Introduction

Returning to the glorious days of critical sociologies in the 1960s, Ben Agger reflects his ideas on teaching sociology. An education of a critical mind should be dialogical and democratic, it «should mobilize, energize and inspire.» It is young people who, equipped with critical concepts and radical insights, can change the world, states Agger. «Teaching should matter because students do. Students, like our own children, are prisms through which we understand ourselves better. They also model democracy and play in ways that most sociologists have forgotten. Children are utopian agents...» (Agger 2006, 212.)

Yes, indeed they are, as are our students. Or are they? «How touching, how naive» someone may retort from the Department of Economics in these times of born again cynicism and the freezing culture of futile publishing. But if teaching really is as important as Agger and few others (see Burawoy 2004, DeCesare 2009, Persell 2009) claim, are we taking it seriously, or only acting as we were? What if our teaching of and studying in educational and social sciences are, at present, based on false assumptions – or «university contract» according to which teachers are as if they were teaching and students as if they were studying. And what if, even worse, teaching and studying in the university mere alienates and numbs the students inflicting individual, social and political hopelessness? What if we as academic scholars reproduce hopelessness and alienation in our arrogance towards teaching and learning, and our hunger for personal merit as part of academic diploma mills? David Graeber states as follows:

Hopelessness isn't natural. It needs to be produced. If we really want to understand this situation, we have to begin by understanding that the last thirty years have seen the construction of a vast bureaucratic apparatus for the creation and maintenance of hopelessness, a kind of giant machine that is designed, first and foremost, to destroy any sense of possible alternative futures. (Graeber 2008.)

Are we part of that «bureaucratic apparatus for the creation and maintenance of hopelessness» in our teaching (and in our research projects for that matter), or are we not? Are we a part of the problem, and not a part of the solution? I am afraid to say, but I fear that in our narrow-minded, often-faked professionalism we are the problem by taking part to a giant machine – a.k.a
academic-industrial complex (McLaren et al. 2010, see also Giroux 2007) – that is not only destroying our possibilities for liberatory, critical learning but also possible alternative futures.

In this working paper I study the relationship between public sociology and critical pedagogy in the fourfold table their constitute, and map the possibilities and premises of using Wikiversity in both disciplines. Wikiversity (http://en.wikiversity.org) is an open learning community in the Internet, and one of Wikipedia's sister projects. In its main page it is stated as follows: «Wikiversity is a Wikimedia Foundation project devoted to learning resources, learning projects, and research for use in all levels, types, and styles of education from pre-school to university, including professional training and informal learning.» In reality there is no single view of Wikiversity, but many.

I what follows I claim that dialogical and collaborative thinking of both public sociology and critical pedagogy suit together with the leveling effects of Wikiversity. Self-organization and collaboration inherent in Wikiversity can enhance the aims of public sociology and critical pedagogy to further learners' possibilities for lifelong learning and their critical consciousness, and create a more democratic, ecosocialist future. In addition I argue that educational processes – how and in what ways we learn – are significant ingredients in reaching these aims.

Public Sociology and Critical Pedagogy

Public Sociology

As known it was Herbert Gans who followed Russell Jacob's concept of public intellectuals and brought the idea of public sociology to the fore in his ASA Presidential Address in 1988. He accentcd that public sociologists are not popularizers, but «empirical researchers, analysts and theorists like the rest of us, although often their work is particularly thoughtful, imaginative or original in some respect (Gans 1989, 7).» Furthermore he thought that to be a public sociologist three qualifications must be fulfilled: good writing skills, breadth of sociological interest, and avoidance of undue professionalism.

Sixteen years later, as an ASA President, Michael Burawoy continued the efforts of institutionalizing public sociology as legitimate and necessary part of sociological endeavor by introducing his definition of public sociology. According to Burawoy public sociology «seeks to bring sociology to publics beyond the academy, promoting dialogue about issues that affect the fate of society» (Burawoy 2005, 104). Task Force on Institutionalizing Public Sociology reminds in its report that although sociology has a tradition and roots on social reformism, utilitarian movements and social activism, it has not, after one hundred years, yet act upon its public and political promises outside the university.

American sociologists have long been deeply engaged in the public issues of the day and with the policy makers and activists of their times. Lester Ward, the first president of the then American Sociological Society, W.E.B. DuBois in his many works on the American Negro (in his words) such as “The Negro Artisan,” “The Negro American Family,” and “Economic Cooperation among Negro Americans,” and Jane Addams in her publications on “The Child, the Clinic, and the Court” and “Women at the Hague” all set standards for our field. Many other early sociologists conducted sociology inside the academy and outside the academy in the public arena by writing reports for courts, health departments, foundations, and state government agencies. As Lester F. Ward said in his 1906 presidential address “[S]ociology has now begun, not only in some degree to forecast the future of society, but to venture suggestions at least as to how the established principles of the science may be applied to the future advantageous modification of existing social
structures. In other words, sociology, established as a pure science, is now entering upon its applied stage, which is the great practical object for which it exists.” Why, 100 years after ASA’s founding, is there a task force mandated to recommend methods for recognition and validation of on-going public sociology, guidelines for evaluating public sociology, and incentives and rewards for doing public sociology? This is because sociology as a discipline has never fully developed its promise to apply the tools and knowledge of sociology beyond the academy. (Task Force on Institutionalizing Public Sociology 2005.)

Critical Pedagogy

Critical pedagogy is a tradition in educational research which takes an educational look on social life, its structures and processes. The critical look has a special twist in it. It is, firstly, assumed in critical pedagogy that all aspects of society, social phenomena (films, ads, lectures, conversations, traveling, etc.) and social institutions (party politics, media, health care, family, university etc.) have a pedagogical dimension; it is as if the social world in its many everyday incidents – specific space-times – was but an ideological teaching apparatus providing valuable connections when people need to know something but also colonizing an innocent mind with massive amount of symbolic violence in messages, sounds and images.

Secondly, it is stated that education is all about politics (from identity politics to party politics and everything in between), and that politics unceasingly has an educational (or pedagogical) aspect; the term public pedagogy is used to refer to the educational dimension of the variants of social life and the public arena. Thus critical pedagogy by no means refers to the organization of school and classroom learning. One of the key figures in the present scene of critical pedagogy, Peter McLaren has described critical pedagogy, and what he coins «revolutionary critical pedagogy» as follows:

Critical pedagogy, on the other hand, helps to undress the cultural formations, social relations and institutional and other organizational structures that mediate how we approach the concepts of curriculum, design, evaluation, classroom instruction, and the social construction of knowledge, such that these forms and structures of mediation become more transparent in efforts to help students locate their agency so that they can act more coherently as human subjects growing up in conditions not of their own making. It does this by providing an extensive vocabulary – essentially trans-disciplinary – that brings some of the key insights from critical social theory and puts them at the service of teachers and students. It also helps to unite various struggles against social and economic injustice and join people together in common cause against neoliberal capitalism and imperialism, without giving up on or diminishing the specificity of their local struggles. Revolutionary critical pedagogy operates from an understanding that the basis of education is political and that spaces need to be created where students can be given the opportunity, the skills, the vocabulary, and the resources to imagine a different world outside of capitalism’s law of value (i.e., social form of labor), where alternatives to capitalism and capitalist institutions can be discussed and debated and, most importantly, struggled for. It is really about developing an anti-racist, gender-balanced, anti-imperialist and anti-patriarchal approach to reading the word and the world, one that is pro-socialist, that focuses on decolonizing pedagogies. There is a growing eco-socialist dimension to critical pedagogy and one that teaches respect for the rights of animals as well. It is a tool not only to combat the great scatter of swine we find in our political arenas – the despots, the neocons, the chicken-hawkss, the war mongerers – it is a tool to fight the social relations that give rise to them and reproduce relations of exploitation intergenerationally. Here critical educators
can join forces with labor organizing, anti-free trade and anti-sweatshop campaigns, green mobilizations, indigenous movements, shack-dweller and landless peasant movements and debt repudiation coalitions. (Cohen 2007, *italics* added.)

What is important to notice, is McLaren's stress to a need to create spaces «where students can be given the opportunity, the skills, the vocabulary, and the resources to imagine a different world outside of capitalism's law of value.» As I will argue, Wikiversity is precisely such a place for the self-organization of non-commodified and collaborative teaching and learning.

**Teaching Public Sociology**

Michael Burawoy has emphasized the role of teaching in public sociology, or more precisely, a certain relationship and communication between different publics. He has emphasized students central role not only as sociology's first and captive public but also as one with prior knowledge. For Burawoy this means that students should not be treated as empty vessels into which we pour our mature wine, nor blank slates upon which we inscribe our profound knowledge. Rather we must think of them as carriers of a rich lived experience that we elaborate into a deeper self-understanding of the historical and social contexts that have made them who they are. With the aid of our grand traditions of sociology, we turn their private troubles into public issues. We do this by engaging their lives not suspending them; starting from where they are, not from where we are. Education becomes a series of dialogues on the terrain of sociology that we foster — a dialogue between ourselves and students, between students and their own experiences, among students themselves, and finally a dialogue of students with publics beyond the university. Service learning is the prototype: as they learn students become ambassadors of sociology to the wider world just as they bring back to the classroom their engagement with diverse publics. (Burawoy 2005, 9.)

His ideas closely resemble those of Paulo Freire's (1921–1997), who in his *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* stated that in order to get rid of the oppressive society, educational interaction should be turned from hierarchical 'banking' into dialogues where people can communicate freely and create their social world as equal and meaningful (Freire 1993).

Both Freire and Burawoy can be criticized on the basis of the following paradox: while they both seem to respect students' experiences and maintain a series of dialogues between them, they still – perhaps unintentionally – juxtapose their sociological expertise («With the aid of our grand traditions of sociology, we turn their private troubles...») with students' novelty. Perhaps «our» grand sociological and pedagogical traditions do not hold anymore but are in need of serious rethinking and rewriting. Unfortunate authoritarianism is a genuine possibility if public sociology and critical pedagogy are interpreted as emancipatory projects in which «emancipation is understood as something that is done to somebody» (Biesta 2010)*. From this position it is obvious that there also needs to be «a fundamental inequality between the emancipator and the one to be emancipated» (*italics* in original). Thus a pedagogy «in which the teacher knows and students do not know yet; where it is the task of the teacher to explain the world to the students and where it is the task of the students to ultimately become as knowledgeable as the teacher» (Biesta 2010).

* This is, however, a contested interpretation for in many occasions it is maintained that public sociology and critical pedagogy are dialogical projects based on reciprocial respect and learning. Moreover it is emphasized in both of them that every form of power inherent in human relations, implicitly or conciously, needs to be debated, negotiated and taken into account.
A Gulf and A Distance

This is the point, where the ideas of Jacques Rancière enter the stage, for he is the philosopher who, besides criticizing Bourdieu's sociological approach**, has develop a radical learning theory, entitled emancipatory method. In the following I read Rancière's explication of the theory in his book The Emancipated Spectator (Rancière 2009), which nicely captures the core of his earlier work entitled The Ignorant Schoolmaster (Rancière 1991). Rancière starts with an idea that it is the very logic of almost any pedagogical relationship – actually it is the task assigned to the teacher (Rancière uses the word schoolmaster) – that the teacher abolishes the gulf between her knowledge (written in advance in different curricula and textbooks) and the ignorance of the ignoramus (pupil, student). Her lessons and exercises aim gradually, year after year, to reduce the gulf – whether in cognition, spirit, aesthetics, skills or manners – separating her and her students. But here lies the paradox: she can only narrow the gulf on condition that she constantly re-creates and reproduces it. For «to replace ignorance by knowledge» she must be few steps ahead all the time, install new set of ignorances, new gulfs, between the pupil and herself. (Rancière 2009, 8.)

The reason for this is simple, says Rancière. «In pedagogical logic, the ignoramus is not simply one who does not yet know what the schoolmaster knows.» More than that, the student is the one who does not know what she or he does not know, or how to know it. This is the very logic of the schooling system: it sets students into a plank slate position in that the system has ready-made formulas for what to teach (school subjects and study contents), how to teach (teaching methods or didactics), and in what age to do what (grades from preschool to high school and beyond). In other words, «the schoolmaster is not only the one who possesses the knowledge unknown by the ignoramus,» but «also the one who knows how to make it an object of knowledge, at what point and in accordance with what protocol» (ibid., 8.). And this is precisely the reason, why in the aim to create critical, even insurgent thinking and action it would be so absolutely necessary to focus on creating suitable educational situations for this purpose. Otherwise it is probable that we only serve to fulfill the wishes of «bureaucratic apparatus for the creation and maintenance of hopelessness» (Graeber 2008). In the context of public sociology and critical pedagogy it is necessary to acknowledge, as Rancière, that the educational system leaves something out of its overdetermined calculations; it ignores students' agency, and her lifeworld:

For, in truth, there is no ignoramus who does not already know a mass of things, who has not learnt them by herself, by listening and looking around her, by observation and repetition, by being mistaken and correcting her errors. But for the schoolmaster such knowledge is merely an ignoramus's knowledge, knowledge that cannot be ordered in accordance with the ascent from the simplest to the most complex. The ignoramus advances by comparing what she discovers with what she already knows, in line with

** From the early 1970s Rancière has criticized Bourdieu’s reproduction thesis and its application in educational policy making. In his opinion, Bourdieu has built an idea of the intellectual aristocracy, of “sociology kings,” who always know the people’s matters and their life situations better than themselves. In its determinism Bourdieu’s sociology of education thus presents ‘the philosophy of the police order’ serving the dominating power whose representatives do not even hear the ordinary people’s voice but consider it as meaningless nonsense (Hewlett 2007, 90, 91–97) but on the other hand one can claim that Rancière has used Bourdieu as a stroll man in developing his own points of view. According to the criticism, Bourdieu assumes that people are more or less ignorant; people from the working-class will be excluded from the educational system just because they do not realize, or are not aware of the real reasons for the exclusion. This ignorance, in turn, is a structural consequence of the apparently democratic capitalist system, which closes them out in the first place. In Bourdieu’s thinking the system stays erect because people do not realize its proper functions and because it reproduces its own existence by staying unrecognized again and again within its own processes (Ross 1991, xi–xii). However, Rancière does not want to sign or accept this circle logic of reasoning but stresses that the matters are as they are, and remain unchanged, partly because of these so-called social facts.
random encounters but also according to the arithmetical rule, the democratic rule, that makes ignorance a lesser form of knowledge. She is concerned solely with knowing more, with knowing what she did not yet know. What she lacks, what the pupil will always lack, unless she becomes a schoolmistress herself, is knowledge of ignorance – a knowledge of the exact distance separating knowledge from ignorance. (Rancière 2009, 9, italics in original)

In the following lengthy quote Rancière further explicates his pedagogical thinking:

What the schoolmaster knows, what the protocol of knowledge transmission teaches the pupil in the first instance, is that ignorance is not a lesser form of knowledge, but the opposite of knowledge; that knowledge is not a collection of fragments of knowledge, but a position. The exact distance is the distance that no yardstick measures, the distance that is demonstrated solely by the interplay of positions occupied, which is enforced by the interminable practice of the 'step ahead' separating the schoolmaster from the one whom he is supposed to train to join him. It is the metaphor of the radical gulf separating the schoolmaster's manner from the ignoramus's, because it separates two intelligences: one that knows what ignorance consists in and one that does not. It is, in the first instance, the radical difference that ordered, progressive teaching teaches the pupil. The first thing it teaches her is her own inability. In its activity, it thereby constantly confirms its own presupposition: the inequality of intelligence. This endless confirmation is what Jacotot calls stultification.

Joseph Jacotot (1770-1840), mentioned in the quote, was a French autonomous thinker, and a leading figure in Rancière's book The Ignorant Schoolmaster. In that book Rancière described Jacotot's method of «intellectual emancipation» which Jacotot developed as a sort of alternative pedagogy in the spirit of revolutionary times in France in the late 18th and early 19th century. «Intellectual emancipation is the verification of the equality of intelligence. This does signify the equal value of all manifestations of intelligence, but the self-equality of intelligence in all its manifestations. There are not two sorts of intelligence separated by a gulf.» (Rancière 2009, 10.) In other words, equality is a presumption of all emancipatory pedagogical interactions, and not their purpose or some distant goal as in stultifying pedagogical practices (see also Ruitenberg 2008)**.

Thus, someone who wants be to part of actual emancipation by education, «an ignorant schoolmaster», neither knows, cares nor legitimizes the gulf to be bridged by an expert, between her teaching and her students. Quite reverse, it is her task to renounce the assumption of ignorance and the idea of two different intelligences, those of inferior and superior, and uncouple his mastery from his knowledge. However, this uncoupling is easier said than done in the hierarchial universities – still worthwhile to obtain. The ignorant schoolmaster, perhaps an ideal figure of a public sociologist and a critical educator, does not teach her students her knowledge, «but orders them to venture into forest of things and signs, to say what they have seen and what they think of what they have seen, to verify it and have it verified.» (Rancière 2009, 10–11.) To act against this, is a firm bedrock for political amnesia, social hopelessness and stultified personae.

*** For Rancière the ultimate metaphor for emancipatory learning is the “poetic labour of translation.” It “is at the heart of all learning” from the first trial and errors, observations, and comparisons of a child (“[T]he human animal learns everything in the same way as it initially learnt its mother tongue”) to the works of a “scientist who constructs hypothesis.” “The same intelligence is always at work – an intelligence that translates signs into other signs and proceeds by comparisons and illustrations in order to communicate its intellectual adventures and understand what another intelligence is endeavouring to communicate to it.” (Rancière 2009, 10.)
To say this is not to deny cognitive or any other distance between the teacher and the student, but to point to a difference between the concepts of gulf and distance. A gulf refers to an authoritarian mastery of a teacher by the educational system, whereas distance is something belonging to our being as human animals. As Rancière (ibid., 10) puts it, we «are distant animals who communicate through the forest of signs.»

Every distance is a factual distance and each intellectual act is a path traced between a form of ignorance and a form of knowledge, a path that constantly abolishes any fixity and hierarchy of positions with their boundaries (Rancière 2009, 11).

There is always various distances in the lives of people as they use signs and symbols in communication, and there are distances in the more mundane sense that I, as a teacher with certain life experiences, have traveled my path in search of knowledge and understanding. But this path is among many, and not necessary the one used by others. Thus the difference between a systemic gulf and an organic distance (see Pictures 1 and 2).

These ideas get further support from the tradition of cultural psychology in which it is emphasized that teaching and learning situations are not only surrounded by sociopolitical and ideological factors but also create those factors as byproducts of sorts. Cultural psychologists stress that human communities are, above all, learning communities, or in Jerome Bruner's (1996) terms «mutual learning cultures». Bruner suggests that an ideal learning situation is not that which keeps students in isolation, in which they merely sit and listen, or read lecture notes in solitude, to him this is an alienated mode of learning. A more natural situation is that in which students can share their ideas and communicate with others in different ways.

This is not to say, however, that good quality revolutionary learning – sometimes referred to as deep approach to learning in contrast to surface approach (by educational psychologist Ference Marton) – would always be about communicating and keeping in touch; of course, at times, deep learning might require more consciousness retreat and loosening up than anything else. But it does say that in an ideal learning situation there are «mutual sharing of knowledge and ideas, mutual aid in mastering material, division of labor and exchange of roles, opportunity to reflect on the group’s activities» (Bruner 1996, xv). These connections are knotted between students, between students and their teachers, and between students and other people close and distant.
Cultural psychology of learning suggests participatory learning which is intrinsically motivated and connected to peoples' interests, aims and passions. It is also social in nature in involving interactions, and sharing with others, and it occurs during organic activities which are not highly prescriptive. This is where Wikiversity can be beneficial and useful in allowing these organic connections and naturally evolving interactions. Cultural psychology provides basic understandings of the importance of mutual sharing and mutual aid in learning, actually echoing Marx's maxim «from each according to his [and her] ability, to each according to his [and hers] needs» in his *Critique of the Gotha Program*, whereas emancipatory learning, as described by Rancière, presumes and underlines everyone's chances to participate in learning, in the first instance, as *equals*. Says Rancière: «Equality is not a goal that governments and societies could succeed in reaching. To pose equality as a goal is to hand it over to the pedagogues of progress, who widen endlessly the distance they promise they will abolish. Equality is a presupposition, an initial axiom—or it is nothing.» (Rancière 2002, 223.) Here Rancière uses the term distance, or perhaps it is translator's choice. In my reading it refers precisely to the *gulf* between the teacher and the ignoramus.

**Wikiversity as a Learning Community for Defiance**

How, then, can these ideas be actualized in teaching public sociology and critical pedagogy? Can we teach without falling into the trap of training, or as Manchev (2010) asks, without «performing authority, imposing norms, surveying and punishing, and enjoying our power? How can we open up thinking without educating? Is it possible to mobilize a "common" (or perhaps it is better to call it "friendly") way of thinking? How would it be done?» *Sapienti sat.*

If we as critical social scientists are concerned, following Feagin and Vera (2008), «with eliminating the chains of various social oppressions and with creating much more just and egalitarian societies,» then what sorts of teaching practices will help in advancing these aims in public sociology and critical pedagogy? To put it other ways, what does it mean, practically, to say that students are not empty vessels, but bring their own experiences and ideas to the learning situation? It is obvious that liberatory teaching cannot refer to the model where there is someone who knows and someone who does not know, not to an idea that there is - and must be - an unbridgeable gulf between an expert and a novice.
The key concepts and ideas of both public sociology and critical pedagogy, those of participation, collaboration, commitment, and solidarity, all point to a mode of learning and teaching that can be supported by the use Wikiversity (or other wikis). Wikiversity consist of three principles. Firstly, there is no-one who controls the actual contents (except the administrators and other users who try to fight vandalism), there is no Faculty deciding courses and granting diplomas. Secondly, Wikiversity is based on self-organization of users and editors regardless of their age, social status, gender, ethnicity or religion. And thirdly, Wikiversity is all about mutual learning cultures, equal participation and collaborative editing. In enhancing this the Wikiversity users and editors have found learning-by-doing model and ideas of participatory action research as useful.

Wikiversity can also be seen as an ideological «text», or practice, as any means of teaching and learning. It has its own underpinnings, and it shares some of the core ideas of participation, collaboration, and sharing, pointing to a fundamental leveling and democratization of learning and society, with the characteristics and tasks of public sociology and critical pedagogy. Wikiversity, like other wikis as well, has a profound difference compared to so-called traditional, broadcast media transmitting information and operating in the one-to-many model since Wikiversity utilizes easy-to-use wiki technology that in principle allows everyone's participation and builds on many-to-many communication model.

As stated in the beginning, Wikiversity is by no means a homogeneous learning community in its currents goals and contents. And, of course, it should not be. People interpret its uses and purposes differently and discuss about those interpretations in its discussion pages. Even its mission statements have varied in time. In 2006 it was stated as follows:

«Wikiversity is intended for the creation and use of free learning materials and activities. The mission of Wikiversity is to empower people to achieve their educational goals using resources produced by the free culture movement. The goal is to create a community of people who support each other in their educational endeavors.» (http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Wikiversity)

Two years later the mission was set as follows:

«Wikiversity is a centre for the creation and use of free learning materials and activities. Its primary priorities and goals are to create and host a range of free-content, multilingual learning materials/resources, for all age groups and learner levels and host learning and research projects and communities around existing and new materials.» (http://en.wikiversity.org/wiki/Wikiversity:Mission)

If read with analytic eye one can see that the terms like 'empowering,' 'free culture movement' and 'community of people' are erased from the recent mission statement. Perhaps Wikiversity is turning mainstream from its previous hacker image. At least it is more antiseptic and more neutral than the original one suggesting Wikipedia's neutral point of view -policy: «Neutral point of view (NPOV) is a fundamental Wikimedia principle and a cornerstone of Wikipedia. All Wikipedia articles and other encyclopedic content must be written from a neutral point of view, representing fairly, proportionately, and as far as possible without bias, all significant views that have been published by reliable sources. This is non-negotiable and expected of all articles and all editors.» (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NPOV.) It is yet to be seen how this cornerstone principle fits into Wikiversity that is something more than a free dictionary, where all the flowers of research and information bloome, including original research findings in contrast to Wikipedia (see http://en.wikiversity.org/wiki/Wikiversity:Original_research).
The power of Wikiversity as an extension of university teaching and learning is precisely in its collaborative and public mode of communication if looked at from the teachers' and students' point of views. Wikiversity encourages them to participate in the public learning sphere, and to act as public sociologists by providing an uncensored and immediate public channel to sociological communication inside the university and in the public arena. But this type of participatory communication to be in dialogue and participation with diverse publics still seems to be rather odd. «That is, the professor can be a 'tiger in the classroom' while being a 'pussycat in the Dean's office' and, too often, in the outside society» (Feagin & Vera 2008). In this situation Wikiversity's features can also form barriers both to teachers and students to get involved, especially if they are accustomed to the idea that universities are isolated parts of society, like islands in the sea, or, at best, «laboratories of life» as John Dewey once hoped them to be.

It assumes literacy, and, actually, critical media literacies, which «meet the dual challenges of teaching media literacy in a multicultural society and of sensitizing students and publics to the inequities and injustices of a society based on gender, race, and class inequalities and discrimination» (Kahn & Kellner 2005, 244). Although most of the students are not only media literate but savvy users of information technologies in their daily lives, they might still be cautious about wikis and their first edit, regardless of how simple it is. Thus it must to do more with 'right' attitude, or a mind set, than technological skill. And it certainly has something to do with students' learning histories, with their identities as learners (as subordinates or rebels), as well as university teacher's learning and teaching histories (as tigers or pussycats).

Even some anarchist scholars, who, on one hand, participate in anarchist activities and write defiant text (see e.g. Graeber 2009) still teach traditionally. A case in point is David Graeber, an anarchist scholar dismissed from Yale (according to rumors for his anarchism and support for the students organization). In replying the questions, what do you do to create horizontal relationships? Have you practiced consensus decision making in the classroom? Graeber said: «To be honest, in teaching I'm rather traditional. Well, I lecture.» And here is the paradox: How to teach anarchism by lecturing?**** The same paradox goes with public sociology and critical pedagogy: How to teach them without somehow applying the maxim: «teach what you preach.» In seminars Graeber says he is more free-form, though, «probably too free-form» and makes the following apt remark:

[F]reedom is infinitely diverse. There is no one "anarchist" way to do something. As soon as we start thinking that way, we open the door to every sort of hidebound sectarianism. Obviously, there are certain ways of behaving that are clearly not anarchist, that are impossible to square with the idea of a free society. And, in a deeply hierarchical society such as our own, some of that will inevitably creep into anything we do. Sometimes the worst thing you can do is pretend you are in an equal situation when you're not - i.e., walk into the room and say, "hi, let's just sit and rap," when in fact, you have to write up a grade for these people. Of course, you can also just give everyone an "A", but then you get in trouble with the hierarchy. (Actually, that was one of the complaints against me at Yale -

**** It is as if anarchism altogether excluded corporate universities as potential sites of rebellion and creation of solidary relationships and ecological living. This can be the right conclusion, which casts doubt also on the possibility to use Wikiversity in university teaching and learning. Anarchism as a learning theory consist of rejection of rigid structures and programmes as well as majority rule (democracy) and management by consensus, and is highly suspicion of constitutions and blueprints in its belief in small communities and social justice and socio-economic equality. Anarchistic education systemically promotes co-operation, solidarity and mutual aid and thus furthers social and ecological revolution, de-growth, and conviviality (see Suissa 2001). An anthology entitled Contemporary Anarchist Studies (Amster et al. 2009) includes a section on pedagogy, but it is relatively thin, to say the least, and does not speak with neighbouring tradition such as liberation sociology or critical pedagogy.
that I was too easy a grader on the graduate students. Because I figured grad students, after all, they're here because they really want to be. If they don't want to do the work they're not hurting anyone but themselves. They at least should be able to experience an environment where they can say whatever they like and not have to be looking over their shoulder every minute. But as I say, even that small gesture was enough to get me in big trouble at a place like Yale.) (In Kuebrich N/A.)

«The academic has often considerable teaching and service commitments within the university and/or specific criteria for promotion and tenure that require academic publications in mainstream journals, all of which can be at odds with the deep engagement with local struggles,» says Burawoy (2007, 132). The world of academic sociology and critical education indeed demand peer-reviewed publishing, but not community involvement, scientific peer communications, but not nourishing dialogues with community activists, or the general public. Wikiversity is a way for an academic to be involved and public, and most certainly it is a global way to be in touch with the students and others.

I see the uses of Wikiversity as counteracts against corporatization and commodification of knowledge in the universities and elsewhere across the schooling system funded and governed by the academic-industrial nexus. Wikiversity is an important addition in the toolbox of public sociology and critical pedagogy in that it shares with them a common aim of border crossing, dialogue, and outreach. It is based on the idea of reflective practices toward social change as are public sociology and critical pedagogy. What is crucial in all of them, in the light of their objectives, is their emphasis on collective, collaborative and open approach to learning along with the belief and respect in commons, that is to «the commons of culture, the immediately socialized forms of 'cognitive' capital, primarily language, our means of communication and education» (Žižek, 2009, 91).

Given the imminent institutional and individual obstacles Wikiversity can prove to be a necessary (but by no means sufficient) tool for sociological and educational defiance as it opens up possibilities for peoples' knowledge, for collective defiance and popular insurgency through common knowledge building, and, for that matter, learning different positions and argumentation. It goes without saying that I am not envisioning that all pedagogical processes in the university should model Wikiversity's collective collaboration and openness for all, but perhaps only for the sake of balance and alternative, it might be a good idea to variate the broadcasting mode of teaching and learning in which one talks while others listen and memorize. What I do believe, and would like to promote, is that Wikiversity can make us more equal than we were in the era of exams and diplomas issued by a university. We could be, again, sociologists and critical educators sans papiers.

If we are interested in developing together our conscientização, our critical consciousness, as I believe we should, then I think it is necessary to focus on teaching, or more precisely, on how we can encourage and inspire our students to learn, and learning how to learn, and how they can inspire us. For, the question of how we interact with each other in lecture halls, seminar rooms, and other sites of learning as Wikiversity, is always related to a question of the state of the world we are living in.

References


Rancière, Jacques (2009). *The Emancipated Spectator*. London: Verso. (Original English version of the text I am referring to see http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0268/is_7_45/ai_n24354915/pg_4/?tag=content;col1)


