



PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION: THE MARXIAN PERSPECTIVE;

KEYWORDS

Dr N C SUMATHI

Guest faculty University of Mysore

"The materialist doctrine that men are products of circumstances and upbringing, and that, therefore, changed men are products of other circumstances and changed upbringing, forgets that it is men who change circumstances and it is essential to educate the educator himself". **Karl Marx and Engels(The Historical Materialism)**

Although Marx and Engels didn't write widely about education, they developed theoretical perspectives on modern societies that have been used to highlight the social functions of education. Their concepts and methods have served to both theorize and criticize education in the reproduction of capitalist societies, and to support projects of alternative education, i.e, public education for the working class, in accord with Marxian Socialist principle.

As the "**Thesis from Feuerbach**" which opens this section suggests, changing social conditions create new forms of education, so that the rise of capitalist bourgeois societies would produce educational institutions that reproduce dominant social relations, values and practices. Likewise, transforming capitalist societies and creating socialist ones requires new modes of education and socialization.

The classical Marxian paradigm thus sees education as functioning within the hegemonic social system which is organized by, and serves the interest of capital, while calling for alternative models of education that would prepare students and citizens for more progressive socialist mode of social organizations Marx and Engels envisaged education and free time as essential to developing free individuals and creating many sided human beings. The sketch of socialism in the German Ideology – where one would "hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, rear cattle in the evening, criticize after dinner, just as I have a mind, without ever becoming hunter, fishermen, shepherd or critic." This reflects the ideals of a non alienated life in which education is a key part of the life process.

In the vision of free society sketched out in the **Grundrisse**, the system of automatics would produce most of society's goods, and individuals could thus enjoy leisure and the fruits of creative work, whereby education would become an essential part of the life-process, not just the few privileged capitalist, such a society would be completely different social order from that of capitalist society which is organized around waste and the production of commodities.

Thus Marx's utopian vision of communism, education, would help fully develop socialized individuals, create a co-operative and harmonious society, and unleash creativity in all of its forms.

Frankfurt School - Philosophy of Education :

In Weimar Germany in the early 1930's, the Frankfurt school were carrying out research into the family and authority and concluding that the family was declining as an agent of authority, giving way to the media, peer groups, schooling, and other institutions. In exile in the United States after 1934, the Frankfurt school focused on the role of the media in education and socializing individuals. To a large extent, the Frankfurt School inaugurated critical studies of mass communication and culture, and thus produced an early model of cultural studies (Kellner 1989 and 1995). The Frankfurt school theorists coined the term "Culture industries" to signify the process of the industrialization of mass produced culture and commercial imperatives which drive the system.

In retrospect, one can see the Frankfurt group's critical theory as articulation of a stage of state and monopoly capitalism which became dominant during the 1930s (Kellner 1989). In this era of "organized capitalism," the state and giant corporations managed the economy and individuals submitted to state and corporate control. This period is often described as "Fordism" to designate the system of mass production and the homogenizing regime of capital which wanted to produce mass desires, tastes, and behavior. It was thus an era of mass production and consumption characterized by uniformity and homogeneity of needs, thought, and behaviour producing a "mass society" and what the Frankfurt school described as "**the end of the individual.**" No longer was individual thought and action the motor of social and cultural progress; instead giant organizations and institutions overpowered individuals. The era corresponds to the staid, ascetic, conformist, and conservative world of corporate capitalism that was dominant in the 1950s with its organization men and women, its mass consumption, and its mass culture.

During this period, mass culture and communication were instrumental in generating the modes of thought and behavior appropriate to a highly organized and homogenized social order. Likewise, public education was creating standardized education and curricula which was serving as instruments of massification and social control. For instance **Herbert Marcuse's One-Dimensional Man**, (1964) criticized the ways that educational institutions, the media, and other forms of socialisation were creating conformist modes of thought and behaviour, producing what he called "one-dimensional man".

Post Modernism and Neo Hedonism :

In more recent studies, however there has been a turn-throughout the English speaking world – "post-modern" problematic emphasizing pleasure, consumption, and the individual construction of identities in terms of what Mc Guigan (1992) has called a "**cultural Populism**". Media

culture from this perspective produces materials for identities, pleasures, and empowerment, and thus audiences constitute the “popular” through their consumptions of cultural products.

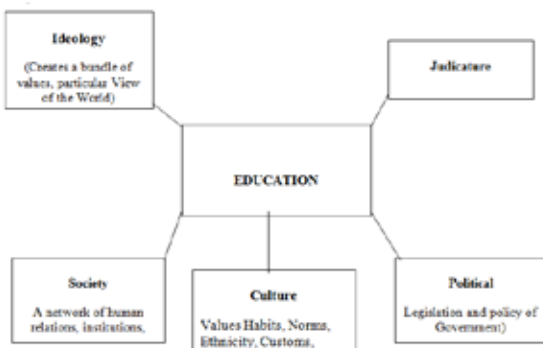
The forms of cultural studies developed from the late 1970’s to the present, theorize a shift from the stage of state monopoly capitalism, or Fordism, rooted in mass production and consumption to a new regime of capital and social order, some times described as “Post-Fordism” (Harvey 1989, or “post-modernism” (Jameson 1991) and characterising a transnational and global capital that valorizes difference, multiplicity, eclecticism, populism and intensified consumerism in a new information / entertainment society. From their perspective, the proliferating media culture, post modern architecture shopping malls, and the culture of post-modern spectacle became the promoters and policies of a new stage of **techno-capitalism**, the latest stage of capital, encompassing a post modern image and consumer culture (Best and Kellner 1997 and 2001).

The Pedagogy of the oppressed (1972), Brazilian educator and activist Paulo Freire criticized the “banking concept of education” while calling for more interactive, dialogical, and participatory forms of Pedagogy that are parallel in interesting way to those of John Dewey. While Dewey wanted education to produce citizen for democracy, however, Freire sought it in the spirit of Marxism. Henry Giroux was linked to Michael Apple’s attempts to link neo-Gramsci’s theories of hegemony to analysis of capitalist schooling as instrument of corporate power and domination.

Figure 1. How market economy aided by corporate and mass media affect all aspects.



How the Education can play a Pivotal Role Figure 2



.Torres and Nicholas Burbules in ‘Globalization and Educa-

tion’ articulate an overview of the challenges to education from globalization. They argue that the economic restructuring of the global economy suggests both the need to reconstruct education to make it relevant to the needs of a new economy, but also provides the challenges to resisting the ‘**market based model of education**’ that would impose similar business models and imperatives on educational institution through out the world. They analyse the dangers in the imposition of neo-liberalism and market models on the institutions of education, while benefitting from political advances of globalization, such as the internet, and new technologies, new forms of global and cosmopolitan culture, and a globalization of democracy and human rights.

According to **Noam Chomsky** in his work **Corporate Assault on Public Education**. “our kids are being prepared for passive obedience, not creative independent lives”. **Maria Montessori** model of kindergarten education, that children held within them something wonderful, something so special that it could be the key to changing the world. She saw that they were inherently good and that, if allowed to develop freely, they felt connected to everything and were naturally caring to each other and the world around them. And the work of the Adult was to help them to be all that they could be. She argues that the spiritual nature of the children has been forgotten and denied and that children could therefore show adult the way to return to a more meaningful holistic way of living.

CONCLUSION :

Discussions of globalization and education point to the continuing relevance of Marxian perspectives for educational philosophy and practice today. Critical neo-Marxist pedagogues throughout the world have articulated problematics of gender, race, sexuality, and multiculturalism with Marxist concepts of class and domination, thus providing potential expansion and enrichment of Marxist perspectives.

Indeed, the continuing viability of Marxian perspectives today are bound up with the continuing expansion of capitalism in a global economy and growing importance of the economy in every domain of life. Marxism has historically presented critical perspectives on capitalism and the ways that economic imperatives shape institutions like schooling to correspond to the interests of the ruling class.

REFERENCE

1. Marx, Karl and Fredrich Engels (1975) Collected works, Newyork and London. International Publishers and Lawrence and Wishart. | 2. Arato, Andrew and Eike Gebhardt 1982. The essential Frankfurt school Reader : Newyork continuum. | 3. Marcuse, Herbert (1964) One – Dimensional Man. Boston : Beacon Press : Second edition, Beacon and Routledge press, 1995. | 4. Mc. Guigan, Jim (1992), cultural Populism, London and Newyork : Rout ledge. | 5. Jameson, Fredric. Post-modernism, or the cultural logic of Late Capitalism, Durham, N.C. Duke University Press 1991. | 6. Best Stevens and Douglas Kellner (1991). Post modern Theory ; Critical Interrogation ; London and Newyork : Macmillan and Guilford Press. | ii) -do- 2001, Post Modern Adventure New yrok, Guilford press. | 7. Freire, Paulo (1972). The Pedagogy of the oppressed. Newyork Horder and Horder. | 8. Giroux Henry (1992) Border Crossings, Cultural Workes and the politics of Education. Newyork Routdogs | ii) " - (2000 n) stealing innocence : Newyork, St. Martin's press. | 9. Burbules, Nicholas and Carlos Torres, editors (2008) Globalization and Education, London and Newyork : Routledge. | 10. Chomsky Noam. The Corporate Assault on public education Ukia Community blog. World press. Com. 2013 / 03 / .