Wikilearning as Radical Equality

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Abstract

In this chapter we characterize wikilearning – co-operative online learning – as a form of collaborative, collective and democratic learning using digital technologies; this form of learning is especially suitable in the hands of social movements and other activists as they 'learn in struggle'. Wikilearners build online communities of learning (e.g., Wikipedia, Wikiversity, and smaller sites based on wiki software and other so-called social media) in which they share their learning and help each other to learn perhaps without even realizing it. Ideally anyone can join these rhizomatic communities and contribute without top-down guidance or leadership. In developing the idea of wikilearning we refer to French philosopher Jacques Rancière's notions on teaching and studying without authorities as a foundation of radical equality. It is our contention that wikilearning consists of several qualities necessary for the creation of and full participation in a more humane and just society.

Introduction

In the end of his so far latest magnum opus In Defense of Lost Causes Slavoj Zizek lists the four antagonisms that, in his view, will not be solved or overcome by Capitalism. Not surprisingly, the first in the list is ecology, where the possibility of crisis is connected to the second antagonism: techno-science in the guise of biogenetics. New forms of apartheid (new walls between the wealthy West, and poverty and agony vegetating in the world's shanty towns, favelas, skid rows, barrios and ghettos) is the third antagonism, the fourth being that of intellectual property (echoing Michael Hardt's and Antonio Negri's ideas of the commons; see Zizek 2008, 421–425.) It is the last of these antagonisms which we take as our starting point by studying the question of intellectual property and open access not from the juridical point of view but from the point of view of education as a core commons. In this respect we believe that living and learning in the Wikiworld – the already existing world of free resources, software and collaboration on the net (see Suoranta & Vadén 2010) – marks the unprecedented possibility to change our individualized and alienated ways of being and learning in the world into something more humane and more just. In this respect it is our contention that what we have called as "wikilearning" is a new paradigm of learning at the same time as it is a means – perhaps even a weapon – in the hands of the majority of the people in their struggle to break free from the chains of the formal machinery of corporate and state-governed learning.

A working definition of wikilearning could be as follows: 1) the group is self-organized and volunteer (in opposition to pupils and students as captive audience in the school settings); this naturally includes the option of starting new groups (so-called 'forking'), 2) all (study) materials are available on the basis of open access (content is created under copy left licenses, if licenses are needed at all) and 3) everybody has equal possibility for contributing, commenting and working on the materials right from the start. An additional condition could be 4) to limit wikilearning to activities that are mediated by computer networks (in practice, the Internet), but that seems an unnecessary move, as the point of wikilearning is also to disseminate the practices out of the cyberworld into other spheres of life. Wikilearning can also be defined using a pedagogical maxim launched by the French philosopher Jacques Rancière (1991): "Teach what you don't know." The maxim represents the ultimate equality between students and teachers, between people, as it does not take into account any distinctions like age, previous schooling history, or gender that are often taken as a basis of pedagogical rank. Thus wikilearning in its ideal form and full fruition but also in its many practices signifies radical equality between different people, and differs drastically from the politically regulated and curriculum-directed schooling systems governed by the state.

Institutional Education and Ideological Calls

National educational systems maintained by nation states are characteristically closed top-down organizations, and in the recent world of vast opportunities of learning they seem to forestall more than allow "opportunities for people to learn from each other" (Preskill and Brookfield 2009, 24). As ideological power structures, or in French philosopher Louis Althusser's terms, ideological state apparatuses, schools (including corporate universities) have classical overdeterminate structures which produce individual subjectivities. As such, schooling systems also fit Althusser's description of an ideological state apparatus in their capacity to present a "call" to the individual as a subject: "the category of the subject is constitutive of all ideology, but at the same time and immediately I add that the category of the subject is only constitutive of all ideology insofar as all ideology has the function (which defines it) of 'constituting' concrete individuals as subjects. In the interaction of this double constitution exists the functioning of all ideology, ideology being nothing but its functioning in the material forms of existence of that functioning." (Althusser 1971.) Another way to say this is that the formal, systemic education is the ideological field as organized by the field of power. The ideological-educational matrix "calls out" the subjects by offering them various discursive positions and possibilities of agency penetrated by the institutional power of the state itself.

According to John Holloway (2005) "the state is not just a neutral institution but a specific form of social relations that arises with the development of capitalism. And, that it is a form of social relations that is based upon the exclusion of people from power, that is based on the separation and fragmentation of people." This we know from other analyzes, too. From the critical point of view the emphasis must be placed on the multi-layered socio-political structure of learning in state education: the key point is to realize how learning is regulated politically, and how it is in the service of dominant politics in

society. In the formal learning processes of schooling both teachers and students become subordinates with only relative autonomy. Althusser poses a crucial question, "What do children learn at school?", and provides the following answer we want to quote at length:

"They go varying distances in their studies, but at any rate they learn to read, to write and to add – i.e. a number of techniques, and a number of other things as well, including elements (which may be rudimentary or on the contrary thoroughgoing) of 'scientific' or 'literary culture', which are directly useful in the different jobs in production (one instruction for manual workers, another for technicians, a third for engineers, a final one for higher management, etc.). Thus they learn know-how. But besides these techniques and knowledges, and in learning them, children at school also learn the 'rules' of good behaviour, i.e. the attitude that should be observed by every agent in the division of labour, according to the job he is 'destined' for: rules of morality, civic and professional conscience, which actually means rules of respect for the socio-technical division of labour and ultimately the rules of the order established by class domination. They also learn to 'speak proper French', to 'handle' the workers correctly, i.e. actually (for the future capitalists and their servants) to 'order them about' properly, i.e. (ideally) to 'speak to them' in the right way, etc. To put this more scientifically, I shall say that the reproduction of labour power requires not only a reproduction of its skills, but also, at the same time, a reproduction of its submission to the rules of the established order, i.e. a reproduction of submission to the ruling ideology for the workers, and a reproduction of the ability to manipulate the ruling ideology correctly for the agents of exploitation and repression, so that they, too, will provide for the domination of the ruling class 'in words'. In other words, the school (but also other State institutions like the Church, or other apparatuses like the Army) teaches 'know-how', but in forms which ensure subjection to the ruling ideology or the mastery of its 'practice'." (Althusser 1971.)

On the other hand it is said that schools and educational institutions are among the few places in which it is possible to learn to participate in politics (Bauman 1999, 170), and also to learn certain skills of counterhegemony, although it is usually the case that teachers are forced to live a double life by being at the same time both the agents and the targets of ideological power. Most often schools follow curricula (whether national or more local) which are political documents to the core. Therefore, to act politically, or to be a political player in the field of education, a teacher should take that document as part of society's political programming, and not as an innocent handbook or as a substantial cornerstone of their work. Ideally they should encourage their students to political meta-learning, to critically examine the foundations of curricula, its themes and subjects. That is, they ought to encourage their students to the development of a political awareness. Some try to this with notable heroism, perhaps leaving the curriculum aside and concentrating on the principles and practices of liberatory pedagogy while others claiming they do not care about politics (unfortunately not realizing the long-term consequences of this position) ignore the question, or are socialized only to obey the rules of the given ruling ideology in their teacher training.

Of course, in principle (and in rare cases also in practice) teachers have power over their work (relative autonomy) and they execute their daily tasks independently from party politics or other ideological direction, but it is often the case that this is done in quite naive a manner or only in apparent independence: political and policy changes remain unnoticed. By saying this we are not referring to the individual teacher's thoughtlessness as such, her fault or error, but to the very fact that the ideological nature of the educational system does not reveal itself to political analyzes easily, and the structural forces opposing attempts to practice political meta-learning and raise political awareness are sometimes too great to overcome. Thus an important question is: "Can the teachers be expected to promote democratic practices in classrooms, when they representatives of the dominant power and at the same are its subordinates?" (Tomperi & Piattoeva 2005, 258). From Althusser's (1971) point of view, this is mission impossible:

"I ask the pardon of those teachers who, in dreadful conditions, attempt to turn the few weapons they can find in the history and learning they 'teach' against the ideology, the system and the practices in which they are trapped. They are a kind of hero. But they are rare and how many (the majority) do not even begin to suspect the 'work' the system (which is bigger than they are and crushes them) forces them to do, or worse, put all their heart and ingenuity into performing it with the most advanced awareness (the famous new methods!). So little do they suspect it that their own devotion contributes to the maintenance and nourishment of this ideological representation of the School, which makes the School today as 'natural', indispensable, useful and even beneficial for our contemporaries as the Church was 'natural', indispensable and generous for our ancestors a few centuries ago."

We cannot help thinking that every teacher needs skills and courage to acknowledge and question her political roles and ideological contexts in the digital age. Otherwise there is a danger of disconnect between students and teachers in that the latter group lags too much behind in their media and other literacies compared to the group of students (see Levin et al. 2002). As so many times repeated in the already vast literature of critical pedagogy, critical position of educational workers is the bedrock for the democratic society. As Stephen Preskill and Stephen Brookfield (2009, 14) state, "perhaps the most important element of learning leadership [and to be a teacher, a father, a colleague, a scholar, we might add], however, is being open to learning from the people around you and letting them see how crucial this is for your own practice and development." That is why we now turn to another world of learning outside the reality of formal schooling and its ideological practices.

Wikilearning

Formal schooling assumes that there is always someone who knows in the end, someone who knows what others should know and acquire, someone who knows the meaning of things, and what is meaningful to know. In Lacanian-Zizekian terms this is the Big Other (see e.g. Zizek 2008). There is no more fundamental rationale for the modern schooling than this Big Other who "knows in advance." Using the terminology of Jacques Rancière the assumption of the Big Other refers to the pedagogical myth: it divides the world in two by supposing a socially constructed division of power, as well as a lower and higher intelligence. Writes Rancière (1991, 7):

[The pedagogical myth] "says that there is an inferior intelligence and a superior one. The former registers perceptions by change, retains them, interprets and repeats them empirically, within the closed circle of habit and need. This is the intelligence of the young child and the common man. The superior intelligence knows things by reason, proceeds by method, from the simple to the complex, from the part to the whole. It is this intelligence that allows the master to transmit his knowledge by adapting it to the intellectual capacities of the student and allows him to verify that the students has satisfactorily understood what he learned."

Of course, in everyday life it is impossible and unnecessary to live such a myth since learning occurs in the course of action and participation, that is, when something must be done, and, therefore and by the same token, learned. In the everyday world we very often seem to learn by ourselves, from our parents and guardians, and from our peers. Therefore we are inclined to think as adult education theorist Griff Foley (1999, 1) who contends that for him "the most interesting learning occurs informally and incidentally, in people's everyday lives. And some of the most powerful learning occurs as people struggle against oppression, as they struggle to make sense of what is happening to them and to work out ways of doing something about it."

Let us illustrate the ideological nature of formal education by an example that also leads directly to the particularities of wikilearning. As we saw in the quote from Althusser, above, the emphasis of formal learning is on usefulness: the key is to constitute and set to work subjectivities that are useful and minimally disruptive to the ruling ideology. In the current economico-political climate, the requirement of usefulness and effectivity has gained ever more momentum, the state demanding greater transparency and more precise targeting of educational resources. "Employability" is one of the current buzzwords for this utilitarian function of formal education (see Moore 2009).

From the narrow point of view of "employability", any surplus of education is a at best a benign side-effect, at worst a waste of taxpayers money. As Terry Wrigley (2007, quoted in Moore 2009, 243-244) says "capitalism needs workers who are clever enough to be profitable, but not wise enough to know what's really going on." Conversely, for the radical consciousness such a surplus is necessary, as observed already in the 1970's by Rudolf Bahro:

The production of surplus consciousness that is already in train spontaneously must be vigorously pursued in an active way, so as to produce quite intentionally a surplus of education which is so great, both quantitatively and qualitatively, that it cannot possibly be trapped in the existing structures of work and leisure time, so that the contradictions of these structures come to a head and their revolutionary transformation becomes indispensable (Bahro 1978, 404, cited in Gorz 1997, 89).

One field for the surplus of education is, precisely, so-called informal education happening in a very natural ad hoc manner in everyday life; for instance, when pupils at school learn important lessons of life from their peers. Such informal learning extends beyond the school-hours, when the kids engage, for instance, in various activities on the Net, chatting, playing, gaming, and so on. It is this unregulated and, from the perspective of formal education, unnecessary learning that forms the basis of the Wikiworld.

The Internet is one such field of open learning where we - "common people" - not only seek and share information but also create new knowledges and image new possibilities without anyone giving us orders or homework, without anyone's specific pedagogical or other authorization, and without usual patterns of classifications such as age, skills, gender, or ethnicity. Undoubtedly the most important example of wikilearning so far has been the Wikipedia and its sister projects such as Wikiversity.

Open wiki projects, such as Wikipedia and Wikiversity, take their form over time. They are, first of all, online communities that are responsible of building their own culture and way of operating. Because of this, when an open wiki project is started, it is hard to know what it will finally become. Still, open wiki projects do not develop independently because they are embedded in specific socio-cultural contexts. Because of their free and open nature — anyone may join — their context changes over time depending on the socio-cultural demographics of active community members. (Leinonen et al. 2009.)

Both Wikipedia and Wikiversity are based on people's joint effort in learning (call it folk knowledge, common wisdom, or collective intelligence). Besides the obvious fact that Wikipedia and its kinds are the largest informal educational apparatuses ever and as such represent the ultimate and quite coincidental (at least from the point of view of formal education) achievement in lifelong learning and popular education, they demonstrate the power of the collective learning in an ethical and very straightforward way. As put by David Runciman (2009):

"Wikipedia has turned into a relatively reliable source of information on the widest possible range of subjects because, on the whole, the good drives out the bad. When someone sabotages or messes with an otherwise sound entry, there are plenty of people out there who see it as their job to undo the damage, often within seconds of its happening. It turns out that the people who believe in truth and objectivity are at least as numerous as all the crazies, pranksters and time-wasters, and they are often considerably more tenacious, ruthless and monomaniacal. On Wikipedia, it's the good guys who will hunt you down. "

The aim of Wikipedia is to set information available to everyone and to serve every learner who has access to the Internet. Wikilearning can be characterized as a Rhizome like in Sylvano Bussotti's notation in his composition entitled Rhizome (Five Pieces for David Tutor [1959]). The notation is paradigmatic in its nonhierarchy if compared to typical 'notations' of an well-ordered curriculum. Rhizome's staff does not determine playing; it arises, develops and lives organically. Or, perhaps the core of wikilearning is best captured by Marc Ngui as in Picture 1:

Picture 1. Marc Ngui: Thousand Plateaus (http://www.bumblenut.com/drawing/art/plateaus/index.shtml)

It is important to note that the Wikipedia is explicitely a free encyclopedia, not a "comprehensive" or "reliable" one; these qualities are mere side-effects of freedom. Freedom here is undersood in the sense of "free speech". Everyone is from the outset free to contribute to and edit on the articles in the Wikipedia. This ideal embodies in a great way the sense Ranciére gives to the universality of notions like egality. For Ranciére egality is not the goal of our actions, for instance, in education, it is rather the starting point; we act on the ground that everyone already is equal. The freedom of Wikipedia, together with its copyleft licence, which gives the users feedom to copy, modify and redistribute the material, given that the redistributed version is also copylefted, provide a social setting for the Ranciérian universality.

This social setting (free speech and copy left) is supported by the technological side of wiki software. A "wiki" is simply a web page (originally the name for the software underlying the web page) that can at any time by edited, and that automatically keeps track of the versions, and allows for the addition of new pages. Usually a wiki also has a tab for discussions, where the editions and additions can be deliberated on. Consequently, the wiki has become the dominant technology of knowledge creation, documentation, negotiations on knowledge, and so on. Epistemologically, a wiki page has interesting qualities: it has a visible history and a genealogy that can be seen. At the same time, with its "edit"-button, it presents itself not as immutable "it is written"-knowledge, but as provisional, fallible and collective, thus giving rise to a need of critical reflection on the uncertainty of knowledge. By combining these socio-technological properties of wikis (free speech, copy left, universality as a starting point, editability and version tracking) with the surplus of informal education we get the notion of wikilearning.

Characteristics of Wikilearning

It is possible to sketch dimensions – a typology – that characterize certain key differences between wikilearning and learning in formal settings such as school. At least the following twelve aspects (see Table 1) should be noted:

Wikilearning	School Learning
Radical openness and 'disorganization' of learning	Politically and economically regulated school learning with top-down, ready-made curriculum
Voluntary participation	Compulsory participation
Radical inclusiveness	Economically and culturally determined exclusiveness
Peer-to-peer (p-2-p) -interaction	Teacher- and tutor directiveness
Reflective uncertainty	Unreflective certainty
Evaluation and synthetization	Listening and (rote-)memorizing
Cooperation and sharing	Evaluation of individual achievements
People's collective intelligence, knowledge as an aggregation	Schooled elite's expert knowledge, knowledge as a body of learning
Problem-based learning	Subject-based learning
Folksonomy	Taxonomy
Local, contextual ad hoc-learning	Predestined learning goals and achievements
Radical equality	Equal opportunities

Table 1 Comparing Wikilearning and School Learning

Radical openness and 'disorganization' of learning vs. politically and economically regulated school learning with top-down, ready-made curriculum

Wikilearning is a radically open and dis- and unorganized in the sense that it is not regulated by laws or education policies, it is not part of the nation state and its educational system, but an independent activity. It does not exist in a written curriculum. However, as Scott Lash (2002), among others has pointed out, the disorganizational

nature of networked communities can be very effective. For instance, the informal volunteer organization provides a framework for such intricate distributed knowledge work as developing the GNU/Linux operating system.

Voluntary participation vs compulsory participation

Whereas wikilearning occurs in free participation, school learning is not only compulsory, but also governed and regulated by the federal government and/or the state, and teachers and adminstrators as 'disciplinary experts' who not only decide what and how students ought to be learnt but also shape curriculum and assessment standards (Greenhow et al. 2009, 248). The voluntary of wikilearning extends to all levels; the decision to participate or not, the intensity and mode of participation are all voluntary.

Radical inclusiveness (wikipublics, wikipublicity) vs. Economically and culturally determined exclusiveness (mainstream media, counterpublics)

In order to participate in the mainstream media you have to have certain qualities in your possession. It is not enough to be able to read and write and speak. You also have to have a degree, that is, educational and cultural capital. Often a permission of some kind is needed, and often the permission is not granted in a neutral way, but may need connections, money, qualifications, etc. In addition, mainstream media is heavily dependent on both its owners and the flow of advertisement money. Both facts point to the same direction: mainstream media cannot be too controversial if it wants to sell and make a profit. Like the mainstream media, alternative media with their counterpublis have their own rules of participation, too, which exclude or include. Participation in wikilearning is much more inclusive activity: only basic literacy and computer skills are needed.

Peer-to-peer (p-2-p) -interaction vs. teacher- and tutor directiveness

Wikilearning occurs in a peer to peer mode, that is, by learning from each other, and helping each other to learn. Importantly, the p2p structure allows also giving without taking and taking without giving, i.e., it is not reciprocal. Thus peer pressure is kept to a minimum. This might sound like a dream, or a never fulfilled utopia, but it is actually embedded in the use of the wiki technology itself. Where school learning 'technology' is written according to the habits and traditions of didactics and pedagogy (teacher-centered, student-centered pedagogy and so forth), and these habits and traditions are also embodied in school buildings and classrooms designs etc., wikilearning is based on voluntary self-aggregation of the participants with their productive assets. These assets are both immaterial and material: immaterial as brain power and cooperation (or 'participatory processing') with other users, and material as access to computer and to the digital networks (Bauwens 2009, 123).

Reflective uncertainty vs. unreflective certainty

One general wikilearning principle is that of reflective uncertainty. Wiki information should not be taken for granted, because wikis are editable and the current edit may be erroneous if not outright malicious. However, the history of edits can, at least in principle, be traced back to the beginning. This, of course, is a dramatic difference between wiki-information and printed information. Wikipedia's edit and history buttons potentially increase learners' skills in critical media literacy in comparison to textbooks' qualities to augment unreflective certainty. Gradually, by using wiki type pages, users learn to mentally expect and anticipate the structures of editability and genealogy also on other pages, including those of books. Thus, the reflective uncertainty of wikified information leaks also to other areas of knowledge.

Evaluation and synthetisation vs. listening and (rote-)memorizing

In wikilearning it is crucial to negotiate on information and knowledge (e.g., in wikis' discussion areas and so-called "coffee rooms") in contrast to school learning which emphasizes hearing and listening, and rote memorizing the things teacher has taught. Wikilearning includes information searching and comparison of different sources of information as opposed to school learning's textbook approach.

In addition communication and information exchange in wikilearning are not based on the model of sender and receiver (Shannon information), but on suggestion and evaluation. Take an ethnographic look to the classroom: in a traditional classroom the activities are speaking, listening, making notes, filling workbooks. The wikilearners are widely distributed, and the activities are typically computer-mediated. However, the difference is bigger on the level of cognition and experience. Speaking, listening and making notes correspond to the cognitive activities of conveying information and memorising. When an open source developer receives a piece of new code (a patch) the point is not to memorise or even to use it, but to evaluate it, and synthetise it with possibly several versions of the existing codebase. (It is also noteworthy, that in the hacker world, there is a militant ethos of evaluating the patch, the hack, and not the submitter, the author of the patch). Ideally, all activity in wikilearning has this quality of evaluation and integration, rather than delivering and memorising.

This quality of learning can be seen especially in young people's learning as Greenhow et al. (2009, 251) points out: "Contradicting traditional pedagogical models in which students submit their works to one authoritative source (the instructor) and receive feedback from that source, today's learners expect to participate in evaluating as well as in being evaluated and to share work and feedback among their peers."

Cooperation and sharing vs. evaluation of individual achievements

Wikilearning is based on doing and creating together. The idea is that no one can achieve alone what can be achieved together. In wikilearning individuals' learning achivements are not measured, criteria external to learning activity itself are not used. The value of a

learning activity will be judged only by the participants themselves based on their different motivations of participation (utility, fun, communality, etc.).

People's collective intelligence vs. expert knowledge of the schooled elite

A wiki page aggregates the common pool of information by the editors of the page. It is not the property or achievement of any one participant in the group and could not be written by any one editor. The wiki software is built for this kind of aggregation, not for the publication or dissemination of pre-existing knowledge. Furthermore, the process of aggregation does not have a pre-defined endpoint. The aggregate is always freely available and subject to further uses, editions, modifications and additions. This promotes a radical plurality of information, compared to the gated or closed forms of expert information relied on by formal education.

Problem-based learning vs. subject-based learning

The motivation for wikilearning is based on voluntarism, therefore the artificial boundaries of subjects (such as maths, literature, etc.) do not have to be replicated. The motivation of each participant is in one way or another internal based on the desires and problems of everyday life. This is, again, in clear contrast to formal education whis is often compulsory and in which individual learning tasks are often externally motivated (by the need to get good grades, to be a good pupil, etc.).

Folksonomy vs. taxonomy

Connected to the point above, the material in wikilearning is categorised and interconnected by ways which the users find meaningful, not in the categories of expert definitions or institutional classifications. The tags and hyperlinks created by users eventually build a folksonomy, in which both the basis for the classification (the ontology) and the classification itself emerge without expert validation either before or after the fact. Thus folksonomy supplants the more familiar taxonomies where the new always gets subsumed under the old.

Local, contextual ad hoc-learning vs. predestined learning goals and achievements

Wikilearning responds to local and contextual needs. In the anthropology on open source software developers, one of the earliest groups that have embraced wikilearning to the full, this phenomenon is called "scratching your own itch"; developers typically develop software that they themselves need or want to learn about (see Raymond 1999). Consequently, also the process and duration of learning are based on this real-world need, unlike in formal schooling where pre-existing goals have to be acheived and where performance is evaluated with regard to rigid benchmarks.

Radical equalities vs. equal opportunities

Like discussed above, wikilearning is based on radical equality in the sense that with regard to wikilearning everyone already is equal - the starting point is the freedom of everyone to participate, create, use the materials, etc. Wikilearning is not regulated by academic degrees and does not intend to produce a rival hierarchy or order of rank. In fact, typically the hierarchy in a disorganisation is also task-based, contextual, informal and susceptible to rapid changes.

The Impact of Wikilearning: radical equality comes to the school

Let us return to radical equality once more. The point of starting from the idea of equality in learning is, of course, not the naive presupposition that right from the outset everyone would have the same dispositions, capacities, skills, etc. The idea of radical equality is not a description of empirical facts, but rather a principle that structures action. For example, consider a doctor facing a person who is ill. The doctor may base his response to the patient based on various qualifications, such as whether the person is insured or not, whether or not she belongs to the group of people that the doctor is responsible, and so on. Alternatively, by assuming the position of radical equality, the doctor may structure his response by assuming the equality of all patients. Or consider a refugee or a migrant from the poor South to the rich West. Typically, the bureaucracy responds to her by demanding different qualification and documents that may or may not prove that she is entitled to this or that service or benefit. Again, the point of radical equality would be for the bureaucrat to structure her action so that the refugee/migrant already is equal to any fully documented citizen.

By analogy, the processes of wikilearning are stuctured so that they "call out" the equality of all participants. No external consideration limits access. This is the counter-ideological move. Learning is geared toward the qualities of co-operation, Habermasian negotiations and deliberation, and, most importantly, towards a plurality of knowledges.

In terms of education, this means the demolition of teachers as authorities, the sources or catalysts of learning. It is possible - even desiderable - to teach that which you do not know! (see Suoranta 2008). Ranciére turns the tables by suggesting that it is the educator (the "explicator") who needs the idea of the uneducated, not the other way around. The educator "calls out" the uneducated: "It is the explicator who needs the incapable and not the other way around; it is he who constitutes the incapable as such. To explain something to someone is first of all to show him he cannot understand it by himself" (Rancière 1991, 6). Here we find the knot that ties wikilearning as radical equality to social justice: "We know, in fact, that explication is not only the stultifying weapon of pedagogues but the very bond of the social order. Whoever says order says distribution into ranks" (ibid., 117).

Of course wikilearning can also be seen from a different, more critical vantage point: it too has its own ideological traps and hidden assumptions which state that in the free world of learning a learner becomes docile knowledge-skill worker who is willing to

serve as a servant of creative economy; she is active and interactive 24/7, media savvy, flexible, and reflective. On this dark side of wikilearning, the learner becomes her own task-master who has internalized the needs of the market to the point where all requirements on her skills and time have been outsourced to herself. Here wikilearning has been appropriated as a hyper-effective part of the utilitarian educational machine.

The answer to this danger is not to step away from wikilearning, but to inject it with a purpose that is dialectically both internal and fundamentally alien to the utilitarian goals. What we have in mind, is of course, again the surplus of education that is both spurred on by capitalism itself (as entertainment, edutainment, lost generations, etc.) and feeds on the gaps in capitalism (there are innumerable wikis on alternative economies, self-subsistency, self-help, DIY culture, etc.).

What of the relationship between formal education and wikilearning? Naturally, seeing the hypercompetitive allure of wikilearning, schools everywhere want to align themselves with its promise, presenting themselves as "formal learning with a human face"; as schools who are on the forefront of social media, web 2.0, and so on. There are numerous reasons to be skeptical of this development. The structures of formal education (compulsory attendance, division of subjects, division between teachers and students, need to give grades to individuals, etc.) strongly counteract any attempt to inject wikilearning into schools.

In order to really align former formal education with wikilearning, we have to go all the way. In practice this would mean that schools fully embrace the Wikiversity as a global platform of learning. By now it is clear that digital information and communications technologies create new forms of interaction and learning which do not exist without those technologies, or were not obvious in the earlier stages of those technologies (Liff & Steward 2001, 340). But as Leinonen et al. (2009) notes:

> "There is a chance that Wikiversity will become one of the most important online education sites on the Internet with a great impact on global capacity building. But it is possible that Wikiversity will slowly vanish when the first pioneering volunteers realize that running an online education site requires more than masses of editors of wiki pages."

This is where the "heroes of formal schooling" have a revolutionary possibility: by assuming the position of radical equality they can open up the learning processes in which they and their co-learners (be they "pupils" or "colleagues") are engaged, and at the same time take part in creating educational resources beyond the commodified educational market. Free software already exists, free encyclopedia exists, and the next wave is free education.

Conclusions

What we have wanted to understand and emphasize is that Wikiworld is a site for multiple voices necessary for the democratic struggle for global justice. And actually we

are imagining even more for we acclaim that, if allowed, common people, the great majority, will use Wikiworld most effectively, and it is our task as affluent parts of the population to fight with them in terms of open access. We define Wikiworld as collectively distributed network and wikilearning as shared meaning-making as an opponent to the traditional model of schooling based at least partly on elite's often well-hidden "hatred of democracy" (Rancière 2007). From this perspective the ideas of the wikiworld and wikilearning can be hard to digest for those who see them only as adjuncts to the capitalist market and capitalist schooling. Thus, we are inclined to think as mujerista theologian Ada María Isasi-Díaz (2008) who writes as follows focusing especially on poor womens' standpoint:

> "the poor and oppressed are better able to imagine another way of understanding and dealing with reality, a way that can make us all realize that every one of us must struggle against oppression. I am in no way claiming that poor women are intellectually more capable or morally superior. The claim for privileging the understandings and praxis of poor women has to do with what it means to know reality. Being involved in the material mediations of reality, taking responsibility for reality, and changing reality are intrinsic elements of knowing reality. Because changing reality is central to knowing reality, those who are privileged are necessarily less inclined to change reality than those who have little or nothing to lose by changing it. The fact is poor women and all the oppressed must change reality if they (and the rest of us) are to survive."

The wikiworld is about changing the premises of living in the world. Wikilearning belongs to everyone. And thus the question of learning freedom and democracy and changing the world are always questions about power, the use of power, and the capacity to do things in a given political and social circumstances with other people. As prominent social theorist John Holloway (2005) has stated, "power means our capacity to do things. This power, it seems to me, is always a social power, simply because the doing of one person always depends on the doing of others. It is very difficult for me to imagine a doing which would not be dependent on the doing of other people. It is clear that our doing here at the moment depends on the doing of hundreds or thousands of people who created the technology we are using, who created the concepts we are using."

Where some social theorists have doubted the potential of critical educational practices as tools for changing the world (see Holst, 2002, 78–79), others, like Rancière, have answered the question affirmatively. From our point of view, the question has been wrongly posed since education, society and politics are always inseparable and intertwined; they are woven into each other in the level of people's everyday learning. Thus it is not useful to decide the question by theorizing it in advance; theorization depends upon the social practices in the area of wikilearning and the surrounding social world. The question is only how learning and its complex, ideological and hegemonic relations are defined and arranged in societies. For us the emancipatory practice of wikilearning is the cradle of radically equality.

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