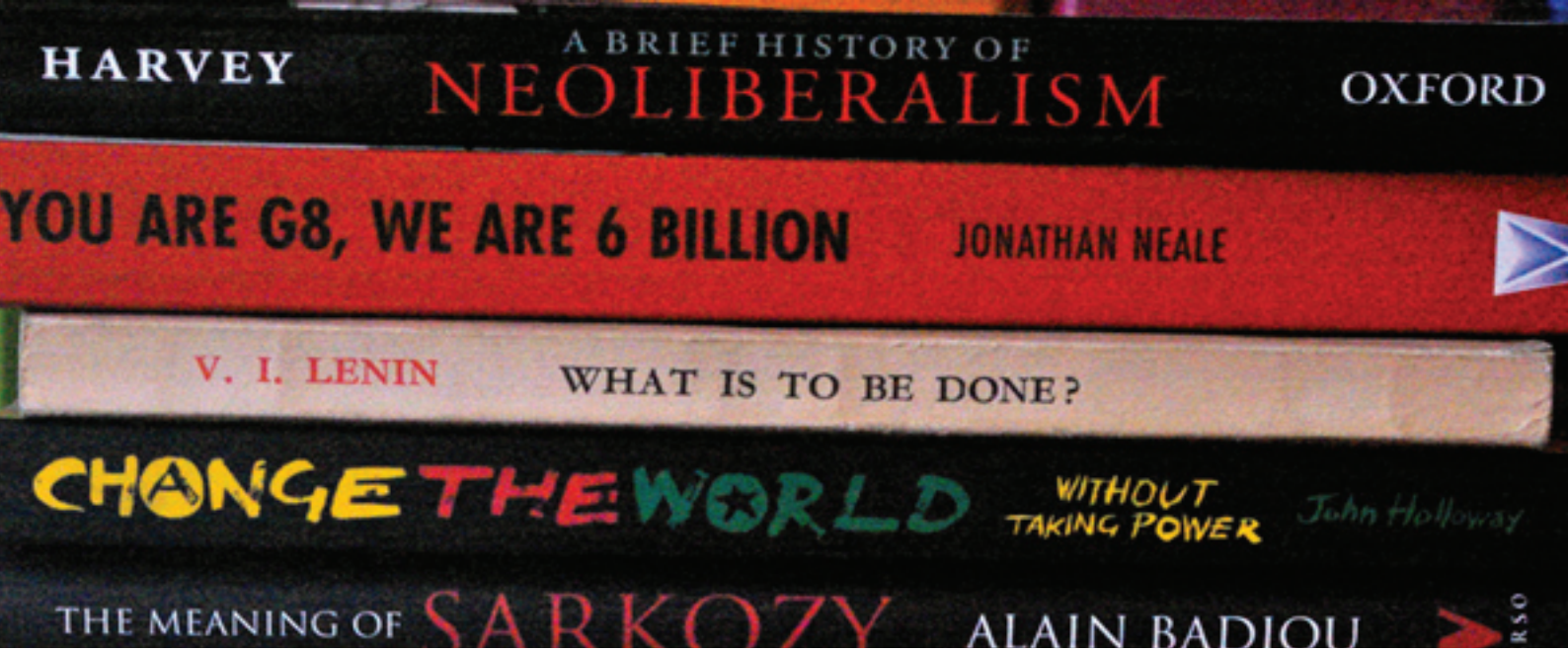

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Movement knowledge:

what do we know, how do we create knowledge

and what do we do with it?

Laurence Cox, Cristina Flesher Fominaya[1]

It is with great pleasure that we present the first issue of *Interface: a journal for and about social movements*, on the special theme of "movement knowledge": how movements produce knowledge, what kinds of knowledge they produce and what they do with it when they have it.

What kinds of knowledge do movements produce?

Movements produce knowledge about the social world. More specifically, they produce knowledge from below, information about society which is inconvenient to and resisted by those above: the wealthy, the mighty and the learned (or, as we might say, states, corporations and disciplines). A crucial aspect of movement practice is making known that which others would prefer to keep from public view, be that practices of torture and extra-judicial executions, the effects of individual pollutants and the costs of global warming, levels of rape and sexual abuse, the facts of poverty and exploitation, caste oppression and racism – the list is long. On a larger scale, movements highlight new ways of seeing the world: in terms of class or patriarchy, of colonisation or neo-liberalism, of ecology and human rights.

This process reaches back at least to the "Atlantic revolutions" of the 18th century, in France and North America, Ireland and Haiti, and continues today with an immense range of movements around the world. In this long process, one

[1] Thanks to Ana Margarida Esteves and Sara Motta for their contributions to this editorial.

measure of movement success is bringing movement knowledge into public spaces: into parliaments and policy processes, into media discourse and popular culture, into academia and publishing. As Eyerman and Jamison (1991) have highlighted, movements are engaged in a constant process of generating counter-expertise, sometimes from their own resources, sometimes through finding allies in traditional intellectual professions such as academia, journalism and the law, and sometimes through pushing the creation of new forms of knowledge.

In recent years, academic fields such as women's studies, adult and popular education, peace studies, queer studies, Black Studies, post-colonial studies, working-class studies and so on testify to this. At present, the rise of indigenous movements in the Americas, the revelations by survivors of institutional sexual abuse in Europe and North America, the Dalit movement in India, and many others are generating their own bodies of associated research.

The process is a long one, though: within the discipline of sociology alone, it is arguable that the study of society would neither have been thinkable nor necessary without the French Revolution, which overturned the taken-for-granted character of the European social order, and without the "social question" raised by the mass movements of the poor and oppressed which were variously reflected in the thinking of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, Émile Durkheim the socialist, and Max Weber, a conservative concerned to maintain the delicately balanced social order of the *Kaiserreich* in the face of the SPD.

Movements have also, of course, reflected on their own role in bringing about social change. One of the most important forms of this reflection has been strategic: "naming the system" in order to identify what kinds of change are needed in order to overcome particular inequalities, for example, as with the debates between liberal, Marxist and radical feminisms; or the debate over revolution and reform as paths to systemic change exemplified by the polemic between Luxemburg, Bernstein and Kautsky within the young socialist movement.

Anti-colonial and anti-imperial movements have debated whether change was best brought about through appealing to imperial self-interest or through nationalist resistance; whether elite or popular movements, "moral force or physical force" were the most effective strategies; and on the relationship between ethnicity, class and gender – not to mention over the concept of nation or race itself. More recently, ecological movements have reflected tensions between "eco-socialists" and "realists", "deep" and "light" greens, and so on, combining the question of systemic analysis with that of paths to change.

The examples above are not meant to be exhaustive; they do not include, for example, the substantial bodies of reflection contained within adult and popular education movements, in community organising, in the practice of liberation psychology and "mad pride", in the long-standing anarchist tradition, within indigenous movements, or most recently within the global justice movement (Maddison and Scalmer 2005).

The rise, over the last fifteen years (since the Zapatista-sponsored Encuentros in particular) of this most recent wave of international networking has brought movements which had been largely separated into situations where they have needed to talk to each other more, on many different levels (from the organising of a protest to strategies for global change). It has also pushed forward debate within movements on how movements work, what we do, what choices we make, and so on.

At the same time, the history of the last two hundred years, and in particular of the last thirty, as there have been substantial rewards for fragmentation (co-optation into the state, the commodification of identities, academic specialisation and so on) has left us with a situation where our movements are often able to discourse with great fluency on questions of global analysis – general theoretical understandings of the social world, normative critiques of particular aspects, particular mechanisms of its workings – while largely "agreeing to differ" on the questions that have most immediate practical relevance: what should we do? What works best? How should we organise? Stretching a point, we can say that by

the time many activists come to meet people from other movements they have already been heavily socialised into, and organisationally committed to, a particular way of operating, and furnished with "off-the-peg" critiques of other approaches.

How do movements produce knowledge?

There have been a series of attempts to analyse the ways in which social movements produce knowledge. In general terms, they raise two kinds of question. One is to focus on the issue of subaltern knowledge as against official knowledge: what is known by the slave, the woman, the colonised, the worker, the oppressed, and so on which is hidden to – or denied by – the master, the man, the colonist, the employer, or the oppressor. The other is to focus on the specific processes of knowledge production which are bound up with social movement development: how movements generate agreed analyses of society, strategies and tactics, understandings of internal practice, and so on.

Within the Marxist tradition, these questions have been posed as issues of class. Thus the *Communist Manifesto* presents a developmental understanding of how class consciousness develops in the process of struggle, in opposition to official ideologies but with the development of a world-view and programme which is adequate to the class in formation: a model which it uses to understand the development of bourgeois society and thought (in part I) just as much as the future development of proletarian self-awareness (in part II).

The most developed accounts of the development of class consciousness are found in the work of Lukács, who draws on Weber's ideal types to elaborate its rationality; and in the work of Gramsci, who contrasts the practical but implicit "good sense" developed in everyday life to the contradictory and contested sphere of "common sense", and the contrasting work of the "organic intellectual" (the trade union organiser or party activist) to that of the "traditional intellectual" (the small-town doctor or priest, the manager or journalist).

The tradition of popular education, and the work of Paolo Freire, has taken a related direction, exploring how through processes of consciousness-raising people can come to articulate their tacit understandings of reality in ways that can challenge structures of oppression (see e.g. Mayo 1999 or his dialogue with Highlander Folk School founder Myles Horton (Horton and Freire 1990)).

In comparable majority-world peasant settings, but with a more pessimistic edge, James Scott (1990 etc.) has drawn attention to the "hidden transcripts" of those who, in his view, already possess a developed world-view in opposition to their masters, but are unable to express it because of the fear of violent repression. By contrast, US black feminist bell hooks (1994 etc.) argues for the possibility of "speaking truth to power" and the effect of articulating such hidden knowledge.

The question of who knows what, and how, is central to all of these analyses, as it is to the “history from below” exemplified in authors such as EP Thompson or Sheila Rowbotham. The work of feminist Sandra Harding (1987 etc.) places the concept of the standpoint from which knowledge is elaborated – who knows what - squarely in the centre of theoretical debate, giving a strong grounding to arguments about the places from which we know.

Hilary Wainwright’s (1994) socialist feminist analysis pays equal attention to the processes by which social movements bring together and articulate the fragmented "tacit knowledge" of individuals in ways that challenge official understandings of reality. The relationship between knowledge from below and action from below is then a central one in this understanding.

Within social movements research, finally, we have already mentioned the widely-cited work of Eyerman and Jamison (1991), which has been fundamental to positioning social movements as producers of knowledge, both about the social world and about how to change it.

How can we produce knowledge about movements?

As social movements make their way into academia, many participants speak and write as at once activists and academics, within theoretical traditions that do not separate the two activities of knowledge-making and movement action. By contrast, contemporary social movement studies as it now exists, institutionalized as an increasingly canonized body of knowledge within North American and West European academia, has become increasingly distant from any relationship to movements other than the descriptive and analytic – despite the fact that a number of its most significant authors started from positions sympathetic to social movements, if not actually within them.

There are nevertheless still important bodies of knowledge about movements that are apparently produced within purely academic contexts. Here we say apparently because (as in all social research) it is research participants who generate data (in the documents they produce, in interviews, as objects of participant observation and so on). Thus researchers who are not themselves activists – as well as many who are – have to engage closely with movements in the work of social movements research, negotiating access, convincing people to complete surveys, and offering their services in various ways.

Yet the practice of social movement studies, as a sub-discipline, includes virtually no explicit acknowledgement of this practical relationship, and a far sharper separation between the kinds of canonical knowledge produced by academics and the informal or activist knowledge produced within movements than in many other fields. University-based research in (for example) adult education, women's studies, social work, nursing or media studies – to stay reasonably close to home – expresses far more respect for practitioners as intellectual producers, and typically involves far more distribution of academic knowledge to the broader community of practitioners than is now the case within "social movement studies" in its institutionalized form.

In academic terms, then, *Interface* positions itself as a journal of dialogue between researchers and practitioners, which recognizes that both are intellectual

producers in their own right (and indeed that practitioners themselves engage in research). Similarly, rather than a one-way relationship where the knowledge produced by movements is drawn on for purely academic purposes within an essentially closed discourse and the results of research are typically restricted to university libraries, our goal is to make relevant research public, without charge and in languages which seek communication rather than accreditation.

In this issue

The articles in this first issue highlight some of the issues raised above, and can be read as a dialogue between activist researchers who are all deeply involved in the process of knowledge production with, and within, their own movements – whether they are formally based in movement institutions or in universities, or both.

Often missing in social movement studies is an explicit reflection on methodology and the consequences different research techniques and standpoints have on the analysis produced. Mayo Fuster Morell's article on action research, which opens this issue of the journal with an overview of the different action research tendencies within the global justice movement, is an important exception. Covering a wide range of movement knowledge projects, she argues that these tendencies are complementary rather than necessarily opposed to each other, but that there are substantial distinctions between individual and collective forms of knowledge production and ownership.

Budd Hall's article draws on adult education perspectives to explore learning processes in social movements, documenting a seven-country action research project on learning within environmental movements – perhaps the largest such project ever undertaken. His article highlights some of the themes and practices articulated within these movements' learning processes, arguing that not only is learning central to social movements, but that social movements are central to society's learning.

The Portuguese-speaking group, currently composed by scholars and activists from Portugal and Brazil and in a process of expansion to Portuguese-speaking Africa and East Timor, then presents three articles that problematize some fundamental and understudied aspects of knowledge production by and about social movements.

"Extensão universitária" (Continuing education) by Jose Ernani Mendes and Sandra Carvalho analyses how universities can support struggles within the popular classes as centres of production, democratization and diffusion of counter-hegemonic knowledge and projects. It focuses on the history of continuing education in Latin America, the impact of neoliberalism and current strategies of resistance in Brazil, in joint projects between the MST and the State University of Ceará.

Ilse Scherer-Warren, in her article "Redes para a (re) territorialização de espaços de conflito" (Networks for the (re) territorialization of spaces of conflict, shows how social movements produce and contest the notion of "territory" in the framework of struggles over land rights, with particular reference to the MST and MTST in Brazil.

The article "Movimentos sociais existem?" (Do social movements exist?) by Antonio Pedro Dores claims that mainstream social movement theory is currently focused on the agency of leaders. Claiming that social movement outcomes are the result of the interaction between the activity (or lack of thereof) of all movement members and an often unstable, unpredictable environment, the author advocates for a more comprehensive model of analysis of the role of social movements in processes of social change that takes into account that often they are neither the cause nor the engine that bring about the outcomes that they aim to promote.

Our section of action and research / teaching notes is designed to change the pace and style of knowledge within *Interface*, sharing practical experiences and skills developed in specific contexts in short and lively articles. The four articles in this

section show something of the diversity and creativity of contemporary movements.

Michael Duckett's action note documents the ongoing "Wor diary" project, which aims to record local struggles in the Northeast of England in diary format, and discusses some of the practical issues involved in the process of production.

Süreyyya Evren's action note chronicles a postanarchist group's experiences with various publishing strategies: an underground / informal approach, an attempt at subverting mainstream media, and independent publishing strategies. It reflects on the strengths and weaknesses of each approach.

Caspar Davis' action note explores the experience of wisdom councils in Canada, introducing the concept and the practical methods involved, and discussing the way the councils developed and what their outcomes were for the future.

Alejandrina Reyes' Spanish-language teaching note on community education comes from a group of educators who attempt to turn 'education on its head'. Knowledge is created by ordinary Venezuelans in the process of reflection on their participation in social movements and community struggle. Knowledge in this context is knowledge for social emancipation, dignity and political transformation. The note gives a practical introduction to their work and a contribution to widening our own sense of educational praxis.

We close this issue of the journal with two substantial review pieces reflecting on contemporary movement knowledge – as it is written, and as it is researched.

David Landy's review article on anti-Zionist writing in the Jewish diaspora explores the relationship of this writing to the developing Israel-critical movement within the diaspora. He argues that these writers reflect a Lacanian "mirror stage" of the movement, in which it comes to know itself through a focus on its own identity and its legitimacy within mainstream Jewish thought, but that this comes at the cost of a failure to include the voices and experiences of Palestinians, even where as activists the authors work closely with Palestinian groups.

Fergal Finnegan reviews Janet Conway's recent book *Praxis and politics*, which explores knowledge production within the Canadian Metro Network for Social Justice. He highlights the strengths of her popular education approach politically and theoretically as well as drawing out its difficulties in articulating strategy.

Read – or listened to – as a series of voices coming from related experiences but each spoken or written within their own language and tradition, these various pieces highlight the intellectual robustness and practical grounding of contemporary movement knowledge and research in this area.

Where to now for research on movement knowledge?

Our experience in working on this issue has convinced us that one of the key directions for research on movement knowledge has to be in the direction of what de Sousa Santos (2006) has described as an ecology of knowledges. There is a strong temptation, in particular for academics interested in this field, to attempt to develop a perspective which marries our own political commitments to a perspective which will gain us disciplinary status. The result, of course, is to increase our academic capital and distance our intellectual work from social movements – or divide it into two parts: as Gramsci put it, one kind of work for the "simple" in our own movements and one for the elite in the universities. The political outcomes of this are fairly clear to see[2].

There is of course also a political version of this, which marries a sense of intellectual superiority to various kinds of organisational sectarianism or an insistence on a single model of knowledge production as inherently superior to all others. The weakness of this approach is that it elevates technique above all else – or uses technique to elevate us and our own projects above the very people we

[2] Another variant of this is what can be called "radical quietism": an apparently sophisticated critique of the construction of discourses, identities, practices and so on which is not part of an attempt to develop and improve movement organization but serves instead to justify passivity, by positioning the writer as morally superior to all actual struggles and movements.

should be seeking to build alliances with, and their modes of knowledge production, which will be different from ours.

At this point, of course, the question arises of who "we" are. If knowledges are situated, any individual writer – or any collective – has at some point to take responsibility for naming the place they are speaking from, whether this is identified in terms of a social-structural situation, a political strategy or something else. Our interpretations of reality – if we are good researchers – are not arbitrary, but neither are they universal or uncontested. "Owning" our own analyses in this sense is the first step away from positioning ourselves as having a uniquely authoritative understanding of reality.

Thus we want to argue that the attempt to "own" knowledge production from above is fundamentally mistaken. If social movements are knowledge producers, and generate ways of knowing grounded in particular experiences and for locally practical purposes, then (as activists and as researchers) we cannot know *a priori* "how to know", still less how other people should know. What we learn in our own movements, as we work on particular projects, campaigns and strategies, is new to us, and what we learn from our allies doubly so – since it is grounded not in a remaking of our own worlds but in their remaking of theirs.

This does not mean that we all have to stay fixed in our own different spaces, with no possibility of communication - or disagreement. It means that the product of these processes – of the encounter of different movement knowledges, and different intellectual traditions – is not foreseeable in advance, and is generated in an encounter which (if it is effective) leaves the different knowledges and languages involved changed; not merged, but changed. If we are serious about tackling the larger structures and systems that govern our lives, not simply tinkering with our local circumstances, this is the direction we need to go in.

This means two things for research on movement knowledge. One is that it needs to be programmatically inter-disciplinary in relation to academia. Similarly, in relation to the multiple intellectual traditions and local contexts of our different movements it needs something like a linguist's approach to these multiple

"languages": rather than focussing on the differences, and making the political equivalent of jokes about how other people speak or what their languages sound like, we need to find ways of communicating across and between languages.

Secondly, we need to avoid a split between the "elite" and the "simple". Recalling that growing up multilingual is a normal situation for perhaps the majority of the world's population, and that learning languages is not simply a privilege of the rich but often a necessity for the poor (as migrants, or as those subjected to greater cultural or political power), we can look for politically effective ways of restating what we know about movement knowledges that respect and draw on the skills of our friends, fellow activists and allies.

The experiences of the Zapatista Encuentros, People's Global Action, Via Campesina, World Social Forums, Indymedia and many other recent movement networks highlight how many other people are making this same attempt along with us in their different ways. Turning to the past, Linebaugh and Rediker's (2000) history of the formation of the revolutionary Atlantic, as indigenous people, slaves, sailors, soldiers, artisans and others found themselves not simply parts in a structural play written by others but frequently rewriting the script, developing new ways of cooperating and communicating, and transmitting knowledge from one side of the world to the other.

Origins of the *Interface* project

Interface was conceived in the context of an annual conference on *Alternative Futures and Popular Protest* in Manchester, that brings activists and academics into fruitful and sometimes explosive dialogues about the movements they study and participate in. What is perhaps unusual for a small conference is that many participants keep returning year after year. What is it that draws them back? While Manchester is a nice place and the organizers are great people, clearly there are some other compelling attractions.

From our own experience, we find that for those working in academia it provides the opportunity to present work to an audience with first hand experience of the movements in question and no compunction about dispelling romanticisms, demanding an empirical grounding for high-flown theoretical abstractions or providing useful examples, counter-examples or relevant literature. But it also provides a place for activists engaged in their own movement based-knowledge production to develop that knowledge in a useful and stimulating context, and to learn from academics who have dedicated themselves to studying and reading about a vast array of movements.

For academics, there is a degree of freedom to try out new ideas or pursue "marginal" (or marginalized) aspects of social movement study that is often missing from other academic forums. For activists, it provides an opportunity - often unavailable in movement forums - to step back from short-term political agendas and reflect systematically on movement practice and learning. The volumes of proceedings produced since 1995 (Barker and Tyldesley 1995 etc.) are a powerful reflection of the richness of these joint explorations.

For many of us, this experience has shown us that research and politics are not as sharply opposed as some of our own comrades and colleagues – in our own organisations or disciplines – would like to have us believe; and that it is possible to be both a good activist and a good researcher at the same time, whether in a university, in a movement organisation, or both.

This space between academia and activism provides a rich terrain for learning about social movements. That spirit of open communication between academics, activists, and academic/activists is what we hoped to capture in this journal project.

The shape of the field

There are some excellent social movement journals already in existence; yet (as many observers have commented – e.g. Bevington and Dixon 2005) social

movement studies has become an increasingly self-referential sub-discipline with a largely closed canon, and less dialogue with movement practitioners than it had at its inception. Remarkably little of this research is of use or interest to movement activists, who are typically pursuing different kinds of question in their own theorising (Barker and Cox 2002). Concurrently, some of the most innovative approaches to movement study are now being developed outside of this "social movement studies" framework: the *International review of social history* (2007) special issue devoted to humour and social protest is a case in point. Geographer Jenny Pickerill's work on the use of ITCs in social movements is another (2004).

Similarly, there are a number of very high-quality movement periodicals out there. Yet in many intellectual traditions there is now an overwhelming focus on the analysis of the social world and of discussion of the issues movements campaign on. By contrast, within those traditions that pay close attention to methodology and structure, this is typically done within a taken-for-granted analysis of movements. All too little attention is paid to learning from *other* movements, or to learning from the past – except within the "origin myths" of particular schools of thought, explaining why all the major questions about movements have already been answered.

Paradoxically, while there are still movements that independently transmit their own origin myths to participants, they are increasingly generated and reproduced in university settings training students in particular disciplines or theoretical perspectives – or sold as part of acquiring particular, high-status "radical" identities. One of the implications of this is that *a priori* commitment to a particular understanding of movement organising is often underwritten by career and lifestyle choices which make alternative strategies literally unthinkable.

There are then, of course, both movements (and disciplines) that simply accept, without criticism or reflection, parameters set from above around the scope and nature of movement action, and which are to that extent committed to actively avoiding discussion of these issues, or are not even aware that they are

uncritically adopting already established and possibly counter-productive practices (see, for example, Flesher Eguiarte, 2005).

With *Interface* we hope to provide an alternative outlet for work that is relevant to both movements and academics, and that draws from a range of literatures, disciplines and experiences that might not find expression in other social movement specific journals – while simultaneously providing a meeting-place for theorists and knowledge producers involved in a range of movements, and often individually isolated within their own organisations, to encounter others working on the same problems from different starting-points.

There are now a wide range of different approaches to carrying out "movement-relevant research", particularly those collected in Croteau (2005) and in Graeber and Shukaitis (2007), and those discussed by Fuster (this volume). We see this as a source of richness rather than a weakness, so long as these different approaches are in dialogue with one another.

More generally, our goal is to develop a living interaction between the different types of knowledge produced in and around movements, the different academic disciplines interested in the area, the different kinds of knowledge, language, culture and intellectual traditions involved, and so on.

Because of the diversity of people's working situations, we work with a diversity of article types. Many are double-blind peer-reviewed, enabling effective feedback which is not based on personal connections, as well as allowing for academic recognition of high-quality work irrespective of its origins. Alongside this, however, we publish action notes, transcripts of discussions, interviews and key documents, highlighting the practioner emphasis of the journal; as well as review essays, reviews and teaching notes, intended as useful for movement educationalists as well as teachers in a range of situations. We remain open for proposals for other types of articles that may better suit particular situations and needs.

The journal is programmatically multi-lingual; while this issue only has articles in English, Spanish and Portuguese we are able with our current team to accept

and review submissions in Catalan, French, German, Italian, Maltese and Norwegian. With individual editors able to work in Russian, Afrikaans and Zulu, we are actively seeking to expand our linguistic range to include material in Asian and African languages in particular.

The journal is organised as a series of autonomous regional groups, covering Western Europe, the Portuguese-speaking world, Spanish-speaking Latin America, South Asia, Oceania, North America, the Mediterranean, East and Central Europe and Africa respectively. Each of these groups commissions and reviews articles independently, is responsible for its own linguistic realities, and makes its own decisions as to the best way to organise relationships between movement theorists and academic research, based on the very different situation in different contexts.

We are keen to find new collaborators for the African, Mediterranean, North American, Oceanian, South Asian, Spanish-speaking Latin American and East and Central European groups in particular; please contact the relevant editors as listed on our homepage.

Issue two: civil society versus social movements

Our theme for issue two is "civil society vs social movements". By this we mean the increasing tension between officially-approved versions of popular participation in politics geared towards the mobilisation of consent for neo-liberalism – the world of consultation and participation, NGOs and partnership – and the less polite and polished world of people's attempts to participate in politics on their own terms, in their own forms and for their own purposes – social movements, popular protest, direct action, and so on. In drawing this distinction, we realise that things work differently in different countries, for example in those Latin American states where governments see themselves as acting with social movements, in post-Soviet states where "civil society" has been directly opposed to the state, and so on; the purpose of this special issue is not to

impose a single interpretation, but to develop a discussion between activists and researchers in different contexts around this phenomenon.

Hopefully, by now you will be eager to dive into this issue. Before we go, however, we want to take a moment to thank everyone who has been involved in this project, which has run entirely on a volunteer basis. We also are aware that we have only begun to scratch the surface of the possibilities for dialogue across movements. As an ongoing project, we encourage any of you who feel you can contribute to this project in meaningful way to get involved.

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About the authors

Laurence Cox is involved in networking between social movements in Ireland, in particular the Grassroots Gatherings of anti-capitalist movements. He runs a PhD-level programme of participatory action research into social movement practice at the National University of Ireland, Maynooth. Email: laurence.cox@nuim.ie. Website (in need of update): www.iol.ie/~mazzoldi/toolsforchange

Cristina Flesher Fominaya is assistant professor in sociology at the Universidad Carlos III de Madrid. She has a PhD in sociology from UC Berkeley and has researched and published work on the British anti-roads movement, autonomous politics, and the anti-globalization movement. She is currently researching victim commemoration, cultural trauma and collective memory following the terrorist attacks in Madrid (2004) and New York (2001). cflesher@polsoc.uc3m.es

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Action research:

mapping the nexus of research and political action

Mayo Fuster Morell

Abstract

This paper aims to capture the richness and diversity of action research on the global justice movement. It starts by proposing a typology of five tendencies (*participative-collective method; producing alternative content; strategic thinking for political processes; building relationships and networking connections;* and *opening knowledge*). It goes on to present clusters of different experiences, illustrated by examples. Having provided an orientation map of action research on the global justice movement, the author concludes by presenting what in her view should characterize action research. The paper is based on participant observation, a review of the literature and personal experience.

I. Introduction

The mobilization cycle of the global justice movement has been accompanied by a proliferation of new initiatives and practices with multiple trajectories that can be located in the intersection between investigation and political action.

Within the framework of this paper I refer to it as action research. However, the term action research is not the only term referring to this nexus between research and political action. Furthermore, there is not an established concept for defining it. There is a "network" of concepts that links terms like activist research, participatory action research, con-ricerca, memory, reporting, systematizing and investigaction, among others.

It could be argued that research is always action research and that there is no such thing as apolitical and / or neutral research. Furthermore, action research guided by a neoliberal agenda is not a minority tendency today. But in this paper I use "action research" to refer to research guided by a progressive and emancipatory approach and linked to a transformative

action in the framework of the global justice movement.

The intersection, and interaction, between political action and investigation is a very broad field without clear boundaries or points of reference, and one that easily expands. There is an inspiration effect that stimulates reflection on existing investigative practices and gives rise to new research initiatives. Looking back to previous inspirations, the main pillars are the method of the "inquiry" and co-research in the Italian "operaist" tradition, women's consciousness-raising groups and feminist epistemology, institutional analysis, and finally the Latin American tradition of participatory action research (Malo, 2004).

Within action research we find different traditions and trajectories that make up a constellation with common points, but also points of contact and oppositions.

The goal of this paper is to provide those interested in action research with a map to make sense of the variety of different approaches. I start by distinguishing five tendencies to facilitate mapping of the action research field. The five types of action research tendencies are: i) being based on a participative-collective method; ii) producing alternative content; iii) developing strategic thinking for political processes; iv) a desire to change the way in which knowledge is managed and owned; v) and, lastly, building relationships and networking connections. I also present a typology of approaches and clusters of experiences providing examples for each type. Finally, I conclude by presenting what for me are the characteristic elements of action research.

The methodology behind this work is based on participant observation of various experiences of action research, conversations with practitioners and a review of the literature and documents produced by movement groups. This paper is also the result of my personal experience. It is based on my personal experience in action research initiatives developed in the frame of social movement organising. Since 2001 I have participated in several efforts at applying research to social movement goals and in conferences and meetings adressing these area at a Catalan and a European level. It is also based on my personal experience in developing research in European and North American academic institutions. Since 2006, I am trying to give an action research orientation to a PhD project.[1]

1 I built the Econsensus tool in 2001 and founded Militant Investigation Network in 2002. In 2003 I founded the Glocal activist research working group and published the "Guide for social transformation in Catalonia 2003"

II. A map of action research: five tendencies

Within the rich field of action research, I propose to distinguish five distinctive tendencies. Some types of experiences put particular attention on being based on a *participative-collective method*; others are focussed on *producing alternative content*; others develop *strategic thinking for broad political processes*; other are distinctive because of their *attempts to build relationships and networking connections;* and, lastly, others have a strong intention to *change the politics of knowledge,* that is the way in which knowledge is managed.

i) Participative-collective method: These experiences are characterized by being based on participative and collective oriented process. They are generally associated with specific subjects or goals.

ii) Producing alternative content: This orientation is focused on providing arguments and data related to the implementation of an alternative or to developing a critique of the status quo. It focusses on the production of content more than on transforming the way the knowledge is produced. It is thus action research in relation to the contents produced rather than with regards to how the information is generated and the methods used in doing so.

iii) Developing strategic thinking for broad political processes: This orientation is based on the goal of providing reflections and analysis concerning political strategy in broad political processes. It is not associated with a particular target or group but with movements as a whole.

Such research generally addresses questions on "deciding what to do in common" and "who we are".

iv) Building relationships and networking connections: This orientation here is focused on

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and edited the Catalan directory of collectives (www.movements.info). I co-organised, with Collective Investigacció, the first international meeting of activist research and social movements in Barcelona (January 2004; www.investigaccio.org) and coordinated the publication of *Recerca activista i moviments socials* (2005 Ed. El Viejo Topo).
I founded the Euromovements techno-political network (www.euromovements.info), the Social Forums Memory Project and systematized working group (2005-2007) and the Networked Politics collaborative research project (www.networked-politics.info); and organised seminars and workshops on action research at various European and World Social Fora.
I began social movements research at the Institue of Governance and Public Policies (Universitat Autonoma de Barcelona). I am currently doing a PhD on the governance of online communities at the European University Institute and am a visiting researcher at the School of Information at UC Berkeley.

creating dialogue and connections between diverse subjects and knowledge trajectories. It is based on finding commonalities to support each other and on developing transthematic frames and solidarity.

v) Opening knowledge: These are experiences that start from a critique of pro-property knowledge management logics such as restrictive intellectual property and copyright. They are engaged in developing alternatives that favour creativity, accessibility and re-use.

Apart from these five different tendencies, where the research is developed from is also a distinctive aspect. There is a consciousness of a border between research done inside academia and that done outside academia.[2]

These five tendencies must not be considered as being necessarily in opposition to each other. Most experiences of action research discussed here are based on a combination of these five elements: *Action research experiences tend to follow a participative method; to develop strategic thinking and produce alternative contents; to use open licences; andto contribute to building relationships as a result*. These five tendencies refer to particular ways of combining all these aspects, putting a special emphasis on one or other of them.

III. Clusters of experiences

Having outlined these five tendencies in action research, in this section I will list some different experiences of action research within the global justice movement. This listing is far from being comprehensive, but I hope it is useful in order to convey the richness of the field.

List of action research experiences:

i) Co-research tradition and "consulta" method

ii) Participatory action research for local community building and space design

iii) Research critiquing and monitoring existing institutions and research on alternatives

iv) Action-oriented training and empowerment

2 A comparison of academic and activist theorizing can be found in Barker and Cox (2001).

v) Action research and art: performative research

vi) Hubs of reflection and publications on movement strategy and organizational logics

vii) Social Fora and the epistemology of the encounter of knowledges

viii) Mapping for action

ix) Memory: movement archiving and documentation

x) Online creation communities: peer-to-peer production model

xi) Techno-political tools: systematizing information for the creation of (networking) tools

xii) Organic intellectuals' contributions to social movements

xiii) Academivism: activists researching social movements from an academic institution

xiv) Another academia is possible: actions for change in academia

In the following map, each cluster is situated according to their closeness to the five tendencies presented in the previous section. The goal of this map is to provide a simple orienting picture of action research around the global justice movement.

Map I: Action research. Distribution of types of experiences by orientations

OPENING KNOWLEDGE NETWORKING KNOWLEDGES

Open knowledge at universities

Online creation communities Techno-political tools Social forums

Co-research Collective movement strategy

PARTICIPATIVE
METHODS ACTION RESEARCH STRATEGIC THINKING

Participatory action research

Performative research Organic intellectuals

Action-oriented training and empowerment

Memory[3]

Mapping for action

Critical research and

research on alternatives

Academivists

ALTERNATIVE CONTENTS

i) Co-research tradition and "consulta" method

This approach is based on collectives that start a process of self-reflection on their identity in

3 Memory is also connected to opening knowledge orientation.

order to consider what they have in common, which is their situation, their own practices and alliances. At its base is the building of new subjectivities of transformation.

In some occasions there is an "external" affinity group that facilitates that self-reflection. This is the case for example of the Argentinian Colectivo Situaciones interventions in piquetero groups (www.situaciones.org).

This self-reflection discussion is a common practice in social centre assemblies, such as the Roman ETC (www.escatelier.net), although it is not necessarily being developed systematically.

The experience of the Zapatista Consulta and the Zapatista slogan "preguntar caminando" ("walking, asking questions") is a methodological reference to this approach. Following this inspiration, some initiatives use surveys, interviews and discussion groups as an opportunity to talk to others and with themselves, to break down distances in the fragmented social space, and to search for common notions that describe personal reality and seeking forms of resistance and cooperation (Malo, 2004). Some examples of collectives with this approach are the Italian magazine *Deriva Approdi* (www.deriveapprodi.org) and *Posse* (www.posseweb.net), and the Madrid-based *Precarias a la Deriva*'s co-investigación on women's precarity (www.sindominio.net/karakola/precarias.htm)

ii) Participatory action research for local community building and space design

In this case the methodology of action research is used in order to direct community interventions around the provision or coverage of social needs or taking concrete collective decisions. In the USA, there is a tradition of community building that incorporates a systematic process of reflection in order to define community needs, problems and resources; see for example the University of the Poor (www.universityofthepoor.org). Municipalities in Europe and Latin America that promote participative democracy also adopt similar methodologies, as is also the case of cooperative intervention in third countries within solidarity movements.

It is also applied outside of local community environments and within international processes. This is the case of the World Social Forum's consultation process. The Social

Forum Consulta is applied to allow decisions on the main themes of the programme to be made in a participatory way.

iii) Research critiquing and monitoring institutions and research on alternatives

These approaches are not necessarily characterised by the methodology used or who developed it and why, but by the contents of the research.

Research critiquing and monitoring institutions refers to research efforts aimed at documenting and strengthening the movement's criticisms and critiques. Examples include the research developed by the Corporate European Observatory (CEO) (www.corporateeurope.org) on the lobby system in European Union policies; the anti-GMO campaigns documented by ASEED (www.aseed.net); Statewatch's monitoring of political institutions (www.statewatch.org); the Center for Research on Globalization (www.globalresearch.ca) or research on the media by Source Watch in the USA (www.sourcewatch.org).

By contrast, research on alternatives is focused on developing alternative solutions, such as research on Basic Income (www.redrentabasica.org); the Centre Tricontinental's research on alternatives from the South (www.cetri.be); INURA, a network of people involved in action and research in localities and cities (www.inura.org), or the Permaculture Network (www.permaculture.org).

In some cases, critical research and the research on alternatives work in parallel. This is the case of the Indian center Navdanya (http://www.navdanya.org) which does research on GMO consequences at the same time as developing organic farming.

iv) Action-oriented training and empowerment

There are several cases of educational "institutions" created specifically to provide skills and training on social movements issues. This experiences build on the critical pedagogy put forward by Paulo Freire as a response to the traditional formal models of education where the "teacher" stands at the front and "imparts" information to "students" that are passive recipients (Freire, 1996). This is the case, for example, of the Universidad Madres de la Plaza

de Mayo (www.madres.org/Universidad.htm) or the Escuela Florestan Fernández linked to the Movement of People Without Land (Movimento Sem Terra).

v) Action Research and art: Performative research

This type of approach is characterised by developing research through artistic channels of expression. This is the case of Beehive Collective, whose mission is "To cross-pollinate the grassroots, by creating collaborative, anti-copyright images that can be used as effective educational and organizing tools for the public area" (www.beehivecollective.org).

vi) Hubs of reflection and publications on movement strategy and organizational logics

Some collectives adopt a role of creating opportunities and developing critical analysis to shed light on the contradictions of processes and movement organization. This is the case for example of the Turbulence Collective , who make calls for reflection on key questions and publish the results in a magazine (www.turbulence.org); of Networked Politics, the node for collaborating on researching new forms of political organization (www.networked-politics.info); or of the Team Colors collective in USA engaged in militant research to provide "strategic analysis for intervention in everyday life" (http://teamcolors.blogspot.com) .

Other actors important in spreading movement knowledge are the movements' publishers, such as El Viejo Topo (www.elviejotopo.com) or AK Press (www.akpress.org).

vii) Social Fora and the epistemology of the encounter of knowledges

Social Fora, or the spaces for cross-movement dialogue, are the meeting points of different trajectories of knowledges, such as feminist theory, and environmental or cultural studies. This spaces are key in generating knowledge for dialogue.

In Boaventura do Sousa Santos words, "The World Social Forum (WSF) symbolizes the struggle against the monoculture of knowledge in the name of ecology of knowledges within which both scientific and lay knowledge can coexist". The epistemology underlying the WSF is opposite to the idea of a general theory, in Santos' point of view. "The WSF undermines the

idea that the world is an exhaustible totality, as it holds many totalities, all of them partial".

The basic premise of the ecology of knowledges is that there is no global social justice without global cognitive justice (Santos, 2004). In the meeting place of different knowledges, key elements are a lack of hierarchy among the different knowledges and the building of translations. In this regard, Santos defines translation as "the procedure that allows for mutual intelligibility among the experiences of the world, both available and possible, without jeopardizing their identity and autonomy, without, in other words, reducing them to homogeneous entities" (Santos, 2005). In the practice of the movements, the work of translation concerns both knowledges and actions.

The translation of knowledges consists of interpretative work between two or more cultures to identify similar concerns or aspirations among them and the different responses they provide for them. The second type of translation work is the translation of actions. It is undertaken among social practices and their agents. "All social practices imply knowledge, and as such they are also knowledge practices. When dealing with practices, however, the work of translation focuses specifically on mutual intelligibility among forms of organization and objectives and styles of action or types of struggle" (Santos, 2005).

viii) Mapping for action

An innovative line of research is the construction of cartographic visual maps. It is based on creating collective understanding of the complexity of new territories and hightliting relationships. Some examples are the maps of Bureau d'Études and the Université Tangente (utangente.free.fr) showing multinational networks; the map against / about the Forum of the cultures of Barcelona (www.sindominio.net/mapas); or the map of conflicts in metropolitan territory of Rome done by Transform! Italia (www.transform.it).

ix) Memory: Movement archiving and documentation

Three key questions fall under this approach. First, the memory of the processes built by the actors themselves and not by external force. That is, the movements engage in building their own memory. Second, reporting on events to spread information on what happened and to

make them accessible to people who were not involved at the time. Third, preserving what happens for the future and for the accumulation of debates and conclusions, allowing continuity in the process. Memory is based on applying archiving and documenting techniques. In support of this memory building, and specially in developing it in a collective way, new information technologies have played an important role.

Some examples of this approach are the archives of reports and minutes of the Social Forums such as the Memory of the second European Social Forum at Paris 2003 (www2.fse-esf.org); the Chronos archive of mobilizations (www.euromovements.info/chronosweb); the E-library on social transformation (www.openelibrary.info) which includes an archive of 700 articles on global justice movement related issues; the project to write the movements' story of Seatlle mobilization against the World Trade Organization in 1999 (http://www.realbattleinseattle.org) or the People's Global Action's Global Archive (www.nadir.org/nadir/initiativ/agp/en).

x) Online creation communities: Peer-to-peer production models

An online creation community could be defined as a "loosely" collective action performed by individuals that, cooperate, communicate and interact, mainly via a platform on the Internet, with the common goal of knowledge-making (Fuster Morell, 2007).

Online creation communities are interesting examples not necessarily for their contents but for their organizational form and methodology, highlighting principles of cooperation and participation of large groups and the accessibility of knowledge.

Online creation communities are based on what Benkler defines as commons-frame peer production (Benkler, 2006). This term describe a new model of economic production in which the creative energy of large numbers of people is coordinated (usually with the aid of the Internet) into large, meaningful projects, mostly without traditional hierarchical organization or financial compensation.

The first examples of online creation communities are development communities, that is communities developed around free software programming, such as the communities around Apache, Linus, Debian or Drupal. The emergence of development communities constituted an

empowering and inspiring experience in terms of a collaborative frame of production and in terms of a "copyleft" knowledge management system that favours creativity and re-use. They are based on a decentralised community of passionate "hackers" collaborating to write the code, and leaving it open to allow it to be re-used and further developed.

The new technologies of information allow very rich processes for building collaborative working tools. A particularly good case is Wikipedia (www.wikipedia.org). Wikipedia is a Web-based, multi-lingual, "copyleft" encyclopedia designed to be read and changed by anyone. It is collaboratively edited and maintained by thousands of users via wiki software. The open editing process has led to Wikipedia becoming the world's largest encyclopedia. Vandalism is a recognized problem, though much of it is caught and amended by users who monitor the recent changes. Critics claim that Wikipedia contains much inaccurate information and can never be as authoritative as a traditional encyclopedia. Nevertheless, Wikipedia is one of the most used reference sites on the World Wide Web and has been widely endorsed.

xi) Techno-political tools: Systematising information for the creation of (networking) tools

Some techno-political tools aim to generate an online creation community. Nevertheles,s while online creation communities refer to a specific goal resulting from interactions online, techno-political tools are generally associated with broader processes and with processes whose offline dimension is more important than the online interaction that takes place through the tool.

Techno-political tools are defined by two key ideas. Firstly, they put an emphasis on a collaborative and open environment. Secondly, they are based on systematizing the information and knowledge generated in mobilization processes in order to build useful tools that reinforce networking and to democratize access to contact data. This approach is based on making the knowledge already driving the social networks accessible, to empower them and to articulate them. It is based on an "indirect" research approach.

In the Internet sphere, any action is translated into digital information and digital information always leaves a trace on databases. A growing part of people's daily lives in the

North and developed countries passes through digital supports (PCs and other machines). All this growing information generated in daily life can be connected and interpreted by programmes, each time more complex, in order to extract applicable knowledge. Within the social movements, for example, this strategy has already been introduced for example in the Social Forums process, through the adoption of new digital and online protocols for and for the organization of the events: all this data normally produced by the actions necessary to organize the forum is now stored, saved, made easily accessible and utilized to offer further opportunities to produce knowledge and information and to intensify the networking process within and around this space of confluence of social movements.

This is probably a new frontier for action research: the possibility of storing and the elaboration of information produced independently from direct research aims. Apart from many other complex (legal, social, cultural, political) aspects, the interest in the potential of this information will produce a close correlation between the development of databases and protocols that organize the flow of any action in the Internet and the aim of getting more and more information potentially transformable into useful knowledge. This could open up new connections between social movements and researchers. Furthermore, this tendency suggests that in the future one of the tasks of a researcher could be the conceptual design of the protocols for storing relevant data and of the programmes to elaborate them.

The “political” in techno-political tools means that the tools are used and/or built for political ends. The “techno” means that the content and/or the mediation of such practices is carried out through technology. The “tool” it refers to the fact that objects are open to being re-appropriated; to being used for unexpected purpose. The tool aims to combine autonomy and a sense of acting jointly following the logic of Do It Yourself (DIY).

The usefulness of techno-political tools could be defined as the capacity to expand / increase the identification of actors and resources for the action and reflection.

Some examples of techno-political tools are the tools developed by Euromovements.info, like the European Directory of collectives and organisations (www.euromovements.info/directory). The directory was not built from scratch, but adapts data that the regular activity of the movements creates. For example, the main information source for the European directory is the registration databases for the European Social

Forums.

Another example is the activism networking platform openesf.net (www.openesf.net) which is a networking platform to organise the European Social Forum.

xii) Organic Intellectuals' contributions to social movements

Although some movements resist ascribing knowledge to individuals, important contributions are nevertheless made by individuals to the movements as organic intellectuals, willing or not. In Barker and Cox's words:

> "Movement intellectuals make two kinds of theoretical contribution. The first is the justification of the movement. Here form is as important as content, for much of the ideological work of movements is dialogical, in exchanges with opponents and potential allies. The forms and settings of movement ideas vary (...): pamphlets, newspapers, posters, sermons, songs on demonstrations, informal conversations, and so on. (...)
>
> Secondly, movement intellectuals produce strategic and tactical proposals, typically of the form "Given the overall situation, and our purposes and resources within it, this is how we should act". "We" may be a formally defined movement or party, or may be framed as "ordinary people", "workers", "the Catholic community", "Blacks", etc." (Barker and Cox, 2001).

There are also individuals that have been studying an issue for many years (e.g. GMO, EU lobbying) and contribute as "experts" on the area.

Some Think Tanks, such as the Transnational Institute (www.tni.org) based in Amsterdam or the International Forum on Globalization based in San Francisco (www.ifg.org), support the figure of "activist-scholars," understood as people committed to critical analyses of problems and providing intellectual support to movements. They include journalists, independent researchers and writers, academics and policy consultants.

According to Boaventura do Santos Sousa, all the experiences presented hitherto are forms of knowledge that "break the public space of the University (as institution that hold the monopoly on knowledge) in the name of a wider public space" (Santos, 2004). I now turn to

experiences of action research related to academia.

Academia

Many participants in the global justice movement are part of universities. According to Agrikoliansky and Sommier's research on the European Social Forum (Paris 2003), 70% of the participants were related to a University (as graduate or post-graduate students) (2005). However, the relationship to academia is a live, open and multi-dimensional question in the global justice movement.

Some of the questions arising around the relationship with academia are: Is it possible and how, to make use of the academic institutions to benefit social movements? What are the perverse effects of the Academy studying social movements? Which role is played by academics in the mechanisms of power (such as the re-absorption and division of movements into physical activists and theoretical activists, or between non-violent and violent activists)? What practices of resistance to the academy are initiated by social movements? Etc.

Within the framework of academia there are several, complementary, approaches to action research around the movement.

xiii) Academivism: Activists researching social movements from an academic institution

"Academivism" can be understood as attempts to contribute to social movements through research developed in an academic framework, performed by people who have a double identity as academics and as activists. In other words, people who, while being active and part of the social movements and taking a critical approach to the academic institution, are engaged in research on social movements in an academic framework.

Some of the questions related to this position include: How can we make our work relevant to those with whom we study? What is the role of the researcher? Is it possible to carry out action research from an academic institution? How does affect the researcher to have a "double identity" of activist and research? How is the knowledge by the social movements and the activist theorised (and in what respects is it different from knowledge generated in the academy or other contexts)?

Anthropology and ethnography, due to their fieldwork immersion methods of "being there", are more open to these questions. Juris presents militant ethnography as "a politically engaged and collaborative form of participant observation carried out from within rather than outside of grassroots movements". But he also considers its limitations: "If ethnographic methods driven by political commitment and guided by a theory of practice largely break down the distinction between researcher and activist during the moment of fieldwork, the same cannot be said for the moment of writing and distribution. Indeed, one has to confront vastly different systems of standards, awards, selection, and stylistic criteria". That could explain the anger of this activist at the first International meeting on activist research and social movements who responded with: "You go back to the university and use collectively produced knowledge to earn your degrees and gain academic prestige. What's in it for the rest of us?" (2004).

From academia there is also places based on providing education on alternative contents with an academivist orientation. This is the case of Hegoa, a Basque institute for development and international cooperation (www.hegoa.ehu.es), of the Centre for the Study of Social and Global Justice (Nottingham) (www.nottingham.ac.uk/cssgj) or of the Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales, promoter of the Observatorio Social de America Latina (www.clacso.org).

xiv) Another academia is possible: Actions of change in Academia

Opening up the knowledge created in the universities

In the academic world, there are emerging exponents of public access to the knowledge it generates. Starting from the hard sciences, initiatives such as the Public Library of Science (www.plos.org), a nonprofit open access scientific publishing project aimed at creating a library of open access journals and other scientific literature under an open content licence, are part of a wave to make science results accessible and to enlarge cooperation in research.

Another example is *Interface* itself, as an open access journal on social movement research (www.interfacejournal.net).

These actions are connected to a broader free culture movement in favor of open knowledge

and the defense of knowledge as a public good. At US Universities there is also an emerging movement of "Students for Free Culture" whose goal is to transform the politics of knowledge at University (www.freeculture.org).

Initiatives to bring academia and society closer

This approach refers to efforts to build relationships between civil society and academic institutions and to increase public awareness both of research results and of the demand-driven approach to research.

Examples include the Fondation Sciences Citoyennes (www.sciencescitoyennes.org), the Science Shop (www.scienceshops.org) first established in the Netherlands in the 1970s or INOSA (www.cs.indiana.edu/~gasser/inosa) which "promotes more egalitarian relationships of mutual learning between individuals and organizations working within universities and those in other parts of civil society".

Lastly, other types of "actions" taking place in order to change academia through ethically based practices have to do with the struggles in defence of the public university and against the proletarianisation of research.

IV. Authorship and ownership

In discussions on action research, a distintion and contrast between "academic research *versus* activist research" is commonly made, and this distinction is usually the main axes of the discussion. Useful considerations can arise from this perspective (see for example Barker and Cox, 2001). Nevertheless, I consider that this perspective limits analysis, and can be used to narrow the focus of the questions asked of action research. In this context, it can be useful to address action research from the point of view of authorship and ownership.

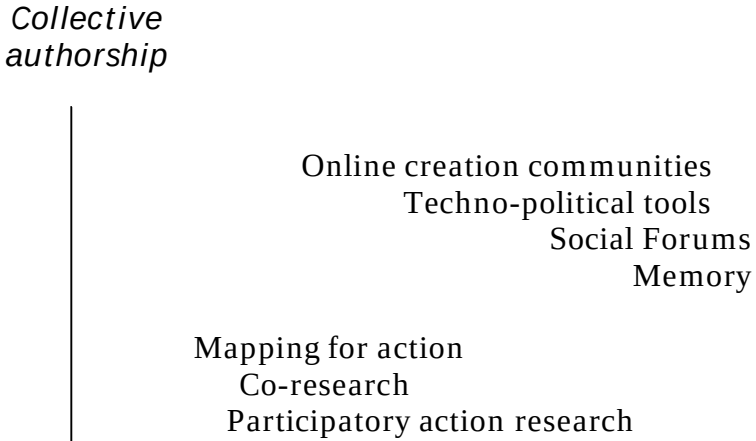
As presented previously, the five tendencies I proposed are not necessarily in opposition to one another. Most experiences of action research in the movement are based on a combination of these five elements: they contribute to building relationships; follow a participative method; tend to use open licences; develop strategic thinking and produce alternative contents. However, authorship and ownership is a more categorical issue. Some

experiences are based on collective authorship while others have an individual authorship and these cannot go together.

It might be worth mentioning that individual authorship does not refer to monologues or to isolation. If we look to the contexts of individual contribution generally we will find it part of a conversation. Nevertheless, in individual authorship a moment can be clearly established in which the ideas are explicitly attributed to a specific person. Collective authorship can also vary. It can include the case of a "universal" non-authorship, not attributing a explicit authorship, or collective authorship can refer to the explicit authorship of a clearly bounded group. Furthermore, the same person could in some occasions adopt an individual authorship and in some occasions a collective one.

Map II presents a simple distribution for orientation purposes of different types of experiences around authorship and ownership. The distribution of the clusters suggests that there is generally a relationship between the type of authorship and the type of ownership. Collective authorship tends to adopt "copyleft" (or formulas that favor access and re-use) approaches to ownership more easily. Further analysis and empirical research may be needed to see if this analysis holds up.

Map II: Authorship and ownership: distribution of type of experiences by authorship and ownership[4]



4 Not included in this map are performative research and action research for training and empowerment.

Collective movement strategy

Critical research
Research on alternatives

Individual ownership — *Collective or accessible ownership*

Organic intellectuals

Academivists

Open Knowledge at Universities

Individual authorship

V. Conclusion

The nexus between research and political action is rich in its diversity.

Five main tendencies can be distinguished. Some types of experiences put particular attention on being based on a *participative-collective method*; others are focussed on *producing alternative content*; others develop *strategic thinking for political processes*; others are distinguished by their *effort at building relationships and networking connections;* and, lastly, others have a strong intention to *change the way in which knowledge is managed.* There tendencies are not necessarily mutually exclusive, but can complement one another.

The type of authorship (individual versus collective) is a sharper border and may also be related to the type of ownership. Collective ownership seems to be adopted more in collective authorship.

The defining features of action research

In conclusion, I would like to raise for consideration and exploration a number of elements that 'swarm' around action research in the global justice movement and, in my view, should

define it:

■ Research arising from the action of transformative social movements: that implied by the needs directly or indirectly expressed by the social movements and excluded sectors of the population.

■ Criticism of any theory that claims to speak from a neutral place, from where it can see everything. Instead, research should be carried out from people's own situations, that is, from personal experience, within a strategy of research from below.

■ Research towards action for the critical transformation of the present reality, with an explicit political commitment to the present cycle of protests: research that pursues the creation of a knowledge that is valued for its practical effectiveness in generating changes, in contrast to objective and contemplative theoretical knowledge in the traditional academic fashion; knowledge that gives visibility to conflicts; knowledge that generates and maximizes action; knowledge that transforms reality while generating a new reality.

■ Research with a glocalist [global+local] framing.

■ Non-disciplinary research which attempts to overcome the fictitious compartmentalization of reality. By contrast, reality should be understood as a totality that combines manifold interconnected aspects.

■ The development of research as an effective procedure, whose development is in itself already a result. The validation of research depends on its capacity to contribute to change. Research with a real use-value.

■ Research nurtured by a spirit of experimentation; nomadic and travelling research, adapting to changes.

■ The principles under which research is organized should be decentralization, horizontality, autonomy and the desire for coordination and cooperation. It is either developed by subjectivities constituted through the formal and explicit objective of social activism research, or transversally and integrated into other fields of social movement action.

■ Everyone participating in the research should be considered part of it, with an effort to

overcome hierarchies. This includes research springing from the relationship between the subject-researcher (the researcher as subject) and the subject-researched in a process of composition; non-instrumentalist research; investigation without an ”object”; rather than treating the social movements as objects of investigation, they – as well as the researcher - are subjects in a process in which everybody is left reconstituted. It is not ‘about’ social movements; rather it is from and for social movements but immanently so. In other words, rather than locating itself in a position already codified, it produces the terms of the situation.

■ The subject-researcher participates in the situations investigated, is open about his/her motives and opinions, and is not necessarily a person with a specialized university education. By contrast, the traditional role of the academic researcher which is questioned here is that of the prudently distant, supposedly objective and individualist specialist.

■ The subject-researcher become more a facilitator of the research than its owner and director.

■ Research from the perspective of resistance rather than one that is merely communicative. It tends to be based not on an acquisitive position, “giving” voice to excluded populations, but on establishing cooperation, with the acknowledgement of its own exclusion from the outset. It is not constituted through a separated consciousness, but makes the research one more tool in the process of confronting the system that we resist.

■ A consciousness of the re-appropriation of knowledge and a critique of the apparatus of academic capture in relation to mechanisms that reproduce power relations and favour the expropriation of knowledge.

■ Knowledge management based on free, public, inclusive, common and nondiscriminatory forms for universal use, without property or copyright or under pro-profit aims. This tends to be supported by accessible formats and easily distributed as well as, when applicable, copyleft licensing. This implies a critique of the commodification and privatization of knowledge as one of the causes of social exclusion.

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About the author

Mayo Fuster became active politically in the Catalan Global Resistance Movement. In 2002 she focused her activism on action research. She is co-author of "Recerca activista i moviments socials" (El Viejo Topo) and "Activist research: practice(s) to challenge the investigaction" (http://www.euromovements.info/html/index.htm). She is studying the governance of online communities in the European University Institute's PhD programme, and is a visiting researcher at Ischool – UC Berkeley. She is part of the webteams of the European and World Social Forum and Networked-Politics.info. Email: mayo.fuster@eui.eu website: www.onlinecreation.info

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A River of Life:

Learning and Environmental Social Movements

Budd L Hall

Socialist Dreaming is not about the liberation of the individual from the social, but is about a collective dreaming (McLaren and Farahmandpur, 2004: 213)

What constantly recurs is that these movements are involved in doing, where the senses are at the heart of action (McDonald, 2006:214)

The best route to social transformation lies through the synthesis of action, learning and social change (Edwards, 2006: 12)

Introduction

Learning, both intentional and incidental is that embodied place that enables those of us in the diverse movements of our times to feel that river of life; that space where our knowledge, our hopes, our dreams become somehow connected to each other, to those of others in our communities and the world and to those who have both come before and will follow us. Social movements are intense locations for knowledge coming together and for learning to occur. By social movement learning I refer to several interconnected phenomena: a) informal learning occurring by persons who are part of any social movement; b) intentional learning that is stimulated by organized educational efforts of the social movements themselves; and c) formal and informal learning that takes place amongst the broad public, the citizens, as a result of the activities undertaken by the a given social movement (Hall, 2005).

I believe that the catalytic power of learning and its sister activity knowledge creation have been undervalued and under-theorized in the discourses of social movements. Indeed without an understanding of the role of learning and

knowledge creation, I contend that it is very difficult indeed to explain the power and potential, which social movements represent. I am delighted to make a modest contribution to correcting this and welcome any fellow travellers in this journey, fellow paddlers in the river of life!

The adult education movements of Europe arose with the major social movements of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Movements about lessening the horrors of early capitalism and industrialisation, reduction of child labour, health and safety in the workplace, obtaining the vote for women, movements for peace in the context of the two world wars all had powerful educational or learning dimensions. Indeed how could they have existed outside of the context of learning? What we have come to understand as the foundations of the Eurocentric adult education traditions include such mythic efforts as the Mechanics Institutes and the Workers Education Association originating in England, the study circles from Sweden, the folk high schools in Denmark, and the Antigonish Movement in Canada. These movements were created and nourished within a social reform climate and went on to create their own robust institutional structures. Indeed many of the organisational forms of these early learning movements still exist even though with some it may be difficult to ascertain their current connections to contemporary social movements.

The Popular Education movements of Latin America of the 1980s and 90s, of The Philippines of the same period with significant influence back into Canada, the United States and Europe (the later thanks to the organizing work of people like Liam Kane of Glasgow, Mae Shaw, Jim Crowther and Ian Martin of Endinburgh, Scotland) have also illuminated the links between learning and social movement aspirations. There have been movements one could argue over the years of adult literacy, much of that supported by UNESCO at the international level. The International Council for Adult Education with it partner organisations in Europe, Asia, Latin America and elsewhere has been an important network since its founding in 1974 where the learning agenda and the social movement agendas have come together. The journal of the ICAE, *Convergence*, has been the main vehicle for carrying this discussion forward.

But for purposes of this article, I am not going to refer in any depth to the more organized parts of the adult or lifelong learning movements although I commend that literature to readers as they are an important element of the overall understanding of the contemporary links between learning and social movements. I want however to share my evolving thoughts about *social movement learning* itself with special reference to the forms of learning that I studied in the mid 1990s as part of an extensive study on learning in the context of a number of environmental action campaigns and movements around the world.

Social Movements: An Evolving Concept

What is a Social Movement?

It goes on one at a time

It starts when you care

To act, it starts when you do it again after

They said no

It starts when you say we and know what

You mean, and each

Day you mean one more

- Marge Piercy, *The Low Road*

The poetic definition of Marge Piercy is, to my mind, the clearest and most easily communicated statement about how we understand a social movement. There are, of course, many others definitions of social movements. And as the first decade of the 21st Century draws to a close with its thrilling and horrifying forms of globalisation, our understandings of what social movements are and how they work or if they are still robust enough concepts to help us understand what is

happening in the world expand. The conceptualization by David Snow, Sarah Soule and Hanspeter Kriesi in their Introduction to the *Blackwell Companion to Social Movements has* the advantage by being more broadly inclusive as to what gets counted as a social movement.

> "Social movements" according to these scholars, "can be thought of as (italics original) *collectivities acting with some degree of organization, and continuity outside of institutional or organizational channels for the purpose of challenging or defending extant authority, whether it is institutionally or culturally based, in the group, organization, society, culture or world order of which they are a part* (2004:11).

In addition, Donatella Della Porta and Mario Diani have, in synthesizing an enormous variety of European and North American literature, noted that most social movement scholars share a concern with four characteristics of movements: "informal interaction networks; ...shared beliefs and solidarity; ...collective action focusing on conflict; ...use of protest". (1999, pp. 14-15)

Kevin McDonald offers us extremely useful insights into understanding the global movements of the early 21st century in much more complex ways. He looks at the emergence of new kinds of networks and flows of communication, action and experience. "The forms of practice and communication we encounter in these movements are more embodied and sensual than deliberative and representational" (2006:4). McDonald writes of new grammars of experience, grammars of action and culture. He argues that we are witnessing a move from social movements as forms of representation with direct action for political gains as a goal to movements of experience, of drama, of theatre, of taste and touch and even ritual (59). Moments in the midst of the anti-globalisation protests, the ecological struggles, or struggles for indigenous cultures and language are immediate experiences of a different world, a new life enacted through ritual, ceremony, dance, or play. They are not the indirect struggles for power that will one day make a change; they are the world we want experienced right now! The movements of the present are less about organisation and community and more

about event and experience (84). McDonald refers to the work of the German Hans Joas (1996) who puts forward a robust a fresh understanding of action within social movements. Joas suggests that the dominant forms of understanding of action are flawed in that they largely framed in terms of intentionality, which focuses on control, purpose and cognition. Movements illustrated by the Zapatistas, healing movements such as Qigong or the spiritual movements of global Islamic are about flow, networking, connectivity, immediacy, creativity and an immediate sensual intimacy.

The links between social movements and civil society or global civil society organisations are complex and intertwined. Social movements are collective expressions of a given group of people intended to resist, transform or in other ways have impact in the political, social or policy worlds; the worlds of governance. Global Civil Society refers most often to the explosion of small and large non-governmental organisations and networks which have arisen in the past 20 years and which have become particularly prominent in the context of the World Social Forum (Hall, 2000). Some would say in fact that the phenomena of the World Social Forum are a global social movement or a set of social movements in and of themselves. What the global movement(s) is/are named differs. We are alternatively speaking of a movement for alternative globalisation, an anti-globalisation movement, a movement for the world we want or a movement for redefining community. A quick stroll through the World Social Forum and related websites will reveal thousands of non-governmental civil society organisations. These thousands of organisations at the global level are part of what we refer to as global civil society. Global civil society can be understood as at least two phenomena: the sub-total of all local and national civil society organisations or the total of the international or transnational civil society organisations. Whichever definition one chooses, the fact remains that the actual governance of the global commons is being deeply influenced by the actions and aspirations of people of the world expressed through their staggeringly diverse organisational forms.

The examples of social movement learning in this article are based on data on the *Transformative learning Through Environmental Action Project* that was undertaken between 1992 and 1994 by the Transformative Learning Centre at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education or the University of Toronto, the Faculty of Environmental Studies of York University and CEMINA, a Brazilian-based environmental NGO. This study was the largest qualitative research project ever undertaken on learning within and because of environmental social movements. It has had little dissemination so I welcome the opportunity to share some of the findings with readers of *Interchange.* This comparative and international research project was funded by the International Development Research Centre of Canada to investigate ways in which learning emerged, and was stimulated and supported, in different environmental social movement contexts around the world. These were in Brazil, Canada, El Salvador, Germany, India, Sudan and Venezuela. Coordinated by Moema Viezzer in Brazil, Darlene Clover, Budd Hall, Edmund O'Sullivan, the late dian marino and Leesa Fawcett in Canada, the project developed as a contribution to, and a way of following up, the adult education dimensions of the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in June of 1992.

The several years of networking in the international adult education community, especially in preparation for the Earth Summit raised a number of questions:

1) How could the learning dimension of the environmental movement be strengthened?
2) What can be learned from social movement environmental action campaigns about the ways in which learning takes place and can be most enhanced?
3) Which combinations of pedagogical practice hold out the most promise for transforming relations of power and perception?

Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study were to:

1) Identify indicators of success for social movement learning within environmental action contexts:
2) Undertake an international survey of transformative education initiatives,
3) Develop a number of conceptual working papers and case studies dealing concepts of social movement learning through environmental action; and
4) Organize a collaborative workshop for the analysis of how social movement learning works.

Methodology

The study was a participatory and collaborative effort by the teams at the three sponsoring organizations that brought diverse approaches and experiences in partnership with a team of scholar-activists who were responsible for writing the case study reports. For example, OISE/UT had extensive experience in adult and popular education theory; the Faculty of Environmental Studies at York University with environmental education, nature and society; while CEMINA brought experience in feminist environmental popular education.

Early in the design of the study, it was agreed that the range of experiences of social movement learning in the field of environmental action was too large and diverse to be able to provide enough points of comparison for one study. As a result, it was agreed that the case studies would be drawn from experiences of environmental action in the context of food production, distribution and consumption. Food is life itself and all social economic and political relations with nature can be understood from the point of view of food, or even, as we were to discover in the study of the Navdanya (nine seeds) project in India, from the point of view of the seed. As Leesa Fawcett (1993:5) noted in the final report of the study, “Everything we put into our food, we eventually eat”.

The Case Studies

The chosen case studies were action-oriented, social movement based and concerned with food and its production, consumption and distribution in some ways. Case study activist-researchers, working in the groups associated with the case study, were invited to research and write the individual case studies and to participate in the collective analysis workshop at the end of the process. The case studies included: Navdanya: A Grass Roots Movement in India to Conserve Biodiversity and Sustain Food Security; El Daen- Environmental Conservation in Western Sudan; Berlin and Brandenburg as Centres of Environmental Activism: Organic Food consumption and Organic Gardening and Farming; Food, Aboriginal Ownership, Empowerment and Cultural Recovery at the Six Nations Community in Canada; Women-s Citizenship in Action: The Struggle Against Hunger and Poverty and in Defence of Life in Brazil; Social movement learning in the Venezuelan Urban Amazon; People's Rights, Environmental Education and Ecological Action for Sustainability in El Salvador.

Findings: Principles of environmental social movement learning

Recovery of a sense of place

The propensity to destroy the ecological balance in our communities varies, in part, according to the degree of 'sense of place', which we have. . Place refers to our locations in bioregional terms and also in terms of such social indicators as race, class, gender, sexual orientation, and able-bodiedness. As Meyer-Renshausen (1994: 8) noted in her case study in the *Awakening Sleep Knowledge* report of linking organic vegetable growers to Berlin consumers, "the members (of the food co-op) now know exactly where their cabbage comes from". As a result, we concluded that principles of bio-regionalism are important to developing a sense of place and that we need to think of ways of building practical and theoretical ways to recover our sense of place when planning learning, experiences

The importance of bio-diversity

Bio-diversity is that complex celebration of difference that allows for the flowering and survival of the world. Respect for bio-diversity means honouring space for bio-diversity to flourish. Bio-diversity performs its magic best when performing in settings that most humans understand as wild. As Vanasa Ramprasad (1994:9) noted in the case study of Navdanya, "Biodiversity is vulnerable, and left unprotected it tends to erode". The reduction of bio-diversity in the form of fewer seed varieties, extinction of animal species or the disappearance of other life forms threatens our survival. The full implications of concepts such as bio-diversity have broad meanings even for our understanding of the roles of our particular human species. Respect for education of a transformative variety increases the visibility and understanding of the importance of bio-diversity in ways that make sense in the particular context involved. Again from Ramprasad, “Conservation of biodiversity and crop varieties in-situ on farmers fields is a security imperative in the context of the North-South conflict over genetic resources” (p. 13).

Reconnecting with the rest of nature

Our pedagogical practices, according to our understanding of social movement learning, need to seek specific ways for us to reconnect with the rest of nature. As Vizier and Moreira (1994: 17) say in their case study of the Jardim Kaghora community in Brazil, "It is necessary to share the joy of living without domination among human beings or between human kind and nature". The first aspect of this is to recognise that we are part of nature and not apart from nature. We are connected with every form of life as we share the same molecular building blocks. Our collective ability to survive as a collectivity of all living beings depends on each of our species surviving in ecologically interconnected webs of life. This means that opportunities of a theoretical, practical, experiential and participatory nature need be sought so that everyone can begin to recover a sense of the natural.

Awakening "sleepy knowledge"

Increasing attention is being paid to the role of indigenous knowledge, even within academic settings (Dei, Hall and Goldin-Rosenberg, 2002). The concept of 'sleepy knowledge' came from the Venezuelan Puerto Ayacucho movement for the recovery of traditional environmental knowledge to help urban indigenous migrants cope better with the new conditions facing them. As knowledges and system of thinking have come to be so dominated by Eurocentric, rich country, patriarchal paradigms, older and non-dominant forms of knowledge have been allowed to "go to sleep". Ovalles (1994) describes the educational process of "awakening" being done in Puerto Ayacucho as:

> . . . a social process through which the values, principles, knowledge, etc learned from the practices of past generations and found in the personal and collective consciousness of people are critical. These values, principles and knowledge come from the experience and relationships between societies and their natural environments throughout history. Due to the socialization process, this knowledge has been lost, and no longer transmitted from generation to generation until now. (p. 2)

In addition to the knowledges of ancient peoples, the knowledges of women and of those who live closest to subsistence have much to offer us for environmental adult education. As the keepers of seeds, primary care givers in communities, farmers, haulers of water and wood and vibrant social and environmental activists and educators worldwide, many women bring more life-centred visions and ideas to environmental discourse.

Acting and resisting

Facilitating action and supporting resistance is a key principle for transformative adult environmental learning. As Ovalles (1994: 4) says about the work in the urban Amazon, "learning becomes transformative in the moment that it starts to

influence power, work, management and cultural relations". It might well be argued for example that even Western science, with its built-in biases, offers us sufficient proof of the declining health of our biosphere. But that knowledge alone cannot help us if it is not linked to social and political actions that can make changes in the laws or practices which destroy us. Resistance, itself a form of action, is that quality which allows us, as individuals and as collectivities, to maintain our sense of integrity and community thereby denying others of power over us in important ways. Social movement learning seeks out action and supports resistance.

Building alliances and relationships

In each of the examples of social movement learning which we researched, there was a strong emphasis on the importance of people working together. This is because change of a systemic nature is a long-term matter that requires skills and energies beyond any single person. Each of our cases of social movement learning involved the creation of alliances across diverse groups. In Sudan, the rural environmental association created an alliance with adult educators at the University of Khartoum. In Brazil, popular organizations of street kids, workers, women and others came together in a poverty and hunger campaign. In El Salvador, former members of the armed opposition established new alliances with peasant leaders. Social movement learning needs to find ways to strengthen our skills in working with others. It has to do with organizing, understanding difference, respecting diversity, learning how to build consensus, reaching out to those who do not share our views and with sustaining long term political and operational strategies. This may be shantytown women coming together to start a food bank. It may involve *campesinos* in El Salvador eating together or joining the Rural Leadership Network. Ovalles (1994: 4) says that in Puerto Ayachucho, "each meeting they tried to make up networks of individuals and organizations which would permit continuing of the process"; while in Brazil, Moema Viezzer and Teresa Moreira (1994: 9) noted that "In November last year we organized a

committee which has worked on three fronts all along. We established a bridge between middle-class schools and committees from middle-class apartment buildings and committee again hunger set up by the Neighbourhood Association from Jardim Kahohara (the slum community."

Skills are important too

Social movement learning is not just about understanding concepts and connections; it is also about learning and teaching specific skills. Words such as "empowerment" sometimes obscure the fact that specific skills are involved in environmental action and that learning how to do something may be as empowering as a new insight that gives broader meaning to one=s daily life. In the Six Nations of the Grand River in Canada for example, learning how to farm in the traditional way of the ancestors involves skills as well as consciousness. In the Sudan, "Women started to exchange information in ways and means of preserving food" (Hijazi, 1994: 10) Successful organic bio-shops in Germany requires skills in running a small business. Similarly, several skills were needed in the Navdanya project, including "cleaning and documentation of seeds, seed conservation, varietal improvement, in field agronomy trials" (Ramprasad, 1994: 16) The challenge to those of us who work or seek to work with transformative forms of learning in these contexts is to identify the specific skills needed for the actions intended and to arrange ways to learn them.

Valuing process in learning

Many of our most unsuccessful educational experiences have focussed on trying to get the most "facts" across in the shortest period of time. In social movement learning, however, the process of the learning is as important as the content of learning, beginning with the daily lived experiences of those involved in social movement learning for increased attention to the relationship of the learning processes to the overall goal of our movements.

As Ramprasad (1994: 18) noted:

> In the Navdanya project this is referred to as evocative forms of training. Instead of trainers transferring knowledge and information as if into an empty cup, the trainer draws out the wisdom that is lying dormant within the vast range of agricultural experience that the farmer has. By doing this active thinking is awakened within the inner life of the farmers.

Deconstructing relations of power

Learning for transformative purposes involves understanding relations of power within a specific context. Understanding relations of power helps in understanding the exploitation or abuse of nature and people in particular situations. For example, an important part of village level seed projects in the Navdanya project in India involved understanding the relations of power within the Indian state, agri-business global corporations and the sale of hybrid seeds and fertilizers. A seed conservation project would not be effective if the conservation practices were learned in the absence of any understanding such relations of power. Benevides (1994: 3) noted that in El Salvador, many farmers had to use their small plots as collateral for loans to buy seeds or fertilizer, and soon found that they lost their land as soon as they were unable to make repayments. Understanding the relations of power also allows for the potential to alter those relations and, most importantly, provides a framework for analysing future actions by agri-business interests. Power flows through each and every practice in everyday life via gender relations, race and ethnic relations, class relations and more. Sensitivity to the complex relationships of power and knowledge in ecological contexts is a goal for social movement learning.

The practices and processes of social movement learning

The collective analysis workshop process generated nearly one hundred specific practices and processes of transformative environmental adult education that

had been used within the case studies. Many of the practices that formed the heart of the environmental actions under discussion had not been intentionally designed as educational practices but became key moments for very powerful learning, which deepened the understanding of the actions at hand and reinforced the sustainability of the overall work. Many of the principles identified in the section above are incorporated in these practices. Two or three examples from each of these categories are used to illustrate the diversity and creativity of the practices. The practices identified include: celebrations and rituals, "on-the-spot" learning, learning from elders, community meetings, nature tours or study visits, gender analysis, medicinal plant collections, kitchen composting, marches and protests and the creation of community markets.

Celebrations and rituals

Celebrations and rituals represent an important form of environmental adult education. They have the capacity to combine new and old knowledge's, spiritual and physical activities and various ways of coming closer to the earth. Meditation was also used in some of the case study contexts. In making use of celebrations and rituals for environmental education, we are drawing on some of the most powerful and ancient methods we know. The following are but two of literally thousands of such activities.

The Navdanya project in India saw social movement learning as an awakening of the spiritual facilities that slumber within the farmer. Learning is a drawing out of the wisdom lying dormant within the vast range of agricultural experience that the farmer has. One of the practices used by Navdanya was to integrate the work of identifying and preserving the best genetic stock for the coming seasons into traditional seasonal festivals. In this ceremony women played the central role as "keepers of the seeds" as they participated in an elaborate festival of song and dance that focused the entire community on the process of seed preservation. The seeds that had been selected for keeping were identified by the local farmers who elaborated their own criteria for selecting seeds based on qualities derived from

their very specific contexts, including the desire to grow without imported fertilizers.

The Rural Leaders Network in El Salvador believed that their cultural, spiritual and agricultural work feeds empty stomachs, supports the community and feeds the soul. Noting that the spiritual aspect of life must not be underestimated, they made extensive use of song and music in their training programmes. They also pay particular attention to sharing traditional histories when they begin a training workshop by asking leaders from the different communities to tell the stories of their communities. These are communities with many thousands of years of history and the telling and exchanging of each story calls forth the years of resistance of the people of the region and shows common elements among them.

A number of small celebrations were also held throughout the collective analysis workshop. These culminated at the closing ceremony through collectively weaving a web of sisal twine, pausing each time to think about what our experience had meant to us.

"On-the-spot" learning

A second broad area of practice that emerged from the collective analysis process of the project was labelled "on-the-spot" learning. In India they spoke of "in situ" learning as opposed to "ex situ" learning which was compared to the practices of in situ preservation of seeds compared to ex situ preservation of seeds. It was pointed out that the communities than are doing maintenance control of the genetic stock more responsibly by private companies.

If we think about educational work, the same thing might be said; education works best when it is kept close to the communities and suffers when others design it at a distance. In all of the case studies we examined, a majority of the learning was done in the farms, homes, shops, workplaces or elsewhere that work

and daily life was going on. The links between action, relevance and natural processes are so much more obvious when one is standing in the field.

An example of on-the-spot learning was identified in the Community Garden, an integral part of the project at Six Nations in Canada. When Leman Gibson, the Mohawk Elder works with the trainees at Six Nations of the Grand River near Brantford in Southern Ontario in Canada, he does so on the gently rolling land behind his home, which is one of two community gardens and test sites for growing traditional varieties of indigenous foods. His stories grow out of the land much as the corn, the squash and the beans (these three foods are known traditionally in Iroquois culture as the "three sisters"). Whether thanking the creator directly in a prayer before working or simply through the respect he shows for the earth which brings so much each year, the trainees get spiritual, technical and philosophical learning while they work on the spot.

In Sao Paulo, Brazil, as part of the large-scale food for life campaigns of the mid-1990s, a practice of reclaiming urban space for gardens was established. Homes are small and close together in the shanty towns of urban Brazil and, while we may be used to thinking of gardens and farms as rural experiences, the women's groups in the Hunger Campaign re-appropriated urban space to create gardens for the cultivation of what they called ›seeds of diversity‹. In spaces that have usually been used for garbage, women have reclaimed the land for gardens where women grow different crops and share what they grow. It is very difficult to provide security for crops in a community where hunger is prevalent, but the urban gardens provide more than just a source of food. They are at the same time a place for women to come together to figure out a variety of other ways to survive. The gardens also offer ideas about other more productive uses for the urban land that all too often becomes just another dump.

Learning from elders

To some extent all of the case studies examined had an element of learning from elders. In Germany, the urban women and men of Berlin went to some of the

older organic communes in the surrounding countryside to learn from the elderly farmers. In the Six Nations agricultural project two elders, one man and one woman are recognized as key advisers for the project and as teachers on practical farming and gardening techniques. The members of the Six Nations community could not work at a community level without the involvement of some of the elders. Similarly in the El Daen area of Sudan, the Elders (all male in this case) were at the heart of the conservation decisions and leadership.

Who are our elders in the various educational contexts that we work in?

Community meetings

Community meetings of both an informational and participatory nature were common across all the case study projects. Social movement learning made full use of the very wide variety of popular education and adult education methods in these community settings. These included cinema study groups, storytelling, cartoons, posters, community theatre, role-playing, song, music and art. The Brazilian campaign, the work in El Salvador, the work in Venezuela and India all had a rich and imaginative use of participatory approaches for use in community meetings.

Nature tours or study visits

Nature can teach us much if we can learn to hear its messages and read its signs. Sometimes other species and plant life are all around us. In these cases educators need to learn to be quiet and become more open to the world around us. Sometimes in urban settings we feel distant from and apart from the other parts of our natural world. In these cases it is useful to go to places where nature is more healthy and sustainable from an ecological point of view.

One of the study visits in Sao Paulo, involved taking the women from the shanty town to the areas water treatment plant. Here it was possible for the women to see all the chemicals put into the city water and to talk with the workers about

how water becomes contaminated in the first place. The results of this visit were clearly seen when the women's group reclaimed a spring in their neighbourhood by removing all the surrounding rubbish and putting up a barrier around it so that it would be kept clean. In Berlin, urban environmental activists in search of a way to strengthen their relationship with nature began to make visits by bicycle to organic farms in both the former west and former eastern parts of Germany around Berlin. Similarly, study visits of townsfolk to villages were organized. In the Indian case study where one of the objectives is to educate the consumers of various food products

Gender analysis

Women and their lives are at the heart of social movement learning. Understanding the differential impact of environmental destruction on the lives of women is critical to being able to find a solution in most cases. In all of the case studies, women, because of their central role in food growing, food preparation, and care-giving in general were fundamental to transformation. Practices such as consciousness-raising, feminist popular education, cooking classes and other activities that simply allow women to be together outside of the very heavy load of daily work were found in most of the case studies. This means that educational practices that directly or indirectly allow for increased visibility of the roles of women, particularly among men are important.

Medicinal plant collections

Plants were used for various medicinal purposes in the case study projects in El Salvador, Six Nations of the Grand River, Venezuela, Germany and the Sudan. In El Salvador in particular, the growing of medicinal plants is a central part of the rural leadership work. Recovery of knowledge about medicinal plants strengthens the self-sufficiency of communities and reduces the dependence of expensive imported medicines for many common ailments. There has been a revival of such

interest in each of the countries and the active tending of such herb gardens has proven to be an excellent adult education tool.

Kitchen compost piles

In Brazil and Germany the keeping of a kitchen compost pile was an intentional part of the work of environmental activists. The use of a compost pile with its direct and visible lesson about reducing organic waste and the power of nature to nourish itself by turning waste into good soil is one of the best ways of letting nature teach us. Along with reducing our creation of rubbish, learning to recycle organic products can make a substantial difference in our communities.

Marches and protests

Environmental action takes many forms. Sometimes it is important to take collective action in order to bring certain information to the authorities involved. Marches, protests and other forms of non-violent action are powerful ways to learn about the distribution of power, the role of different kinds of knowledge and the strength that comes from acting together. Whether in India protesting the patenting of the Neem tree or in Brazil going to local authorities to provide clean water, the right to take collective action were one of the most powerful learning tools and a means of responding to unfair environmental practices available.

Creating community markets

In both the Berlin and Six Nations case studies, creating a community market was seen as an educational as well as an economic activity. The large food producers and food marketing organizations that have historically had a monopoly over food distribution have prevented green activists in Berlin from using plants for medicinal purposes or buying local organic produce. The creation of local “bio-shops” where local producers can find buyers has proven to be both

a functional marketing arrangement as well as an excellent place for informal education to take place. The buyers, sellers and shopkeepers educate themselves about so many issues having to do with ways to live more lightly on the earth. At Six Nations, market research at the start of the project indicated that the community spent nearly $11 million dollars a year for food. None of that money was spent in the community. So there were plans for an integrated community market and educational centre as part of the recovery of traditional food crops and better use of the land in the community. This centre would provide the community with films and talks about aspects of indigenous agricultural and culture as well as be a destination for visitors wanting to buy locally and learn something about the area.

Power and Globalisation

Social movements are instruments, means, and imaginaries for dealing with the issue of power where power is understood to be the process turning imagination into lived reality. So our understandings of power are critical to our understandings of social movements and indeed to our understandings of globalisation and obviously to our understandings of how learning and knowledge interact with social movements, power and change. I indebted to John Gaventa for drawing my attention to his and others recent work from the intersection of international politics and international development studies that offer us extremely useful ways of understanding the nature of power in our globalised world. Gaventa offers what he has called the "power cube" which can be imagined in the form of a Rubik's cube with three sides representing the three different dimensions of power (2007:206). On the vertical axis of the cube are levels of power: supra national or global, national and sub-national or regional. At this level we consider the way that power is expressed at the local or the national or the supra national levels. The horizontal axis describes spaces where power takes place including closed spaces, invited spaces and claimed/created spaces. Closed spaces for example would be inner circles of corporate life,

military planning, vast areas of political spaces where people are intentionally excluded from discussion. Invited spaces can be understood as the various participatory governance initiatives that governments create for citizen involvement. Claimed or created spaces might for our purpose include social movements. These are spaces where those excluded create or take up their own spaces. The third dimension of the cube is forms of power: visible, hidden and invisible. Forms or dimensions of power theorists refer to a public space of political negotiation that represents most of what we experience as political life in our communities. Hidden forms are those where the very agendas for political negotiation are determined. Invisible forms of power are the dark experiences of internalised powerlessness where no political action is even imagined let alone acted upon.

Many development professionals and activists working on issues of citizenship, governance and poverty reduction within international donor organizations and international non-governmental organisations have taken up the power cube. Understanding power along the three dimensions suggested gives us both a practical analytic tool and a complex understanding of power itself. The Rubik's cube, which can be turned along all three axis allows for billions of permutations as does power itself!

Social Movements lie at the heart of change

My deepest understandings of relations between women and men are not primarily as a result of the reading of feminist literature, although I have done so. My understanding of white heterosexual privilege has not come primarily from reading of anti-racist or queer studies, although I have done so. My understanding of the risk to our environment has not come primarily from my reading of environmental literature, although I have done so. In each of these cases my most profound learning of new ways of seeing and living in the world have come as a result of direct and indirect impact of these social movements on the daily practises of my life. My learning about gender issues began when in the

1970s; my home became a place for weekly women's meetings. My understanding of white privilege began most sharply from being on the wrong side of debates about who to hire in a community organisation and from challenges to racist assumptions in my classrooms. My learning about homophobia began at a poetry reading session when another reader shared his stories of exclusion and pain.

Social movements have what I suggest is a 'magic power'. They have a capacity to create change among persons who are not even members of the movement in question. We *learn* or come to new understandings of different dimensions of life as a result of the actions taken by those engaged in the movements themselves. In 2008 members of Greenpeace, in England scaled the smoke stack of a coal powered electrical power plant and painted the letters of the first name of Gordon Brown, the British Prime Minister down the side of the smoke stack in massive letters. GORDON was splashed across the front pages of the newspapers in England and persons who may have not thought at all about what was going on in the debates about alternative power sources were offered a new framework, a new way of understanding. The GORDON effort created a public learning moment for thousands of people who never intended to learn about the issue; a kind of magic power of learning.

I would argue that in every area of sociological analysis or political theorizing, the new frameworks for understanding power in relation to race, dis/ability, gender, the rest of nature or even spiritual life have originated in the movements of our times. Academic literature was either years or decades later with their theoretical explanations or explanations. Social movements and Eyeman and Jamison tell us create epistemic communities where new knowledge is generated and shared. The ripples from the social movement stones reach out to those of us who are not part of the movements, to those in the academy looking for more reliant ways of explaining things and eventually to the changing of institutional behaviours. The process is not smooth, it is not fun, it is not predicable, but it comes at us continually and is, from my perspective, the very core of social and cultural transformation.

In the reading of the literature on social movements it has become clear that each of us might agree with the notion that social movements exist. We would also each be able to perhaps name a social movement or social movements. But when one tries to pin the elusive social movement down to more precise definition, the frustration grows. We learn of old social movements such as the labour movement, which have largely taken on organisational forms. These movements most often have identified leadership structures and fixed sets of values and objectives. Members in these movements often have cards and can be found on lists. We learn of new social movements, which often include women's movements, peace movements or environmental movements, which have a combination of identifiable and diffuse leadership. These movements are most often unified through common sets of values and perspectives. Of course well-articulated forms of both the women's movements and the peace movements have existed in 'old' forms as well. And as academics we are now trying to come to grips with the multi-faceted face of the variety of global anti-racist, anti-imperial, anti-globalisation and anti-capital movements which are understood as having continual emergent leadership and organisational forms. Some forms of these social movements are expressed through religious discourse such as fundamentalist movements of Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism or Islam. At specific moments such as the World Social Forum in 2004 in Mumbai, India, the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) meetings in Vancouver in 1998, the Quebec Summit of the Americas or the Calgary, Canada G-8 meetings in June of 2002, representatives of these various movements come together with a remarkable range of creativity and alternative visions.

New generations of social movements are not merely oriented to "critiquing" dominant society but they are simultaneously engaged in regenerative activities and offering alternatives to reshape the very grammar of life. In short, we see the transition from a phase of "protest" to a phase of "proposal". I am interested in giving close attention to what these proposals represent and signify, what is their intent and content in rebuilding both human and non-human collectivities. These new generations of social movements are not single issue based or enveloped

within the larger narratives of nationalist struggles or 'equal opportunity' within the state and/or the market but they have opened the Pandora's box of multi-issues and multi-actors. Most important for us is the fact that each actor is embodied with his/her own pragmatic and symbolic productivities. Finally, whether social movement leadership is aware or not, there is a creation of knowledge arising and taking shape as well as the appearance of a wide range of pedagogical and social learning strategies. Thus we value social movement space as much for its process as for its results.

Adult and Lifelong Learning developments

The emergence of several more recent streams of learning discourse come together to make the study of social movement learning particularly rich at this point in time. First, there is new interest in educational discourse about learning that occurs over a life span and the educational processes that occur in out-of-school settings. One example of this increased interest was found at the UNESCO Fifth International Conference on Adult Education in July of 1997 where some 1600 persons from 160 countries met and endorsed among other things a Declaration which accorded special reference to the many “new agents of social change” (UNESCO, Hamburg Declaration, 1997) which generate many new forms of adult and informal education.

Second, there has been considerable research into the informal learning of adults as part of the work done by David Livingstone and his team at the University of Toronto within the New Approaches to Lifelong Learning research network (2000). Through work carried out in this network we have learned that all adults learn by their own recognition, 8-10 hours per week through informal learning processes. The work of the NALL project researchers has documented the rich learning environments in social movement settings such as trade unions, community-based environmental groups, ex-psychiatric survivors.

The Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex team, which looks at Power, Participation and Social Change, has been elaborating a series of

reflections on the practices of learning, knowledge gathering and social justice. Peter Taylor and his colleagues have assembled a useful report on *Learning for Social Change*, which drew on the reflections of diverse groups of international development social change agencies, educators and communicators. (2006). They draw attention to the importance of attending to the practices of facilitation of learning for social change. They note "power relations constrain or broaden and create hierarchies of knowledge" (2006:16). What is most useful perhaps for an evolving understanding of social movement learning is the rich elaboration of forms of learning which includes: emotional, propositional, indigenous, insight, tacit, collective, expert, lay, discursive, wisdom, experiential, revealed, and practical.

There is an opportunity beyond the scope of this article to explore how the varying discourses of adult and lifelong learning, learning for social change, popular education, social movement learning, Aboriginal ways of knowing, critical pedagogy, feminist pedagogies, queer pedagogies and more can deepen our understanding of the role and potential of learning in the context of social movements. As I reflect on the extensive dimensions of learning I suggest that we could construct a "Learning Cube" very much like Gaventa's power cube, which would illustrate the billions of permutations for a learning world.

The two most cited figures in the literature on social movement learning are Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937) and Paulo Freire (1921-1997). Peter Mayo (1998) has rendered the most succinct comparative analysis of these two intellectuals. Both Gramsci and Freire see the learning process most fully flourishing within social movement contexts. They both stress issues of commitment, agency, and political or structural change. While Gramsci (1971) contextualized his work in the notion of a working class movement of the early 20th century in Italy, Freire (1970) understood his work as relating to women and men in a wide variety of social movement contexts even though his own roots were in Latin America. The Freirean understanding of dialogue as a transformative educational practice, while powerful, is sometimes criticized for being silent on questions of gender, race or other forms of difference. What Freire does seem to get right is his

emphasis on the importance of people writing their own history. Time is ripe to re-evaluate the Gramscian and Freirean explorations of the relationship between expert's knowledge over the knowledge of the subjugated.

The adult education literature has recently seen several theoretical explorations of social movement learning. Mattias Finger (1989), Michael Welton (1993) and John Holford (1995) have each put forward a kind of map of the linkages between social movements and adult learning. According to Finger, new social movements are the catalyst for personal transformation and the environment within which transformation occurs. They define the future topics of adult education. Learning within these movements is more powerful than the impact of schooling

Welton (1993) argues that new social movements are both personal and collective in form and content. He sees them as 'privileged sites' of social movement learning or emmancipatory praxis. He asks the question, "What are adults learning?" in new social movements, but does not go much further than outlining some ways of understanding what the new social movements are responding to. He asks one of the key questions that we are trying to answer, "Is something of great significance for the field of adult education occurring within these sites?"

Holford (1995) goes beyond both Finger and Welton. Holford finds much of importance in the work of Eyerman and Jamison (1991) who speaks of social movements as a location of "cognitive praxis". Eyerman and Jamison suggest that it is "through tensions between different groups and organizations over defining and acting in that conceptual space that the (temporary) identity of a social movement is formed." Through the notion of "cognitive praxis" they emphasize the creative role of consciousness and cognition in all human action, individual and collective. They look at social movements through the complex lens of social theory of knowledge that is both historically and politically informed. They focus simultaneously on the process of articulating a movement identity (cognitive praxis), on the actors taking part in this process (movement intellectuals), and on the context of articulation (politics, cultures, and institutions). What comes out of

social movement action is neither predetermined nor completely self-willed; its meaning is derived from the context in which it is carried out and the understanding that actors bring to it and/or derive from it. Eyerman and Jamison emphasize that social movements are not merely social dramas; they are the social action where new knowledge including worldviews, ideologies, religions, and scientific theories originate.

Social movements are a socially constructive force and a fundamental determinant of human knowledge. As such they have profound implications for learning theory. Social movements are far more than 'sites of learning', but lie at the heart of the content of learning itself.

Griff Foley of Australia wrote an extensive study of what he calls "Learning in Social Action" (1999). He looks at a number of case studies of local social, environmental and political social action. His key concepts are learning through struggle, struggle being the action of those who have less power against those who have more. His work drawing on a largely political economic tradition asks never-the-less similar questions as the others. How do the political economic contexts of a given struggle shape education and training? What are the ideological and discursive practices of social movement actors? To what extent do these practices hinder or facilitate learning and action?

Several authors have provided answers to these questions. Darlene Clover, at the University of Victoria, has written extensively on learning with the environmental adult education movement and on women's learning in a variety of community-based cultural movements (Clover and Hill 2003). A good example of how cultural artistic forms of expression have informed popular protests is Carole Roy's research that looks at the learning dimensions of Canada's "Raging Grannies" (Roy 2004). The Raging Grannies are older women who turn the stereotypes of old age upside down as they sing songs of political protest on the steps of the legislature while dressed in old fashioned bonnets and dresses. Butterwick (1998) has written on the social movement leadership of women in

Canadian adult education history. Cunningham and Curry (1997) have explored social movement learning within the Chicago African American Experience.

New utopian visions and practices are being created everywhere in profusion

Ulrich Beck has noted that, "The blueprints for alternative world views are carried about in the breast pockets, backpacks and hearts of social activists today" (Beck 1997, 23). These new blueprints are deep, elaborate, practical and even spiritual approaches to another world where fairness and respect form the heart of the human and more than human relationships. Whether in the oral naming of our world by the Aboriginal People; or the documented practises of green economists; or the business successes of women's grassroots saving groups in Asia and Africa; or the community business incubators of Van City Credit Union in British Columbia, Canada; Or the participatory budget of the city of Porto Alegre Brazil; or the thousands of groups building the world social movement; or the sustainable forestry of small holder loggers in British Columbia; in spite of the attempts of the global market forces to silence or render invisible other ways of being, our world, our imagination and our creativity has not been stopped. The anti-globalisation and anti-capitalist movements are creating a powerful epistemic community where learning is accelerating. Attention to the power of learning, the power of knowledge making in social movement contexts is a contribution that those interested in learning and engagement of civil societies can make.

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About the author:

Budd L. Hall, Director, Office of Community-based Research at the University of Victoria in British Columbia, Canada is an activist-scholar whose engagement includes adult education in Tanzania, the international participatory research movement that he led in the 1970s and 80s, environmental and peace education and more. He has worked with the late Paulo Freire, Dame Nita Barrow, and President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania. He is also a poet offering courses on poetry and social movements.

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Extensão universitaria:

compromisso social, resistência e produção de conhecimentos

(Continuing education:

social provision, resistance and the production of knowledge)

José Ernandi Mendes e Sandra Maria Gadelha de Carvalho

RESUMO

O presente trabalho apresenta a extensão universitária como importante dimensão do fazer universidade, junto ao ensino e a pesquisa. Discute seu caráter político subjacente a perspectivas diferentes de universidade e enfatiza seu aspecto social ao propiciar a aproximação desta instituição de ensino superior à sociedade, notadamente às classes oprimidas do povo brasileiro. A estrutura do texto está organizada da seguinte forma: partimos de uma breve história das atividades de extensão na América Latina e no Brasil; depois explanamos as transformações sofridas pela universidade no contexto neoliberal; em seguida apresentamos a resistência à perspectiva hegemônica mediante projetos educativos envolvendo o Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem Terra (MST) e a Universidade Estadual do Ceará (UECE) no âmbito, do Programa Nacional de Educação na Reforma Agrária – Pronera.

ABSTRACT

This article presents continuing education as an important dimension of the university universe, alongside teaching and research. It discusses its political character within different perspectives on the university and emphasizes its social aspect, which makes visible the relationship between institutions of higher

education and the broader society, especially the oppressed classes within Brazil. We start with a brief story of continuing education in Latin America and in Brazil; subsequently we explain the transformations suffered by the university on the neoliberal context. We continue by presenting resistance against this hegemonic perspective through educational projects involving the Landless Workers' Movement (Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem Terra - MST) and the State University of Ceará (Universidade Estadual do Ceará – UECE) within the framework of the National Program of Education on the Agrarian Reform (Programa Nacional de Educação na Reforma Agrária – Pronera).

1. Introdução

O presente trabalho apresenta a extensão universitária como importante dimensão do fazer universidade, junto ao ensino e a pesquisa. Discute seu caráter político subjacente a perspectivas diferentes de universidade e enfatiza seu aspecto social ao propiciar a aproximação desta instituição de ensino superior à sociedade, notadamente às classes oprimidas do povo brasileiro. A estrutura do texto está organizada da seguinte forma: partimos de uma breve história das atividades de extensão na América Latina e no Brasil; depois explanamos as transformações sofridas pela universidade no contexto neoliberal; em seguida apresentamos a resistência à perspectiva hegemônica mediante projetos educativos envolvendo o Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem Terra (MST) e a Universidade Estadual do Ceará (UECE) no âmbito, do Programa Nacional de Educação na Reforma Agrária – Pronera.

2. Universidade na Sociedade: mútuas implicações

Um olhar pela história nos mostra que a instituição das primeiras universidades no Ocidente, entre os séculos XI e XV, está profundamente imbricada com os acontecimentos sócio-políticos e econômicos que as contextualizam. Num primeiro momento, é nela que se elabora o pensamento medieval, sob os auspícios da Igreja

Católica, “no sentido de fundamentar a sua ação política e religiosa, enquanto preparava seus quadros, o clero especificamente” (LUCKESI et al, 1995:31).

Os movimentos da Renascença, Reforma e Contra-Reforma no século XVI, inauguram a Idade moderna, e ainda as Revoluções Industrial e Burguesa no século XVIII, em que afloraram as idéias iluministas e uma nova estrutura econômica e social, que consubstanciou a sociedade capitalista, impõem à Universidade medieval uma profunda reestruturação, coadunando-se a uma nova perspectiva instrumental do saber científico.

A Universidade francesa, criada por decreto de Napoleão em 1806, sendo muitas vezes designada como Universidade Napoleônica, é representativa das novas funções referidas a esta instituição que, segundo Luckesi (idem:32) caracteriza-se “pela progressiva perda de sentido unitário de alta cultura e a crescente aquisição de caráter profissional, profissionalizante, na linha do espírito positivista, pragmático e utilitarista do Iluminismo”, estruturando-se em escolas superiores isoladas, esvaziadas em seus objetivos políticos.

Neste modelo, privilegia-se o ensino para suprir tanto as necessidades de um mercado em expansão como as conseqüências sociais da nova vida urbana, em que por exemplo, se multiplicam as escolas, requerendo a formação de professores.

Ainda no século XIX, na Alemanha, novas preocupações são debatidas quanto ao papel da Universidade, apontando-se para a retomada de sua liderança do pensamento, propondo-se que seja centro de pesquisa.

Elucida Luckesi et al (1995) que o marco desta transformação ocorre em 1810, quando da criação da Universidade de Berlim, por Humboldt, concluindo, que a “Universidade moderna, enquanto centro de pesquisa, é, portanto, uma criação alemã, objetivando preparar o homem para descobrir, formular e ensinar a ciência, levando-se em conta as transformações da época” (LUCKESI, 1995:33).

Estes modelos exprimem debates de concepções diversas sobre a função social da Universidade em cada momento histórico em que se tornavam marcantes, influenciando até os dias atuais a estruturação do ensino superior, para além de seus locais de origem. Denota-se como o ensino e a pesquisa tornaram-se

prioridades, não ocorrendo até o século XX a preocupação com as ações de extensão[1].

Melo Neto (2001) elucida que o enfoque à extensão universitária aconteceu primeiramente no século passado com as universidade populares da Europa[2], formadas por grupos autônomos em relação ao Estado, e pretendiam divulgar conhecimentos técnicos à população. Além destas, as universidades norte-americanas, por iniciativa oficial, principalmente nas zonas rurais, também foram pioneiras na prestação de serviços às comunidades.

Na América Latina, Melo Neto (idem) destaca o Movimento de Córdoba, em 1918, quando os estudantes argentinos discutem a relação entre a sociedade e a universidade, objetivando que, através da extensão universitária, se divulgasse a cultura às classe populares, mas também se debatesse os problemas nacionais, a unidade latino-americana e a luta contra as ditaduras e o imperialismo. Destaca o autor que a dimensão da extensão como educação popular, presente na Carta de Córdoba, remonta as deliberações do Congresso Universitário em 1908, no México.

Embora a discussão sobre a extensão seja tardia em relação à história das universidades, ela também exprime quão relacionada esta se encontra às conjunturas de cada sociedade em que se insere.

Neste sentido, é oportuno lembrar que, não raro, defende-se a extensão como forma de inter-relacionar universidade e sociedade. Melo Neto (2001) advoga, e com ele concordo, que seria mais apropriado referir-se a uma comunicação, um diálogo, tendo em vista que a universidade se encontra na sociedade e como demonstrado, reflete e atua em seus processos sociais, econômicos e políticos, assim também ocorrendo com a universidade brasileira.

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[1] Destacamos estes dois modelos por exprimirem concepções de suas épocas e influenciarem outros centros de ensino superior como o japonês, o soviético e o latino-americano, entre estes o brasileiro, como esclarece Gradvhol (2002).

[2] A idéia de socializar com a população, o que se produzia no universo técnico-científico, aproximando a ciência da realidade social, surge na França e Inglaterra no final dos anos de 1850, a partir de estudantes e professores vinculados a movimentos anarquistas. Posteriormente, motivados pela construção de valores igualitários e abertura do espaço universitário, criam as Universidades Populares, voltadas para valorização da cultura popular e formação crítica da classe operária. Segundo Gurgel (1986) destacam-se, ainda, as universidades populares da Alemanha, Itália e Bélgica. A respeito de Universidades Populares no Brasil ver Souza (2005).

3. A Universidade brasileira e a extensão: uma construção histórica

A história da universidade demonstra que sua característica fundamental vincula-se a dimensão científica do saber, nos âmbitos da produção e transmissão, materializada nas ações de pesquisa, ensino e ainda a extensão de sua função à sociedade. No relacionado à realidade brasileira tem-se que refletir o papel da universidade na construção do país e sua relação com a sociedade em diversos momentos históricos, desde o surgimento da idéia de educação superior.

3.1 Da conquista dos primeiros Centros à Ditadura Militar

Nas colônias espanholas da América Central e Latina, a Universidade foi constituída desde o século XVI, destacando-se as de Lima, no Peru, em 1551; no México, em 1553, e Córdoba na Argentina em 1613[3] (Luckesi et al, 1995).

No Brasil, somente após 1808, com a vinda de D. João VI e da família real portuguesa para a então Colônia, fugindo de Napoleão, é que se organizam os primeiros cursos superiores. Até então, os luso-brasileiros realizavam seus estudos na Europa, pois Portugal não permitia a criação de universidades na Colônia. As primeiras criadas foram a Faculdade de Medicina da Bahia, 1808 e as de Direito de São Paulo e Recife em 1854.

Inspiradas no modelo napoleônico[4], as faculdades eram cursos isolados que se dirigiam à formação dos profissionais requisitados à estruturação do Estado e as necessidades sociais. Somente no século XX, na década de 1930, pode-se

[3] E ainda S. Domingo, 1538, Bogotá, 1622; Cuzco, Peru em 1692; Havana, 1728; Santiago, Chile, 1783 (Luckesi et al, 1995: 34). Sendo, portanto, o Brasil o último país das Américas a ter universidades, mesmo que desde o período colonial, os jesuítas o tenham proposto a coroa portuguesa (Orso et al, 2007a). Porém, por constituir-se o primeiro projeto de uma universidade brasileira, voltado para a elite, os investimento econômicos foram significativos e os esforços de seus corpos docente e discente conseguiram alcançar renomada qualidade no ensino, pesquisa e extensão.

[4] Orso et al (2007a) esclarece que, no Brasil, o modelo napoleônico teve grande resistência como estruturador da Universidade, acusado de centralizador pelos liberais que defendiam o modelo germânico, como extensão da liberdade de pensamento. Este debate de cunho filosófico-ideológico, que ocorreu desde o início do século XX, retardou a criação do ensino superior universitário no país.

legalmente, a partir do ajuntamento de três ou mais faculdades organizar-se as universidades. Nestes moldes, criou-se em 1933 a Universidade de Minas Gerais e em 1934, a Universidade de São Paulo (USP).

Nestas primeiras décadas do século passado, ocorre o processo de industrialização e urbanização nacionais e a universidade vem coroar este processo de modernização nacional, preparando as elites que o direcionariam. Orso et al (2007a:56) anuncia que os documentos oficiais deixam claro que a universidade deveria estar voltada para a formação da elite [liberal paulista] e para a seleção dos mais capazes, não se constituindo num projeto "neutro" e "desinteressado", como a época, alguns idealizadores propagavam. Portanto, a USP foi um projeto idealizado, discutido e construído politicamente.

Luckesi et al (1995) alerta que em 1935, o renomado educador Anísio Teixeira, propõe uma universidade brasileira como "centro de debates livres de idéias" e enraizada nas problemáticas nacionais. Todavia, a ditadura civil que foi implantada com o Estado Novo de Getúlio Vargas de 1937 a 1947 abortou esse projeto.

Quanto à extensão, já em 1931, referindo-se às Faculdades existentes, o então Ministro da Educação, Francisco Campos encaminha ao Presidente da República exposição de motivos que defende a extensão como destinada "a dilatar os benefícios da atmosfera universitária àqueles que não se encontram diretamente associados à vida na universidade, [...] que concorrerão de modo eficaz para elevar o nível de cultura geral do povo [...]" (NOGUEIRA, 2005:1)

Predomina, assim, uma concepção que supervaloriza o saber científico, que deve ser levado ao povo, para elevar-lhe a cultura, considerando-o, portanto, como desprovido de outros saberes também enriquecedores.

O debate sobre a universidade torna-se novamente caloroso quando Darcy Ribeiro, amigo e discípulo de Anísio Teixeira, na década de 1960, critica o ensino superior como limitado "à repetição e difusão do saber elaborado em outras realidades" (Luckesi, 1995:35 - 36).

Sem dúvida as críticas englobavam a própria USP, considerada a mais qualificada universidade nacional. Os debates suscitaram a formação de uma Comissão para a

reestruturação da USP, à medida que muitos[5] consideram que havia se distanciado dos objetivos de 1934. Segundo Orso (2007b), questionava-se principalmente, o currículo e a própria organização institucional, que deveria permitir maior trânsito entre os vários cursos, permitindo ao formando inserir-se em várias profissões afins e a substituição das Faculdades por Institutos Superiores. Predominava a preocupação eminentemente com o ensino. Contudo, este autor esclarece, que Florestan Fernandes não se atinha em suas críticas apenas a estes aspectos. Contrapondo-se ao "memorial" de que Roque Spencer de Barros foi relator, questionava a própria função social da Universidade que ao seu ver não respondia às exigências da época (Orso, 2007b).

Por outra via, os estudantes universitários, desde a fundação da União Nacional dos estudantes (UNE), em 1938, assumem o ideário de Córdoba, quanto à divulgação da cultura às classes populares, a ser realizada pela extensão universitária, defendendo desde então a necessidade de uma reforma educacional. No primeiro Seminário Nacional da Reforma Universitária, promovido pela UNE, em Salvador, Bahia, no ano de 1961, quando foi elaborada a Carta da Bahia, já se manifestava a preocupação com a "libertação do povo", tendo a universidade, através da extensão, a missão de levar-lhe a cultura, e ao mesmo tempo, proporcionar ao universitário o conhecimento da realidade nacional. O movimento estudantil também reclama a democratização da Universidade, constatando-se que sua pressão pela Reforma Universitária tinha um foco político-ideológico. Quanto à concepção de extensão ainda transparece um veio assistencialista, a partir do que o ensino superior pode proporcionar ao povo inculto.

Embora Melo Neto (2001: 51) considere a concepção divulgada pela UNE, na Carta da Bahia, "marcada pela autoridade do saber universitário e pelo seu paternalismo em relação às comunidades tanto da cidade como do campo", pretendendo impor "uma *sapientia* universitária a ser absorvida pelo povo", foi através das ações do movimento estudantil que se iniciou uma série de atividades de extensão, que até

[5] Orso et al (2007b) cita como eminentes professores representantes de deste debate Rocker Spencer M. de Barros e Florestan Fernandes, que mesmo com posições divergentes do primeiro, produziu também documentos sobre a reestruturação da USP.

então não ocorrera. Merecem relevância os Centros Populares de Cultura (CPC's) com ações alfabetizadoras em todo país; o teatro da UNE, que circulava pelas periferias das cidades com peças reflexivas acerca da realidade nacional; os Centros de Debates, Clubes de Estudo e ainda cursos de educação política que abordavam temáticas de interesse dos trabalhadores.

No percurso dessas andanças, ganha força a proposta da Reforma Universitária divulgada pela UNE, culminando com o compromisso do então Presidente da República, João Goulart em realizá-la juntamente com outras reivindicadas pela sociedade civil organizada como a Reforma Agrária, Reforma Educacional, lei estabelecendo a limitação da remessa de lucros das multinacionais, entre outras anunciadas no comício de 29 de março de 1964, na Central do Brasil, no Rio de Janeiro. Tal anúncio representou o estopim de todo um processo político, capitaneado pelos militares e chefes oligárquicos, contra os setores da burguesia industrial que defendiam um projeto de desenvolvimento nacionalista para o país[6]. Dia 31 de março, os militares fecham o Congresso Nacional, depõem o presidente e assumem o Governo Federal, através de um golpe de Estado. Os anos de 1964 a 1968 foram bastante conturbados, dada a resistência de vários grupos sociais e políticos à Ditadura Militar.

No que tange a Universidade, foi criado pelo Marechal Arthur da Costa e Silva, em 2 de julho de 1968, o Grupo de Trabalho para a Reforma Universitária (GTRU), tendo designado pessoalmente os membros que o comporiam[7]. Desta forma, esclarece Orso (2007b), a reforma, que era uma bandeira de luta do movimento estudantil e recebeu apoio dos professores, foi completamente arrebatada pelos militares.

Em 28 de novembro de 1968, foi decretada a Reforma Universitária e quinze dias depois Costa e Silva decretou o Ato Institucional nº 5 (AI 5) que proibia associações

[6] Para maior aprofundamento sobre a questão consultar Sader (1982).
[7] Orso (2007b) informa nominalmente os componentes do GTRU que eram professores universitário, que em geral haviam assumido os cargos na gestão universitária, deputados e dois estudantes que não aceitaram participar. No transcorrer do trabalho, esclarece o autor que o Grupo sofreu várias influências através de Fórum e Seminários da Escola Superior de Guerra, e do acordo MEC-USAID (Ministério de Educação e Cultura – United States Agency for International Development), entre outros.

sindicais, reuniões políticas, movimento estudantil e ainda em 26 de janeiro de 1969, foi promulgado o decreto nº 477, ambos "serviram de amparo legal para as piores atrocidades cometidas contras as universidades, professores, estudantes, sindicalistas, religiosos, jornalistas, parlamentares e até militares" (ORSO, 2007b:77). Considero apropriada a avaliação deste autor, ao denunciar que durante as duas décadas de Governo Militar, as medidas realizadas desmoralizaram, castraram e despolitizaram os estudantes e a universidade, além de contribuir para um aumento vertiginoso da privatização do ensino superior.

Alerta ainda Orso (2007b:79) que o "modelo organizacional proposto para o ensino brasileiro foi o norte americano, da universidade-empresa capitalista, racional, voltada para a produtividade" sob o lema "segurança nacional e desenvolvimento".

Sob a égide destes acontecimentos, a extensão voltou-se para ações de integração estudante-comunidade, predominando uma concepção assistencialista de prestação de serviços. Como denota Melo Neto (2001) foram vários programas criados e efetivados nesta perspectiva: Centro Rural Universitário de Treinamento e Ação Comunitária (Crutac), o Projeto Rondon, em que os estudantes prestavam serviços de saúde a comunidades empobrecidas das regiões do Norte e Nordeste e a Operação Mauá, mais diretamente vinculada a área tecnológica. Todos sob rigoroso controle político e ideológico.

O desgaste do Regime Militar, a universidade passa a ser objeto de debate. Importantes intelectuais brasileiros reconhecem que a extensão constitui-se na terceira função da universidade. Darcy Ribeiro (1982) propõe uma naturalização da atividade, a partir da obrigatoriedade de sua prática, sobretudo através de cursos regulares.

Ao final da década de 1970, recomeçaram no país as mobilizações pela anistia aos presos políticos e fim da Ditadura Militar, que já não tinha a mesma força hegemônica, tanto devido às denúncias de crimes políticos, como por não ter alcançado seus objetivos desenvolvimentistas, corroídos pela inflação pós-crise do petróleo em 1974 que ocasionou o aumento acentuado da dívida externa.

3.2 Da redemocratização à ascensão da ideologia neoliberal

A década de 80 é marcada pela reorganização política da sociedade, que teve papel fundamental no processo de transição democrática destacando-se o movimento sindical rural e urbano, movimento estudantil e federações de associações de bairro das periferias dos centros urbanos. O fim da Ditadura Militar é imposto pelo movimento "Diretas Já" que mobilizou todo país. Em 1985, é eleito presidente, ainda pelo voto indireto do Congresso Nacional, Tancredo Neves, primeiro presidente civil após o governo dos militares. Todavia, o mandato é assumido pelo candidato a vice-presidente, José Sarney (1986-1989), devido ao falecimento por motivos de saúde de Tancredo Neves.

A "Nova República" instaurada por Sarney, um político de posições liberais, do Partido do Movimento Democrático Brasileiro (PMDB), teve como uma de suas prioridades a construção de uma nova Carta Constitucional para o país, que foi promulgada em 1988 e, no que diz respeito à Educação, assegura-a como "direito de todos e dever do Estado", estabelecendo para o ensino superior a indissociabilidade entre o ensino, a pesquisa e a extensão.

Somente oito anos depois, a Lei nº 9.394 de 20 de dezembro de 1996 institui a Lei de Diretrizes e Bases da Educação Nacional (LDB), que regulamenta os artigos da Constituição de 1988. Fruto de um acirrado debate entre os defensores da educação pública e os interesses do setor privado, a lei traz algumas conquistas para os primeiros, mas não deixa de ser condescendente com os segundos, num clima de ascensão da ideologia neoliberal.

Quanto à educação superior, preconiza como uma de suas finalidades[8], no artigo 43º, item VI: "estimular o conhecimento dos problemas do mundo presente, em particular os nacionais e regionais, prestar serviços especializados à comunidade e estabelecer com esta uma relação de reciprocidade"; e complementa no VII: "promover a extensão, aberta à participação da população, visando à difusão das conquistas e benefícios resultantes da criação cultural e da pesquisa científica e tecnológica gerada na instituição" (grifos meus). No artigo 53º, em seu parágrafo

[8] Priorizaremos nesta análise o que na LDB apresenta implicações para a extensão.

único, que dispõe sobre a autonomia didático-científico das Universidades, estipula no item IV: "programação das pesquisas e das atividades de extensão".

Desta forma, a lei confere às atividades de extensão igual *status* ao ensino e à pesquisa, alerta para a participação da população, o que significa um avanço em termos democráticos e ao preconizar uma relação de reciprocidade reconhece as camadas populares como sujeitos igualmente enriquecedores das ações extensionistas. No entanto, ainda prevalece o tom assistencialista, expressado na prestação de serviços.

No bojo das lutas democráticas dos anos 80, a Associação Nacional dos Docentes do Ensino Superior (Andes) e o movimento estudantil empunharam as bandeiras da autonomia universitária, do compromisso social da universidade e sua necessária democratização, reivindicando a eleição dos reitores e compondo o Fórum Nacional em Defesa da Escola Pública.

Neste contexto, ocorreu em 1985, o encontro de Pró-Reitores de Extensão no Norte do país, acontecendo em novembro de 1987 a criação do Fórum Nacional de Pró-Reitores de Extensão, que definiu como sua missão "elaborar e coordenar a política de extensão a ser desenvolvida pelas instituições de Ensino Superior (IES) públicas brasileiras" (Nogueira, 2005).

Dado a conjuntura sócio-econômica da época é plausível supor que o conjunto destes atores sociais tenha influenciado nas deliberações acerca do trabalho extensionista tanto na constituição de 1988, quanto posteriormente na Lei de Diretrizes e Bases da Educação Nacional – LDB, em 1996.

O fortalecimento do neoliberalismo[9] nos anos 90, no Brasil, trouxe conseqüências drásticas ao Ensino Superior. Os governos de Fernando Collor de Melo (1992-1994)

[9] Entre outros destacam-se como teóricos neoliberais Friechich von Hayek e Milton Friedman, economistas da escola de Chicago, nos Estados Unidos, cujas idéias elaboradas, ao final da segunda guerra mundial, só tiveram ressonância após a crise do petróleo nos anos 70. Consideram que o Estado com suas políticas de bem-estar social desequilibra a ordem natural das leis de mercado. Sintetiza Segundo (2005) que esses defensores do "Estado Mínimo" vêem as políticas públicas como o cerne da crise atual do capitalismo, atribuindo-lhe, segundo Anderson (1996:10), liberdade dos cidadãos e a vitalidade da concorrência da qual depende a prosperidade de todos". Avalia Boron (1999) que a experiência dos países que seguiram a "cartilha" econômica, ditada pelos preceitos do Consenso de Washington, na América Latina, Europa Oriental e Rússia, baliza concluir que se trata

e Fernando Henrique Cardoso (1995-1998 e 1999-2002) adequaram-se perfeitamente as deliberações das agências internacionais, no que tange às políticas educacionais e planos econômicos (SEGUNDO, 2005).

Acerca da Universidade, Chauí (2001) denuncia que as temáticas[10] mais debatidas por docentes e discentes das IES, nos anos 90, estavam circunscritas ao campo da ideologia neoliberal, mesmo que para a ela opor-se. Entre as principais que a autora enumera, destaca-se: a idéia de modernização racionalizadora pela privatização e terceirização da atividade universitária: "a universidade participando da economia e da sociedade como prestadora de serviços às empresas privadas com total descaso pela pesquisa fundamental e de longo prazo" (grifos meus) (CHAUÍ, 2001:35-36).

Chauí (Idem) possibilita que relembre o pipocar de Fundações paralelas à estrutura organizacional das universidades públicas, como forma de captação de recursos do setor privado.

Muitos dos convênios estabelecidos para tal fim junto ao setor privado, como também público, passam a ser compreendidos como extensionistas. Embora sejam muitas as concepções de extensão, como expõe Melo Neto (2001), indo do assistencialismo, clientelismo, à prestação de serviços, ofertas de cursos acadêmicos em localidades distantes, próximo ao sentido de campus avançado ou até com conotações político-ideológicas, já referidas anteriormente, até a década de 80 todas se inseriam no campo do público.

No entanto, na década passada, o fortalecimento da idéia de privatização, no âmbito da ascensão neoliberal, se transpõe a extensão, definindo um prisma

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de triunfo mais ideológico e cultural do que econômico. Sintetiza Abreu (1999:41) o neoliberalismo "é uma ideologia capitalista que defende o ajuste dos Estados Nacionais às exigências do capital transnacionalizado, portanto contrária aos pactos que subordinam o capital a qualquer forma de soberania popular ou instituições de interesse público".

[10] Figuram entre as principais temáticas: aceitação da idéia de avaliação universitária, desvinculada da realidade da educação básica; aceitação da avaliação acadêmica pelo critério da titulação e das publicações, com descaso da docência, como é de tradição nas universidades americanas; aceitação da distribuição dos recursos públicos para "linhas de pesquisa", o que não se adequa às áreas de humanidades e pesquisa teórica fundamental.

completamente diverso do anterior e originando debates calorosos a respeito (Mendes, 2007).

À despeito de toda uma campanha de oposição e denúncia impetrada pelo Sindicato Nacional dos Docentes das Instituições de Ensino Superior (ANDES), contra a recente política de privatização (ANDES, 2006) e mesmo que o Fórum de Pró-reitores de Extensão tenha deliberado no Plano Nacional de Extensão Universitária em 1999, que "extensão é o processo educativo, cultural e científico que articula o ensino e a pesquisa de forma indissociável e viabiliza a relação transformadora entre a universidade e a sociedade", o que se percebe é o *imprinting* de uma lógica mercadológica nesta dimensão da atividade acadêmica.

A lógica mercantil se estende à extensão universitária, onde é visível a confusão entre público e privado, mediante sua terceirização e falta de participação da comunidade acadêmica na elaboração e discussão das atividades extensionistas e, por conseguinte, no afastamento de outros dois pilares que dão sustentação às universidades: ensino e pesquisa.

Destaca-se ainda um aprofundamento do neopragmatismo capitalista de verter em dinheiro tudo que for possível e quase todas as gestões universitárias brasileiras são tomadas por essa lógica que invade as ações de ensino, pesquisa e extensão.

Alunos e professores, sujeitos inexoravelmente vinculados às ações de concepção e de execução da extensão, são considerados inadequados como agentes econômicos. Naturalmente recorre-se a um princípio característico da reestruturação do Estado dos anos 90, a terceirização de pessoal, uma vez que a racionalidade acadêmica é perigosamente problemática, questionadora e científica para cumprir com parcimônia o curso natural de repasse financeiro proveniente dos projetos realizados. Daí, a preferência pela maioria de sujeitos que não têm vínculo com a universidade, portanto, alheio as suas históricas funções.

Outra idéia importante presente na extensão desde seu início passa a ser negada: a universidade deve levar saberes nela produzidos para a população dela excluída e de saberes, "desprovida". Na perspectiva neoliberal que assola a universidade brasileira, inclusive a Universidade Estadual do Ceará, até mesmo essa postura

arrogante, desrespeitadora do saber popular se esvai, entretanto, de uma forma que precariza ainda mais a relação universidade-sociedade. No novo contexto, a universidade exime-se da responsabilidade de levar saberes e serviços decorrentes da função científica que a caracteriza, optando por ações "menos trabalhosas", mais simples, rentáveis, podendo ser executadas e executáveis por pessoas sem pré-requisitos de qualificação.

Nesta nova conjuntura há, aparentemente, uma redução da opressão de um saber sobre outro, entretanto os saberes do povo continuam tão desvalorizados quanto anteriormente, uma vez que a universidade se exime de sua responsabilidade político-científica e cultural no trabalho desenvolvido. As ações realizadas pela universidade poderiam, perfeitamente, ser protagonizadas por outras instituições não universitárias, uma vez que não se relacionam com as atividades de ensino e de pesquisa, além de alunos e professores serem delas alijados.

Neste contexto, a proposição de uma extensão voltada para as camadas populares torna-se, portanto, centro da disputa de projetos extensionistas e da própria concepção de universidade. Ao propor e insistir com uma extensão de caráter social, em que a construção do conhecimento e da práxis pedagógica seja efetivamente resultado da aproximação da universidade com a sociedade, professores, estudantes e movimentos sociais põem em pauta a construção de outra universidade, assentada noutra lógica. Neste sentido alguns docentes da Uece e o Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem Terra – MST – se propõem a juntos construírem projetos no âmbito do Programa Nacional de Educação na Reforma Agrária – Pronera.

4. Pronera-Uece: da resistência à construção de saberes entre a Universidade e a Sociedade

O Programa Nacional de Educação na Reforma Agrária – Pronera, foi instituído em 1998, pelo então Ministério Extraordinário de Política Fundiária – MEPF, hoje Ministério de Desenvolvimento Agrário – MDA, devido pressão dos movimentos sociais do campo pelo direito à educação em áreas rurais desapropriadas em função

da luta por Reforma Agrária. Entre estes se destaca o Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra – MST, que desde 1987 vem envidando esforços para garantir escolas e projetos educativos nos assentamentos rurais.

No percurso de implementação deste Programa Carvalho (2006), a partir de sua pesquisa de doutorado, avalia que vem se constituindo como política pública de governo, com dotação orçamentária estipulada e consolidação de suas ações educativas em vinte e dois estados da federação, em parceria obrigatória do MDA, através das regionais do Instituto Nacional de Colonização e Reforma Agrária – INCRAs, Universidades públicas e movimentos sociais do campo.

Na Universidade Estadual do Ceará (Uece), onde leciono, este debate veio à tona quando assumimos um grupo de seis professores, a coordenação de três projetos de extensão na área de educação de jovens e adultos (Eja): Escolarização I e II de Trabalhadores (as) Rurais em Áreas de Assentamento no Estado do Ceará e Formação de Educadores em Áreas de Assentamento – Magistério da Terra. Os dois primeiros objetivam escolarizar até a quarta série do ensino fundamental 4.600 jovens e adultos residentes em áreas de Reforma Agrária; o terceiro oferece o ensino médio na modalidade Magistério para os educadores dos dois primeiros que não o concluíram. Assim, os três projetos ocorrem de forma integrada no âmbito do Programa Nacional de Educação na Reforma Agrária (Pronera) de responsabilidade do Ministério do Desenvolvimento Agrário (MDA) em parceria da Uece com o instituto Nacional de Colonização e Reforma Agrária (Incra – Ceará) e o Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem-Terra (MST) por convênio assinado em dezembro de 2005.

Mesmo tendo sido aconselhado, que o convênio fosse assinado com o Instituto de Estudos, Pesquisas e Projetos da Uece (Iepro), o qual cobra em média 10% de administração, dinheiro que financia várias iniciativas e itens de manutenção da universidade[11], o grupo de coordenadores não acatou, pois além de não haver como subtrair este montante dos recursos previstos, tratava-se também de uma posição

[11] É constante no cotidiano da Uece esta referência por parte de funcionários e docentes envolvidos na Administração Universitária. Todavia, jamais foi publicizado ou disponibilizado à comunidade acadêmica como se empregam tais recursos.

ideológica em não reforçar institutos que contribuem para a privatização da universidade.

Ao optar-se por um trabalho com referência na educação popular, em que se concebe a construção coletiva de conhecimentos, tanto no âmbito da Universidade, como das comunidades onde ocorrem as aulas constatou-se aprendizados de ricos significados para os envolvidos.

São vários espaços de construção destes saberes, destacando-se os seguintes:

- A formação continuada dos educadores e educadoras dos Projetos de Escolarização I e II. Esta foi organizada em momentos específicos abordando as áreas temáticas de Língua Portuguesa, Matemática, Estudos do homem e da natureza, Fundamentos metodológicos de alfabetização de adultos e Temas geradores em Paulo Freire, Arte e educação.

Trabalhou-se em seis salas constituídos a partir da proximidade das áreas de atuação dos educadores e educadoras, tendo-se uma média de 30 participantes, incluindo-se os bolsistas universitários e coordenadores locais do MST que realizavam o acompanhamento das atividades. Os professores universitários responsáveis pela abordagem do conteúdo, sempre planejavam coletivamente seu trabalho, partindo-se sempre da sondagem dos saberes e concepções que os educadores já traziam acerca de cada temática.

Só então se apresentava novas questões desde o conhecimento científico, avaliando-se conjuntamente sua pertinência à realidade que vivenciavam, oportunizando-se a argumentação e contra-argumentação das reflexões em pauta e indagando-se como se relacionavam a sua prática educativa. Desta forma oportunizou-se rica troca de experiências entre os educadores (as) e demais participantes..

A síntese final comportava uma retomada das concepções e saberes no início do encontro, agora reavaliados após leituras dos textos acadêmicos e debates ocorridos em confronto com ações educativas concretas desenvolvidas pelos educadores (as), resultando muitas vezes em desafios de uma nova prática educativa compactuados entre todos.

Desta forma, trilhou-se um percurso dialético desde uma perspectiva de práxis como explica Pimenta e Anastasiou (2002), em que o concreto pensado, por ser síntese de múltiplas determinações importa uma síntese obtida pelo processo sistematizado de reflexão.

Nas avaliações participativas e orais de cada encontro eram recorrentes nas falas dos educadores (as) as novas perspectivas e aprendizados que vislumbravam transformar em ações educativas de suas salas. Por outro lado este mesmo processo tem sido objeto de pesquisa de bolsistas e professores que nele se envolveram.

◘ Nas salas de aula de ambos os projetos; onde o debate de textos acadêmicos em confronto com os saberes populares decorrentes das experiências de trabalho e de vida, e, das lutas travadas pelos educandos, permite a reflexão crítica dos conhecimentos veiculados nos textos, sendo estes reelaborados pelos professores e alunos universitários e participantes dos movimentos sociais, originando artigos que expressam os novos conhecimentos adquiridos.

◘ As ocupações realizadas pelo MST em prédios públicos, como a Universidade e o Incra/Ce, devido intercorrências no transcorrer dos projetos de extensão tais como contingenciamento e atrasos nas liberações dos recursos e por aspectos necessários a um trâmite burocrático mais ágil, como a infraestrutura referente a maior número de computadores, telefone, entre outros. Nestes momentos, ocupar e conhecer o território da Universidade, estabelecer negociações com a Administração Superior, proporcionou aos militantes deste Movimento, participantes dos projetos, o rompimento de uma barreira geográfica e social que mantinha a Universidade "a parte" da sociedade.

Mostrar a si mesmo, aos que compõem a Universidade e a sociedade, através das notícias veiculadas na imprensa e mídia televisiva sobre as ocupações, que são capazes de lutar por seus direitos, de estabelecer negociações, propiciou aprendizados referentes a noção de cidadania, de autonomia, bem como para os servidores públicos, docentes, discentes e Administração Superior, a desmistificação de que não têm possibilidades de envidar tais lutas, e sobretudo que além de capazes sabem como fazê-lo, organizadamente, pois ao permanecerem

vários dias na ocupação mantêm as atividades pedagógicas e garantem a limpeza, as alimentações e as condições de pernoite e ainda reuniões políticas para avaliação e encaminhamentos necessários.

Nesta direção Telles (1999) reflete que o anúncio dos direitos sociais pelos personagens da cena pública como sujeitos que publicizam as questões as quais lhes dizem respeito instaura um dissenso, que possibilita uma ampliação dos horizontes do campo político e uma "diversificação dos campos de experiências possíveis" (TELLES, 1999:188). Neste caso, se inclui uma educação rural de outro tipo: a educação do campo.

Averiguar em que medida tais aprendizados repercutem em suas comunidades necessitaria de pesquisa específica. Todavia é comum referirem-se a debates que fazem, quer na reunião de suas Associações, quer nas salas de educação de jovens e adultos a partir dos estudos realizados e saberes adquiridos nestas ocasiões. Carvalho (2006) identificou na fala de alguns educadores e coordenadores do MST avaliações atestando que nos assentamentos onde há maior oportunidade de estudo a organização política e social mostra-se mais eficaz.

A elaboração do Projeto Político-Pedagógico (PPP) do Curso Magistério da Terra, que se deu de forma conjunta entre professores e bolsistas universitários e representantes do coletivo de educação do MST, instituindo-se como experiência inovadora, por sua concepção metodológica e curricular, reconhecida como tal pela Secretaria de Educação Básica do Estado do Ceará – SEDUC.

O Curso é organizado em oito etapas, totalizando uma carga horária de 3.316 h/a. Cada etapa, por sua vez, constituída de dois grandes tempos pedagógicos: O Tempo Escola, 80% da carga horária, é o momento da presença direta dos educandos(as) no curso para desenvolvimento do conjunto de atividades e participação no processo pedagógico. Esse tempo é coordenado por um coletivo de educadores, orientados por um Projeto Metodológico; o Tempo Comunidade correspondendo a 20% da carga horária, é destinado à leitura, pesquisa e produção individual, com base em questões geradoras referentes ao eixo-temático de cada etapa.

O PPP do Magistério da Terra procura negar a lógica de currículo hegemônico, superando a fragmentação dos conhecimentos presente na maioria dos cursos de formação inicial de professores. O reconhecimento dos saberes dos diversos sujeitos envolvidos constitui-se a condição primeira para superação de um currículo escolar apartado da realidade social. Esta possibilidade decorre do pressuposto da constituição de outra perspectiva de poder, vinculada aos destituídos de direitos, de terra e de educação de qualidade, comprometida com a construção de uma sociedade, fundada na justiça e igualdade sociais. O Magistério da Terra visa formar educadores(as) críticos para atuar na educação Infantil e Fundamental de 1ª a 4ª séries de crianças, jovens e adultos do campo em áreas de Reforma Agrária, fortalecendo a agricultura camponesa e familiar em oposição ao agronegócio, ecologicamente destruidor do modo de vida dos povos do campo.

Superando a unidimensionalidade do caráter científico presente nos conhecimentos sistematizados do universo escolar, muitos portadores de um viés cientificista, o PPP do Magistério da Terra procura articuladamente relacioná-los também aos aspectos políticos, sociais, culturais e técnico-pedagógicos, contextualizando a partir da educação do campo e da vivência dos educandos.

O próprio conceito de educação do campo é definidor da escolha curricular dos que participaram do PPP do Magistério da Terra. Afinal, a expressão *do campo* dá ao PPP o caráter político que o caracteriza, conforme explicita Caldart (2004:27):

> Não basta ter escolas no campo, queremos ajudar a construir escolas do campo, ou seja, escolas com um projeto político-pedagógico vinculado às causas, aos desafios, aos sonhos, à história e à cultura do povo trabalhador do campo.

Neste sentido, fruto da discussão coletiva o PPP do Magistério da Terra orienta-se em quatro (04) eixos temáticos na sua estrutura curricular,: 1) Terra e Trabalho; 2) Educação do Campo; 3) Cultura e Modo de Vida; e, 4) Lutas Sociais e Sujeitos Coletivos.

Estes eixos além de transversalizarem as diversas disciplinas escolhidas para composição da grade curricular, orientam o trabalho pedagógico de professores de

diferentes áreas de conhecimento. Os planos de aula das equipes de educadores têm como referência cada eixo temático prevalecente num período de um ano letivo.

A interdisciplinaridade é garantida no intercâmbio de informações entre as diferentes disciplinas, realizado por professores especialistas (educadores), coordenadores que participam do planejamento e avaliação das atividades pedagógicas, bolsistas-universitários que acompanham o Curso dando suporte necessário aos alunos, coordenadores locais escolhidos pelo MST.

Dadas as especificidades do Curso, a avaliação não tem a mesma perspectiva daquela que se realiza no sistema oficial, quando se enfatiza a apreensão do produto/resultado. No Magistério da Terra a avaliação tem um caráter processual, empenhado no aperfeiçoamento da experiência de formação dos(as) sujeitos (as) envolvidos(as). O Memorial da Prática Política-Educativa, realizado ao longo dos quatro (04) anos, é uma peça fundamental no processo avaliativo.

O aluno do Curso Magistério da Terra deve ter a compreensão de que a prática educativa demanda, indiscutivelmente, clareza política dos educadores(as) com relação a um projeto de emancipação humana, conforme nos ensina o educador Paulo Freire:

> Não basta dizer que a educação é um ato político assim como não basta dizer que o ato político é também educativo. É preciso assumir realmente a politicidade da educação. Não posso reconhecer os limites da prática educativo-política em que me envolvo se não sei, se não estou claro em face, a favor de quem pratico. (FREIRE. 1997:46-47).

5. Considerações Finais

A extensão universitária na América Latina, e, portanto no Brasil, tem apontado para aproximação da academia e sociedade, adquirindo configurações próprias em cada momento histórico.

Diante do cenário neoliberal, a reinvenção da academia emerge como necessidade a partir de uma concepção que lhe é própria, a produção de conhecimento. Através de Projetos de Extensão com os movimentos sociais pode-se recuperar o sentido do público no aprofundamento da relação com a sociedade em especial com os segmentos oprimidos, através de suas organizações de luta, constituindo-se aprendizados significativos para ambos, na perspectiva de construção de uma sociedade igualitária.

Na Universidade Estadual do Ceará, os Projetos Magistério da Terra e Escolarização I e II, no âmbito do Pronera, desde uma proposta curricular, envolvendo seus diversos sujeitos com seus diferentes saberes, da concepção à execução, tem aprofundado as relações entre a universidade e os movimentos sociais, entre o conhecimento erudito e popular, realidade urbana e do campo, enfim, entre teoria e prática.

Observa-se na interação entre universidade e sociedade a construção de conhecimentos a partir das matrizes da sociologia e pedagogia críticas, proporcionando a docentes, discentes e educadores populares reelaborarem criticamente as concepções que traziam acerca da educação do campo, do papel das instituições de ensino superior, da ação dos movimentos sociais, da educação de jovens e adultos, entre outros, que resultaram em mais de trinta artigos apresentados em eventos científicos, regionais, nacionais e internacionais.

Os currículos desenvolvidos nos projetos, dada a multidimensionalidade dos processos de produção coletiva do conhecimento referenciada na realidade do campo, na perspectiva de formação de sujeitos políticos, comprometidos com a Reforma Agrária e um projeto popular para o Brasil, tem contribuído para a formação de educadores e educadoras com uma consciência concreta dos direitos e do mundo em que vivem.

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Biografias

Sandra Maria Gadelha de Carvalho, Doutora em Educação Brasileira, Professora Adjunta da Universidade Estadual do Ceará (UECE). Coordenadora do Laboratório de Estudos da Educação do Campo (LECAMPO). Coordenou vários projetos de parceira entre a Universidade e o Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem Terra. É especialista em educação do campo e Educação de jovens e Adultos (EJA).

José Ernandi Mendes, Doutor em Educação Brasileira, Professor Adjunto da Universidade Estadual do Ceará (UECE). Coordenador do Projeto Magistério da Terra, parceria entre a UECE, o Instituto Nacional de Colonização e Reforma Agrária (INCRA) e o Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem Terra (MST). É membro do LECAMPO e tem trabalhos sobre as políticas educacionais, o trabalho docente e a escola pública.

Sandra Maria Gadelha de Carvalho, Professor at Ceará State University (Universidade Estadual do Ceará - UECE), holds a doctorate in Brazilian Education and she is Coordinator of the Agrarian Education Studies Laboratory (Laboratório de Estudos da Educação do Campo - LECAMPO). She has coordinated various projects of partnership between the University and the Landless Workers' Movement (Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem Terra - MST). She is a specialist in Agrarian Education and in the Education of Youth and Adults (Educação de Jovens e Adultos - EJA).

José Ernandi Mendes, Professor at Ceará State University (Universidade Estadual do Ceará - UECE), holds a doctorate in Brazilian Education. He is the Coordinator of the Land Teaching Project (Projeto Magistério da Terra), a partnership between UECE, the National Institute of Agrarian Colonization and Reform (Instituto Nacional de Colonização e Reforma Agrária - INCRA) and the Landless Workers' Movement (Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem Terra - MST). He is a member of LECAMPO and has carried out research on education politics, teaching work and public education.

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Redes para a (re)territorialização de espaços de conflito: os casos do MST e MTST no Brasil*

(Networks for the reterritorialisation of spaces of conflict: the cases of the Brazilian MST and MTST)

Ilse Scherer-Warren

Resumo

O espaço, enquanto território, é local e referência aos conflitos mais acirrados da sociedade. Já era nas sociedades tradicionais e continua sendo nas sociedades contemporâneas. Vamos aqui nos deter a esta última, especialmente ao caso brasileiro, no que diz respeito a espaços urbanos e rurais. Para atingir este objetivo, desenvolveremos alguns pressupostos teóricos para a análise das lutas sociais na produção do espaço, exemplificados à luz de dois casos emblemáticos de movimentos que contribuem para a (re)territorialização de espaços em conflito, a saber o Movimento dos Sem-Terra (MST)[1] e o Movimento dos Trabalhadores Sem-Teto (MTST)[2], no Brasil.

Abstract

Space, understood as "territory", is a site of, and a pointer to, the harshest social conflicts. This was so in traditional societies and continues to be the case in contemporary society. This article analyses these conflicts in this latter type of society, with particular reference to urban and rural spaces in Brazil. To this end, the author develops some theoretical presuppositions for the analysis of social struggles in the production of the space. The

* Palestra proferida na temática Lutas sociais e produção do espaço, no Seminário Política e Planejamento: Economia, Sociedade e Território, Curitiba, 06 a 08/08/2008.

1 Sobre a trajetória do MST, vide Caldart, 2004; Scherer-Warren & Carvalho Ferreira (orgs.), 2002, especialmente Cap. 12: A atualidade dos movimentos sociais rurais na nova ordem mundial, e também Scherer-Warren, 2007d.

2 Sobre a trajetória do MTST, vide a tese de doutoramento de Lima, 2004.

analysis is illustrated by two cases of high-profile movement that had contributed to the (re)territorialization of the spaces in conflict: the Landless Movement (MST) and the Homeless Movement (MTST) in Brazil.

Introdução

Os conflitos sociais inter-organizações da sociedade civil e geradores de importantes movimentos sociais no Brasil contemporâneo, referem-se a lutas entre grupos que defendem o domínio, controle e manutenção de amplos espaços privatizados (como a dos ruralistas/UDR, dos latifúndios, do agro-negócio, do setor imobiliário, das grande corporações, etc.) versus grupos que buscam a conquista, legalização e preservação de espaços com função social de atendimento à populações historicamente em situação de exclusão social (como a dos sem-terra, dos quilombolas, dos indígenas, das populações tradicionais, das mulheres camponesas, dos atingidos por barragens, dos favelados, das novas periferias urbanas e outros).

As lutas das populações socialmente e relativamente excluídas do modelo da reprodução concentrada da riqueza no país, são lutas pela democratização da propriedade, pela preservação da natureza, pela distribuição da riqueza nacional, pela inclusão social, política e cultural dos mais pobres e discriminados da nação. Queremos aqui examinar como estes movimentos vêm se fortalecendo na sociedade brasileira através de suas organizações em rede e enquanto redes de movimentos sociais[3]. Para tanto é necessário distinguir nas redes a noção de redes interorganizacionais ou "coletivos em rede" da noção de "redes de movimentos sociais", a saber:

> "Coletivos em rede referem-se a conexões entre organizações empiricamente localizáveis. (p. ex., entre ONGs ambientalistas). Estes coletivos podem vir a ser segmentos (nós) de uma rede mais ampla de movimentos sociais, que por sua vez é uma rede de redes. O Fórum Brasileiro do ONGs e Movimentos Sociais para o Meio Ambiente e o Desenvolvimento é uma sub-rede do movimento ambientalista brasileiro. Entretanto, o movimento social deve ser definido como algo que vai além de uma mera conexão de coletivos". (Cf. Scherer-Warren, 2007c, in: Ferraro Júnior

3 Sobre organizações em rede e redes de movimentos sociais vide alguns de meus trabalhos anteriores, especialmente, Scherer-Warren, 1999, 2000. 2005, 2006 e 2007b, 2007c, 2007d.

(org.), p. 328).

Para que ocorra a passagem de um coletivo em rede para um movimento social em rede, deve-se observar a realização de três dinâmicas sócio-político-culturais coletivas: 1. a formação de uma identidade coletiva ou identificação em torno de uma causa comum; 2. a definição de uma situação de conflito e de seus adversários; 3. a construção de um projeto ou utopia de mudança[4]. Ou, em outras palavras:

> "Las redes de movimientos sociales ... van constituyéndose en un proceso dialógico: a) de identificaciones sociales, éticas, culturales y/o político-ideológicas, es decir, ellas forman la identidad del movimiento; b) de intercambios, negociaciones, definiciones de campos de conflicto y de resistencia a los adversarios y a los mecanismos de discriminación, dominación o exclusión sistémica, o sea, definen a sus adversarios; c) con vistas a la transposición de los límites de esta situación sistémica en dirección de la realización de propuestas o proyectos alternativos, es decir, establecen sus objetivos, o construyen un proyecto para el movimiento" (Scherer-Warren, 2006c.)

Todavia este processo dialógico não ocorre num vazio da historicidade, mas sim em contextos com significados temporais, espaciais e societários, que transitam entre a solidariedade e o conflito, da reivindicação material à sua significação simbólica, da participação em contextos institucionais às estratégias que visam a transformação do instituído. São estes significados que buscamos entender para o caso das intervenções políticas do MST e do MTST e, desta forma, buscamos explicar como se opera a produção de territórios sócio-espaciais mais democráticos, a partir das seguintes *dimensões analíticas das redes*:

- espaço-temporal
- conflitiva-solidarística
- material-simbólica
- participativa-estratégica

1. Dimensão espaço-temporal

4 Vide a este respeito Touraine, 1987, 1997; Castells, 1997; Scherer-Warren, 1999, 2000 e 2007b.

Harvey (1989) nos fala da compressão do espaço e do tempo na sociedade contemporânea. Segundo o autor esta compressão, resultante de novas tecnologias de comunicação e informação, teria promovido mais os localismos que os internacionalismos, teria beneficiado mais o capital que os trabalhadores. Concordamos com sua análise, mas gostaríamos de apontar também alguns processos na direção oposta, especialmente a partir da atuação de movimentos sociais em redes, geradores de novas territorialidades.

Estes movimentos de reação à lógica dominante, apontada acima, são agentes reativos ao *status quo* e podem ser entendidos a partir da noção de multerritorialidade, desenvolvida por Haesbaert (2006), onde diferentes lógicas de controle territorial, de relações de poder em relação ao espaço de referência podem coexistir, mesmo que de forma conflitiva. Em outras palavras, a organização espaço-territorial compreenderia três tipos ideais de representação (ibid, p. 307):

1. *territórios-zona,* centrados em dinâmicas sociais ligadas ao controle das superfícies ou áreas e com "fronteiras" bem demarcadas;
2. *territórios-rede*, controle espacial pelo controle de fluxos e das conexões (ou redes) e com a possibilidade de sobreposição e partilha de múltiplos territórios;
3. *aglomerados de exclusão,* resultante da exclusão socioespacial de grupos segregados e com inclusão precária, sem condições de exercer controle efetivo sobre seus territórios, seja no sentido de dominação político-econômica ou de apropriação simbólico-cultural (p. 312).

Pergunta-se, em que medida o MST e o MTST são agentes de resistência a territórios-zona historicamente consolidados e em que medida podem ser considerados produtores de novas territorialidades? Eis a questão inicial a ser aqui tratada.

As populações mobilizadas e que se associam a redes do MST e do MTST são, geralmente, oriundas de *aglomerados de exclusão*, seja de trabalhadores rurais sem terra (parceiros, meeiros, pequenos arrendatários, trabalhadores informais no campo, e semelhantes), seja de trabalhadores de periferias urbanas, advindos de um êxodo rural semi-forçado (trabalhadores informais sem qualificação). Freqüentemente estes trabalhadores se caracterizam por um nomadismo no campo e/ou na cidade, transferindo-se a diversos aglomerados de exclusão.

Com a adesão ao movimento, estes trabalhadores transformam-se gradativamente em

sujeitos políticos, participantes do agenciamento de uma nova territorialidade, ou de um território-rede fluído que conecta os membros do movimento em sua área, acampamento ou assentamento, com os de sua região e estes com a organização a nível nacional e, em certos momentos, a nível latino-americano e globalizado.

A ocupação de terras devolutas e a organização de um acampamento provisório é um momento de desterritorialização e (re)territorialização de profundo significado político e simbólico. A ocupação das terras é um ato de resistência e de luta pela transformação de territórios-zona (latifúndios e terras devolutas), considerados como apropriações históricas inadequadas e socialmente injustas. O acampamento é o espaço onde as redes de solidariedade e de identidade simbólica e política se desenvolvem, conforme veremos mais adiante.

Já na passagem aos assentamentos da reforma agrária nova relação espacial ocorre. O assentamento se caracteriza como um misto de território-zona e território- rede. Território-zona não no sentido mais tradicional, já que não há o domínio econômico e político absoluto em relação à propriedade, seus membros orientando-se politicamente pelo movimento rumo a efetivação de um projeto ou utopia historicamente diferenciada. Esta nova forma de propriedade coletiva ou individual se condiciona ao uso e produção da terra. Porém tem suas áreas e fronteiras bem demarcadas. Portanto, trata-se de um microterritório-zona, sujeito a um controle específico e acordado entre os membro de cada assentamento, mas vinculado a um território-rede muito mais amplo, conectados por "nós" ou elos que se espalham regional, nacional e até internacionalmente, através de significados simbólicos e pautas de lutas políticas visando transformações sociais mais amplas e duradouras.

No caso de MTST a trajetória de resistência às condições de vivência de semi-nomadismo em aglomerados de exclusão e a luta para a produção de novos espaços de vivência tem pontos em comum ao MST no desenvolvimento da organização grupal, mas há uma certa especificidade que merece ser destacada. A questão fundamental aqui é a moradia e não o trabalho como no MST. Apesar de que a moradia fixa se vincula no imaginário desta população à possibilidade de luta por outros direitos da cidadania (emprego, saúde, educação, alimentação, lazer e cultura). Assim ao entrarem em conflito com o território-zona de referência, ou em suas palavras o "latifúndio urbano ocioso" ou os prédios desocupados e sujeitos à exploração imobiliária, estão também defendendo a criação de

um novo território-zona residencial para a população urbana marginalizada.

Por outro lado, a participação do MTST num território-rede iniciou-se com sua vinculação ao MST. Aos poucos as experiências de ocupações localizadas de terras ou prédios vão criando elos entre si, mas a existência de um movimento nacional ainda não está consolidada e as relações transnacionais são emergentes[5]. Assim podemos concluir que o novo território-zona para a cidadania dos sem-teto predomina em relação ao território-rede de articulação política, numa situação freqüentemente inversa a experiências do MST, ou conforme Martin (1997), apoiando-se em Fernandes, neste último movimento há elementos para se pensar a força da organização em rede na construção de novas territorialidades:

> É precisamente "esta estruturação (que) permite o rompimento do isolamento geográfico, social e cultural, bem como a troca de experiências das fases das lutas, organização dos trabalhadores, ocupação de terras, negociação com as forças politicas envolvidas etc". Ela permite ao MST não somente "o domínio sobre o seu próprio espaço", mas também "a ampliação de sua organização e a espacialização/territorialização de suas lutas" (FERNANDES, 1992, p. 35)

Desta forma, podemos concluir que a lógica reticular, que produz o território-rede, quando justaposta a uma lógica movimentalista, não articula apenas espacialidades e temporalidades, mas através destas conecta o presente e o passado, representados pelo cotidiano, com o futuro, representado pela utopia e os projetos de mudança. Este é o tipo de lógica que permite a aproximação da rede do MST a rede do MTST. Ferreira (2008), em análise sobre as redes movimentalistas da atualidade conclui na mesma direção, quando afirma que:

> As ações ocorrem sempre no presente e é a partir da vinculação entre o passado – com toda nossa historicidade – e o futuro – com o projeto utópico que almejamos – que poderemos construir as mudanças. Estamos, então, certos de que as espacialidades e temporalidades do cotidiano não se separam da dimensão do concreto e nesse sentido, como afirmamos anteriormente, devemos fugir do risco das

5 Vale mencionar a organização de uma rede denominada Frente Internacionalista dos Sem-Teto (FIST), que é um Fórum geral de articulação dos movimentos de luta pela moradia, com atuação principalmente no Rio de Janeiro, com o objetivo de que "as ocupações saiam da política estritamente local, que diz respeito só à comunidade, e passem a trabalhar articuladas com as outras ocupações, com práticas de solidariedade e apoio mútuo" (www.fondation-besnard.org/article.php3?id_article=498, 31/01/2007).

> reificações; senão estaremos caminhando na direção da naturalização das fraturas sociais, passando a ver como normais a segregação socioespacial e as enormes desigualdades na apropriação da cidade.

É através da consciência crítica sobre os processos hegemônicos de apropriação do espaço e sobre a conseqüente reprodução das desigualdades sociais que os movimentos citados vêm desenvolvendo suas redes de resistência e buscando construir novos espaços de solidariedade e de cooperação Devemos, entretanto, sempre lembrar que a produção de espaços e os processos de desterriterritorização são frutos de relações sociais que podem ser de cooperação ou de conflito, as quais devem, portanto, ser objetos eleitos para a análise desses processo, o que nos remete para a segunda dimensão analítica.

2. Dimensão conflitiva-solidarística

Segundo Ferreira (2008) "é justamente na busca das tensões entre os diversos agentes e atores que produzem o espaço urbano [podemos acrescentar: que reproduzem e produzem o espaço rural] que encontraremos o melhor caminho não só para a análise dos conflitos sociais, mas também para a transformação do estado de coisas atual". Nesta direção, a relação entre proprietários e despossuídos é freqüentemente geradora de conflitos e promotora de movimentos de resistência. Porém, do lado dos despossuídos, o conflito também pode gerar identidades coletivas e solidariedade grupal, condições essenciais para a criação de um movimento social.

O conflito se constrói em torno de concepções diferenciadas de proprietários e despossuídos em relação ao valor de uso e valor de troca dos espaços de posse ou ocupação, por um lado, e/ou em relação às referências simbólicas, afetivas, elos comunitários ou societários de vivências nestes espaços, por outro. Neste último caso, os processos de migração forçada, como com os atingidos por barragens, é especialmente contundente.[6]

O MST, sendo o movimento social mais fortemente organizado no Brasil contemporâneo e apontado como referência mundial de resistência de populações marginalizadas, tem se consolidado como a representação política mais expressiva dos conflitos sociais no campo e instigado a criação de organizações contra reforma agrária, como a UDR, a bancada dos

6 Vice a este respeito Rothman (ed.), 2008.

ruralista no Congresso e a constante tentativa de sua criminalização através da mídia de massa. O ápice deste conflito ocorreu recentemente no Rio Grande do Sul, através da repressão violenta da polícia a uma manifestação pacífica do MST juntamente com outros movimentos sociais em Porto Alegre e a subseqüente tentativa de criminalização legal e proibição da organização por parte do poder judiciário do estado apoiado por forças conservadoras do campo (latifundiários, agronegócio). O campo do conflito se ampliou, não só porque provocou no imaginário de muitos cidadãos a memória da repressão aos movimentos sociais na época da ditadura militar, como por ferir direitos de cidadania defendidos pelo conjunto de movimentos sociais, como os de ir e vir, participação em manifestações públicas e direito de expressão política. A reação também se estendeu ao campo das representações políticas, como foi sintetizado nas palavras do deputado federal Maurício Rands (PE): "A ata do MP [Ministério Público] gaúcho é uma demonstração de tudo que um órgão de Estado não pode fazer, pois contém preconceito e tentativa de criminalização de um movimento social" (JC OnLine – Recife, 9/7/08); bem como se estendeu a vários setores da sociedade civil, militantes de direitos humanos, intelectuais, artistas, etc., das quais o desabafo do escritor gaúcho Luiz Fernando Veríssimo é bem expressiva:

> A ineqüidade que criou essa multidão de deserdados no país com a maior extensão de terras aráveis do mundo é a mesma que expulsou outra multidão para as ruas e favelas das grandes cidades, deixando o campo despovoado para o latifúndio e o agronegócio predatório. A demora de uma reforma agrária para valer, tão prometida e tão adiada, só agrava a exclusão e aumenta a revolta. As invasões e manifestações dos Sem Terra se sucedem e assustam. Proprietários rurais se mobilizam e se armam, a violência e o medo aumentam, a reação se organiza. Agora mesmo no Rio Grande do Sul, enquanto endurece a repressão policial às ações do MST, um documento do Ministério Público estadual prega a criminalização de vez do movimento, caracterizando-o como uma guerrilha que ameaça a segurança nacional, com ajuda de fora. É improvável que uma maioria de promotores de Justiça do Estado, transformados em promotores de ordem acima de tudo, tivesse abonado o documento como estava redigido, com seu vocabulário evocativo de outra era. Mas ele dá uma idéia da força crescente do outro lado... (Jornal Estado de São Paulo - 03/07/2008)

A tentativa, completamente descabida, do Ministério Público do RGS em comparar o MST à FARC e a redes terroristas deve ser discutida política e academicamente. O seguinte quadro comparativo entre uma rede de movimentos sociais e uma rede terrorista, nos indica como de fato o MST pertence em totalidade ao primeiro tipo de rede política:

Tipos de redes

Tipos	Visibilidade pública	Estratégia	Objetivos	Empoderamento
MOVIMENTOS SOCIAIS	Esfera pública	Redes de informação	Emancipação	Sociedade civil
REDES TERRORISTAS	Células clandestinas	Nós das redes - guetos	Coerção ilícita	Grupos fundamentalistas

Fonte: Ilse Scherer-Warren, 2002[7]

A violência no campo não é de hoje, é estrutural e institucional, além de sempre ter buscado se legitimar no campo ideológico e político através das classes dominantes rurais, conforme já nos alertava Tavares dos Santos (2000):

> Sintetizando as informações disponíveis, podemos traçar algumas características da violência no campo: trata-se de uma violência difusa, de caráter social, político e simbólico, envolvendo tanto a violência social como a violência política. Neste caso, ela se exerce, freqüentemente com alto grau de letalidade, contra alvos selecionados (contra as organizações dos camponeses e trabalhadores rurais) e seus agentes são membros da burguesia agrária, fazendeiros e comerciantes locais, mediante o recurso a "pistoleiros" e milícias organizadas. Também se registra a presença do aparelho repressivo estatal, comprovado pela freqüente participação das polícias civis e militares. Enfim, a omissão de membros do Poder Judiciário reforça o caráter de impunidade. Como resultado, produz-se a carência do acesso ao Poder Judiciário

7 Trabalho apresentado no Seminário Democracy and Recognition: a North-South Debate, Berlim, abril de 2002.

> para as populações camponesas e dos trabalhadores rurais, resultando em uma descrença na eficácia da Justiça para resolver conflitos ou mesmo para garantir direitos constitucionais, como o direito da função social da terra.

No caso do MTST, este acompanha em grande medida o discurso de contestação do MST, o qual coloca em confronto o valor do latifúndio e da terra improdutiva, isto é, o valor de troca da propriedade para os grandes proprietários versus valor de uso e da necessidade de democratização na distribuição das terras para os despossuídos. Todavia os sem-teto colocam uma ênfase especial em seus discursos sobre o valor da terra e moradia fixas para a criação de possibilidades para a superação das prementes carências do cotidiano e melhoria na qualidade de vida. Segundo Ferreira (2008), foi neste contexto conflituoso que o MTST nasceu em 1997, por iniciativa do Movimento dos Sem Terra (MST). Segundo Gilmar Mauro, membro da direção nacional do MST, sua criação partiu da constatação de que 85% da população brasileira, na época, residia em zona urbana e constituiu uma tentativa de articular as lutas pela terra e as lutas das populações urbanas. A primeira operação de envergadura do MTST aconteceu em Campinas, uma cidade próxima de São Paulo, quando cinco mil famílias ocuparam um terreno abandonado que foi batizado por eles de Eldorado dos Carajás. (Le Monde Diplomatique, 2007).

O nome Eldorado dos Carajás comporta, além de outras possibilidades interpretativas, um duplo significado simbólico, o de vinculação solidarística à rede do próprio MST e a de reação e luta contra a violência estrutural e institucionalizada. Ou conforme a retórica do próprio movimento:

> Quando ocupam um latifúndio urbano ocioso, os sem-teto resistem contra a lógica difundida como natural de que pobre nasce, vive e morre oprimido. Não aceitam a espoliação que muitos chamam de sina. Ao montar seus barracos de lona preta num terreno vazio, essas famílias cortam a cerca nada imaginária que protege a concentração de riqueza e de terra nas mãos de poucos. E num terreno de onde uma só pessoa esperava o lucro, os sem-teto plantam a transformação, uma semente de cidadania[8].

É, assim, através do enfrentamento a sua condição de subalternidade, reinterpretando os fundamentos da espoliação, que os sem-teto como os sem-terra vão construindo suas

8 Cf. mencionado em www.mtst.info/?q=quem_somos.

condições de cidadania. Mas para que isto ocorresse tiveram também que reinterpretar a materialidade da exclusão em termos simbólicos, conforme veremos a seguir.

3. Dimensão material-simbólica

Haesbaert (2006, p. 294) nos alerta para não confundir redes territoriais com redes físicas ou técnicas, enfatizando "o papel das redes em processos (re)territorializadores, ou seja, na construção de territórios em seu sentido de controle ou domínio material e/ou apropriação simbólica". Parece, portanto, oportuno discutir como os movimentos sociais desenvolvem em suas práticas este duplo papel.

Conforme já mencionado, os movimentos sociais para atuarem na (re)territorialização de seus espaços segregados e para migrar de seus aglomerados de exclusão para territórios-rede, terão que se organizar em redes de movimentos.[9] Por outro lado, a passagem dos sujeitos individualizados ou de organizações com demandas restritas para organizações em rede requer ultrapassar o imediatismo reivindicatório em direção à construção de nexos entre as demandas materiais ou as privações no cotidiano e o sentido subjetivo destas privações, traduzindo estes nexos em formas expressivas, simbólicas, comunicativas e em pautas políticas comuns a várias organizações, criando identidades coletivas que possibilitam a articulação dos movimentos específicos numa rede de movimentos sociais.[10]

A possibilidade da construção de sujeitos e da transformação destes sujeitos em atores politicamente ativos nas redes não transcorre como uma necessidade imediata da vivência de carências. A carência por si só não produz movimentos sociais. O movimento resulta do sentido coletivo atribuído a esta carência e da possibilidade de identificação subjetiva e da subseqüente possibilidade de criação de símbolos de representação em torno dela (p. ex: as músicas, o boné, a bandeira, etc. no MST). Neste processo há que se considerar o reconhecimento recíproco sobre a vivência da exclusão ou da discriminação dos sujeitos e a tradução desta vivência em novos valores coletivos dos grupos, na definição dos conflitos geradores da exclusão e dos principais adversários políticos. Resulta também da subseqüente transformação dos sujeitos em atores políticos, da respectiva transformação das carências em demandas, destas demandas em pautas políticas e das pautas políticas

9 Redes que se constroem em torno de um identidade coletiva, da definição de conflitos e adversários e de um projeto ou utopia de mudança, conforme já mencionado.
10 Maiores desdobramentos deste debate foi desenvolvido em Scherer-Warren, 2008.

em ações de protestos, calcados em projetos e utopias de mudança[11]. Assim, o movimento se constitui através da participação dos sujeitos no próprio processo da luta social. Na mesma direção, Martin (1997) concluiu que:

> Assim, como já vimos no campo com o MST, os movimentos sociais urbanos (MSU) têm também um papel importante na ampliação e acumulação de forças e experiências, pois: "marcam o início de um processo que tende a afetar a vida daqueles que dele participam, pelo enriquecimento que o contato com o outro propicia e que o debate estimula". Nesse sentido [citando CARLOS, 1992], a participação nos MSU pode ser a origem duma "revelação da identidade do homem, através da ação", na medida que "o contato cotidiano com o outro implica na descoberta de modos de vidas, problemas e perspectivas comuns". Por outro lado, esta participação produz "junto com a identidade, a consciência da desigualdade e das contradições nas quais se funda a vida humana».

Portanto, em ambas organizações (MST e MTST) tem sido observado os três momento de constituição de um movimento social – formação de uma identidade coletiva, definição de um campo de conflito e um projeto de transformação social. Em estudo sobre o surgimento e desenvolvimento do MTST, Lima (2004) afirma que «ao longo deste percurso, uma das preocupações centrais dos militantes que coordenavam a ocupação, era procurar esclarecer aqueles com quem discutiam o projeto, que este não se limitava, exclusivamente, à obtenção da moradia, mas sim, expressava a luta por reforma urbana e pela transformação social ». Ainda na análise da autora isto ocorre porque passou-se, « ... no processo de constituição do MTST, da existência de um projeto que busca articular as demandas imediatas e concretas de um determinado segmento de classe trabalhadora à demanda mediata por transformação social ». Efetua-se aí um processo de politização onde o sujeito passa a entender que para além de conquistas materiais válidas, há a necessidade de redefinir a sua condição de cidadania (ou de completa falta anterior de sua realização) e de redefinição de seu espaço de moradia, anteriormente um conglomerado de exclusão e agora um território de cidadania em construção, que assim foi expressado no depoimento de uma militante do MTST à pesquisadora acima:

> [...] A preocupação nossa em dividir em lotes, formalizar o que aconteceu aqui

11 A passagem de um movimento meramente reivindicativo para um movimento social propriamente dito requer, além disso, a realização dos três passos já mencionados acima. Outros desdobramentos, Scherer-Warren, 1999, 2000.

> dentro, um bairro, onde todo mundo tem acesso... É organizado? É. Nós, pelo menos, tentamos ser organizados e desenvolver aqui um bairro e não uma favela. Nada contra uma favela. Eu acho que a grande maioria do povo que vive aqui veio de favela. Uma boa parte veio do aluguel. Perderam o emprego e as condições e tiveram que vir para cá. Mas se nós fizemos uma ocupação e no final das contas ficassem becos? O que nós estávamos fazendo? Que organização é essa? Isso aqui não seria uma organização, era uma bagunça. Foi onde nós formamos um bairro, mas um bairro muito chique. Está na madeira? Mas está chique (Isaura, depoimento à autora, 2003).

Porém, a passagem da vivência dos participantes do MST e do MTST, de um aglomerado de exclusão para um território em rede, com auto-estima e sentimento de cidadania em construção, foi também fruto de uma participação efetiva e continuada numa rede de movimento que valoriza a democracia interna e externa, conforme veremos no próximo item.

4. Dimensão participativa-estratégica

Para aprofundar o entendimento da interação entre redes e territórios, gostaríamos de acompanhar Leila Dias (2007, p. 20), quando a autora afirma que a lógica das redes é definida por atores que as desenham, modelam e regulam. De outro lado, acompanhando Santos (2000, p. 259), a autora afirma que a lógica do território é arena de oposição entre o mercado – que singulariza – e a sociedade civil – que generaliza. Assim, "o território é suporte das redes que transportam as verticalidades, isto é, regras e normas egoísticas e utilitárias (do ponto de vista dos atores hegemônicos), enquanto as horizontalidades levam em conta a totalidade dos atores e das ações" (ibid, p. 259). Neste contexto das horizontalidades poderemos incluir a ação dos atores contra-hegemônicos que atuam em rede. É a partir deste embate entre verticalidade e horizontalidade que os movimentos sociais atuam, transitando entre territórios-zona e territórios-rede e, assim, definindo suas formas de participação na esfera pública, na democracia ou para a democratização da terra e da moradia, no caso dos movimentos que estamos analisando.

Todavia, a participação dos atores organizados em rede com impacto no campo democrático, deve ser examinada a partir de três ângulos: o da democratização no interior

da própria rede; o da participação da rede nos processos de democratização da esfera pública; o papel da rede na promoção da justiça social, da eqüidade e, portanto, da democratização da riqueza e de avanços na cidadania.

Tavares dos Santos (2000), numa retrospectiva das lutas sociais no campo, concluiu que há avanços especialmente na promoção da cidadania aos sujeitos das redes de movimentos, para além dos registros de conflitos e violências as quais estes sujeitos tem sido submetidos pelas forças do capital e as vezes pelo próprio Estado:

> Delimitou-se, portanto, um campo de conflitos agrários, no qual a proposta de reforma agrária aparece, uma vez mais, como possibilidade de aprofundamento da democracia na sociedade brasileira. A reiteração das lutas sociais no campo, no entanto, tem demonstrado, neste século, que a capacidade da ação histórica das classes, categorias e grupos sociais dominadas tem conseguido construir, além das variadas formas de violência, modos de viver, de produzir e de falar que ilustram possibilidades de uma relação de alteridade mais equânime e solidária, construindo uma nova forma de cidadania.

A construção da cidadania no contexto deste território-rede, desenvolvido a partir de um novo tipo de participação político organizativa do movimento, é interpretada pelo próprio MST, como um espaço de relevantes mudanças de significados no cotidiano de seus membros e nas relações de poder na sociedade envolvente:

> Os trabalhadores ao conquistarem o seu próprio espaço, construíram o espaço de socialização política... ampliam o sentido da luta pela terra que passa a ser entendida para além da questão econômica, ou seja, é também um projeto sociocultural de transformação de suas realidades. Os efeitos sociais deste movimento sobre as relações sociais atinge toda a sociedade. Estes são frutos de conflito e, também, das ações destes sujeitos que têm por objetivo causar transformações específicas e gerais nas relações de poder. (www.mst.org.br, 14/3/2000).[12]

Portanto, o significado simbólico e efetivo da luta é buscado aqui na possibilidade de produzir transformações no interior da própria rede e no contexto das relações de poder na esfera pública. A estratégia política para o empoderamento da rede na esfera pública também é buscada através de articulações mais abrangentes, como entre o MST e o MTST,

12 Maiores desdobramentos em torno deste ponto, vide em Scherer-Warren & Carvalho Ferreira, 2002.

destes com a Via Campesina, Movimento de Barragens, Movimento de Mulheres Camponesas, Movimento dos Desempregados e outros movimentos sociais do campo e da cidade, além de articulações em rede, como o Fórum Nacional de Reforma Agrária e Justiça no Campo (FNRA) o Fórum Nacional de Reforma Urbana (FNRU), a Assembléia Nacional Popular, a Semana Social Brasileira, a Coordenação dos Movimentos Sociais, dentre outros.

Finalmente, o papel da rede na promoção da justiça social, da eqüidade e da democratização da riqueza tem como documento síntese a Carta da Terra, que dá a unidade total ao movimento, segundo o FNRA[13]. Nesta versão da Carta, assumida pelo Fórum em 2004, é proposta a desapropriação de todos os latifúndios, das propriedades de estrangeiros e de bancos e daquelas que praticam o trabalho escravo. Refere-se à luta pela demarcação de todas as terras indígenas e de comunidades remanescentes de quilombos, para erradicar a pobreza como um imperativo ético, social e ambiental e faz referências aos interesses da cidadania num sentido mais universal, de promoção da democracia, da paz, da ecologia, etc.[14]

O MTST, juntamente com outros movimentos de luta pela moradia, também construiu seu manifesto[15], em prol de uma democratização da riqueza, onde reivindica "desapropriações de terrenos e edifícios urbanos que não cumprem função social, destinando-os às demandas populares organizadas", além de demandas por políticas sociais de inclusão social, numa tentativa de passagem de seus aglomerados de exclusão para novos territórios-rede, onde seus personagens vivem de forma socialmente mais justa e com direitos de cidadania assegurados.

5. Concluindo

Pode-se deduzir que estes vários grupos populacionais referidos até aqui, migrantes entre vários aglomerados de exclusão, seja na terra rural ou na periferia urbana, ou circulando de uma região a outra, numa constante dispersão espacial e cultural, na busca de

13 Cf. nossa pesquisa junto ao Fórum, citada em Scherer-Warren, 2006, 2007a.

14 De acordo com Carta da Terra internacional, fruto de uma ampla rede e movimento, apoiada e assinada pela UNESCO em 2000, a qual parte de uma visão integradora e holística, considerando a pobreza, a degradação ambiental, a injustiça social, os conflitos étnicos, a paz, a democracia e a crise espiritual como problemas interdependentes (vide: www.cartadaterrabrasil.org/), e assumida, dentre outros pelo MST, pelo FNRA, constando da Carta do 5o. Congresso Nacional do MST: www.mst.org.br, 15/06/2007.

15 Manifesto Popular de 28/03/2008, vide: www.mtst.info/?q=taxonomy/term/66%2B67

alternativas de sobrevivência face a suas condições de sem-terra e sem-teto, caracterizam-se por uma espécie de vivência da diáspora[16] dentro das fronteiras do Estado-nação.

Será através de suas participações nas lutas pela terra e pela moradia, que estas populações se transformam em sujeitos que lutam por direitos e em atores politicamente ativos nas redes de movimento. É nesta condição que realizam a passagem atópica dos aglomerados de exclusão para o sonho utópico nos novos territórios-zona (assentamentos e lugares fixos de moradia) e com o sentimento de pertencimento e reconhecimento enquanto cidadão e sujeito coletivo nos territórios-redes, através de sua participação nas redes de movimentos de referência. Para fechar, recorremos mais uma vez a Martin, que relembra Lefebvre (1974, p. 484):

> Hoje em dia (...) uma transformação da sociedade supõe a possessão e a gestão coletiva do espaço, com intervenção dos interessados, com os seus múltiplos interesses, diversos e mesmo contraditórios. Portanto, a confrontação e o seu trunfo é o domínio do mesmo espaço". Não se trata mais do espaço abstrato, reificado, mas de todos os lugares socializados, no campo e na cidade, dos conflitos no e pelo espaço... É exatamente por causa de tudo isso, que uma abordagem verdadeiramente geográfica dos movimentos sociais, ou seja, sem esquecer a sua dimensão espacial, parece hoje tão importante.

Foi justamente nesta direção que se pretendeu desenvolver a presente reflexão: estabelecer um diálogo construtivo entre as perspectivas geográfica e sociológica e que permitisse compreender os recentes processos de (re)territorialização de espaços segregados e em conflito, desenvolvidos pelo MST e MTST no Brasil.

16 Sobre a relação da condição diaspórica com o territórios de referência, vide Haesbaert, 2006 e Halls, 2003.

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Biografia:

Coordenadora do Núcleo de Pesquisa em Movimentos Sociais, professora da UFSC e pesquisadora 1A do CNPq.

Coordinator of the Research Cluster on Social Movements, professor at the Federal University of Santa Catarina and researcher for the National Council of Scientific and Technological Development

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Movimentos sociais existem?

(Do social movements exist?)

António Pedro Dores

Resumo

A concretização das transformações sociais depende dos movimentos sociais no mesmo sentido em que depende da acção dos individuos. Não são necessariamente os movimentos sociais ou os individuos os promotores ou catalizadores das transformações. Mesmo quando são protagonistas, cabe à teoria social discernir em concreto as funções de cada um em cada situação histórica.

As teses sociológicas que conceptualizam os movimentos sociais como modos de expressão da sociabilidade humana são mais capazes de interpretar a realidade do que as conceptualizações mais politizadas, centradas em protagonistas, do que sejam tais fenómenos sociais. As vontades das pessoas, ainda que organizadas e orientadas racionalmente para finalidades benévolas, partindo portanto de uma energia emocional que sustente a mobilização, sendo relevantes para a sociedade, não asseguram nenhuma orientação do devir, cuja determinação é historicamente instável, cientificamente polémica e factualmente multifactorial.

Palavras chave: movimentos sociais; transformação social; análise social

Abstract

Social transformations depend on social movements as much they depend on individual action. Neither the one nor the other is necessarily the cause or the motor of social change. Even when this is the case, it is up to social theory to decide the role of each within any given historical situation.

Those sociological theories which see social movements as expressions of human sociability are more adequate to the reality of social movements than more politicized concepts focussed on leadership. Human intention, organised and oriented rationally towards human well-being and drawing on emotional energy for social mobilisation, is certainly relevant to society. However, this does not determine the direction of social change, a process which is historically unstable, hard to predict scientifically and affected by multiple causal chains.

Key words: social movements, social transformation; social analysis

Movimentos sociais existem?

Vivem-se tempos históricos. Tem-se a sensação de estar a viver uma crise cíclica de grande profundidade, que alegadamente se produz de cem em cem anos, réplica daquela que se viveu nos anos 30 do século passado, quando uma crise de confiança no sistema financeiro produziu uma vaga de desemprego e miséria nos Estados Unidos da América, nas vésperas deste país se tornar uma superpotência através da aplicação de receitas keynesianas. Questiona-se provocatoriamente se será desta o fim de dois séculos anos de capitalismo, ou "apenas" o fim da hegemonia ocidental na Terra começada há 500 anos. Além da crise económica há a crise política (há a esperança da vitória de Obama nos EUA a poder vir a retardar ou inverter) e a crise ecológica e energética (sem outra perspectiva sem ser o agravamento). Quem está disposto a prescindir do acesso aos restos do petróleo, do estilo de vida consumista, da economia de crescimento e da gestão socialmente excludente dos recursos económicos tornados escassos, por razões de eficiência lucrativa?

Os dirigentes em todo o mundo procuram evitar a catástrofe anunciada. Como diriam os marxistas, as condições objectivas de transformação do mundo estão presentes. Por isso se sente com tanta evidência, a nível global, a ausência dos movimentos sociais nesta ocasião.

Os movimentos sociais, nomeadamente do Fora Social Mundiais, foram apanhados de surpresa. Apesar dos sinais de crise terem pelo menos um ano, nenhuma reacção é

reconhecível de modo a constituir uma alternativa de estratégia de desenvolvimento, nem nos movimentos dos países do centro do capitalismo, nem nos países emergentes, nem nos países periféricos.

A pergunta que titula este trabalho admite respostas "objectivas" e resposta "subjectivas": sim, os movimentos sociais existem mas não têm nenhum projecto de governança global. Não, os movimentos sociais não existem enquanto não tiverem um programa de governança global. Estas são as respostas "objectivas" a oferecer perante a análise da realidade presente.

O outro tipo de resposta decorre da consciência das limitações da observação científica do social e também do desejo do observador: ainda que não seja perceptível, pode estar a emergir um motivo de agregação de movimentos sociais que os tornará actores históricos irresistíveis e boas notícias para as populações. A resposta complementar desta tornou-se logicamente improvável (pois o seu autor seria considerado catastrofista, o que raramente ocorre no campo do estudo dos movimentos sociais), mas pode ser realmente viável, ainda que não corresponda aos desejos do observador: a emergência de movimentos sociais que se venham a revelar-se pesadelos para as populações, como aconteceu a partir do final dos anos 30 na Europa.

Concentremo-nos apenas nas respostas "objectivas", procurando afastar-nos tanto quanto possível dos nossos desejos e ideologias tácitas.

Observe-se como a dualidade (Sim, existem sem aspirarem a governar. Não, não existem enquanto não aspirarem a governar) não é meramente lógica. É científica e é política.

É tratada politicamente nos Fora Sociais por todo o mundo, sob a forma de auto-identificação. Uns resistem à política de hegemonia política interna ao Forum Social Mundial, contra a qual, de resto, se fundou o Fórum Social Mundial: este começou por proibir a participação de organizações políticas no seu seio e descartou todas as declarações com pretensões de representatividade. Outros, desde logo, notaram ser praticamente ineficaz e demissionista a recusa de concertar esforços na construção de alternativas políticas à dominação neo-liberal e neo-conservadora, sem o que um novo mundo possível jamais emergirá, dizem.

Também na teoria social estas duas posturas podem ser identificadas. O jovem Alain Touraine reclamava, nos anos setenta, uma radical oposição dos movimentos sociais às instituições em geral e ao Estado em particular, com os quais manteriam relações conflituais. Os cientistas sociais poderiam reconhecer os verdadeiros movimentos sociais dos falsos pelo nível e coerência das tensões racionalmente criadas por eles com as instituições. Os novos movimentos sociais, herdeiros do movimento operário entretanto institucionalizado no Estado Social, além do protagonismo e da identidade social e política reconhecida, teriam de se colocar em condições de intervir ao nível da historicidade, de estabelecer a perspectiva de sucessão de governanças alternativas ao *status quo*.

Os movimentos ecologista, feminista e estudantil prometiam ser modelares. Os respectivos desenvolvimentos, porém, não seguiram os passos nem uns dos outros nem do movimento operário, apesar de ser indiscutível a importância cultural, social e política de qualquer deles nos dias de hoje.

No outro extremo do espectro de opções teóricas disponíveis na teoria social encontramos Francesco Alberoni. O sociólogo italiano, inspirado na psicologia, identifica o estado nascente como um fenómeno psico-social emergente quando se dá a mudança psicológica entre um estado depressivo para um estado de entusiasmo com a vida. Isso pode ser observado ocorrer tanto com as pessoas, individualmente consideradas, como com grupos de duas ou mais pessoas envolvidas na gestão dos seus próprios estados nascentes. O autor propõe explicar o surgimento de movimentos sociais pelo acumular de relações sociais à volta de pessoas em estado-nascente, cuja característica principal não é a partilha racional de objectivos sociais comuns, mas antes a atracção psico-social entre si de pessoas a viverem aquele estado de espírito. Ao reconhecerem-se entre si na raridade e energia especiais desse tipo de vivência, as pessoas apreciam tanto mais vibrar em conjunto quanto mais são depreciadas e incómodas para a generalidade das outras pessoas, desenvolvendo eventualmente em grupos os seus projectos idealizados em torno de tarefas concretas, assim reconhecendo os diferentes obstáculos à concretização prática dos respectivos desejos.

Um dos exemplos dados pelo autor é revelador do sentido da sua ideia: um casal de enamorados, pessoas a viverem experiências de estado-nascente, por um lado é mal compreendido ou mesmo reprimido pelas pessoas. Sentem aqueles entusiasmos como extemporâneos ou mesmo perigosos, devido à perturbação dos hábitos e da disciplina que podem provocar (em especial junto dos familiares). Por outro lado, os enamorados sentem conhecer-se intimamente desde sempre, mesmo quando acabaram de se encontrar e cada um tenha herdado *habitus* sociais muito diferentes entre si. Podem estar a conversar desencontradamente durante horas, convencidos de estarem a partilhar histórias de vida equivalentes. Na verdade, apenas se sentem reconhecidos mutuamente na experiência da exclusão social provocada pela reacção social ao entusiasmo pela vida próprio daquele estado de espírito. Ao encontrarem a cara metade estão apenas a reconhecer-se mutuamente como pares e potenciais aliados para os planos de revalorização da vida considerados por terceiros irrealistas, despropositados, incómodos, eventualmente revolucionários ou subversivos, incompreensíveis. Por isso podem falar cada um das suas próprias experiências e desejos. Ainda que sejam contraditórios entre si, ambos compreenderão simpaticamente (em sintonia de estados de espírito e de excitação) o outro, na sua intimidade, na sua verdade eterna daquele momento, mesmo porque estão incapazes, um e outro, de reconhecer e muito menos dar prioridade às diferenças entre si. O que mais tarde poderá parecer-lhes óbvio, não o era nesses encontros apaixonados. O que não quer dizer que todas as paixões resultem mal. Depende do modo como ambas as partes souberem e quiserem gerir as suas contradições e da sua reacção aos apoios ou oposições do meio social envolvente.

Não há, em Alberoni, uma oposição entre instituição e movimento social. Ao inverso, todo o movimento social aspira à institucionalização, escreve. O ciclo de vida dos movimentos sociais é tipicamente mais curto do das instituições, pois requerem muito mais energia e possuem muito menos recursos. Mas a ambição é, precisamente, serem mais eficientes e terem mais recursos para atingirem os objectivos (os mais diversos) antecipados e depois paulatinamente adaptados às realidades, à medida que vai sendo possível realizá-los, sempre apenas de forma incompleta (em direcções não previstas) relativamente à forma idealizada inicialmente.

O estado-nascente desenvolve uma potencia de racionalidade emergente cuja realização depende das condições concretas de existência e dos recursos investidos no novo caminho. Os obstáculos encontrados não são apenas dos poderes fácticos instalados. São também a incoerência dos desejos relativamente às possibilidades práticas. Todo o movimento social, diz o autor, viverá a sua própria frustração, por sua vez alimento de desejos de angariação de mais recursos (de mobilização ou/e institucionais) e de negociações permanentes e fortemente energéticas (com os parceiros mobilizados entre si e com as instituições relevantes).

Verificamos, portanto, existir uma luta pela valorização e apropriação dos movimentos sociais (nos próprios movimentos sociais e a nível conceptual). Luta travada entre campos que designaremos, por facilidade, por partidário e extra-partidário. Um procura a pedra filosofal, ooutro uma nova estética.

De um lado, a procura de um motor de poder capaz de suportar uma alternativa estrutural ao poder dominante, à semelhança daquilo que tornou os estados do Antigo Regime em estados modernos e o estados mínimos liberais em estados sociais (no ocidente) ou em democracias populares (no Leste da Europa e noutras partes do mundo). [1] Do outro lado, fora da lógica dos partidos, a defesa do espaço descomprometido da intervenção espontânea, fruto da própria natureza humana. De um lado a racionalidade utilitária das teorias accionalistas e, do outro, o distanciamento descomprometido favorável à libertação das expressões da natureza humana, de que a racionalidade é um factor mas não o prioritário.[2]

Uma teorização mais preocupada em discernir as consequências sociais dos movimentos com expressão suficiente para tal. Outra mais preocupada em captar no ovo a fonte original de suplemento de energias vitais e sociais capazes de transformar a inércia em activismo.

[1] O facto dos fascismos e do nazismo terem sido derrotados por potências liberais e comunistas colocou estes movimentos sociais fora das teorizações ou referências, por razões que não são nem políticas nem conceptuais mas éticas. De uma ética de efeitos duvidosos: para calar politicamente os derrotados podem estar a esconder-se os perigos actuais. Como diz uma televisão, é um erro imaginar que memórias históricas negativas jamais voltarão a a ensombrar as nossas vidas.

[2] Nos tempos da Guerra Fria os pacifistas alemães gritavam, “antes vermelho que morto”. Contra o racismo, hoje grita-se “todos diferentes, todos iguais”.

Movimentos sociais e sociedade

A expressão movimentos sociais refere-se às coisas, aos factos, às formas de fazer política usadas para transformação da sociedade num determinado sentido, ambiguamente antecipado? Ou refere-se a um estado de espírito de contestação do *status quo* que emerge espontaneamente, ocasionalmente, partilhado por um conjunto de gentes que usa o espaço público para mobilizar outras gentes, intencionalmente ou não?

Seja qual seja a natureza dos movimentos sociais, *o elenco de fenómenos sociais observáveis não se esgota neles*. Na versão do jovem Touraine, a função do sociólogo deveria ser, por um lado, a racionalização dos modos de compatibilização dos objectivos declarados pelos movimentos sociais com os interesses e potencialidades das respectivas bases sociais de apoio, perante as oportunidades estratégicas e tácticas de desenvolvimento dos movimentos. Por outro, a teoria social deveria usar o seu poder de classificação para excluir do campo dos movimentos sociais os fenómenos que poderiam parecer ou reivindicar-se movimentos sociais mas não tivessem condições ou intenções de transformação social, de intervenção ao nível da historicidade. Em particular, deveria ser clara a separação entre as instituições, alvos das acções transformadoras, os movimentos sociais actores e promotores dessa transformação e a inércia social quotidiana produto da reprodução social.

Ocorre, entretanto, uma transformação paulatina das sociedades ocidentais. Nomeadamente passou-se de uma sociedade de longas rotinas estáveis por longos períodos de tempo, em contraste com a instabilidade dos movimentos sociais, para uma sociedade cada vez menos tolerante e interessada em rotinas que não possam ser alvo de inovação e mudança permanentes. As instituições e os quotidianos tornaram-se capazes de acolher no seu seio – e até tirar proveito disso – movimentos sociais. Tornaram-se flexíveis, como se usa dizer, adaptáveis às modas, pois aprenderam a explorá-las em seu favor.

Tabela 1. Tipos de sociedade e aceleração da mudança

Tipo de sociedade Tipo de acção	Integradora (1945-79)	Exclusiva[3] (1980-...)
Razão (partidária)	Fordismo do "one best way" Economias nacionais	Pos-fordismo das pequenas séries Economia global
Liberdade (extra-partidária)	Nacionalismos na política	Globalização das deslocalizações

A nível político passaram a verificar-se os consensos ao centro, o "discurso único", sem alternativas, sem grandes narrativas, desconfiado do progresso (social) mas crente no mercado (e nos lucros).

Que movimento social terá originado tal transformação? A resposta não é evidente. A transformação social, portanto, terá ocorrido sem o protagonismo de nenhum movimento social. A federação dos movimentos sociais na actualidade, o Forum Social Mundial, também parece desinteressado ou pelo menos distante do centro da acção transformativa dos dias de hoje.

Richard Sennett (2006) escreve que terá sido consequência inesperada e indesejável da actividade da nova esquerda em que participou, desde os anos sessenta. Queriam menos Estado e menos burocracia para terem mais liberdade, mas finalmente a liberdade é actualmente menos e há o risco de a situação se degradar. Outros, como Manuel Castels (2004) dirão que as novas tecnologias de informação e comunicação transformaram as relações sociais numa sociedade em rede, que derrotou o Estado Soviético – e, acrescenta-se aqui, também terá custado uma mega bolha financeira que rebenta à vista de todos actualmente.[4]

[3] Cf. Jock Young (1999) e Robert Castel (1998).

[4] Para além da Internet, por redes deve entender-se o uso de computadores ligados entre si através de sistemas de comunicação privados, de que a banca foi pioneira e os mercados financeiros globais são os utilizadores de ponta.

O problema de saber se os movimentos sociais são partidários e racionais ou espontâneos e irracionais pode ser testado através da análise das transformações sociais? Historicamente, a reivindicação de rigor científico dos respectivos projectos de intervenção é própria de alguns, mas não de todos, os movimentos sociais. Em nenhum caso a ciência é utilizada de forma neutral, mas antes como instrumento de luta e afirmação argumentada de interesses subjacentes. Aliás como também acontece com o trabalho dos cientistas dentro das instituições. Todavia a crítica ao determinismo, a inevitável vitória da energia vital dos movimentos sociais, está feita na prática do próprio movimento operário. Isto é: os movimentos sociais não podem ser explicados em função de uma finalidade necessária a realizar, mas sim em função da instabilidade da natureza social da espécie humana, umas vezes entusiástica, outras vezes deprimida, outras vezes rotineira. Em estado nascente os movimentos sociais emergem, sem finalidades apriori a não ser aquelas que forem imaginadas ou adoptadas pelas pessoas em causa, em função da sua necessidade vital de viver essa condição, em determinadas condições históricas.

Serão os movimentos sociais indispensáveis à mudança ou apenas estímulos de mudança, eventualmente contrariados ou ignorados pela história? Que fazem eles para produzir, para fazer para favorecer ou para contrariar a difusão de inovações tecnológicas? Ou de filosofias políticas? Ou dos direitos humanos? Ou de epidemias?

Onde estão os movimentos sociais racionais? Do lado dos ecologistas ou do lado dos feminismos? Ou serão tais movimentos sobretudo resultantes de sentimentos de solidariedade com a natureza e com as vítimas privilegiadas e silenciadas da violência social? E porque se exprimem agora e não anteriormente na história? E onde encontrar formações partidárias capazes de suportar ou dar expressão a tais movimentos? Há um largo campo de pesquisas a desenvolver.

Com a queda da crença no progresso, também decaiu a evidência (desejo) de podermos ser conduzidos para o progresso por actores sociais alternativos àqueles que nos trouxeram até ao Estado Social, os movimentos de trabalhadores. Não que não tenha havido mudanças sociais profundas. Apenas as mudanças sociais podem ser extra-institucionais, como as mudanças culturais, e função de ofertas tecnológicas irrecusáveis,

como os computadores pessoais, a internet, os telemóveis e toda a sorte de produtos micro-electrónicos capazes de mudar as nossas vidas sem nenhuma decisão racional previamente organizada social ou politicamente. Nos mercados, os movimentos sociais também vivem – com entusiasmos, com organização de campos de acção e equipas dirigentes, com seguidores ávidos de bom sucesso, acompanhados por revistas e jornais, ou outras formas de difusão de notícias. Vive-se fora e sem referências directas à política e às instituições, contando como certos, como se fossem naturais, os mecanismos de difusão e concorrência organizados por entidades de regulação nada transparentes.

Em resumo, a globalização não foi gerada por nenhum movimento social evidente mas foi um processo de transformação social profundo, cujo plano jamais foi produzido, ainda que existam muitos planos para influenciar o sentido dos acontecimentos. Todavia, desde a queda do muro de Berlim, ao ataque das Torres Gémeas até à crise financeira, apesar da existência de informações mais ou menos públicas sobre o sentido geral dos acontecimentos, os povos, as pessoas e as instituições, bem como os movimentos sociais, apenas acreditaram naquilo que estavam dispostos a acreditar nos momentos em que tal lhes ocorreu. O excesso de informação, como dizem os informáticos, não produz conhecimento sem antes se realizar uma selecção das escassas informações a que cada cérebro e cada instituição estão receptivos. Frequentemente as evidências passam desapercebidas. Aos políticos, às polícias, aos empresários e banqueiros, aos movimentos sociais.

Todos vivemos como apaixonados pelas nossas próprias convicções e limitações. Lutamos para afirmar a nossa crença ou profissão ou situação – aquilo a que os sociólogos chamam interesse – mantendo-nos em patamares de responsabilidade e observação que nos pareçam mais adequados à nossa condição. Faltam lideres de visão mais ampla, reclamam alguns. Faltam instituições capazes de produzir tais visões centradas na humanidade, e já não apenas em interesses parcelares. Na ONU, onde participam muitos movimentos sociais, através de instituições de canalização de saberes e preocupações certificadas, autónomas dos partidos e dos Estados, com a finalidade de apoiar a institucionalização de poderes globais susceptíveis de regulação nas diferentes áreas de intervenção, onde está a oposição entre os movimentos sociais e as instituições?

Os movimentos sociais existem mas, por vezes, só para os próprios e para aqueles olhares treinados e interessados em observá-los, a partir de concepções que são próprias do observador. Por vezes os movimentos sociais assumem uma visibilidade e um protagonismo públicos, como no caso dos movimentos operários e mais tarde os movimentos ecologistas. Outras vezes – como acontece mais frequentemente – predomina o *low profile*, como no campo dos Direitos Humanos, por exemplo. Mas também há exuberância da diferença, com os imigrantes, os indígenas ou os activistas de questões de género.

Movimentos sociais em Portugal

Antes da revolução democrática de 25 de Abril de 1974 haveria movimentos sociais em Portugal? Deus, Pátria e Autoridade era um mote de gente entusiasmada que cirandava em torno de Salazar e que lhe gritava vivas em salas apinhadas, em resposta a discursos políticos. Fado, futebol e Fátima era uma reinterpretação do mesmo slogan, pensado pela oposição para denunciar a alienação popular, entusiasmada com certas formas culturais, no tempo em que eram proibidos ajuntamentos de mais de duas pessoas, por razões políticas, para evitar conspirações.

A revolução dos cravos teve várias fases: a) Todos estávamos com pressa de nos encontrarmos e por isso corríamos uns para os outros, sem sabermos exactamente com quem estaria previsto que nos encontrássemos. Isto durou muito tempo, vários dias, eventualmente meses. Para muitos de nós deveria ter demorado anos. Da ressaca da revolução, até hoje, ficou no povo português a noção de que discutir é divergir e dessolidarizar-se. Ficou um ódio profundo à política, que vinha do salazarismo, continuou na revolução e, mais tarde, no consenso do discurso único global.

A revolução em estado puro durou pelo menos, uma semana, até ao primeiro 1º de Maio após o 25 de Abril de 1974, quando literalmente todos, cada um por si, se encontraram, sob a forma de torrentes vindas de todos os lados, no estádio lisboeta a partir de então conhecido pelo nome de Primeiro de Maio. Só depois vieram as discussões sobre o que fazer, e as divisões. Até que em 25 de Novembro de 1975 a situação política se normalizou, isto é, a experiência do entusiasmo passou a ser sentida como um logro,

como uma conspiração, como uma ilusão, como um abuso, como se fosse demoníaca, boa apenas para rituais mas não para o dia-a-dia. Movimentos sociais só a dois, parecem ter pensado os portugueses.

A ressaca revolucionária, aprender a viver numa sociedade normalizada, uma vida normalizada, durou bastante mais tempo do que o tempo da revolução. E os esforços para o conseguir não foram menores. Em vez de expansão apaixonada da vida e do tempo alimentada pelas utopias, contenção, contenção, contenção, por vezes até à loucura (literalmente; do tipo de loucura tratada nos manicómios). Sempre e em qualquer caso descobrindo em cada um de nós as competências mais apropriadas às novas oportunidades oferecidas pelas novas circunstâncias, sem perder de vista a felicidade hedonista, em vez da felicidade própria do sacrifício revolucionário.

Hoje em dia, Portugal é das sociedades europeias menos socialmente activas, se contarmos o número das actividades e activistas das associações e a sua independência relativamente às instituições. As associações existentes, na sua grande maioria, estão directamente alinhadas com interesses estratégicos da Igreja Católica, de associações secretas, de partidos políticos nacionais ou locais, de organismos de Estado, orientadas à captação de recursos e muito menos à produção de ideias ou ideais inovadores, em função das respectivas experiências concretas. Tal como acontece noutros sectores da vida portuguesa, incluindo e a começar pela vida económica e pelos mercados, a dependência do Estado e dos partidos – ou melhor, de quem domine os partidos, frequentemente imaginados como seitas e associações secretas.

Em Portugal, por outro lado, emerge um desejo latente de ver transformado o cenário social, como se se vivesse um pesadelo (a chamada depressão nacional)[5] e apenas

[5] "(…) Nós temos que mudar. Um novo governante com os mesmos portugueses nada poderá fazer. Está muito claro… Somos nós que temos que mudar. Sim, creio que isto encaixa muito bem em tudo o que anda a nos acontecer: desculpamos a mediocridade de programas de televisão nefastos e francamente tolerantes com o fracasso. É a indústria da desculpa e da estupidez. Agora, depois desta mensagem, francamente decidi procurar o responsável, não para castigá-lo, senão para exigir-lhe (sim, exigir-lhe) que melhore seu comportamento e que não se faça de mouco, de desentendido. Sim, decidi procurar o responsável e ESTOU SEGURO QUE O ENCONTRAREI QUANDO ME OLHAR NO ESPELHO.
AÍ ESTÁ. NÃO PRECISO PROCURÁ-LO EM OUTRO LADO.
E você, o que pensa?.... MEDITE!" crónica do intelectual colunista e conselheiro do primeiro-ministro Eduardo Prado Coelho no jornal *Público* citado em http://patinar-artistico.blogspot.com/2005/11/olhar-no-espelho.html, 2008-06-14.

restasse a esperança desesperada de que o fundo mudasse magicamente (a chamada euforia provocada pelas grandes obras públicas, tipo auto-estradas, rotundas, Expos ou Euros). Um pouco como se julga que terá acontecido 34 anos antes, na revolução redentora: algum herói, qual D. Sebastião, no caso o movimento dos capitães fartos de guerra, nos possa recomendar um caminho mais fértil, mas sem exigir de cada um de nós qualquer iniciativa que não seja apoiar os novos vencedores. É disso sinal, por exemplo, a luta contra a corrupção, considerada por alguns como o principal desígnio para a modernização do país. Perante a indignação pública face às sucessivas notícias e as desculpas esfarrapadas, a incompetência dos órgãos de justiça, a falta de vontade política, responde-se com anedotas trocadas (agora por internet) e por uma continuidade das práticas de mexer os cordelinhos, como escreve Luís de Sousa (2008). Outro sinal é os avisos políticos de risco de convulsões sociais por parte de gente próxima dos poderes e da governação que dirigem o país com índices de desigualdade sociais das mais altas da Europa, em contraste com o crescimento económico cada vez mais distante da média europeia.

Os portugueses viveram num espaço de tempo mais curto os estados de espírito que marcaram na Europa a viragem dos anos 60 para os anos 80, passando pelos revolucionários anos 70. A ditadura não evitou a chegada dos ventos de mudança cultural induzida pelos movimentos espontâneos de juventude, mas reprimiu a sua expressão pública e política. Só em 1974 essa repressão acabou. As questões da tomada do poder, ao contrário do espírito libertário dos hippies ou dos movimentos estudantis de outros países europeus, ocuparam as vidas dos activistas, recompensados frequentemente com lugares no Estado, entretanto esvaziado do poder fascista em debandada. Em 25 de Novembro de 1975 fez-se o acordo de regime que ainda perdura actualmente: consensos conspirativos ao centro, longe das multidões, em função dos poderes fácticos e dos caciquismos locais (de que a governação da Madeira é o exemplo máximo) e a tolerância para com os comunistas nos sindicatos, nas autarquias alentejanas e no parlamento. A modernização induzida pela entrada na Comunidade Europeia, em 1986, alimentou tanto o fácil sucesso dos políticos democráticos – que dizem deles próprios o pior, quando se trata de avaliar as suas qualidades – como as tendências oligárquicas de captura do poder, evidentes no fisco – auto-declarado

incompetente, durante décadas, para cobrar impostos aos empresários fraudulentos – ou no sector da justiça – considerado frequentemente como o maior travão ao desenvolvimento económico do país, para além de ser acusado de não cumprir os desígnios de regulação de um estado de direito. [6]

Para além das estradas e das grandes obras públicas, o serviço nacional de saúde é um sucesso da democracia em Portugal. Os resultados da democratização dos acessos ao ensino e à justiça foram os maiores fracassos. Curiosamente a Ordem dos Médicos manteve-se rigorosamente corporativa e controladora dos certificados profissionais, ao ponto de haver hoje falta de pessoal médico no país, ao passo que tanto no ensino como na justiça as necessidades de crescimento foram resolvidas minimizando os controlos de qualidade e maximizando o espírito corporativo.[7]

Teoria dos movimentos sociais

O que é que são, e não são, então, movimentos sociais, à luz da experiência social portuguesa? À luz das teorias sociais disponíveis?

A primeira vez que me lembro de ter colocado a questão foi a propósito das queixas, ainda hoje em circulação, contra o desperdício da energia e da paixão das multidões no futebol. Se canalizadas para a política, argumentaram sectores de esquerda, poderiam ser mais úteis para apoiar a transformação social. Mais úteis para a política que agradaria o meu interlocutor (presume-se não se estarem a referir aos casos dos neo-nazis disfarçados de *holligans*), sem colocar a hipótese de o futebol poder estar a canalizar maus instintos, digamos assim, para zonas de neutralização social, como é

[6] O Bastonário da Ordem dos Advogados diz repetida e publicamente que é nas sessões dos tribunais onde os direitos dos cidadãos e dos advogados menos são respeitados. Os tribunais portugueses têm interpretado a ofensa da honra de personagens poderosos como um limite à liberdade de expressão, em particular dos jornalistas, de modo reiteradamente condenado pelo Tribunal Europeu dos Direitos do Homem. A própria constituição portuguesa sugere a subversão do direito à liberdade de expressão e informação quando no artigo 37º alínea 3 afirma "As infracções cometidas no exercício destes direitos ficam submetidas aos princípios gerais de direito criminal (...)", lembrando as práticas legislativas salazaristas em que a cada direito correspondia uma excepção que inviabilizava, na prática, os direitos, afinal apenas "para inglês ver".

[7] A prova disso é, por exemplo, a impunidade da corrupção endémica bem evidente na auto-declarada impossibilidade de fazer respeitar o segredo de justiça por parte das instituições judiciais competentes, ou a defesa sindical de agentes do Estado acusados de tortura.

argumentado quanto ao facto de poder tirar "muídos da rua". O que, a acontecer, seria uma coisa melhor do que lhes parecia à primeira vista.

As transformações sociais, vimos anteriormente, não são todas protagonizadas por movimentos sociais. Os movimentos sociais, por sua vez, nem sempre implicam transformações. Por outro lado, a tentação de descobrir movimentos sociais sempre que haja uma aglomeração de pessoas terá de ser contida. A definição "partidária" de movimentos sociais, mais restrita e política, como a do jovem Touraine aqui recordada, trata disso mesmo. Começa por se dirigir a acções que reclamam a designação de movimento para intervenção transformadora da sociedade e exige-se-lhes credenciais de pertinência e eficácia. Estranhar-se-á a ausência de tais actores em certas crises transformadoras. Daí a pergunta: será que deixaram de existir?

Em vez disso, se se tomar a definição de Alberoni, os entusiasmos poderão ser descobertos muitos, mais ou menos organizados, mais ou menos socialmente extensos, em moles ou em redes, o que não quer dizer terem influência super-estrutural ou transformadora das instituições no sentido formal e directo. Terão apenas, e não será pouco, influência na transformação da vida das pessoas entusiasmadas e em todas as pessoas influenciadas por elas. Influências boas, algumas, e outras más.

Serão o capitalismo, as suas tecnologias ou o espírito do capitalismo, nas suas diversas metamorfoses, movimentos sociais? E o nazismo: foi capaz de federar movimentos sociais? Porque não pode acontecer movimentos sociais atingirem formas de protagonismo político historicamente relevantes e serem eticamente reprováveis (os casos dos totalitarismos soviético ou chinês)? Caberá ao sociólogo ser também juíz da história? Em alternativa, teremos de admitir poderem ser os movimentos sociais negativos para a humanidade?

As teorias sociológicas mais partidarizadas tendem a responder que os movimentos sociais têm direcções políticas específicas anti-autoritárias e populares incompatíveis com a promoção do capitalismo ou da direita. Por outro lado, se se considerarem serem os movimentos sociais expressões específicas da vitalidade humana, poderá sempre haverá aspectos de qualquer movimento social, a revelar empiricamente em cada caso, susceptíveis de serem interpretados como negativos.

Noutra perspectiva, a adopção do telemóvel não é tomada como uma consequência de um movimento social, mas sim de uma onda consumista, que todavia mudou o quotidiano e os instrumentos de mobilização política, como a Internet. Antes disso, as migrações do campo para a cidade não foram consideradas movimentos sociais, como ainda hoje os movimentos migratórios também não o são. Todavia, não terá sido a divulgação da ética do trabalho junto dessas populações uma das maiores transformações caracterizadoras do mundo moderno?

As manifestações pela independência de Timor Lorosea em Lisboa foram emergências de um movimento social? Se sim, que programa de subversão política defendiam? Se não, como realizaram uma tal influência política que se tornou tão relevante na luta dos timorenses pela sua independência, do outro lado do mundo?

Os campos de refugiados na Palestina são, em si mesmo, movimentos sociais? Ou são tão só fonte inesgotável de movimentos sociais?

O sociólogo deve predispor-se, sem preconceitos, a seguir o actor social, seja ele um simples individuo à procura de formas de exprimir o seu entusiasmo emergente, seja um grupo extenso de pessoas com formas próprias de auto-reconhecimento capazes de provocaram auto-satisfação e produzirem identidades paulatinamente incorporadas e difundidas socialmente, mesmo se nunca chegam a tomar politicamente o poder de uma ou de todas as instituições.

Não há uma continuidade ou apenas uma diferença de ênfase nas teorias sociais sobre os movimentos sociais aqui tratadas. Há diferentes entendimentos do que seja a função do conhecimento sociológico – num caso deve tomar partido, noutro caso deve revelar a natureza humana – e do seu valor epistemológico – avaliar as consequências das acções sociais, num caso, valorizar as vivências humanas, no outro.

A teoria social apresenta-se frequentemente composta de uma parte estática – o estudo do presente, como sociografia fora da história – e de uma parte dinâmica – a comparação de sociografias separadas no tempo apresentadas como tendências sociais.

Tabela 2. Estáticas versus dinâmicas sociais

Estática	Dinâmica
Instituições	Diferenciação
Anomia	Disfunções
Classes	Espírito do capitalismo ou revolucionário
Civilização	Repugnância perante a violência
Informação	Conhecimento
Privado	Público
– intensas e rotineiras –	– profissionais ou políticas –
Habitus	Associação e acção racionais

Esta aproximação mecânica às realidades sociais cria problemas de compreensão dos modos de articulação entre as vidas privadas e as vidas públicas. Problemas que não são inocentes. Pois desconsideram as desigualdades sociais de base (remetida para o foro privado, da responsabilidade da família ou do individuo) para afirmar uma igualdade formal (no espaço público alegadamente racional e livre de coersões) como se fossem realidades distintas: a micro e a macro sociologia.

A teoria do estado-nascente permite-nos romper com as especializações espacio-temporais e o espartilhamento mecânico, de facto institucional, da vida social. O actor social emergente, porque entusiasmado, é motor potencial de movimento social na medida em que não respeita os espartilhos institucionais. Espartilhos esses em parte materiais e noutra parte virtuais ou ideológicos. O actor social dispõe-se, por natureza do seu estado, a experimentar novos e velhos caminhos, indiferenciadamente, para o bem ou para o mal. É uma necessidade pessoal recorrente. Eventualmente canalizável através de instituições ou através de ideologias ou através de movimentos sociais socialmente visíveis e, eventualmente, politicamente perturbadores.

Considerações finais

Em sociedades abertas à institucionalização de todos os movimentos sociais, como aquelas que vivemos no Ocidente actualmente, imaginar os movimentos sociais oponíveis (em vez de suportes e alimentos) das instituições é falhar o essencial.

O movimento operário ajudou a transformar o Estado liberal em Estado Social, tendo este adquirido competências de acolhimento regulado dos movimentos sociais. Nas condições actuais, os movimentos sociais são, pois, institucionalizados precocemente. Não dispõe do tempo de maturação na luta que, no século XIX, tiveram os movimentos de trabalhadores. Em piores condições, portanto, para adquirirem *momentum* capaz de pôr em causa, de uma só vez, todas as instituições ao mesmo tempo. E, depois, porque fazê-lo ou desejá-lo, depois da experiência histórica do século XX?

A revolução dos cravos, com meia dúzia de mortes directamente imputáveis às actividades politico-militares, é o protótipo da revolução violenta no período dos anos setenta do século XX, época que viu cair muitas ditaduras no Sul da Europa e na América Latina de forma ainda mais pacífica. É incomparável a violência implicada na onda democratizadora iniciada com a revolução portuguesa com a que ocorreu na sequência das actividades revolucionárias na Europa no mudar de século XVIII para o XIX e se continuou no século XX, até 1945. Por outro lado, são também oponíveis o espírito esperançoso e de progresso que o século XIX legou ao século XX e o espírito depressivo e descrente, desencantado e defensivo, com que o Ocidente entrou no século XXI.

Aos movimentos sociais, principalmente nos países mais desenvolvidos, são oferecidas oportunidades de institucionalização local, nacional, regional, global. Uma das principais disputas estratégicas dentro dos movimentos sociais é, precisamente, a que suporta a decisão de recolher, ou não, fundos públicos ou privados. Ter melhores condições materiais de realização dos objectivos compensará, em termos de eficácia, as condições de controlo que vêm com os fundos? São tais condições impeditivas do amadurecimento autónomo dos movimentos sociais, eventualmente subversivos da ordem estabelecida?

Será que os movimentos sociais deixaram de ocorrer, à medida que são substituídos por redes de ONG´s subsidiárias de desejos filantrópicos, diplomáticos, alternativos, defensivos, revolucionários, como as que são atraídas pelo Fórum Social Mundial? A abertura do Estado Social à institucionalização dos movimentos sociais, manifestada também pelas redes transnacionais de ONG sediadas nas Nações Unidas ou em Bruxelas (na esperança de vir a ser possível constituir uma governança global) acabou com as possibilidades de sucesso subversivo dos movimentos sociais?

A resposta a estas perguntas depende da história que vier a viver-se, mas também depende do que se entenda por movimentos sociais.

Há, no conceito de movimentos sociais, um revivalismo dos tempos heróicos comunitários – mortíferos e violentos – dos movimentos operários espontâneos, feitos de culturas fusionais, como lhes chamou Sainsaulieu (1988). Os movimentos sociais das revoluções sem sangue, como foram o Maio de 68 ou as revoluções democráticas no Sul da Europa e da América Latina, nos anos 70 do século XX, não são o anúncio do progresso a abrir-se: são, tão só, a ilusão de um retomar de alguns dos países em vias de desenvolvimento nos caminhos já prosseguidos pelos povos dos países mais desenvolvidos. A vontade de realização da igualdade do século XIX é agora, sobretudo, a necessidade de viver a liberdade, a cultura democrática a que se referiu Sainsaulieu como sendo características das novas classes profissionais emergentes a partir dos anos 70 do século passado.

Os movimentos estudantis, feministas ou ecologistas, embora o tenham tentado, não instituíram formas comunitárias alternativas, como fizeram os operários. Dispersaram-se e difundiram-se em práticas culturais "todas diferentes, todas iguais". Procuraram influenciar todos os poderes, em vez de constituírem partidos à parte. Promoveram mudanças, não organizaram a transformação social. Querem reformas, não protagonizam a revolução.

Os movimentos sociais com impacto histórico directo na reestruturação dos sistemas de instituições não existem, hoje em dia.[8] Reclamam contra contradições evidentes mas, ao

[8] Há movimentos camponeses, como o movimentos sem terra brasileiro ou o de Chiapas, e outros, que poderão vir a ser transformadores. Mas não o foram até agora a nível institucional.

mesmo tempo, ideologicamente escamoteadas da vida social: faz sentido estigmatizar minorias, como as mulheres ou os camponeses ou etnias? Faz sentido arriscar o meio ambiente propício à vida humana, quando não o sabemos reproduzir? Faz sentido afastar os jovens, até uma idade cada vez mais avançada, dos lugares sociais onde se trabalham as estruturas sociais? Como recuperar a dignidade humana perdida a respeito dos genocídios de indígenas nas Américas? Porque se continuam a discriminar pessoas por causa da sua orientação sexual?

Os actuais movimentos sociais não parecem vocacionados à hegemonia histórica. São expressão organizada de dúvidas existenciais profundas e mobilizam a espontaneidade dos descontentes e dos entusiasmados, de modo a institucionalizar as respectivas energias. Reconhecem-se como diferentes e com iguais direitos ao exercício da cidadania entre si, e, sobretudo, iguais direitos comparados com os políticos profissionais.

Os movimentos sociais sempre resultaram, espontaneamente, da natureza socializante das pessoas, ligadas umas às outras por desejos de acção social e individual. Em raras ocasiões históricas, extensas federações de muitos movimentos sociais foram a força motriz de transformações radicais das estruturas sociais. A esmagadora maioria dos movimentos sociais são estruturalmente irrelevantes, no imediato. Mas mesmo o mais pequeno deles – como um enamoramento de que nasça uma criança – pode revelar-se mais ou menos importante, a prazo, consoante as tendências demográficas da época e/ou o protagonismo histórico do rebento.

O conceito de movimento social de Francesco Alberoni, mais sociológico que político, mais psicológico que institucional, permite-nos evitar avaliações morais ou políticas *a priori* dos resultados futuros dos factos presentes, difíceis de prever. O conceito de movimento social como uma dinâmica social gerada por encontros espontâneos de pessoas em estado-nascente (uma forma de estar não planeada mas que disperta fortes intencionadades) abre perspectivas de desenvolvimento da teoria social que não tem sido suficientemente exploradas.

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Biografia

Docente do ISCTE desde 1985, nascido em Lisboa em 1956, doutorado e agregado em Sociologia em 1996 e 2004 respectivamente. Investigador do Centro de Investigação e Estudos de Sociologia, CIES. Coordenador dos mestrados Risco, Trauma e Sociedade e também Instituições e Justiça Social, Gestão e Desenvolvimento, no ISCTE. Membro da Associação Contra a Exclusão pelo Desenvolvimento/ACED, http://iscte.pt/~aced/ACED, iniciativa de pessoas reclusas para romperem o cerco que as inibe de exercer os direitos de livre expressão.

Organizador dos livros Prisões na Europa – um debate que apenas começa e Ciências de Emergência, co-autor com António Alte Pinho do livro Vozes contra o silêncio – movimentos sociais nas prisões portuguesas. Autor dos livros de sociologia Espírito Proibicionista (ensaio), Espírito de Submissão (monografia) e Sociologia da Instabilidade (síntese didáctica), onde se abordam temas como as naturezas sociais, os estados-de-espírito sociais, crítica da teoria social.

António Pedro Dores, PhD, Professor of Sociology at Lisbon University (ISCTE) and fellow researcher at CIES/ISCTE. Born in 1956, he is director of two master degrees in social science on Risk, Trauma and Society and on Justice and Social Institutions. He is founder member of Human Rights NGO concerning prison issues, built by inmates in Portugal, 1997, ACED http://iscte.pt/~aced/ACED. He is organizer of two books, Prisons in Europe and Ciências de Emergência. He is author of other books: Vozes contra o silêncio – movimentos sociais nas prisões portuguesas with António Alte Pinho, about prison struggles about justice, Espírito Proibicionista (sociology essay), Espírito de Submissão (sociological monograph about representations of justice in immigrant populations in Lisbon) e Sociologia da Instabilidade (didactics critical presentation of social theory).

WWW: http://home.iscte.pt/~apad

email: antonio.dores@iscte.pt

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Action note

'Wor Diary': a case of D.I.Y. alternative history

Michael Duckett

Introduction

> "A group of people from Newcastle have created a 2008 diary that revels in our region's rebellious history.
>
> This is a not for profit project to share forgotten stories of love and protest. We hope you get a copy and get inspired. Make history in 2008 and feature in future diaries!"

In this way the Wor Diary[1] website announced the project which I present in this piece as a form of D.I.Y. alternative history.

Description

As the publicity for Wor Diary explained, "We have researched local archives and personal collections to get 3 historical dates for every day of the year, based on Tyneside's inspiring history of protest, rebellion, mutual aid and dignity. (Actually we've got lots more but will have to be brutal editors!)" The project was therefore born of an intention to research and remember this local history, and to bring it alive into the present day:

> "From Suffragettes burning down railway stations before World War 1, to the Winlaton iron manufacturers arming the crowd in order to prevent another 'Peterloo' taking place on Tyneside, this is the underground history that is rarely acknowledged. Read of the dreams of long-forgotten pioneers, the determination of individuals fighting tyranny in all its forms, and the desperate struggles of the starving, without which we would not have the freedoms we have today."

[1] See part 1 below.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne is the largest city in the North East of England, and has a strong industrial history and a reasonably well-known 'official' storyline of coalmining, shipbuilding & football. It also has, like most places on the planet, an alternative history - a forgotten and edited-out history of rebels, visionaries, dreamers and fighters. We ourselves, a group of friends who had first met through local protests, direct actions and green/peace/anarchist/solidarity networks, had only a limited knowledge of past struggles. Wor Diary was an attempt to capture some fragments of this underground history – to snatch back some of the histories that were not properly recorded, the futures that could have been but weren't (not yet).

The manner in which we conducted this research, shared it around our social circles, and published it for a wider readership, was characterised by non-professionalism, enthusiasm, voluntary effort and a form of open-ended participation. In this 'action note' I wish to relate the character of this effort at alternative local history, as a form of radical D.I.Y. praxis! In this form, character may be more important than efficiency; the quality of participation is prioritised over quantitative impact: the diary was not a means to an end, but a means that itself sought to be as rewarding, free, sociable & educational as possible. I shall detail four facets of this ethos further: (1) locality, (2) participation, (3) empowering history and (4) D.I.Y. aesthetics.

1. Locality

First of all, a note on regional identity and idiosyncrasy. 'Wor' is a local pronunciation of 'our'. It is just one of the terms that would not be easily understood by an outsider. Similarly, the first page declared that the diary was “produced by marras for marras”, ‘marra’ being an old pit term for ‘mate’, with strong (though fading) local associations of real, life-or-death support that would keep men alive down the region’s coal mines.

These terms, and almost all of the historical events recorded – personalities, locations, struggles – become opaque and meaningless to anyone lacking some regional knowledge. But the whole purpose of the diary was to record specifically local events - individuals who are not relevant to everybody already; locations which make up our intimate knowledge of the world. Forgotten things, and things that are

obscure from a distance - but which happened here. And here matters. The place where you stand is important. It is where people have lived and died and dreamed and fought (we can name some of them). It is where me and you continue to live, die, dream, fight (we can give you some tips).

2. Participation

> "Each month is drawn by a different person/household/family, with September produced during a participatory event at the Star & Shadow cinema"

The two of us who initiated the project tried from the outset to get as many people involved as possible. A couple sat with us as we trawled through historical documents; a handful contributed dates from their own knowledge or archive; and up to fifty people took an active hand in producing the diary itself.

How many people *were* involved? This is an interesting calculation, if you include all members of a family (the youngest artist was two, another contributor was heavily pregnant with the child born in between printing and distributing). One guy, the housemate of more fully involved participants, contributed in just one way: delivering a sample diary to the local newspaper offices in town, where an interested journalist then gave us a full page three advert (*Newcastle Evening Chronicle* 17.12.2007). I do not consider the journalist to be 'part' of it, but the guy who delivered the sample diary would be on my list.

Different people designed & drew the pages for different months, & within the constraints of a set diary-view format, they were free to add pictures, their own words & ideas in their own idiom and handwriting. This means that every week brings a surprise, a refreshing change of style. Some of it is illegible; much of the references are obscure; there are spelling mistakes and typos on almost every page and the format can be bewildering - and actually quite hard to use as a diary! But many people loved that quirky, individual, diverse character. For example, the scriber of the July weeks was Italian, but if not all readers could interpret her anti-pope slogans or recall who Carlo Giuliani was, it didn't matter because her words were a decoration on that page, to be dipped into if you wished, or skipped over as a back ground aesthetic when not.

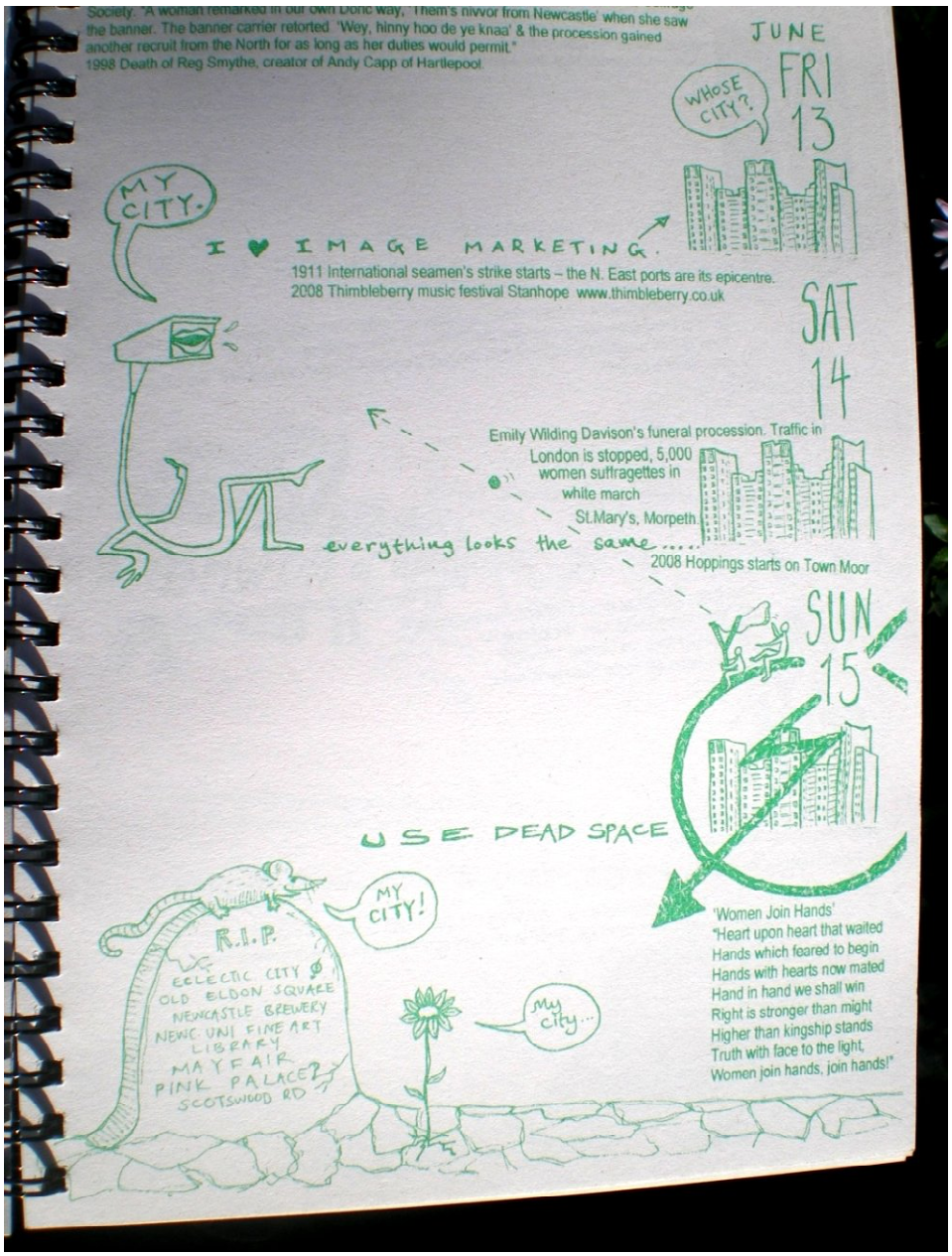

Figure 1. Sample page – 21 by 15 cm (A5)

When I have asked people which weeks were their favourites, they have named completely different weeks, for reasons that I would not have anticipated. Several people do not use the diary as a diary, but have said they keep it on their desk just to read the week's entries in the morning. I heard of a country doctor who was reading out the historical entries to his patients. In a way, it is gratifying to not know how many people have appreciated or engaged with Wor Diary. We never set out with a fixed plan, and we were always open to new contributions, and new interpretations of

how things should be done. I would like to think that more people were involved than I myself know, just as more people bought and used the diary than I ever expected.

3. Local History, & Making History

> "We hope the diary will inspire a greater sense of possibility and of the real history of struggles and freedoms that we have inherited. Not history to put on the shelf, but to inform everyday life. Never more will we pass that corner and forget it was where the 'witches' were hanged, or drink in that pub and forget the songs that once were sung against the British Empire and for the victory of the Mahdi army."

Interface Journal is due to be launched on 15th January. On this day in history, in the small spot on the earth known as Newcastle-upon-Tyne, the following took place:

> 1814 The Tyne freezes. The first onto the ice is a Dutchman with beef bones tied to his shoes for skates, followed by crowds of locals. It stays frozen for 3 weeks, with stalls constructed and fires lit on top.
>
> 1871. Death of John Fife, who gained popularity as a radical opponent of Lord Londonderry's use of cavalry against peaceful meetings, but in 1838 as Mayor of the new town council he himself called out the troops on Chartist gatherings. Archetypal bastard politician.
>
> 1939 Newcastle City Hall, memorial for the north-easterners who fought Fascism in Spain

As amateur historians, we found it was harder to find dates for more recent events (1960s onwards), because there are easily accessed secondary sources for older dates, and the older 'canon' of local radical history is fairly firmly established (the radical MP Joseph Cowen; the leaders of the Chopwell miners; suffragettes such as Emily Wilding Davies). This meant that there was a relative paucity of dates for late-twentieth century issues such as animal rights and gender politics. It was also true that 'dramatic' (violent) events prove easy to date and allowed us to quickly decide 'let's put that in', whereas meetings, gatherings, and longer-term campaigns do not suggest themselves in such an obvious way. Although our history would be uneven, incomplete, and even somewhat inaccurate, it was a very illuminating and gratifying

process to look through the local history books, newspapers and journal articles to discover our own radical heritage.

In your neighbourhood, in everyone's location, amazing, lovely, tragic or traumatic things have taken place, aspects of struggle and power and of life. Not every country has such a detailed historical record as Newcastle, but everywhere the sentiment is true that, as a page at the start of November puts it:

> "Today: Jean did her neighbours shopping
> Bob cleaned snow off the pavement
> Billy did his ill friend's paper round
> Joe got up early to hear the dawn chorus
> Baby Isaac giggled at his book
> Loads of people ate birthday cake
> The papers are full of what 'celebrities' & politicians do or think is important.
> Our lives are full of joy and enthusiasm not fit for their headlines, but these are what makes our lives GREAT."

This sentiment was taken from a spoof paper produced in Newcastle in 2004 & distributed for free at Metro stations. This kind of ephemeral source would rarely make the historical record. The author of the sentiment participated in Wor Diary but did not know his words were being included.

We made the ‘empowering’ intention of the diary explicit in pages which we added to the front and back, devoted to non-diary information. Again, these were opened up to anybody in our political and social circles who felt there was something useful to be shared. In the end, they contained a unique mix of the diary-esque and the idiosyncratically local:

1. a welcome: "Hopefully it'll help inspire more dates to be remembered by future generations".
2. 2008 & 2009 dates at a glance.
3. a 'femstrual' calendar on which to plot period cycles.
4. two pages about 'their' statues (of war and imperialism) and 'wor' statues;

5. two pages urging a break from the everyday and breaking out of the role of passive consumer" such as forming co-ops, growing your own food & 'skipping' food;
6. a poem commemorating the horrors of the coal industry, 'Close the Coalhouse Door' by Alex Glasgow;
7. and for January 1st a fuller list of all the dates we found for that one day of the year, before editing, to demonstrate how many inspirational or strange things happen each day.
8. a list of places locally where more historical information could be found (libraries rather than books);
9. a personal manifesto by one participant declaring her intention in 2008 to express herself on the advertising-dominated walls of the city;
10. two pages of tips on organising a successful event or campaigning;
11. five pages of local contacts for everything from sexual health to credit unions to anarchist music collectives;
12. a page remembering one local visionary, Thomas Spence;
13. a timetable for the number 12 bus;
14. a list of colliery disasters and a map of the metro;
15. advice on "looking after ourselves & each other",
16. and blank pages for notes.

The back cover of the diary is designed as a face mask to be cut out once the diary is used: "Your face is recorded on CCTV cameras hundreds of times a day ... Why not reclaim your privacy with this lovely, easy-to-use mask?" On the first batch of diaries, elastic bookmarks were provided which would also serve to hold the mask on, and crayons were provided to encourage people to decorate their own diary in their own unique style.

4. D.I.Y. Style

Wor Diary was done in a deliberately amateur and diverse style, and was rushed to printing without any corrections or ‘smoothing out’ of the design. In copying our

format from the Californian 'Slingshot' diaries, we also consciously chose to eschew mainstream aesthetics, computerisation or neat usability. Instead, Wor Diary partook of a form of 'zine' aesthetics, which is not to everyone's taste and is, politically, looked-down upon by more 'serious' revolutionaries or campaigners who want to change the world all together, on a large scale.

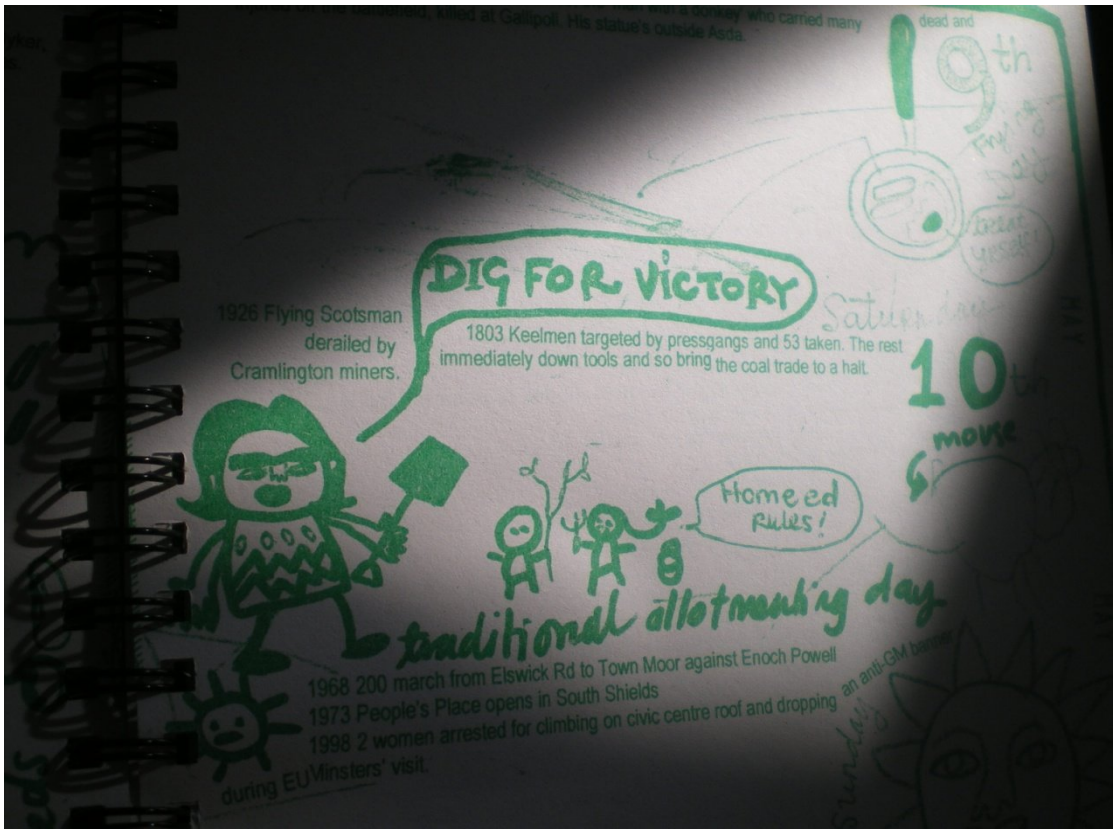

Figure 2: Fragment of a family-drawn page.

Zines are personally-produced by enthusiasts who wish to share their hobbies, their opinions, their diaries or their politics with like-minded souls. They are cheap and small-scale, wilfully obscure and non-mainstream. They inspire me for keeping hold of the personal, the authentic and the hand-drawn, and for taking on the imprint of social life – they collect fingerprints and coffee stains in a way that a 'blog' never does. Above all, they are about specific experience and not about universalising slogans or glossy mass-manufacture. Wor Diary declared its affiliation to this cultural form, on a hand-scrawled poster at the launch event, written on an unfolded cardboard box:

> "Why DIY?

> On the very 1st page of Wor Diary there is a mistake, clumsily corrected.
> We could've airbrushed it, done the whole thing on computer, even 'paid a professional'.
> We didn't, we did it worselves, amateur, hurried, loving, as part of our real lived lives.
>
> Why?
>
> Coz
>
> (1) The World is not made of Plastic.
> It IS made of trees, kittens*, coffee spills, texture & smudges.
> So this is what wor diary LOOKS like it's made of.
> * At least 6 cats have rubbed + walked on the pages, printer & laps of wor diary.
>
> (2) It's NOT OUR JOB!
> Jobs = paid, punctual, dull, organised, efficient.
> Life = yours, fun, enthusiastic, messy, hungover, unfinished.
> Wor diary is a product of our real, lived, joyfull untidy existence."

Process

The diary was launched with a 'pub quiz' in a volunteer-run cinema which currently serves as the most important free, radical space in Newcastle (www.starandshadow.org.uk). This pub quiz further served to spread our stories of alternative history: “Instead of being quizzed on hits from the 1960's you will be asked about riots from the 1860's." Like every part of the diary's process, it also partook of our politics to some extent: "Entry will probably be free to those who have been put in cells more times than Thomas Spence, or whose very existence has been made 'illegal' by the current violence of law (eg. 'failed asylum seekers', anyone breaking bail conditions, etc...)"

The diary was distributed and sold through friends and relatives, and made publicly available at outlets "chosen for their independent character and/or shared ethos with Wor Diary. Get your Christmas presents there instead of HMV & Waterstones." We also sold the diary at stalls which we set up at 16 local gigs & D.I.Y. events - often only selling one or no diaries, but having a presence and 'being at' the events, in the scene, feeling part of Newcastle.

I disagreed with some people who wanted to use the diary as a fundraiser, and argued that it should be kept at cost-price to reflect the D.I.Y. ethos, and also to ensure that it was bought & used - a form of propaganda as much as it is a product. In the end, the 500 we printed (at an anarchist workers co-op in a different city) were quickly bought up, even before the local paper advertised them. We didn't realise we had created a successful formula until it was too late to print any more!

Epilogue: 2009

We never designed 'Wor Diary' as our political banner or group identity, and we made no efforts to make the project consistent or long-term. Instead, we lazily imagined that the idea could take off and be taken on by other people, so that perhaps every year would see a different diary made in a different UK city, filled with obscure information about that locality, researched and created by residents there. But enough people enjoyed and appreciated the 2008 Wor Diary that, in August, one participant circulated an email saying 'I want to do Wor Diary again'. A meeting was then organised, and as I write we are in the middle of putting it together for a second time. The other original creator of the idea insisted that neither he nor I should be in charge this year, and so another participant has the responsibility of chasing up contributions, arranging meetings and so on. I have found it challenging to relinquish control, when I know now how to do it better, but it is true to keeping the participation genuinely open.

In many ways 2009 will keep the same format and ethos, and we have tried to improve participation by, this year, getting every single week of the year drawn by a different person. There is also the problem, however, of such an informal and loose project being pulled in different directions by those who find some part of it interesting. The feedback and criticism we got disagreed in the things we should build upon and the things we should drop. A majority wanted a more readable, less

cluttered format but, with no editorship, this is not proving such an easily realised improvement! If a contributor provides a page that is just as cluttered as last year, but fits the rough brief they were given, then who are we to white-out parts of their contribution?

The biggest upset for some people was having a meat recipe contributed to the 2008 diary by one participant – who designed the recipe herself, did not mean to cause offence, & provided a vegan alternative. Yet this inclusion ruined the diary for a group of other participants, and they asked us to guarantee that it would not happen again. I refused at first, as I did not feel I had the right to take on an editorial role. Instead, I encouraged them to talk to the offending participants. But in the end we have arranged to have one group meeting before we print the diary, so that anyone with concerns can come along and, if it has to happen, any censorship will at least be done in a group process.

All quotes come from the Wor Diary website in September 2008. www.wordiary.org.uk

About the author:

Michael Duckett is a zine-maker, eco-anarchist and an enthusiast of our rebellious history. His Phd with the University of Newcastle explored the contemporary forms of anarchist ideology that are expressed within activist dialogue - not the ideology that is found in a book, static and set out in dry perfection - but a part of everyday life, shared and dynamic and gaining its meaning directly from context. He works with children, and volunteers for community projects in Newcastle.
oldglen@gmail.com

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Action note

Alternative publishing experiences in Istanbul

Süreyyya Evren

I would like to base this 'action note' on our experiences of publishing anarchist materials in Istanbul in the last decade as an affinity group that mainly works on postanarchism. I will try to focus on two aspects of our experience.

First I would like to explain our position and our approach. Briefly, we have been actively working on a research and publication project in Istanbul from a poststructuralist anarchist perspective or we can say a postanarchist perspective. Of course, what we understand by these terms needs to be discussed in detail, but at the risk of simplifying we can say it has been a kind of updated pananarchism; an anarchism that is understood beyond the limits of politics and one which includes post-eurocentric non-modernistic elements, contemporary theoretical developments and culture in a broad sense which leads to a conception of an anarchism which grabs different fields and everyday life. When we are asked to summarize what we try to do, we simply describe it as a pursuit for heterodoxies in every possible field and an effort to enhance these fields of heterodoxies and challenge orthodoxies everywhere. And we make use of the works of contemporary philosophers like Foucault or Deleuze, so-called poststructuralists, and relating this body of theory to other sorts of political writings of people like Bakhtin or Franz Fanon. We try to develop an open methodology which doesn't hesitate to employ third world studies, art practices and art theory and political forms of activities. So although we had good relations with postanarchists of the English speaking world (like Todd May, Saul Newman and Lewis Call) we have developed a different path since we first made our postanarchist publications in mid-90s.

Secondly, I would like to give some details and show how we tried to apply different forms of media in different periods of our project. I will try to draw the advantages and disadvantages we found in various forms of publishing. I hope this will be a useful survey of diverse modes of publishing, which gives clues for various possibilities. The methods we

have been using for spreading and testing our political position will be evaluated together with their results.

Especially in the last 12 years, working as an affinity group of people who are interested in similar subjects, theoretical and political stances, we have passed through different alternative publication experiences. Here I would like to summarize and categorize these and then maybe compare and discuss possibilities.

We have had three main phases of alternative publishing.

1. The first period: Karasin Anarchist Collective.

Karasin Anarchist Collective was active between 1996 and 1998. It was a totally independent publishing period relying heavily on photocopy (xerox) magazines, newspapers, texts and pamphlets. No legal procedure was involved. As for the distribution of our publications we have used already existing networks of subcultural fanzine distribution; we also built a web site publishing everything we made so far in Karasin Anarchist Collective.

2. The second period: A period of '*détournement*' -Working inside other publications and media

The second period of our alternative publishing dates to the period between 2000 and 2003. We have worked inside already existing structures such as an established humanist literature magazine, a comics and culture magazine, a radio station and a publication house and continued to develop our postanarchist studies, combining them with different grounds and media.

3- The third period: Independent publishing and launching a separate legal magazine of our own – *Siyahi*.

That period was initiated in 2003 as an autonomous web site. After that we started to publish our magazine *Siyahi* devoted to focus on postanarchist thought in November 2004. In total, we have published 7 issues of *Siyahi*.

The first period: Karasin Anarchist Collective

Between 1996-1998, we called ourselves the KARASIN Anarchist Collective. And in the context of the Karasin project we published a photocopied (xerox) magazine, a photocopied newspaper and pamphlets. We also used photocopy for copying certain texts. In total we did 2 issues of the magazine, 3 issues of the newspaper and 11 pamphlets. Karasin Anarchist Collective (in some places we called ourselves the Karasin Working Group) was composed of a small core of a few people.[1]

Karasin was formed of people who were translating, writing, reading and discussing. I was active with a web site, photocopy magazine, photocopy newspaper, and pamphlets. But these were not its only activities. Long discussions had preceded our publications. As I remember it, a discussion period of nearly two years with different people came before publishing anything. We were having endless reflective talks about what we want to do. Before starting Karasin Anarchist Publications we did some works with the Karasin 'logo' in some events in literature and politics.

The first 'photocopy action' we did was against one of the most established famous Turkish novelists. We wanted to challenge an elitist advertising campaign which abused the cultural field to create a status distance, an event followed later by a total commercialization of the publishing field. The first action can be understood as an action against market determined literature/culture.

We published the first Karasin magazine on the 14th of April 1996. This was the day the Russian poet Mayakovski died. And although he was not an anarchist we had respect for him and his political stance and the gesture in this reference underlined our ties with literature as well.[2]

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[1] These people were Rahmi G. Ogdul, Bulent Usta, Fusun Kayra, Erden Kosova and Sureyyya Evren.
[2] At the same period I was working as an editor in Kabalci publishing house. This foreshadowed our understanding of 'détournement' which characterized our second period. While I was active with Karasin's anarchist photocopy magazines, newspapers and pamphlets with friends I was also working in this publication house and there I initiated the publication of Murray Bookchin's *The Philosophy of Social Ecology, Essays on Dialectical Naturalism*, translated into Turkish by our comrade Rahmi G. Öğdül. Rahmi also later translated other books related to anarchism and/or postanarchism: Peter Marshall's *William Blake: Visionary Anarchist*, 6:45 Books, 1997; Todd May's *The Political Philosophy of Poststructuralist Anarchism*, Ayrinti Books, 2000 and Hakim Bey's *TAZ*, Studyo Imge Books, 2002.
And as an editor in Kabalci Books, I also initiated a series of poetry books and we published Percy Shelley and William Blake.

Before Karasin, I personally had an experience with photocopy publishing already. With some friends, we had made photocopied books and magazines. Photocopying, in the early 1990s, was an important element of alternative publishing and alternative distribution for us. We had photocopied books and we even tried to distribute photocopied poems on the streets.

We had a completely fictive 'photocopy publication house' called the 'Zenci Kitaplar' (meaning 'Negro Books'). Of course there was nothing like that officially. We were photocopying literature books, stories and poems.

As the second action of Karasin Group, we duplicated an article of a very well known Turkish art critic as a form of protest. In that article the writer was talking about the necessity of the institution of police as such. As a result of our protest, which was only duplicating his article by stamping our logo on it, we triggered protests of fellow leftists directed to this critic.

After these two actions we started the pamphlets and Karasin magazine and turned our faces more to anarchism than literature.

The second issue of the KARASIN zine, 8 May 1997, was dedicated to the memory of the execution of Alexander Ulyanov who was Lenin's brother and who attempted to assassinate the Russian czar Alexander III. For us this dedication was also an indirect sign of our anti-Leninism.

The Karasin pamphlets we published included Sergey Neçayev's *Revolutionary Catechism*, Peter Kropotkin's *Anarchism in Socialist Evolution*, *Anarchism* and *On Order*, Mihail Bakunin's *Revolutionary Catechism*, and Emma Goldman's *The Psychology of Political Violence*. We also published Franz Fanon's *A Sociology of a Revolution* – the chapter of "*Transformation of a Family*", Fyodor Dostoyevski's *The Dream of a Strange Person*, an anarchist interview with Zapatistas by Love and Rage Revolutionary Anarchist Federation in May 1994, a book on the 1992 Los Angeles uprising prepared by combining texts from different fanzines and essays about events.

How we worked:

We once bought a second hand photocopy machine and used that at home, but this was not efficient at all. It was not good for an amateur group like us – it did not cut the

expenses as we imagined. So we bought an all-in-one printer. That machine became the mother of Karasin publications till the end. Karasin was prioritising becoming independent media, to be 'outside' the institutions. We were writing, translating, preparing and publishing at home and distributing the results ourselves.

We also made two special pamphlets on specific events. One of them was on peasant resistance in the Turkish town Bergama (*Peasant Resistance of Bergama and Anarchism*, June 1998, including three essays on the subject written by Rahmi G. Ogdül, Fusun Kayra and Sureyyya Evren. It was also published on the net and re-published by some other websites. And the other special work was on a specific event in another small Turkish town Fatsa in 1979. Between 26th and 28th of August 1998, we (me and Rahmi), in the name of Karasin, attended the Lisbon "International Conference on the Politics of Social Ecology. We presented our talk "*Direct Democracy in Fatsa*" and also photocopied a pamphlet of our talk. (That pamphlet was also translated into Portuguese and published on the net.)

And lastly, we xeroxed the Gazete Karasin (Newspaper Karasin). We produced the first issue as a monthly photocopy newspaper, dated 30th November 1998.

Parallel to photocopy publishing, we prepared a website for our Karasin collective in a free space from Geocities. Geocities was not a part of Yahoo at that point. The last updates to the web site were made in 1998. We put a free tracker program on the main page and as we have checked statistics we thought maybe the real broadening effect can be achieved via a web site. But after a while in which we didn't update the site, Geocities/Yahoo canceled it (some parts of it can now be seen through web archive sites under http://come.to/karasin). Actually, these simply structured web pages achieved a lot. These pages made texts to reach so many places and stayed so long alive.

And internet publication was much much easier.

With photocopy publishing we had serious distribution problems. We were finding shelves in rock-punk oriented music shops, and yet everyday more and more bookshops started to demand invoices or directly stopped selling unregistered photocopy magazines. We were having real difficulty in distributing our material in other cities. Besides Istanbul, we were only distributing small amounts in Ankara and Bursa. We were having much more feedback through our website. Readers were able to download and print out all the material. We know that some people even made pamphlets themselves after downloading the stuff. Photocopying was limiting our dialogue with people outside the anarchist and

subculture circles. We wanted to spread our ideas to a larger amount of readers, to different people with different interests. As our aim was to affect all aspects of life and to strengthen heterodoxies, we wanted to diffuse into various fields. So we shifted towards the second period, where our ideas met not only anarchist and punk communities but many people with diverse concerns in different parts of Turkey.

The second period:
A period of '*détournement*' - working inside other publications and media

In this period we mainly worked inside the oldest Turkish literature magazine. Slowly, we found ourselves more close to that magazine. In September 1998 they published my essay on the third-wave of anarchism that focused on the history of anarchism and anarchism in the late 90s. The editor-in-chief had sympathy for our ideas and we found a place inside the magazine for preparing special dossiers that related to postanarchistic topics such as poststructuralist anarchism. Beginning with a special dossier on hypertext, we started to prepare a series of dossiers focusing on various theoretical topics that we link to our postanarchist agenda.

So between 2000-2002 we worked inside different media platforms: sometimes we tried to transform them, sometimes we tried to change their direction a bit and sometimes we just wanted to live and function inside in our own way without changing it. In this period, with Rahmi, we developed a radical poststructuralist anarchist approach through the articles we wrote for Turkey's oldest literature magazine over two years. During that period I worked as a co-editor in the magazine preparing special dossiers on theoretically charged concepts as hypertext, postfeminism, potlatch, metageography, everyday life, rhizomatic thinking, cyberfeminism etc. We also wrote for another monthly popular Turkish magazine, which was widely circulated because it was a comic magazine as well. It had nearly 20,000 readers across the country and there we tried to find writing forms to embrace everyday life and actual political agenda for non-professional readers. We used dialogues, photographs, jokes etc.

Subsequently we collected our accumulated articles in a volume with the title *Bagbozumlari (Vintages), On Culture, Politics and Everyday Life* in Studyo Imge Books, 2002. This was a publication house which mostly had a reputation on rock culture. (We also initiated the Turkish edition of Hakim Bey's *TAZ* there.) Soon, again in Studyo Imge

Books, we edited another volume as a collection of texts taken from various sources titled *Another World Is Possible* (ed. Sureyyya Evren & Rahmi G. Ogdul, Studyo Imge Books, 2002, Istanbul) basing it on 'anti-globalisation movements' and related bodies of theories.

This period ends with a radio program. Again with Rahmi, we initiated a radio program with the same title *Bagbozumlari* (*Vintages*) on the prestigious and independent broadcasting organization "Acik Radyo" ("Open Radio") from Istanbul. We had various guests for our radio show for talks on art, culture, everyday life and political struggles. (Spanish anarchist Abel Paz was one of the international guests beside Turkish anarchists or writers.) Many shows focused on anarchism and postanarchism.

So in this period we worked in a literature magazine, a comics and culture/literature magazine, a radio station and a publication house. The advantages included the possibility of reaching a much greater audience in different forms, developing our ideas thanks to many intersections, meeting new people interested in the subject or having new contributions from different angles.

But this period also had its disadvantages. This style of 'working everywhere' was making it more difficult to understand our position for many people because everybody is not following every medium. The other contributors to the media we shared and the political and cultural differences in their stances had influenced the way our project was conceived by the general audience. Our neighbors, the other material used in these media, in these different bodies, were affecting our remarks somehow. As we were affecting them, they were affecting us as well and although this opened many positive new areas it was also limiting our expression. We were again in the need of media where we can initiate our own context and at the same time continue to retain our relations with a broader audience. Besides, readers develop prejudices about magazines, and whatever you publish may be either ignored (because of a prejudice about the magazine in question) or just labeled as something it is not even close to.

The third period:

Making separate publishing and a separate legal magazine of our own – the *Siyahi* magazine.

Since 2003, we have been thinking about doing something alternative with our approach which will be a separate publication at the same time. But we did not want to do a

photocopy magazine this time, we wanted printed material. But of course we didn't have the means so we started with a website on www.postanarki.net (which is not active anymore). We published many articles in Turkish there and also collected related English articles in one website.

So then we started to make an independent magazine. We had the chance to work independently in a new independent publishing house (which mainly focused on poetry) and started to publish our magazine *Siyahi* on November 2004. We published six issues with this publishing house but lately they have had financial problems and decided to focus more to on poetry and short story magazines where they can receive more advertisement income to keep the company alive. So we moved to an other publication house (*art-ist)* for enabling the publication of our 7th, 8th and 9th issues. In fact, we were already in close organic relations with *art-ist* contemporary art magazine. Erden Kosova and I were writing and working for *art-ist* magazine since its beginning and Erden has been also in the editorial board.

Siyahi is a platform for contemporary theory, culture, arts and politics related. We have published many articles on postanarchism, and generally politics and culture.

As you can see we are working on postanarchism but *Siyahi* includes other subjects too. *Siyahi* is distributed nationwide in Turkey without being able to pay any fees to its writers and translators, thanks to their volunteering contribution. We also tried to initiate an international version of *Siyahi* (that would be called Siyahi Interlocal) working with Jason Adams, but that project only resulted in a web blog (http://community.livejournal.com/siyahi).

The postanarki web page and *Siyahi* shapes the third period. We started to make the postanarki web page in November 2003 by taking free space from Geocities again. (www.geocities.com/postanarki) And in February 2004 we moved to www.postanarki.net with our separate domain name and hosting. Kursad Kiziltug, who joined us in the second period, was actively working for the web site. When we started to have the printed publication - *Siyahi* magazine - he didn't have time to work on it, and we also felt the printed material was more essential. This web site is not active anymore. But it leaded us to create some international contacts and to circulate many texts in Turkish and English. For example we met online with Jason Adams, the founder of Postanarchism Yahoo Group (October 2002) and the initiator of the Postanarchism Cleaning House web pages, who later visited us in Istanbul. And we met online with Juergen Muemken who later started to

make a web page in German on the subject www.postanarchismus.net and edited two volumes in German on the subject.

Siyahi marks the last period but apparently things will change again, because the distribution company that was distributing *Siyahi* just went bankrupt and this puts us in a severe financial crisis.

Conclusion: After three phases

As an affinity group, we kept working on the same line of anarchist thought, developed new ideas accordingly, and kept spreading our ideas in various forms. With the same ideological aim, we stayed 'outside the system' by photocopy publishing, worked in other established institutions or we made an independent magazine ourselves.

The best part of making photocopy publications is the feeling of being 'away', being 'outside' the system. Of course, there are always debates asking if there is anything that can be labeled as 'outside'. But still, you don't give your names to official bodies to get printing permissions, you don't have invoices, you don't have advertisements, you don't have barcodes. But you don't have readers as well! I mean, of course you have readers, but it is very difficult to reach them, you don't produce a lot and you can't distribute a lot. In today's conditions, it is the other way around; sometimes even a zine is like a simulation of a an e-zine... I sometimes feel that the e-zine is the real thing, and the zine is the simulation! The worst part of making photocopied publications is that you are very close to being proud of your distance with the system. The danger of sticking to an 'anarchist identity' is definitely there.

On the other hand, as I travel to different places, I get the impression that the problem is about the lack of alternative distribution channels. When I visited the London Anarchist Book Fair and saw all those bulks of anarchist pamphlets, I felt like that the 'photocopy still works'. There is some kind of a romanticsm in it which I also still share in some way. Nevertheless, as far as I know, photocopied publication is widely understood as a tool for propaganda in radical circles. It is rare to publish contemporary articles aiming to discuss contemporary theoretical issues in photocopied pamphlet or zine form. In Karasin, we had the intention of publishing articles that would be a contribution to theoretical debates in the Xerox form.

Reflecting on our second phase, the best part of working within various established magazines, radio stations or publication houses is meeting new people, meeting new questions, reaching a wider audience, and testing and developing your ideas in different platforms. I can even say that it is like an education. How would postanarchism be 'applied' in a discourse you use on a radio show or a popular magazine? How do you relate your anarchist or poststructuralist jargon with daily language? (this was also a question during few talks I gave on 'Postmodernism and Left' in Istanbul and Ankara during mid 90s). It was also an important step in "enhancing fields of heterodoxies and challenging orthodoxies" in different fields. We later used our experiences in those different platforms when we prepared our separate magazine *Siyahi*.

The worst part of our second phase is; your message is easily distorted with your 'neighborhors' (other political, social and theoretical positions in the platforms you use). Nobody else follows all the platforms you are active in, so nobody is really able to comprehend the scope of your project. In some senses, it may be that the second phase never ended, but turned into a secondary approach: we still write in different magazines, sometimes on other issues as 'anarchist/postanarchist writers', sometimes directly on anarchism/postanarchism.

In relation to the third phase, the best part of making a separate independent magazine is deciding and building the platform you will talk on while being able to reach new people, new ideas, and a wider audience. An independent magazine seems like a must for making your message clear generally. The worst part is that it requires more volunteer work than any other. And it is a pity that we were unsuccessful in developing the project of 'Siyahi Interlocal', an independent postanarchist international/interlocal magazine that would be edited by postanarchists from different parts of the world.

All of these different approaches had positive and negative consequences. Maybe the fourth phase is this reflective attitude, thinking about the specific features of all these modes and trying to find the best composition that can carry us in the future...

About the author:

Süreyyya Evren is a writer working on literature, contemporary art, and radical politics. His literary works include several novels, short story books, poems and critical essays. His writings have also been published in various languages including English,

German, French, Czech, Serbian, Icelandic and Albanian. Evren is the editor-in-chief of a poststructuralist anarchist magazine called Siyahî in Turkey, and a PhD candidate in Loughborough University, United Kingdom. He is currently working on the historiography of anarchism. S.E.Turkeli@lboro.ac.uk

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Action note

Creative Democracy – Wisdom Councils at Work

Caspar Davis

In a letter to Rececca Solnit, John Jordan wrote, "Our movements are trying to create a politics that challenges all the certainties of traditional leftist politics, not by replacing them with new ones, but by dissolving any notion that we have answers, plans or strategies that are watertight or universal. In fact our strategies must be more like water itself, undermining everything that is fixed, hard and rigid with fluidity, constant movement and evolution. We are trying to build a politics of process, where the only certainty is doing what feels right at the right time and in the right place... When we are asked how are we going to build a new world, our answer is, 'We don't know, but let's build it together.' In effect we are saying the end is not as important as the means, we are turning hundreds of years of political form and content on its head by putting the means before the ends, by putting context in front of ideology, by rejecting purity and perfection, in fact, we are turning our backs on the future... Taking power has been the goal at the end of the very straight and narrow road of most political movements of the past. Taking control of the future lies at the root of nearly every historical social change strategy, and yet we are building movements which believe that to 'let go' is the most powerful thing we can do—to let go, walk away from power and find freedom. Giving people back their creative agency, reactivating their potential for a direct intervention into the world is at the heart of the process. With agency and meaning reclaimed, perhaps it is possible to imagine tomorrow today and to be wary of desires that can only be fulfilled by the future. In that moment of creation, the need for certainty is subsumed by the joy of doing, and the doing is filled with meaning."

Wisdom Councils are that kind of leap into the unknown, an attempt to create a "politics of process that "puts context in front of ideology.

Three Wisdom Councils have been held in Victoria, British Columbia, Canada. They resulted from the convergence of at least two already commingled streams of people: those who had come together as a result of a visit to Victoria by Robert Theobald in 1996(?), and the local branch of the World Federalist Movement – Canada, which has a deep interest in improving democratic processes.

Origins of Victoria Wisdom Councils

Robert Theobald was a great evangelist for the power and wisdom of ordinary people, believing that they were far ahead of their so-called leaders. He came to Victoria at the invitation of the World Federalists, and his visit led to the formation of a the Group with No Name, which started with about 50 people who met every other Saturday to share their thoughts and ideas. Spin off groups produced a forum on work as well as No Name University, a group of curious people including a couple of retired professors who explored topics ranging from physics to the power of myth. The Group itself dwindled over the next 5 years until it came down to about 10 people and finally it petered out.

One of Theobald's associates was Tom Atlee, founder of the Co-Intelligence Institute and author of the Tao of Democracy. Tom put some of the Group in touch with Jim Rough, the developer of Wisdom Councils and Dynamic Facilitation. Jim, who lives in Port Townsend, Washington, came up with the idea for Wisdom Councils through his work as a facilitator. He developed a technique called Dynamic Facilitation which helps groups quickly solve "impossible" problems by generating fresh ideas rather than just choosing between conventional options. Jim wrote a book, *Society's Breakthrough*, describing how a constitutionally mandated Wisdom Councils could transform American democracy for the better. Several people from Victoria – including Caspar Davis, a World Federalist and George Sranko, another veteran of the Group with No

Name – established a connection with Jim by taking his Dynamic Facilitation seminar.

What Are Wisdom Councils?

A Wisdom Council is a group of about 12 *randomly selected* people who meet for several hours with the assistance of a Dynamic Facilitator with the intention of deciding on what issues are most important to the group and concocting a unanimous statement about them. The statement is issued to the broader community at a public meeting, and the Wisdom Council disbands. Jim Rough's original dream was that the Wisdom Council would be added to the U.S. Constitution as a new institution that would have no power other than meeting periodically, each time with a new randomly chosen group, and issuing statements that came from ordinary people who met as individuals with no pretence of speaking for anyone but themselves, who would create statements that came from ordinary people rather than from any power base or interest group. Jim Rough believed, and experience has confirmed, that ordinary people are far ahead of politicians, the media and other leaders in understanding the real problems of our communities and in conceiving solutions for them.

Nuts and Bolts of the Victoria Experience

Early in 2006, Sranko and Davis talked about the possibility of holding a Wisdom Council in Victoria. By a happy coincidence, the local branch of the World Federalists had received a bequest, and had decided to use some of it to explore democratic innovation. They decided to bring Jim Rough and Tom Atlee to Victoria to talk about Wisdom Councils, which they did. The event was held on a Friday evening in November 2006, and the next day about 40 people met with them to pursue their ideas, and Wise Democracy Victoria was born, with the intention of holding a series of three Wisdom Councils in the City.

About 30 people agreed to work on the project. They called themselves Wisdom Council Conveners, and they and the World Federalists agreed that a series of at least three Wisdom Councils was needed to fairly test the idea. The World Federalists agreed to fund the first two Councils, to cover the cost of mailings to potential Councilors, renting facilities for the Councils, etc. The Conveners kept in touch with themselves and with others who had attended the talk by email.

The Conveners met every Saturday for several months in a series of somewhat anarchic self-organized meetings that spent a lot of time deciding how to make decisions and sometimes overturning earlier decisions about subjects like what geographic area to draw the Wisdom Council from, how to do random selection when no really comprehensive list of residents was available , or perhaps even existent. They could not get the voters list, and in any case neither it nor the phone book was truly comprehensive, but in the end they settled on the phone book and devised a method of selecting random pages, random columns on the page, and a random number of lines from the top. The meetings were sometimes chaotic, but each week someone volunteered to facilitate and certain principles were faithfully observed, including the right of everyone who came to have a voice and to be heard. The conversations were always constructive, and decisions were by consensus. It was often messy, and usually slow – especially when previous decisions were rejected a week later when some different people showed up, but it was understood that real democracy takes time and understanding.

The Conveners considered that their own process was just as important as the process of the Wisdom Councils themselves, and a strong bond developed among the conveners. They carefully evaluated each Wisdom Council with an eye to improving the process and its impact on the community.

The Victoria Wisdom Councils

The first Wisdom Council, held in March 2007, was a great success for both the conveners and for the participants, who were astonished at how quickly the process of Dynamic Facilitation got them talking openly about important matters

on which they had strong feelings with a group of strangers. Most were exhilarated by the experience, and some felt that it was an important event in their lives.

The first Council also got good media coverage. Two local papers (but not the major daily) and two radio stations ran stories on its planning, and the public meeting following it was attended by about a hundred people, including Victoria's Member of Parliament and a city councilor. After the event, the Wisdom Council presented its unanimous statement at a meeting of City Council. The only disappointment was that it failed to generate much buzz in the larger community. Members of the Council were invited to join the conveners, and one or two did.

The conveners did everything they could to make things easy, comfortable, and safe for the Councilors, who were each giving a Friday evening and all day Saturday to the project. For each Council, the conveners provided rides if needed, food, and daycare – although daycare was needed only for the third Council.

The second Wisdom Council, three months later, was also a success for conveners and participants, but it got less media coverage and again failed to generate a buzz. It was held in June, and the conveners did not reassemble until September. That fall Jim Rough gave his Dynamic Facilitation seminar in Victoria and some of the conveners attended. Jim had facilitated the first Wisdom Council and his associate Deanna Martin facilitated the second.

While Jim and Deanna were in Victoria for the seminar, Deanna facilitated a meeting of the conveners, and they decided that one reason the first two councils had failed to generate the hoped-for broader conversation was that they got lost in the noise of the city. From the start, the conveners had spent a lot of time and energy on determining the geographical scope of the Wisdom Councils, and the main question being whether to draw on the whole city or on a smaller area, It was decided to try the third Council in a smaller area, and the conveners chose Fernwood, a compact residential area that already had a stronger than average sense of community, and where several conveners and former councilors lived.

Following that decision, the conveners met with several community leaders and got articles in both community papers. They also held a meeting in the local pub, where attendees learned about the Wisdom Council process and discussed local issues and possible actions and solutions.

The third Wisdom Council, sponsored by the local Unitarian Church, was held in a Quaker Meeting House on the edge of Fernwood in March 2008, almost exactly a year after the first Council. It was also a tremendous success for the conveners and the participants, but it also failed to generate as much buzz as had been hoped.

Repercussions of the Victoria Wisdom Councils

One of the conveners taught a communication class at a local University, and he devised an exercise that grew out of his experience as a convener. He divided the class, who came from many parts of the world, including the Peoples Republic of China, into three groups, and assigned each group to conduct a meeting. One group was given rudimentary training – about half an hour – in Bohmian dialogue. A second was given a similar amount of training in Dynamic Facilitation, and the third was given no instruction. The three groups each performed in front of their classmates on one day, and on a later day they spent a later day on a post-mortem on the exercise. They were all exhilarated by the experience, and they recognized that even rudimentary training in Dynamic Facilitation had yielded the best results. This was a spin-off of the Wisdom Council project that may yield important – if unmeasurable – results as these young people pursue their careers, mainly in the media.

Another convener is involved in a Civic League, whose purpose is to determine a set of basic community values by going door-to-door and discussing them with as many municipal residents as possible, and then to measure the votes and actions of each municipal councilor against those values. This is a very different process, but there is a substantial degree of congruence between the values emerging out

it and the statements of the three Wisdom Councils, which also had a lot of similarity with each other. (see the appendix below)

There was some discouragement after the third Council, and the conveners and the World Federalists held post-mortems, both separately and together. They recognized that the Councils had had an important impact on the lives of both the conveners and the Councilors, but they also saw that it had taken a great amount of time and energy to randomly select potential councilors, to invite them, and to persuade enough invitees to participate. No one felt that the time or energy had been wasted, but most felt that their next efforts might take a different direction.

There has been considerable talk about having a Wisdom Council in a local school, and that nay yet happen. There ahs also been considerable interest in convening similar Councils to address specific topics, rather than having an open agenda. Jim Rough calls this kind of council a Creative Insight Council.

After the post-mortems, the conveners took a break, but 10 of them – and two ex-Councilors – met for a potluck dinner in June before scattering for the summer and discovered that they still had a great deal of cohesion and a strong desire to persevere in some fashion. It is hard to say what will happen next. But the project will not cease. Both the conveners and many councilors have been infused with "*the joy of doing, and [the realization that] the doing is filled with meaning.*"

Appendix I – Wisdom Council Statements

The Statements of the three Victoria Wisdom Councils are available online:

> Statement of the First Wisdom Council
>
> http://wisedemocracyvictoria.com/statement-of-the-victoria-wisdom-council/
>
> Statement of the Second Wisdom Council
>
> http://wisedemocracyvictoria.com/statement-of-the-second-victoria-wisdom-council/

Statement of the Third Wisdom Council (Fernwood)

http://tinyurl.com/4xo5c4

Here is the text of the Statement of the First Wisdom Council:

"The Victoria Wisdom Council recognizes that the fabric of our society is fraying in a variety of ways:

- We are increasingly isolated from each other
- We are losing connection with our environment and making choices that have grave impacts upon it
- Our society is increasingly socially and environmentally unsustainable
- There is a growing disconnection between our government and the people

We believe these issues are solvable by fostering a shift from "I" to "We" in our attitudes and actions, by taking a greater role in our democracy, and by recognizing our personal responsibility for these issues.

The Victoria Wisdom Council encourages citizens to become more civically engaged and politically active, by:

- Empowering disenchanted people to reconnect with public life
- Providing more people to people connections, and
- Offering new ways of finding and using our voice

The Wisdom Council itself is one way of achieving this."

Appendix II: Civic Leagues

The Civic League movement is possibly the oldest citizen democracy initiative in North America. *The National Civic League was founded in 1894, when more*

than 100 educators, journalists, business leaders, and policy makers met in Philadelphia to discuss the future of American cities. Those who attended the conference included Theodore Roosevelt, Louis Brandeis, Marshall Field, and Frederick Law Olmsted. The gathering was organized in response to widespread municipal government corruption and served as a national call to "raise the popular standards of political morality." - http://ncl.org/about/

The National Civic League seems to be flourishing in the US. In Canada there is a growing number local Civic Leagues do not seem to be connected to the US organization but which have a similar purpose. They are independent entities, but they seem to have a loose network, sharing their stories generally similar principles, although the details vary. These principles are quite congruent with the aspirations of the randomly selected Wisdom Councils, suggesting that there is an underlying thirst for genuinely responsible democracy and good government.

These are the principle of the Saanich Civic League (Saanich is a suburb of Victoria):

1 Accessible government that works for citizens

2 A community in social, environmental and economic balance

3 A diversified and strong local economy

4 Leadership to combat climate change

5 Community: walkable, affordable, safe; village- centred neighbourhoods

6 A strong commitment to heritage, culture and the arts

7 Beauty; preservation of natural areas; quality development

8 Support for local agriculture, local markets, increased local food supply

9 Accessible, clean - energy transportation networks

10 Actively engaged citizens and greater voter turnout

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About the author:

Caspar Davis is a retired lawyer and amateur editor, photographer and activist. He has been interested in Wisdom Councils since taking Jim Rough's Dynamic Facilitation course 10 years ago, and was instrumental in bringing Jim Rough and Tom Atlee to Victoria in 2006 to talk about Wisdom Councils, and he has been a member of the group that convened all three Victoria Wisdom Councils. rapsac4AT yahoo.ca

URL for this article:

http://www.interfacejournal.net/2009/01/creative-democracy-wisdom-councils-at.html

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La sistematización de experiencias y la vision emergente en el hecho educativo

Alejandrina Reyes

Summary:

This contribution comes from a group of educators who attempt to turn 'education on its head'. Knowledge is created by ordinary Venezuelans in the process of reflection upon their participation in social movements and community struggle. Knowledge as part of this practice is knowledge for social emancipation, dignity and political transformation. This contribution is both a practical introduction to their work and a contribution to widening our educational praxis.

Frecuentemente cuando se tiene una visión tradicional o mejor dicho convencional de los procesos educativos, visión apegada al enfoque cartesiano / newtoniano, existe la tendencia que al hablar de términos como aprendizaje permanente, currículo abierto, formación personalizada, reconstrucción y reconocimiento de aprendizajes por experiencia, entre otros, se cree que se esta frente a una propuesta que expresa desorden, no apegada a los cánones de la rigidez y caracterizada por la falta de "seriedad académica" vinculada a la rigurosidad científica tradicional, de la comprobación y la certeza.

Existe en Venezuela una experiencia de aprendizaje a nivel Universitario como lo es el Centro de Experimentación para el Aprendizaje Permanente, (CEPAP) fundado en el año de 1976 como programa educativo universitario adscrito al Vicerrectorado Académico de la Universidad Nacional Experimental Simón

Rodríguez, (UNESR). donde se aborda el hecho educativo a través del Método de Proyectos[1] cuyo camino para implementar los aprendizajes a través de un currículo personalizado lo es la SISTEMATIZACION DE EXPERIENCIAS.

Esta experiencia venezolana innovadora a nivel educativo, ha permitido a lo largo de su historia, que los participantes incorporen los aprendizajes reconocidos a través de las sistematizaciones de experiencia, de manera paulatina, de manera sistémica, en su currículo de estudio auto construido.

De manera que dichos aprendizajes (a nivel teórico, metodológico, actitudinal) expresan una complejidad, un todo en influencia reciproca con las partes, al respecto nos señala Morin (1997)

> "El desafío de la formación constituye entonces, un intrincado mundo, donde la supremacía de un conocimiento fragmentado según las disciplinas impide, a menudo operar el vínculo entre las partes y las totalidades y, debe dar paso a un modo de conocimiento capaz de aprehender los objetos en sus contextos, sus complejidades y sus conjuntos.
>
> Es necesario desarrollar la aptitud natural de la inteligencia humana para ubicar todas sus informaciones en un contexto y en un conjunto. Es necesario enseñar los métodos que permiten aprehender las relaciones mutuas y las influencias recíprocas entre las partes y el todo en un mundo complejo, se intenta develar las experiencias, las cuales se convierten en narrativas de las prácticas

[1] Al respecto nos aportan Villarroel G., y Herrera S (76:2004):

El método de proyectos fue creado por W.H. Kilpatrick en 1918. Lo fundó en el análisis del pensamiento hecho por John Dewey, y su cometido fue el ensayo de una forma efectiva de enseñar. De los mismos principios que dieron origen al método de proyectos surgió el método de problemas, por obra del propio Dewey. En tanto que el método de Kilpatrick se propone actuar concretamente en el campo de la realización efectiva, el de Dewey procura desenvolverse en el campo intelectual."

> educativas, que dan cuenta de procesos de interrelación social" (Morin. Pág.7)

Un camino que permite aprehender las relaciones mutuas y las influencias reciprocas entre las partes y el todo en los procesos de aprendizaje es el camino de la SISTEMATIZACION DE EXPERIENCIA, pero,

¿A qué nos referimos cuando hablamos de la sistematización de experiencias?

Entendemos la sistematización de experiencias como un proceso holístico de interpretación critica de la realidad, que refleja redes de relaciones complejas de las personas involucradas y donde el ser, el hacer, el conocer y el convivir de las personas se combinan armónicamente para conformar un todo en movimiento permanente en los procesos de aprendizaje.

De acuerdo a la experiencia que hemos tenido como facilitadores y facilitadoras en el Centro de Experimentación para el aprendizaje Permanente (Cepap) utilizando como eje orientador EL METODO DE PROYECTOS podemos señalar que la sistematización de experiencias se produce en diversas dimensiones, en esta oportunidad nos referiremos a cuatro de ellas a saber:

Dimensión Ontológica

A través de esta dimensión podemos observar cómo la sistematización de los procesos de vida, procesos experienciales, procesos vitales, nutren y fortalecen el principio de identidad, lo cual permite abordar los ejes transversales educativos SER y CONVIVIR dentro de una visión no fragmentaria y micro local, sino verlos de manera integradora en vinculación con el sentido colectivo de ciudadanía, que pone de manifiesto los valores y actitudes que debe prevalecer en un educador y educadora para los nuevos

tiempos. De manera que para una mejor comprensión de la sistematización como elemento potenciador de la identidad será necesario tomar en cuenta en esta dimensión los hechos culturales, los valores, las subjetividades, creencias y emociones.

Al sistematizar experiencias actuamos convivencialmente. Cabe destacar que acá la sistematización incorpora elementos que para la ciencia mecanicista, fundamentada en el pensamiento de Newton y Descartes carecen de "veracidad", estamos hablando de las subjetividades, las emocionalidades, los sentires de quienes participan en la experiencia. De manera que el SENTIR juega un papel importante en la sistematización.

Dentro de los productos académicos iniciales y aún en los del proceso intermedio y final que elaboran los y las participantes del Cepap tales como LA AUTOBIOGRAFIA, LOS PERFILES DE INGRESO Y PROSPECTIVOS, ROL PROFESIONAL CENTRAL es importante que se tenga incorporada esta dimensión de la sistematización lo cual refleja cómo los aspectos actitudinales de los y las educadoras está imbricado con la memoria histórica.

Dimensión Metodológica

En esta dimensión se puede observar cómo la sistematización se convierte en una vía a través de la cual se realiza la reconstrucción critica de los aprendizajes por experiencia, quienes sistematizan, adquieren o fortalecen conocimientos a nivel metodológico - procedimentales vinculados al eje transversal educativo DEL HACER. Los y las participantes en el Cepap, a partir de desarrollar sus productos académicos (Informes de aprendizaje) van incorporando herramientas metodológicas, técnicas, instrumentos vinculados a la metodología cualitativa que nutre profundamente sus procesos de sistematización, además reconoce maneras y caminos

particulares que ha utilizado a través de su proceso de vida para el logro de proyectos que se ha planteado.

Dimensión Epistemológica

En la dimensión epistemológica esta ubicada la producción de conocimientos la cual emerge de la experiencia de vida misma, de manera que se aborda el eje transversal educativo CONOCER vinculado a la construcción crítica de nuevas categorías de análisis, partiendo de los contextos y cotidianidades alrededor de la experiencia sistematizada. Frecuentemente en muchos de nuestros Países latinoamericanos es a nivel de Postgrado donde se invita al estudiante/participante a construir conocimiento no a nivel de pregrado, donde se supone que el estudiante debe asumir el pensamiento de pensadores, teóricos, científicos reconocidos por la academia universitaria; en el Cepap el participante en sus Informes de Aprendizaje debe ir aproximándose al ir construyendo teoría sobre su practica, al ir desarrollando áreas de conocimiento relacionadas con la temática abordada en especial relacionadas con los ejes de sistematización, se va nutriendo teóricamente su proceso, así como también, cuando desarrolla sus Unidades de Aprendizaje (constituye un espacio integrador de conocimientos en el proceso de aprendizaje de los y las participantes)

Dimensión política

Esta dimensión es sumamente importante y trascendental, porque le incorpora a la sistematización de experiencias un nuevo elemento, el hecho estratégico y de opción ante un desafío histórico: *¿sistematizar para qué y para quién?*. Esta dimensión política ayuda a problematizarnos, a preguntarnos si queremos sistematizar para ejercer una forma de dominación a través del control de la información y producción de

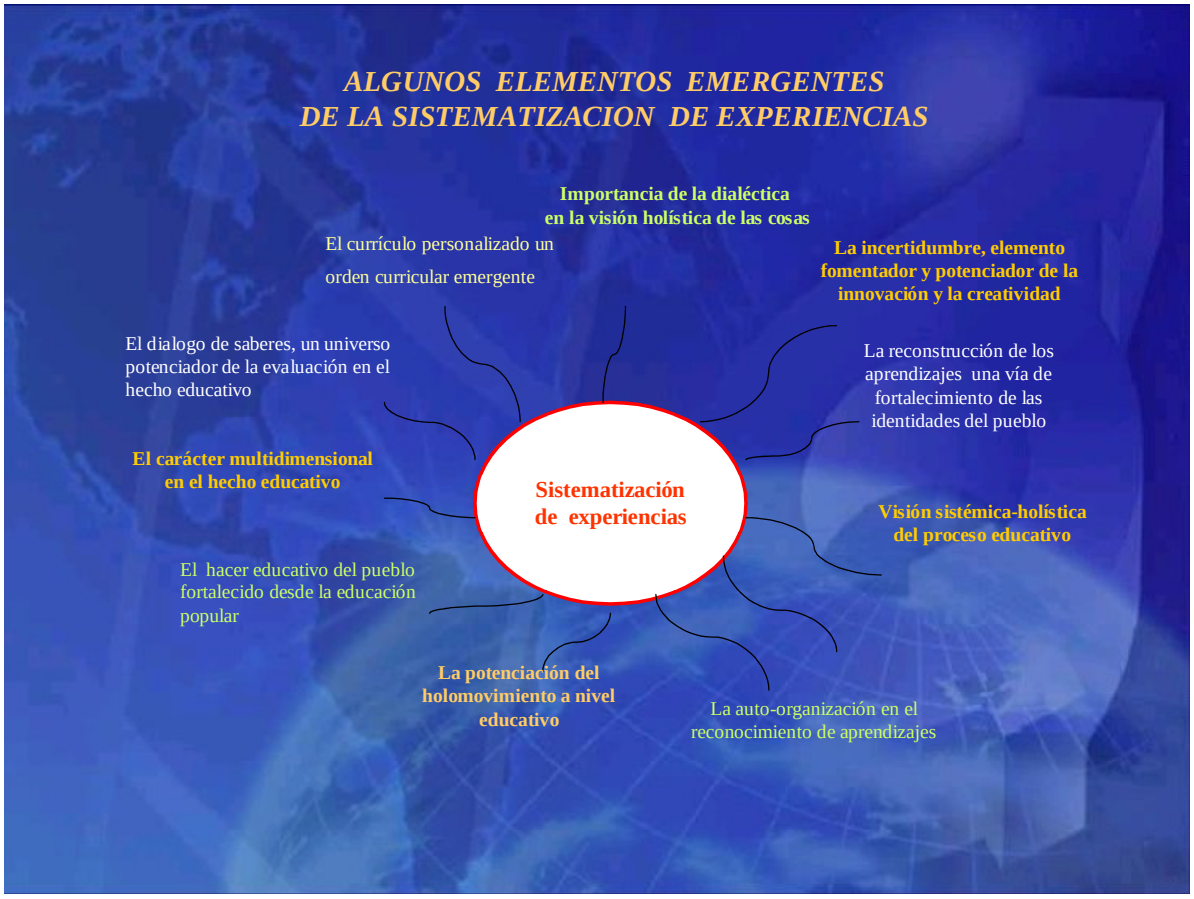
conocimientos de las experiencias donde hemos participado o si queremos transformar y transformarnos a través de la comprensión crítica de nuestras experiencias, que no es sólo nuestra, sino de muchos en relaciones reciprocas.

A continuación queremos señalar puntualmente algunas características de las referidas dimensiones:

DIMENSIONES	ALGUNAS CARACTERÍSTICAS DE LAS DIMENSIONES
ONTOLOGICA	Fomenta el sentido de identidad, pertenencia y arraigo. En fin en esta dimensión se refleja cómo la sistematización de las experiencias de vida, nutren y fortalecen la identidad, lo que permite trabajar el eje transversal educativo SER
METODO LOGICA	Permite la utilización de procedimientos, métodos, metodologías, herramientas de manera innovadora. Quien realiza la sistematización adquiere o fortalece conocimientos a nivel metodológico procedimentales vinculados al eje transversal educativo EL HACER.
EPISTEMO LÓGICA	En esta dimensión se desarrolla la producción de conocimientos, el abordaje de forma critica a la experiencia lo que permitirá la construcción de categorías, conceptos, reflexiones teóricas.
POLITICA	Intencionalidad política de quien produce conocimientos a partir de la sistematización

Como puede apreciarse en el cuadro anterior, la sistematización de experiencias esta inserta en una nueva visión paradigmática del conocimiento, en una visión emergente, que brota de las profundidades de nuestra historia como especie humana. donde esa historia a retazos se hilvana por puntadas de hilo invisible y va entretejiendo la red, que se nutre del planteamiento sistémico, que se nutre de la cuántica, de los aprendizajes ancestrales de nuestros pueblos.

A continuación queremos mencionar algunos elementos que consideramos importantes al abordar procesos de aprendizajes donde se incorpore la sistematización de experiencias:



Nos atrevemos a señalar que la SISTEMATIZACION DE EXPERIENCIAS es un elemento estratégico para una nueva visión del hecho educativo, para nutrir y contribuir con los procesos de aprendizaje de los y las nuevas ciudadan@s del mundo, del futuro, quienes vean sus vidas en relación con l@s otr@s y asuman corresponsablemente su accionar de manera critica.

En nuestro querida Patria la República Bolivariana de Venezuela, hoy más que nunca se requiere el fortalecimiento de nuevas visiones del hecho

educativo, que inciten a que el proceso bolivariano, contribuya con la transformación planetaria. Muchas de las misiones educativas (Misión Robinsón, Misión Ribas, Misión Cultura) tomaron elementos de esta propuesta Educativa que le hemos presentado para incorporar procesos de aprendizaje que permitan que los compatriotas que hasta ahora habían estado excluidos del sistema escolar puedan acceder dignamente a él y desarrollar sus potencialidades.

Realmente es un honor, el que seamos parte de este todo, que seamos herman@s latinoamerican@s, y que en esta tierra fértil, *LATINOAMERICA haya surgido nuevas maneras de producir conocimiento que no responden a la dominación y exclusión de una élite que sabe y una multitud que domésticamente responde a lo que se le diga. En nuestros Países de Latinoamérica han surgido propuestas investigativas y metodológicas como la investigación acción participativa de la mano de recordado sociólogo Colombiano Orlando Fals Borda; de otro País (Costa Rica) surgió* la sistematización de experiencias, como modalidad investigativa participativa la cual como fruto germinado, emergió de la tierra, de manera frondosa, diversa, compleja y en permanente holomovimiento, para fortalecer a los movimientos populares.

Nuestro país, en estos momentos estamos apoyando misiones educativas "Yo si puedo estudiar la escuela básica"-Misión Robinsón en países latinoamericanos como BOLIVIA, ECUADOR, NICARAGUA entre otros, y tenemos la plena seguridad que nuestra modesta ayuda contribuirá a la igualdad y democratización del conocimiento de nuestros herman@s.

En este siglo XXI, dejemos pues que la influencia sutil de la sistematización de experiencias, se incorpore en las tradicionales catacumbas del conocimiento de nuestras universidades que esta muriendo y de la mano de

los movimientos sociales y populares se unan a la danza de los procesos de transformación social.

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Alejandrina Reyes, Centro de Experimentación para el Aprendizaje Permanente (CEPAP) de la Universidad Nacional Experimental Simón Rodríguez (UNESR), Venezuela (alejandrinare@gmail.com)

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The mirror stage of movement intellectuals?

Jewish criticism of Israel and its relationship to a developing social movement

David Landy

Abstract

This article explores the strengths and limitations of movement intellectuals' theorisation of their movement and its terrain of activism. It looks at four published collections of Jewish writers critical of Israel and Zionism and asks how these books represent and defend a developing diaspora Jewish Israel-critical movement, and whether they manage to effectively theorise its terrain of activism. I argue that although these books offer some important purchase on the issues surrounding Israel/Palestine, through promoting the subjectivity of Jewish activists, and by being constrained by what is acceptable among mainstream Jewish thought, they efface the voice and presence of Palestinians, producing a partial understanding of the issue and the movement. I suggest that this may be due to the particular phase of this movement getting to know itself and its terrain of activism, which I characterise as its 'mirror stage'.

Books reviewed in this article:

Anne Karpf, Brian Klug, Jacqueline Rose, and Barbara Rosenbaum. 2008. *A Time to Speak Out: Independent Jewish Voices on Israel, Zionism and Jewish identity*. London: Verso. 224 pp ISBN-13: 978-1844672295 (pb). Paperback £7.49

Seth Farber. *Radical, Rabbis and Peacemakers. Conversations with Jewish Critics of Israel*. Maine: Common Courage Press. 2005. 400 pp ISBN-13: 978-1567513264 (pb). Paperback $19.95

Mike Marquesee. 2008. *If I Am Not For Myself: Journey of an anti-Zionist Jew*. London: Verso.: 256 pp ISBN-13: 978-1844672141(hb). Hardback £15.49

Murray Polner and Stefan Merken. *Peace, Justice, and Jews: Reclaiming our Tradition*. New York: Bunim and Bannigan. 2007. 338 pp. ISBN-13: 978-1933480152 (hb). Hardback $18.25

In the last few years there has been an explosion of diaspora Jewish writing critical of Israel and Zionism. This has coincided, though it is hardly coincidental, with the formation of a specifically diaspora Jewish movement that criticises Israel. There have always been Jews critical of Israel and supportive of Palestinians. Recently though, this has been transformed from a 'Not in my name' individual opposition to and withdrawal of support from Israel to 'Not in our name' - a collective attempt to withdraw legitimacy from Israel's claim to represent Jews, and to forge a specifically Jewish collectivity whose aim is to oppose Israel's policies. We can speak for the first time, not of disaggregated people criticising Israel, but a social movement whose aim is to oppose its treatment of Palestinians.

In this article I seek to explain the relationship between diaspora Jewish writings critical of Israel and this movement. Many of the authors I examine are active in Israel-critical groups (both Jewish and wider) and can be seen, using Gramsci's term, as 'organic intellectuals' for this movement. This is not simply because of any activist involvement, but also because their books are explicitly

designed to build this developing movement – to serve as guides that provide reasons, recruits and routes for its journey.

As such these productions offer an insight into the relationship that movement intellectuals have with a recently established social movement, and how well they can describe and analyse their movement and its concerns. The question of how movement intellectuals understand and present the movement they are associated with has wider application than the specific issue of Israel/Palestine; it links in with the debate comparing academic and activist forms of theorising.

There is no need to reiterate criticism of academic research on social movements, the main points being that these academic descriptions are neither useful for the movements themselves, nor relatedly, are they very good analyses of these movements (Bevington and Dixon 2005; Johnston and Goodman 2006). Such critiques in some cases explicitly contrast academic shortcomings with the output of movement intellectuals (Cox and Barker 2002).

In viewing the type of knowledge produced by movements, Cox and Barker (2002) maintain that it derives from their character as movements in action, rather than static debating fora. The knowledge produced is above all *practical*. It may be practical in providing ideological and moral justifications of the movement or in providing strategic and practical proposals – it is always, however, directed towards what Cox and Barker see as the essential feature of movements – their dialogical and developmental nature – a fact which ensures that movement knowledge is 'attempts to find answers to the question "what is to be done?" in situations which they do not fully control.' (2002, 45)

Yet this activist theorising needs to be critically analysed in terms of what forms of knowledge it produces, how it produces this knowledge, and what are the effects of knowledge being produced in conditions of contention. I ask these questions about this movement and with respect to a certain type of activist theorising – books on the movement that have been produced by activists and academics with some degree of movement involvement.

In choosing to analyse published books, I do not claim that this form encompasses all forms of activist theorising. Far from it, such material is overly

representative of movement elites, is produced under market conditions and in response to other force than movement dynamics, including some of the forces that produce academic works. Nevertheless they represent an important public face of the movement and seriously wrestle with issues affecting it. They serve as exercises in movement justification and strategic thinking, and undertake crucial work in identity building that all movements - but particularly this one - needs to undertake.

In the article, I firstly introduce this movement – its aims, origins and its terrain of activism – does it try to change diaspora Jewish discourse on Israel/Palestine, does it try change wider opinions, does it try to do both? Then, I ask what relationship sympathetic academic/activist theorising has with this heterogeneous movement. I examine four books from the last couple of years – from America there is Seth Farber's interviews with anti-Zionists, which forms a useful contrast with a collection of articles from 'moderate' critics of Israel (Farber 2005; Polner and Merken 2007). There's Mike Marquesee's transcontinental memoirs and finally another anthology from Jewish academics and activists, this time from Britain (Karpf, Klug, Rose, and Rosenbaum 2008; Marquesee 2008a).

These books offer in their different forms - memoir, interviews and multiple voices – various ways to understand both movement and terrain of activism. In doing so I also ask whether the 'manifesto' aspect of this writing detracts from understanding of the issue or whether their engagement contributes to it. I argue that it does offer powerful theoretical engagement with the issues around Israel/Palestine, but that it comes with a downside.

Put simply, through focusing on Jews, these books fail to consider Palestinians adequately. By contesting the terrain of Jewish identity some of these books find themselves in an identity trap whereby the subjects of activism are simply Jews, not Palestinians, something which serves to offer a very partial vantage point on the Israel/Palestine issue. I further argue that this is not a fault of the books being insufficiently objective and academic. On the contrary, it is partly the failure to fully concern themselves with the many way that Jews engage in

activism on Israel/Palestine, and to adequately represent the movement that has led to this effacement of Palestinians.

This article is based on research into this movement – specifically on research into English Jewish Israel-critical activism, as well as readings of these books. As a Jewish activist in the Ireland Palestine Solidarity Campaign, I research this activism in the spirit of critical solidarity – seeing it as a 'partial, imperfect, yet significant praxis' (Johnston and Goodman 2006: 17). It is in the same spirit I approach these books.

Description of movement

Firstly are we talking about a movement? There's certainly something happening in the Jewish world. Since 2002, Jewish groups that oppose Israel have sprung up throughout the diaspora - in Canada, Australia, France, Scotland, even in Germany – and of course many organisations in the US. Taking England, there's an alphabet soup of groups - Jews for Justice for Palestinians (JfJfP), Independent Jewish Voices (IJV), Jews Against Zionism (JAZ), Jews for Boycotting Israeli Goods (J-BIG, Slogan "It's kosher to boycott Israel"), not to mention the older Jewish Socialist Group (JSG).

This initially confusing profusion should not obscure the networked and decentred nature of this activism. Groups undertake joint activities with Jewish and non-Jewish groups; activists are sometimes linked to no groups, sometimes to many, Jewish and non-Jewish; there are links with radical Jewish cultural groups; and many activists are involved in mainstream political parties. Thus, contrary to the claims of detractors (Atzmon 2005), the English experience shows that what is being created is no new Jewish ghetto, but a situated response to the Israel/Palestine conflict and Zionist support of it, networked both to other Jews and non-Jews.

There are some linkages with Israeli and (to a smaller extent) Palestinian organisations and there are efforts to form coalitions – European Jews for Just Peace (EJJP) in Europe, and the more radical International Jewish Anti-Zionist Network (IJAN, a network still at the formative stage). Despite these links, most

of the efforts of Jewish Israel-critical groups are still directed at the national level.

While different groups have different priorities the underlying aim of most of them is similar – to challenge Zionist hegemony among their fellow Jews and to challenge Israel, speaking *as Jews*. The latter is mainly directed at mainstream and Jewish media, and provides support to Palestinians and Palestine Solidarity Movements (PSMs). It is also partly directed towards these PSMs – informing them and (to a lesser extent) Palestinian people that there *are* Jews who oppose Israel and asking them not to conflate the two.

These groups have been somewhat successful in informing the world of Jewish opposition to Israel as well as affecting fellow Jews. Jews, as the saying goes, are news; Jews who oppose Israel especially so, with their criticism of Israel garnering respectable media coverage. The opposition they have provoked from local Zionist hegemonies can be seen as a response to their success as well as a success in itself; the fact that Zionists need to spend increasing amounts of time condemning fellow Jews for being antisemitic (Julius 2008; Rosenfeld 2006) undermines this key Zionist argument and diverts their resources.

One should not overstate their effect. They are still a small, marginalised group of people whose claim to speak out as Jews on Israel/Palestine is subjected to constant attack. However, the mere fact of their existence signals success; in removing diaspora Jewish support for Israel out of the universe of the undisputed into the universe of opinion they have performed a valuable task. Some Jews support Israel, some don't – either way the automatic equation between the two is shattered both for Jews and the wider world. They have more definite effects too among other Jews, with some mainstream Jewish opinion beginning to grudgingly respond to the existence of dissent.

Thus we have, certainly in the English instance, a networked group of people engaged in political contention with a common and very clearly delineated enemy – Zionists more so than Israel. This network is seeking to re-cognize the Israel/Palestine conflict for Jews and others (Eyerman and Jamison 1991), and there is a certain commonality of purpose, which takes in major disagreements

over tactics, such as the boycott campaign. It certainly appears to tick many of the boxes as to what a movement is (Crossley 2002; Diani 1992).

However there is some divergence in the movement over the terrain of activism, or to use the term proposed by the French sociologist, Pierre Bourdieu - the field of contention (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). As I indicated, this movement operates in two separate fields – the Jewish field [1] and the field of solidarity activism, with both of these fields operating and contending within a wider political field. For Bourdieu, different fields impose different forms of struggle on actors, partly because one needs to manipulate the language and the silences imposed by the field in order to have any chances of being listened to – or in the language of social movement theory, in order to ensure that the framing of the movement resonates for the target audience.

However the co-option of the field goes beyond this, since we don't inhabit these fields as disembodied rational actors but as embedded, embodied creatures affected by the discourses of the field. Thinking of this in terms of identity formation, - people don't just deploy identities, they inhabit them and are themselves changed by the dynamics of identity formation. For instance, one aspect of this movement is that some activists, through their criticism of Israel, were embedding themselves within Jewish life and Jewish identity debates, somewhat to their surprise (Segal 2005).

This is not to say that actors' opinions are determined solely by their field - here Bourdieu's metaphor of the games player is useful. As he points out, the one who plays the game best is the one who lets the game inhabit them, and thereby can manipulate it to their advantage (Bourdieu 1990). So it is with social movement actors - the question is to what extent the field, the terrain of activism the social movement activist chooses to contest, affects both their identification and ideology.

[1] I deliberately don't use the words 'the Jewish community' here, since I feel this to be a deceptive term, which allows those dominant in the field to present their hegemony as a natural consensual affair. The concept of field better conveys the processes of contention that actually obtain.

Deploying the memoir: *'If I am not for myself'*

Earlier I referred to these books as guides, comparable in part to travel guides where the authors lay out the barely chartered terrain they have travelled so that others may travel in their footsteps. One will not find any cut-and-dried defence of a movement here, partly because these books are a way of trying to create and guide this movement, something in the process of becoming, and importantly, to guide people into these movements.

The first thing to note is that these books are often highly personal. Returning to the language of social movement theory, they try to achieve their aims not merely through the use of collective framing devices (Benford and Snow 2000), but also through the use of personal narratives. If frames are the moral at the end of the story - strategic, directed and simple to understand, then narratives are the stories themselves – open-ended, incomplete and dynamic (Polletta 1998). The power of narratives derives precisely from their lack of completion, providing a sense of dynamic tension and the possibility for listeners to enter into the story.

All four books try to insert the personal into the political, a strategy immediately relevant to this struggle. It shows others a path to activism and provides a means of offering an important justification for this movement – the authentically Jewish nature of Israel-critical activism. The memoir form is an effective means of creating authenticity and establishing personal authority in advancing controversial arguments. It is undertaken by many anti-Zionist writers –Mike Marquesee, but also Eva Figes and Lynn Segal from Britain, and to a lesser extent Antony Loewenstein from Australia (Figes 2008; Loewenstein 2007; Segal 2007). Such memoirs can be seen as part of a longer tradition that contests the terrain of Jewish identity and memory from colonisation by Zionist narratives (for instance Klepfisz 1990).

There is a certain voyeurism in seeing someone's personal life displayed in a political argument, and at times the memoir form is reminiscent of how pre-revolutionary Enlightenment writers like Rousseau used doses of pornography

to spice up their political and philosophical arguments – a way of holding the readers' attention. Not that the provision of vignettes, strong narratives, characters to interest the reader is to be condemned! Such attempts to be attractive to a wide group of readers underline the extent to which memoirs can be political interventions.

In Marquesee's book, the counter-narrative advanced is both deconstructive and reconstructive. It deconstructs through presenting the author's own experience of just how Jews decided to become Zionist, disrupting the automatic equation of Jewish and Zionist. Besides drawing on his own experience of being called a self-hater for questioning Israel, he delves in considerable detail into his grandfather's personal and political life.

His book switches between political anti-Zionist arguments and accounts of this cantankerous, obstreperous, independently minded grandfather in the eddies of radical New York politics of the 1930s and 40s. The central question Marquesee raises about his grandfather is in the chapter 'Nakba' where he talks of his approval of the ethnic cleansing of the Palestinians. He asks 'How did the champion of the refugee and the immigrant come to gloat over a forced mass exodus?' (Marquesee 2008a: 209). For Marquesee this question is essential, not simply as a matter of personal understanding, but also because it is directly relevant to why otherwise progressive Jews support Zionism today. His presentation of his grandfather's political life is in part an attempt to unpick the reasons for this jarring support for Zionism.

Yet this book is not just a process of deconstruction; alternative paths are displayed, ideas his grandfather could have had, so that by the end of the book he is able to claim his own anti-Zionism as the true heir to his grandfather's radical political beliefs. This presentation of anti-Zionism as a logical conclusion or even a homecoming for a certain type of Jewishness is achieved by splicing an alternative history of Jewry into the personal stories. Rather than Jewish history being persecution piled upon persecution till the messianic creation of Israel, the portrait is of Jewish people dealing with the challenges and chances offered by diaspora life. Diaspora Jews are shown as confident autonomous actors when they engage with their social surroundings, rather

than when they take the Zionist or ultra-Orthodox route of running away into a self-created ghetto (for a similar treatment of early Zionism, though from wildly different vantage points: Rose 2005; Rose 2004).

The aim is to contest the dominant Zionist narrative of Jewish suffering and alienation from other Europeans, and to create an alternative narrative by revealing those threads of history that Zionism effaces. Instead of Chassidim, the Haskalah [2]; rather than Zionism, Bundism.[3] The biblical origin of Judaism is bought into play to argue that dissident prophesising has always been an authentic way of being Jewish - a central argument in the other books too.

Such alternative history both undermines Zionist claims and fashions a political actor – the diasporist Jew – and the political space in the diaspora where this actor can be active. Just as Zionism was once presented as auto-emancipation from the diaspora (Pinsker 1947), this is a means of auto-emancipation of diaspora Jews from Zionism's vampiric proclivities.

The mirror stage and identity traps: *'Peace Justice and Jews'*

Marquesee's book shows the need for a social movement to establish a historical lineage and unity for itself; movement intellectuals need to assume that there is an 'itself' to speak for itself and they need to fashion that self. This assumption of a unity can be seen as akin to the psychologist, Jacques Lacan's ideas about a mirror stage in development. This is where the infant 'discovers' itself as a unitary being by seeing itself reflected in the mirror or the eyes of another. This creation of such an identity is one of the main tasks of these books. It explains why, like earlier attempts (Kushner and Solomon 2003) most are collections of voices - not merely to substantiate the claim, made by Judith Butler (2004)

[2] Chassidism is a revivalist form of ultra-Orthodox worship, originating in the 18th Century, around the same time as the Haskalah – emancipation of the Jews – began.

[3] Bundism was contemporaneous with early Zionism, both being revolutionary turn-of-the century movements. However Bundism promoted revolutionary change in a pan-European Socialist context, rather than in escape to Palestine.

among others that Jewish dissent is polyvocal and heterogeneous, but also to create within the pages of these books the form of such a movement.

While these books can be seen as acting as mirrors, the crucial difference between these and Lacan's mirror is that they are not created by the Other but by those in the movement itself. They are designed to create a necessary corrective to the distorted reflection offered to Israel-critical Jews by Zionist eyes that see them as self-hating, antisemitic, un-Jewish etc. Marquesee's aphorism: 'If I am not for myself... Zionists and Jewish leaders will claim to be for me' (Marquesee 2008a: 289) is firstly a demand for Israel-critical Jews to give the lie to Zionist claims about representing them. This is a recurring raison d'être these authors give for having a specifically Jewish movement. Equally importantly, he is also talking about the importance of rescuing anti-Zionist Jews from pariah status.

However, there is a problem with such identity contestation - the difficulty of lifting one's eyes away from this internal struggle. In fashioning a mirror for itself the movement, like Narcissus, may drown in its own endless refractions. Put less poetically, through this necessary self-affirmation these authors may be unable to escape the identity traps that belie any movement, but particularly this one: where identity is the currency the movement trades on, but at the same time wishes to move beyond – at least to some extent.

This identity trap was recognised a few years back by Neve Gordon (2005), when reviewing two earlier all-Jewish collections of essays. (Kushner and Solomon 2003; Shatz 2004) He acknowledged the political effectiveness of taking a 'Jews only' strategy in compiling these anthologies, but pointed out that this strategy encourages tribalism and 'ends up reproducing some of the most basic biases regarding who can criticize Israel and legitimately discuss anti-Semitism or the connection between Israel and Judaism.'(Gordon 2005: 105)

Marquesee largely avoids such a trap because of his unequivocal leftist and universalistic political stand. Far less successful or interested in avoiding such navel gazing is *Peace, Justice, and Jews*, whose subtitle could be 'look at us, aren't we great'.

While there are some fine individual pieces in this collection of 47 disparate vignettes, the overall tone is one of self-congratulation and self-absorption. The faintly sanctimonious air adopted against those Jews who 'ignore others' legitimate grievances' (Polner and Merken 2007: xv) does not alter the fact that these 'others' are but rarely spoken of. This can even (or especially) be seen in those travelogues where the author 'meets the Arabs'. In this voyage of the enlightened soul, Palestinians, often called Arabs, are usually treated as useful native guides to have - for part of the way. For instance Kenny Freeman talks about how he daringly moves to the Jewish town of Nazareth Illit which he described as being 'attached to' the Palestinian Israeli town of Nazareth, a nice euphemism which allows him to elide over the ethnic cleansing that caused it to be so, or the present day power relations between Nazareth and Nazareth Illit (Ezzat 2006).

After describing how he undertook to befriend a Christian Arab family, Freeman expresses how it was still important to find a Muslim to make friends with, to show that Jews could live with all sorts of Arabs. Having found someone and taken part in their colourful Muslim customs, he could then leave the Nazareth area for comfortably Jewish Tel Aviv. In a way the shallowness of such travelogues is the fault of the memoir strategy – necessarily promoting the personal, indeed self-obsessed point of view. However, the fault cannot be entirely placed on the format; this account can be usefully contrasted with Susan Nathan's (2005) moving, insightful and self-critical exploration of life in an Israeli Palestinian town.

The absence of Palestinians exists at a deeper level in this collection. Tellingly the Nakba, the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians in 1948, is mentioned only once. This occurs in one of the most impassioned pieces –where David Howard, a committed pacifist, angrily rejects all the founding myths of Zionism. More representative however is Rabbi Arthur Waskow's disingenuous take on Israeli history. In *Violence and non-violence in Jewish thought and practice*, the Nakba is simply not acknowledged. It doesn't 'fit' with his narrative of 'purity of arms' whereby civilians were never targeted and Palestinian towns were never attacked by the mainstream Zionists who conquered Palestine in 1948. Invoking

this fantasy past, he talks of how their moral and justifiable 'decision to use military force sparingly' has recently changed into a new and unprecedented aggressive use of violence (Waskow 2007: 122).

This self-deluding narrative is a denial of the actual past of deliberately planned ethnic cleansing (Masalha 1992; Pappé 2006). It is this historical lie that lies behind the professed non-violence of many of the contributors to this book, for it allows them to maintain support of Israel and equate Palestinian and Israeli violence in the present. Unconsciously recalling Anatole France's cynicism about both rich and poor facing arrest if they sleep under bridges, here both the dispossessed and the racial elite will be criticised if they use violence to alter the status quo of Israel.

This is not to say that Freeman, Waskow and other authors are not interested in transformation, but the transformation they are interested in is that Jews become better, more moral people, so as 'to be a free nation in our land', as the title of one contribution has it.[4] Underlying this desire is a merging of diaspora Jews and Israelis which reproduces hegemonic conservative beliefs among the diaspora Jewish field.

Jews in Exile: *'Rabbis, Rebels, and Peacemakers'*

Reading this collection, one is reminded of theologian Marc Ellis's sharp criticism of mainstream American Jewish critics of Israel, namely that their main interest is in redefining Jewish identity and their chief goal is the struggle to be the next Jewish Establishment. His work is informed by a horror that this nice debate over Jewish identity 'is hashed out over and over again *as the displacement, torture and murder of Palestinians continues, even escalates*' (Ellis 2003: 146-7 italics in original).

[4] It is ironic that the only critical look at the Israeli peace movement is from within – a judicious appraisal of Machsomwatch by an activist, which more than any praise, gives some hope as to the future of this movement (Resh 2007).

Ellis recommends walking away from this meaningless internal civil war. His point – that those who contest the Jewish field of activity primarily serve to reproduce it – echoes Bourdieu's point about 'the objective complicity' that rebels have with that which they rebel against (Bourdieu 1993: 74). It is not simply the discourses of the field that are reproduced by actors contesting it, it is also the silences – that which the field finds unnameable and unsayable – in this case Palestinian rights – which are transmitted, however unwillingly or unknowingly, by activists.

Ellis advances the idea of a new actor – the Jew in exile, a character akin to Deutscher's non-Jewish Jew (Deutscher 1968). This isn't simply a theoretical construct – while some Jewish activists prioritise efforts to change the Jewish 'community', others saw this as secondary, either because it was a hopeless task, or because so many Jews are alienated from an official community dominated by unresponsive Zionist institutions, and so this is not an entity worth appealing to. Without totally dismissing the Jewish field, they prioritise the wider world.

Ellis's critique and spirit presides over Seth Farber's annotated series of interviews with prominent Jewish anti-Zionists and non-Zionists. Farber's aim was not to present a representative survey of important American Jewish critics of Zionism. Although there are some notable names such as Noam Chomsky and Norman Finkelstein, the book mainly seeks 'to make the anti-Zionist argument (against current Israeli policies) known to a larger public because it is the strongest, most cogent, and the most moral argument for opposing the Israeli occupation– and thus for becoming active in the pro-Palestinian movement.' (Farber 2006)

This book then is a conscious effort to forward one wing of the movement. Accused by a potential interviewee of trying to divide peace-loving Jews, Farber counters by saying that recognition of such a division is long overdue (2006). In this division, Farber's side seems to have the more interesting things to say, possibly because their talk is mercifully free of the half-truths and stock declarations of love for Israel which characterises 'moderate' Jewish critiques.

The book is constructed as a guide for the perplexed to get involved in activism, with slices of anti-Zionist history and theory scattered through the text. Nor is

the personal touch foregone; Farber presents an account of his own trip to Palestine, recalling the memoir form as well as a trusted action repertoire the pro-Palestinian movement uses in encouraging others to get involved (Landy 2008).

Farber's interviewees are equally aware of the book's role in mobilisation and their voices are directed accordingly. Steve Quester of JATO (Jews Against The Occupation): 'Please exhort your readers in your book to read the words of Palestinians...there's a very bad habit, even on the real Jewish left, of Jews talking to other Jews about the occupation and thinking that they've just finished the conversation' (Farber 2005: 50). This indicates Quester's understanding that readers will most probably be those on the 'real' Jewish left, as well as a discomfort with this fact, wariness of being stuck in a Jewish ghetto. Of all the books considered, this is the one where awareness of the limitations of a Jews-only format is most clearly perceived, a function perhaps of the interviewees' and author's involvement in wider non-Jewish activism.

Though Farber's anti-Zionist framing may work, his insistence, following Ellis that this solidarity with Palestinians constitutes a return to the Jewish prophetic, i.e. a reclamation of the Jewish covenant and the biblical prophetic tradition, is deeply problematic. Firstly this idea – following Ellis's image of Jews in exile carrying the Jewish Covenant with them as they leave - returns him to the terrain he seeks to avoid, that of the self-regarding Jewish civil war. Secondly, many of his highly articulate interviewees disagree with his interpretation of their politics.

At times, such as with Noam Chomsky (favourite prophet: Amos), Farber's concerns resonate. More often – even with Orthodox religious Jews such as Daniel Boyarin - they don't. As Norman Finkelstein bluntly responds to yet another question about The Jewish Covenant. 'I have no interest in covenants. I don't know who the Jewish people are. These are all metaphysical, extraneous terms to me.' (Farber 2005: 118)

Nor is he the only one to evince such lack of interest. It seems for most, their involvement in this activism has at least as much to do with their sense of being American, or of being universal citizens as with any sense of Jewishness. When

Joel Kovel declaims that Israel in all its horrors is *us* (Farber 2005: 75), the collectivity he refers to is the US, not the Jews.

It is to Farber's credit that he offers his interviewees the space to disagree with him and elaborate their own views. The extreme example of this might be Daniel Boyarin's interview, which descends at times into almost comedic hostility. This interview illustrates the vast gulf that exists between religious Orthodox and more secular Jews despite Farber's efforts to include both within the frame of his mirror. This is not a mere theoretical gulf – in England the one Jewish group excluded (or excluding themselves) from the thick network of opposition to Israel is Neturei Karta – the ultra-Orthodox opponents of Israel.

The limits to the form: 'A Time to Speak Out'

Finally, there is *A Time to Speak Out,* an anthology produced by the British group Independent Jewish Voices (IJV) (Karpf, Klug, Rose, and Rosenbaum 2008). In many ways, this is the most intellectually robust of these Jews-only collections and by being so, most clearly reveals the limits to approaching the issue *as* Jews and also to a large extent *as* intellectuals rather than activists.

First, the positive aspects. IJV draws on a wide range of voices from mainstream British-Jewish opposition to Zionism, as well as American, Israeli and Australian writers. The aim of the book is to serve as 'a book of voices...a lively and unpredictable town hall meeting' (Karpf, Klug, Rose, and Rosenbaum 2008: vii). The clearest difference between this and earlier anthologies is its outer-direction, indicating perhaps a greater sense of purpose to this network. The voyages of self-discovery, accounts of 'I went to Israel and guess what I found!' are not completely absent but are secondary. It is as if this stage of the movement is already past; most accounts in this collection can be better characterised as 'I stood up against Israel, and guess what happened to me!'

The first section of this book is a collection of critiques of Israel. Showing the valuable contribution such collections can make to understanding Israel/Palestine, this contains some impressive pieces such as Stan Cohen's excoriating dismissal of Israeli academia and Eyal Weizmann's analysis of the

limits to the humanitarian discourse that surrounds Palestinians, adding to previous Palestinian-centred critiques of this frame (Zreik 2004).

The second section continues in the vein of critique, aimed this time at diaspora Zionists and the silencing of dissent by official Jewish institutions. The authors perform the task of exposing diaspora Zionism admirably; the stories and arguments have a cumulative effect, building up a composite picture of official Zionists as repressive, small minded, provincial and above all unfair. It is hard to read Abe Hayeem's admirably clear account of how architects are silenced by Zionist browbeating, or Emma Clyne's story of the absurdist antics of Jewish student societies, without feeling a sense of indignation at this Zionist hegemony. Here, the injustice frame is placed more over diaspora Zionism than over Israel's actions – with diaspora Jews rather than Palestinians being the main victims in this framing process.

The cool dissection of the arguments of the Zionist lobby by the likes of Richard Kuper, co-founder of Jews for Justice for Palestinians (JfJfP), could be explicitly designed to fulfil one of the book's stated objectives - to 'lead others – likeminded perhaps but independent-minded certainly – to find their voices too.' (Karpf et al 2008: xi). In other words this book, as with others is deliberately designed as a space-clearing exercise to allow and encourage a necessary dissent to be articulated.

Nevertheless the downside of speaking out collectively as Jews is never acknowledged. To repeat: this tactic, however unintentionally, reinforces the idea that Jews have a special role to speak out about Israel, a fallacy which serves to silence the largely absent Palestinians, and to implicitly tell others not to get involved. The incongruity of denouncing particularism and parochialism in a Jews-only collection is not addressed by participants, or perhaps where it should be addressed, by the editors.

Perhaps it is because IJV's actions are focused on other Jews that there is a quite remarkable absence of Palestinians from this collection. They are rarely referred to except as the subjects – or rather the unfortunate helpless objects - of human rights discourse. There is an outright refusal to engage with the democratically elected Hamas government except to lament and occasionally

condemn it. Indeed there is no engagement with any Palestinian political leadership. While it is understandable that liberal diaspora Jews would find it difficult and perhaps also inappropriate to be co-respondents of Palestinian leadership in the Occupied Territories, the non-engagement with Palestinians extends to those living in exile. The painful conclusion is that Palestinians are occasionally to be spoken of but are not welcome to speak in the virtual town hall the editors wish to create.

The troubling absence of Palestinians in this and other collections can also lead to a reproduction of the central Zionist idea – that Israel/Palestine is all about the Jews. Their absence also means that their concerns and proposals are not addressed. This is seen in the refusal by many writers to entertain the idea that the problem with Israel goes beyond the occupation regime. While there is no distasteful Nakba denial such as occurs in American collections, there is an equal refusal to address the demands of Palestinians to reverse its effects and return home.

One could view this as another example of activists being controlled by the discourses allowable in the Jewish field. If one's goal is to change the mindsets of mainstream Jews, one can plausibly argue that this softly-softly approach works better than a more thorough-going strategy. One activist I interviewed defended this approach on practical grounds: 'when you're trying to nudge the door open, you can't, you don't nudge it open with some dynamite.' Questions of strategy as well as ideology must be bought into consideration. Or rather questions of strategy, the choice of the terrain of activism, affect ideology. If 'moderate' Zionists are the target of activism, this helps direct the framing of the conflict – at its extreme there is an unthinking equation of Jews and Israel, more often the problem is framed as not being the racist/settler nature of Israel, it's simply the occupation. And finally, this is a terrain of activism where it is difficult to highlight Palestinian subjectivity.

The silencing of Palestinian voices has been a theme of other collections, and indeed is a problem faced by the entire movement. This isn't simply a result of Jewish advocates promoting their own identities at the expense of Palestinian

subjectivity, or of meekly accepting the limits set by the Jewish field of contention. The problem confronts the Palestine Solidarity Movement as well.

Such a muting of Palestinian voices has many causes – Israel's growing isolation of Palestinians in the Occupied Territories, fractured Palestinian leadership as a result of their fractured experiences – being subjected to sectarian Jewish rule in Israel, military occupation in the Occupied Territories and exile elsewhere (Said 1986). It is also the result of power imbalance between western solidarity activists and the objects of their solidarity (Goudge 2003; Johnston 2003). Jewish activists aren't the only ones whose field of activism is less universal than first appears, more involved in combating and possibly unconsciously reproducing local and racial hegemonies than in coalition-building across borders.

Nevertheless members of activist groups – Jewish as well as non-Jewish - do face this issue to a greater or lesser extent, and see the need to engage with Palestinians. That this is not done in this volume and only to a limited extent in other books can be seen as a flaw, a failed representation of this movement. (On the other hand, none of these books set out to explicitly describe a fixed, concrete movement.)

I would argue this lacuna occurs, not simply because the authors are writing as Jews, but also because they are writing as intellectuals. Were this a collection of activists, or rather – since many of the writers are activists – a collection of people writing *as* activists - they would feel less entitled to efface Palestinian resistance and subjectivity. It is telling that while activist groups such as JfJfP are occasionally name-checked, they are not discussed, and more radical and very active groups such as J-BIG (Jews for Boycotting Israeli Goods) are not even mentioned. The erroneous impression is conveyed that IJV is at the cutting edge of British Jewish opposition to Israel and that the movement is confined to discursively challenging Zionist hegemony, rather than a wider range of activities.

Equally seriously for a collection explicitly designed to speak to a movement, there is little attempt to discuss concrete courses of action, beyond boosting opposition to Zionist hegemony over other Jews. This, I repeat, is despite the

activist credentials of many of the authors. Instead many choose to adopt the intellectual vantage point, of observing from a god's eye position (there is activist engagement – but only with Zionists and fellow Jews) and contenting themselves with judging.

Considering the calibre of many of the people in this collection, it seems that this format – a Jews-only intellectual critique - presents a missed opportunity. For as much as it renders the writers articulate about the problems, it renders them silent about the salient question to every problem: what is to be done?

Conclusion

One can't formulate hard and fast rules about the strengths and limitations of movement theorising on the basis of four idiosyncratic books within a particular movement, but some general themes emerge. Firstly is the multifaceted nature of these writings. They alternately serve as mobilisation tools, analysable documents and analyses in themselves. They offer well-thought out counterposing views and important theoretical purchase on the movement. In this article I have done little more than scratch the surface of these arguments in order to reveal them; but these ideas demand to be engaged with.

Secondly is their critical distance from the movement they try to mobilise. This can partly be ascribed to how the books stress different factions in this movement and critique other factions, and partly to efforts to conform to dominant academic forms. But this is only part of the story. To return to my metaphor – Lacan claimed the mirror stage was necessary in forming the ego. And indeed movements are often imagined as pure egos, desperately trying to expand, to develop, to conquer target groups. Yet this collection of collections shows another aspect of social movements, their constant effort to try to understand themselves.

The attempt to see the self as whole is (usually) more than a heroic effort in self-delusion. Lacan's insight was that in order to see the self in such a way, one needs an alienation from the self. The best of these books offer such a critical distance, their aim is both to criticise Israel and Zionism, and to apprehend

their own terrain of activism. In this they echo Norbert Elias's challenge to sociologists to try and achieve both detachment *and* involvement. While achieving such harmony should matter much to scholars, these books indicate just how much it does matters to activists.

Thirdly, they reveal something of how the terrain of activism determines the ideological and identitarian frames of contention. Returning to Bourdieu's metaphor of the games player, the extent to which the player can choose how to play the game is evident from the wide divergence of views expressed. Even though all writers speak as Jews and to a greater or lesser extent to an imaginary Jewish collectivity, what they choose to say differs so radically that one cannot ascribe it purely to their terrain of activism. Put another way, one does not make allowances for Israel simply because one is trying to appeal to a group where praise for this state is deep-rooted and discursively hegemonic. This is a choice which some players make and some refuse to make – a choice both strategic and ideological.

Yet perhaps Bourdieu's insight holds true at a deeper level – despite stated opinions the field still constricts the range of activities. If activists are fighting Zionist hegemony among Jews, Palestinians will only ever be incidental objects to this work. It will be confined to the relatively safe slogans of 'end the occupation' or even 'end the most unsavoury features of the occupation'. This should not be automatically condemned, for this might be only one facet of people's activities. To properly assess their effectivity we would also have to look at the other overlapping fields of activism which movement participants are involved in. One unfortunate result of Jews-only collection of essays is that it fails to convey that movement participants *are* involved in coalitions, other groups and so on, or to fully engage with this multi-field activism.

So does this speak of a flaw in movement theorising, particularly distant issue movements – that their analyses are fatally weighted down by their need to highlight the active subjectivity of movement participants? Not necessarily. Earlier I talked of how these works' focus on Jewish subjectivity represented 'missed opportunities' for this movement. This is putting it too strongly, for they

serve an important purpose and can be seen as representing 'work in progress', the long and often wearying progress of a movement constituting itself.

It could be argued that I am falling into another trap here – that I am assuming that there is an imperative for this movement to address Palestinians and their concerns, when this may not be the case. Perhaps this movement will remain as an increasingly comfortable contestation and assertion of a certain type of Jewish identity. And yet addressing Palestinian concerns, being truly universalistic, is one of the implicit and often explicit aims of this movement. It seems a logical corollary that to do so the movement and its intellectuals move beyond the mirror-stage - the immediate problem of combating those Jewish critics who would silence them. As a self-aware and self-consciously learning movement it has the resources and perhaps also the motivation to produce further activist theorising to do just that.

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About the author:

David Landy is studying diaspora Jewish opposition to Israel, focusing on Britain. He is based in the Dept of Sociology in Trinity College Dublin. His research interests include solidarity movements, theories of race and ethnicity, migration and diaspora, Zionism and anti-Zionism. He has been involved in international solidarity work and migrant movements as a migrant himself in Finland. He is currently involved in Palestinian solidarity activism. His main activist affiliation is Ireland Palestine Solidarity Campaign (IPSC) and academic affiliation is Trinity College Dublin (TCD). Email address: dlandy@tcd.ie

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Book review:

Conway, Janet (2006). *Praxis and politics: Knowledge production and social movements.* New York. Routledge

Fergal Finnegan

Even a cursory glance over some of the most prominent books produced over the past decade from within the 'global justice' movement would be sufficient to recognize a distinct style and sensibility (Mertes, 2004; Notes from Nowhere, 2003: Yuen, Katsiaficas & Rose, 2002). On a superficial level these collections, like the 'movement of movements' they sought to analyse, appeared to be a strange and unruly carnival of opinion and dissent which might, to pick a random selection, find Bolivian anarchists, Marxist academics and French peasants all rubbing shoulders. For many commentators this joyful cacophony clearly demonstrated the weakness, incoherence and irrelevancy of the global justice movement. However, on the contrary the form and the themes of the movement of movements indicated just how historically significant this period was. At the Zapatista encuentros, the world social fora, the various summit protests and direct action camps alongside thousands of other less well publicised events a new contemporary radical imagination was being shaped by coming to terms with the challenge of neo-liberalism. Inevitably any attempt to describe social reality on a global scale in a period of rapid change will be plural and unfinished.

Just as importantly it is hardly a historical accident that activists chose at this moment to work within broad progressive networks using participatory forms of democracy in which a plurality of opinions and strategies were encouraged. In this sense the shape and organization of the global justice movement can be understood as a conscious attempt to reevaluate the complex legacy of a century of radical thought and experience. It is thus unsurprising that a movement born under the shadow of the enormous failure of Soviet authoritarianism and

inspired by the victories of the 'new social movements' should be concerned with how radical ideas can serve to deepen democracy and encourage diversity rather than stifle dissent and how utopias can be imagined without forgetting the grotesque brutality of the gulags and the lies of authoritarian Marxism

Of course when direct action know-how is placed besides grand Hegelian theory and NGO lobbyists work with committed anti-capitalists debates inevitably emerge over political strategy and ethical values. Debates which, a decade after the Seattle protests, we can now fruitfully reflect upon. One way of framing these debates is to ask how we can usefully understand the relationship between epistemology and politics. What do we mean by 'knowledge from below', how is it produced, what is its ultimate value, and what is, and should be, its relationship with formal, 'expert' and institutional knowledges? These are knotty and significant issues and it is precisely these important questions that *Praxis and politics* sets out to address by analysing the activities of one part of this 'movements of movements' at a local level.

The author, Janet Conway, is a Canadian scholar who spent most of the 1990s working as a full-time social justice activist in Toronto. In her book she examines a broad based coalition of Toronto activists that she helped establish called the Metro Network of Social Justice (the MSNJ) as it evolved and responded to the neo-liberal restructuring of the city between 1992 and 1997. It documents the organizational prehistory, founding and development of the MNSJ within the social and political context of a changing Toronto.

In this account the network, one of several such social justice coalitions that emerged in Canadian civil society in the 1990s, became an important space of resistance and collaboration as the neo-liberal assault on the welfare state intensified. The MNSJ grew steadily from 30 to almost 200 member organizations bringing together activists from a wide range of NGOs, radical political organizations, advocacy groups and trade unions. Inevitably, within such a politically diverse coalition very different objectives and strategies were espoused by various constituent groups within the network but according to

Conway for a good deal of the MNSJ's existence this was a source of creative tension and political experimentation.

However, as the 1990s progressed and as the effects the neo-liberal reform on a state and city level became clear a split slowly emerged between those within the MNSJ who advocated a popular education strategy and activists who were pushing a narrower and perhaps more 'traditional' campaign and protest agenda. Conway's sympathies lie with the former rather than the latter strategy and she was evidently frustrated by what she saw as tendency towards 'hyper-activism' within sections of the MNSJ who relentlessly pursued campaign after campaign at such an unforgiving tempo that it left little time for reflection. Similarly, she enumerates some of the difficulties of political work that is overwhelmingly concerned with pressuring elites to make decisions rather than focusing on developing alternative practices at a grassroots level. This is contrasted to the slower rhythm of popular education initiatives undertaken by Conway and others within the MNSJ which were orientated to what the author calls long-term 'capacity building'.

Most of their educational work was done under the self explanatory rubric of 'Economic and Political Literacy' (EPL) and involved both grassroots community workshops and activist education. The aim of this work was to create a dialogue within communities about how they understood their own social needs by learning and discussing political economy. The book gives considerable attention to this subject and the writer is still clearly excited by the potential of such work to develop social awareness of political issues, to help create social solidarity and ultimately to encourage meaningful forms of political agency. However, when the activists associated with this popular education approach sought to formalise and further their work within the network by securing funding for a properly resourced EPL centre in 1997 the initiative was blocked. As a consequence a number of activists split from the MNSJ and in Conway's estimation this irreparably damaged the MNSJ as a space for creating knowledge from below and seriously hampered the reach and strength of the network.

Thankfully though *Praxis and politics* is not just another jaundiced account of possibility betrayed but a reflection on social movements and an argument about how to produce social theory. Conway uses her experience in MNSJ as an occasion to think through creating social movement theory from the 'bottom up'. Furthermore, embedded within this history of the MNSJ and this approach is a thesis about the role of knowledge and learning in contemporary social movements. The author argues that the lived, formal and informal, knowledge of activists deserves careful attention and such work provides the key to understanding both the dynamics and potential of social movements. In this account the everyday and 'largely tacit, practical and unsystematised knowledge' (p.1) of social movements are described as powerful tools for remaking culture and identity. This, Conway argues, is particularly true in coalitions and networks such as the MNSJ which potentially offers a dialogical space for the development of more sophisticated and systematic political analyses through open debate.

This theory of social movements as fertile spaces of knowledge production, identity formation and political experiment certainly deserves careful consideration by both activists and academics. It is developed by drawing on the work of the radical Brazilian educator Paulo Freire and feminist theory in order to outline a social movement epistemology. Within this paradigm the process of democratic decision making and the experience of participatory knowledge production is an integral part of any genuinely democratic political project. In other words the process of making politics and social meaning is much more important than simply achieving campaign objectives. It follows from this approach to epistemology that all knowledge is shaped by power and history and is therefore necessarily, partial and provisional. In methodological terms this means that privileged formal, expert and institutional knowledges require an open and dialogical relationship with experiential knowledge to be really meaningful for progressive social movements.,

While this is hardly a novel proposition it is interesting to have this idea explored in the context of the most recent 'movement of movements'. As such Conway's book can be read critically and usefully alongside the recent work of the radical

educationalists Michael Apple (2006), Henry Giroux (2004) and some of Stanley Aronowitz's (2003) writings on social movements that consider some of these issues as well as various analyses on popular education by Crowther, Martin and Shaw (1999), Liam Kane (2001) and Majorie Mayo (2005). Of course there are also clear parallels between *Praxis and politics* and the more magisterial work on epistemology and social movements by the Portuguese sociologist de Sousa Santos (2007).

Undoubtedly, Conway tackles a subject that is intriguing and perhaps even of enormous importance to social movement theory and for the most part carefully and painstakingly put together and clearly argued. Besides which the range, capacity and energy of the work undertaken the MNSJ activists is noteworthy in itself and as such the book is worthwhile. The fact that Conway goes to the trouble to elaborate how the MNSJ developed as Toronto became an important node in global capitalism adds to the value of the work. Nonetheless, however interesting and potentially useful some of the ideas might be the brevity of the arguments undermines the overall impact of the book by skating over whole fields of social movement theory, educational analyses and radical political economy so rapidly that the arguments are often more suggestive than compelling.

There are also some very noticeable gaps in the book. The central theme of how academic work such as this has, should or might relate to social movement activism is obviously touched upon in every chapter but strangely there is little reflection on how the research for this book, this act of translation from the grassroots to the academy, has impacted on the author's life as an activist. Even more oddly given Conway's personal involvement and that she undertook interviews with other activists the texture of the book is a little flat and the voices and passions behind the events remain a little muffled. Also, frustratingly the work lacks an appendix of materials of the MNSJ or the EPL and does not give any detailed accounts of the workshops organized by the EPL. Oddly given that the work is by an activist-academic there is no postscript on the work of the MNSJ since 1997.

This lack of grit is not solely due to the constraints of academic writing or the fact that *Praxis and politics* is too short to realistically achieve Conway's ambitious goals. Throughout the book there is a theoretical and political unevenness. Conway has a strong distrust of modes of reasoning that risk theoretical and political foreclosure and is strongly influenced by Laclau and Mouffe's (1985) blend of feminism, Gramsci, poststructuralism and liberalism. Accordingly Conway outlines a conception of radical democracy in which is seen as preferable not to legislate or prescribe for one particular vision of the future. However, in this case this approach leads to a theory that is a more an agglomeration rather than a consistent whole. The difficult work of acknowledging the contextual and provisional nature of knowledge within a framework that allows us to meaningfully discuss and evaluate truth claims is stymied and repeats the tendency in some postmodern work to confuse political and theoretical clarity with authoritarianism.

One of the effects of this is that *Praxis and politics* is often unclear about how power functions and is maintained in modern capitalism. As a consequence there is little attempt to broadly frame the losses and gains of the work described, Moreover, there is little clear and conclusive evaluation on the debates that have dominated networks such as the MNSJ on the value of participatory versus electoral democracy and the limits of the network form itself. A linked problem is that Conway's preferred terms such as democracy, capacity building remain somewhat vaguely defined. Even more importantly the complex way popular education can be employed by *varied* political agendas is largely ignored. Instead, the popular education agenda is described as a political approach in and of itself against a series of positions with which she disagrees. Certainly democratic, and dialogical process are of paramount importance but it is moot whether the sort of 'capacity building' described alone amounts to an effective political strategy. This way of structuring the analysis of the MNSJ ultimately forecloses much of the substantive discussion to be had about how you think beyond the present moment, the obstacles in our way and how you get there.

Early in the book Conway approvingly cites David Harvey's call for a 'politics of global ambition' (p.4) based on local resistance. In *Praxis and Politics* the author goes some way to thinking through important questions about social movements and knowledge which is undoubtedly a fundamental part of creating a politics of global ambition. However, the brevity of the books, the numerous gaps and the political vision that underpins mean that Conway falls well short of this. The book remains locked in a historical moment which was important both as a critique of the radical tradition and an attempt to understand the nature of neo-liberalism but the movement of movements needs to move beyond this moment and give a reckoning of its own strengths and weaknesses over the past decade. Those interested in remaking the world through a passion for freedom, equality, dignity and justice will find much to reflect upon in Conway's book but perhaps in terms of political vision not quite enough.

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About the author:

Fergal Finnegan is an activist from Dublin who is an adult educator and a researcher. Any queries or comments on the review are welcome especially from people interested or involved in popular education. His email is fergaltf@yahoo.co.uk or or he can be contacted via post at the Department of Adult and Community Education, NUIM, Maynooth, Co Kildare, Ireland.

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Interface: a journal for and about social movements

Call for papers, issue two

"Civil society" versus social movements

Interface is a new journal produced twice yearly by activists and academics around the world in response to the development and increased visibility of social movements in the last few years - and the immense amount of knowledge generated in this process. This knowledge is created across the globe, and in many contexts and a variety of ways, and it constitutes an incredibly valuable resource for the further development of social movements. *Interface* responds to this need, as a tool to help our movements learn from each other's struggles.

Interface is a forum bringing together activists from different movements and different countries, researchers working with movements, and progressive academics from various countries to contribute to the production of knowledge that can help us gain insights across movements and issues, across continents and cultures, and across theoretical and disciplinary traditions. To this end, *Interface* seeks to develop analysis and knowledge that allow lessons to be learned from specific movement processes and experiences and translated into a form useful for other movements.

We invite both formal research (qualitative and quantitative) and practically-grounded work on all aspects of social movements. In doing so, we welcome contributions by movement participants and academics who are developing movement-relevant theory and research. Our goal is to include material that can be used in a range of ways by movements – in terms of its content, its language, its purpose and its form.

We are seeking work in a range of different formats, such as conventional articles, review essays, facilitated discussions and interviews, action notes, teaching notes, key documents and analysis, book reviews – and beyond (see details in the guidelines for contributors). Research contributions are reviewed by both activist and academic peers, other material is sympathetically edited by peers, and the editorial process generally will be geared towards assisting authors to find ways of expressing their understanding, so that we all can be heard across geographical, social and political distances.

Our first issue, published in January 2009, focussed on the theme of "movement knowledge": what we know, how we create knowledge, what we do with it and how it can make a difference either in movement struggles or in creating a different and better world.

Our second issue, to be published in September 2009, will have space for general articles on all aspects of understanding social movements, as well as a special themed section on "civil society versus social movements". By this we mean the increasing tension between officially-approved versions of popular participation in politics geared towards the mobilisation of consent for neo-liberalism – the world of consultation and participation, NGOs and partnership – and the less polite and polished world of people's attempts to participate in politics on their own terms, in their own forms and for their own purposes – social movements, popular protest, direct action, and so on. In drawing this distinction, we realise that civil society organisations and social movements often have complex and contradictory practices and relationships which do not fit into two clearly distinguished categories. One of the objectives of this edition is not therefore to impose a straightjacket on reflections and analysis of these different types of participation but rather to open up discussion and strategic thinking between activists, movement participants and researchers working in different contexts and with different experiences.

The types of questions and experiences we are interested in exploring include (but are not limited to):

- To what extent do social movements and civil society organisations exist in an antagonistic and conflictual relationship?

- Are there examples in which this relationship can become constructive for the struggle for popular democracy and social justice?

- What can particular experiences of these types of participation tell us about the possibilities and limitations for the development and strengthening of popular resistance to neoliberalism?

- How can we develop theory and practice that overcomes the often idealistic notion that NGOs are always actors that foster social justice?

- How can we overcome the often simplistic critique of NGOs as the 'trojan horses of neoliberalism'?

- What can the experiences of workers and participants in civil society organisations tell us about the nature of domination and resistance?

The deadline for contributions for the second issue is May 1st 2009. Please contact the appropriate editor if you are thinking of submitting an article. You can access the journal and get further details at http://www.interfacejournal.net/

Interface is programmatically multilingual: at present we can accept and review submissions in Catalan, Danish, English, French, German, Italian, Maltese, Norwegian, Portuguese, Spanish and Swedish. We are also willing to try and find suitable referees for submissions in other languages, but cannot guarantee that at this point.

We are also very much looking for activists or academics interested in becoming part of *Interface*, particularly with the African, South Asian, Spanish-speaking Latin American, East and Central European, Mediterranean, Oceanian and North American groups. If you are interested, please contact the relevant editors: details at http://www.interfacejournal.net/2008/03/editorial-contacts.html.

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