

SOBRE PAULO FREIRE E OS ATUAIS DESAFIOS PARA A EDUCAÇÃO: entrevista com Carlos Alberto Torres¹

Equipe Editorial da Movimento-Revista de Educação²

Entrevista realizada com Carlos Alberto Torres, sociólogo nascido na Argentina, com Mestrado em Ciências Sociais, Doutorado em Educação Internacional e Desenvolvimento e pós-doutorado em Fundamentos Educacionais. Professor de Ciências Sociais e Educação Comparada na University of California, Los Angeles-UCLA. Diretor Fundador do Instituto Paulo Freire de São Paulo/BRA, Buenos Aires/ARG e da UCLA/USA. Autor de mais de 60 obras, ocupa a *UNESCO Chair in Global Learning and Global Citizenship Education*, na UCLA, desde 2015. A entrevista recupera a convivência entre o entrevistado e Freire, a recepção às ideias do educador pernambucano na UCLA, problematizando, ainda, questões centrais para uma agenda educacional na atualidade.³

Hanoi, Vietnam, August 30, 2017

Apreciados colegas, contesto en castellano e inglés y en negritas.

Equipe Editorial (E.E): Seguramente, o senhor possui uma das trajetórias mais ricas do pensamento crítico em educação na atualidade. O próprio Freire (1999)⁴, com base nos seus primeiros estudos sobre a *Pedagogia do Oprimido*, qualificou-o como um pesquisador rigoroso, sistemático e criativo. **Em que momento o senhor e Paulo Freire se aproximaram? O que o senhor destaca dessa convivência?**

Carlos Alberto Torres (CAT): Estudié a Freire cuando estaba en Argentina, y escribí mi primer libro, el primero de una trilogía, este libro intitulado *Lectura crítica de Paulo Freire* y publicado en Mexico en castellano y en São

¹ Entrevista realizada por escrito, via e-mail.

² Ver: <http://www.revistamovimento.uff.br/index.php/revistamovimento/about/editorialTeam>

³ Considerando a riqueza do texto enviado pelo Doutor Carlos Alberto Torres, a abrangência e o público deste periódico, optamos pela publicação do material tal como nos foi enviado.

⁴ FREIRE, Paulo. A letter regarding professor Torres promotion to Associate Professor. São Paulo, 1999. Disponível em: <https://carlosatorres.com/paulo-freire/paulo-and-carlos/>. Acesso em: agosto de 2017.

Paulo en portugues. Intercambié cartas con Freire cuando el estaba en Ginebra, Suiza, y le envié dos artículos que escribí y publiqué en la Revista Síntese, publicada por los Jesuitas en São Paulo, y en la Revista Franciscanum. Revista de la Universidad de Boaventura en Colombia.⁵ Le gustaron mucho y con el correr del tiempo dijo a Moacir Gadotti que you fuí su primer crítico –ver el prefacio de Gadotti a mi libro *First Freire: Early Writings of Social Justice Education* (New York, Teachers College, Columbia University, 2014). En un libro colectivo que escribimos, Freire hizo un lindo comentario: “Para Carlos Torres, uno de los que mejor me estudiaron.”

Mi convivencia con Freire fue aprender de el su manera de pensar la vida, la política y la educación, siempre a partir de un acto cognoscitivo de carácter epistemológico. Hablo de eso en *First Freire* y otros escritos. *First Freire* ganó el premio al mejor libro de educación de adultos en USA en 2015 por la American Association of Adult and Continuing Education.

E.E: Além de participar da criação do instituto Paulo Freire no Brasil, o senhor criou o Instituto Paulo Freire da Argentina e o Instituto Paulo Freire da Universidade da Califórnia- UCLA em Los Angeles. Este último, há cerca de 15 anos. **Qual foi a recepção às ideias de Freire na UCLA? As contribuições de Freire têm o mesmo vigor no contexto norte-americano atual?**

CAT: Freire fue recibido en USA en dos instancias. A mediados de los setenta como un educador revolucionario de la educación de adultos. Algo

⁵ Torres, C. A. "Servidumbre, autoconciencia y liberación." [Slavery, self-consciousness, and liberation]. *Franciscanum. Revista de la Universidad de Buenaventura*, Bogota, Colombia 54, September-December, 1976; Torres, C. A. "A dialéctica Hegeliana e o pensamento lógico-estrutural do Paulo Freire. Notas para uma análise e confrontação dos pressupostos filosóficos vigente na dialética da pedagogia dos oprimidos e do pensamento freireano em geral." [Hegelian dialectics and Freire's logical-structural thought. Notes for an analysis of philosophical underpinnings of pedagogy of the oppressed]. *Revista Sintese*, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil 7, 1976.

que me parece muy restringido para las contribuciones de Freire a la educación. Ya en los ochentas fue recibido como un gran innovador en la educación, e incorporado en distintas universidades y cursos de formación de docentes. En UCLA hay una lectura crítica de Paulo Freire muy importante.

E.E. No Brasil, assim como em outros países latino-americanos, observam-se o avanço do neoliberalismo e a redução de políticas públicas destinadas à educação de jovens e adultos no âmbito do Estado. No caso brasileiro, integra essa conjuntura a divulgação de ideias conservadoras sobre a escola e a educação. **Que tipo de incômodo Paulo Freire ainda provoca? A educação pública popular é uma utopia a ser perseguida? A luta política ficará restrita aos movimentos sociais?**

CAT: Freire incomoda por muchas razones, pero especialmente por su argumento central en pedagogía del oprimido. As I have said: Freire argued that few human encounters are exempt from oppression of one kind or another because by virtue of race, class, or gender, people tend to be victims and/or perpetrators of oppression. He stressed that racism, sexism, or class exploitation are the most salient forms of dominance, but he also recognized that oppression exists based on religious beliefs, political affiliation, national origin, age, size, and physical and intellectual handicaps. Starting from a psychology of oppression, influenced by the works of psychotherapists such as Freud, Jung, Adler, Fanon and Fromm, Freire developed a "Pedagogy of the Oppressed." He believed that education could improve the human condition, counteracting the effects of a psychology of oppression and ultimately contributing to what he considered the "ontological vocation of mankind": humanization. In the introduction to his widely acclaimed *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, he wrote, "From these pages I hope at least the following will endure: my trust in the

people, and my faith in men and women and in the creation of a world in which it will be easier to love." ⁶

La educación popular tiene una larga y rica historia en América Latina. Como toda utopia, puede, debe y seguramente será reinventada, no solo por movimientos sociales, sino tambien por administraciones populares.

E.E. O senhor tem tratado de temas centrais como educação, justiça social e cidadania, destacando efeitos da globalização e do neoliberalismo, sem desconsiderar as especificidades locais. **Diante disso, é possível indicar uma agenda prioritária comum para o debate sobre a educação de jovens e adultos na atualidade?**

CAT: Contesto esta pergunta em inglês para incorporar un texto reciente:

In an era of global interconnectedness, the world faces immense challenges as well as opportunities that demand a new education. Do current educational experiences provide the knowledge, skills and values necessary to fundamentally understand what is happening in the world? Is education teaching us how global problems impact our lives, the lives of communities, of nations and the planet?

Global citizenship may help our planet, global peace, and people through its contribution to civic engagement, in its classical dimensions of knowledge, skills and values. There is a cosmopolitan imperative of economic equality, welfare and cultural diversity that may produce an individual who may admire others more for their differences than for their similarities.

⁶ O entrevistado responde também em inglês para incorporar um texto recente:

September 11, 2001 forced me to seek an innovation grounded in a new ethics. This is the background for the UNESCO Chair in Global Learning and Global Citizenship Education that I have the honor to occupy at UCLA, the first UNESCO Chair in the University of California system. This decision dovetails nicely with my academic career where I have endeavored to innovate education towards sustainability and global citizenship. In addition to creating forms of education indispensable to foster mindsets and skills prepared to respond to the world's problems, and being inspired by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, the work of the UNESCO-UCLA Chair is predicated upon nurturing teaching practices, research, theories, and policies that support humanity's struggle for the global commons, human rights and democracy.

I have argued that global citizenship should add value to national citizenship and to the global commons. But what is the global commons? And how can global citizenship add value? Global commons are defined by three basic propositions. The first one is that our planet is our only home, and we have to protect it through a global citizenship sustainable development education, moving from diagnosis and denunciation into action and policy implementation. Secondly, global commons are predicated on the idea that global peace is an intangible cultural good and treasure of humanity with immaterial value. Thirdly, global commons are predicated on the need to find ways that people who are all equal manage to live together democratically in an ever-growing diverse world, seeking to fulfill their individual and cultural interest, void of corruptions, and achieving their inalienable rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. The great question about peace is how we can cultivate the spirit of solidarity across the lines of difference.

E.E: Na conjuntura atual latino-americana, o que não pode ser desprezado na formação dos futuros docentes em todos os níveis?

CAT: We need a new educational paradigm. The world of education was taken by surprise but very much welcomed the 2012 initiative of the U.N. General Secretary, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, entitled *The Global Education First Initiative*. Launched on September 26, 2012, the Global Education First Initiative is a five-year program built on three key principles: education for all, quality of education, and global citizenship. In the Secretary-General's own words, "when we put Education First, we can reduce poverty and hunger, end wasted potential – and look forward to stronger and better societies for all."⁷

This is the first time that a UN Secretary has launched such an ambitious project on education in the UN system. Because it focuses on education, UNESCO is playing a major role in designing and implementing the initiative. As I said, there are three pillars in this initiative: putting every child into school; improving the quality of learning; and fostering global citizenship. While the first and second pillar are quintessential to the work of comparative education as a field of teaching, research and practice, the third pillar, fostering a global citizen education, is particularly relevant for the goals and purposes of *Comparative Education: The Dialectic of the Global and the Local*, the book that I edited with Robert Arnove.

Granted, to be feasible and successful, this ambitious project of global citizenship needs serious theoretical refinements. Other scholars and I have discussed in many places why global citizenship, why global citizenship as opposed to other forms of citizenship, and how comparative education may contribute to advance global citizenship education.

⁷ <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/global-education-first-initiative-gefi/>

Moreover, I will argue that the concept of global citizenship education needs to be framed in the context of a new narrative about education, or perhaps, to follow the critique of neoliberalism that I had advanced in other places a new common sense. *The Global Education First Initiative* should be framed as a new common sense in education because it conflicts and confronts the growing tecnocratizatin of education. The new common sense will be able to transform the traditional canons of culture and civics, citizenship education, as well as global education concepts that have become shifting signifiers—implying different things to different people—into a new horizon yet not fully clarified. I am cognizant of the fact that the concept of common sense, with its Gramscian overtones, may not be acceptable to everybody. There is a suspicion that ‘common sense’ represents an ontological position that lacks an explicit sense of reflexivity. I have discussed these conundrums in one of my articles on neoliberalism and do not need to repeat it here.

The third pillar of the Initiative is now being negotiated within the intellectual and institutional space of UNESCO and the UN system. Like any negotiation, the concept of global citizenship is subject to polarizing forces, diverse and divergent interests and ideologies, and, by implication, contestation. Tensions, conundrums, paradoxes, and contradictions will signal the complex configuration of any project of this magnitude. It is a project that will be negotiated in the globalized environments of the world system and international organizations. The negotiation involves a constant dialectical interplay of national, state or provincial, regional and municipal governments; in short, the ecology of the local heavily compounded with the presence of national and transnational social movements.

This concept will be the lynchpin of a new methodology and educational foundations for teachers at all levels of the system.

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