



Critique, education and emancipation: from popular education to social struggles

EDITORS

Jeremiah Morelock & Felipe Ziotti Narita



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INTRODUCTION

This special volume, edited by Jeremiah Morelock and Felipe Ziotti Narita, gathers scholars and researchers from different backgrounds to shed light on the multiple relationships among popular education, social movements, critique and emancipation. The public call for papers came out in September 2021 and the editors received articles from the United States, Brazil, Algeria and Vietnam.

Since the 1960s, Latin America has been a landmark for political experiments around social movements and, above all, popular education. The political creativity of popular groups, contesting and denouncing the structural problems of national societies, is the force that motivates the works of the greatest Latin American theorists of popular education, from José Martí to Paulo Freire. Despite the force and the importance of social movements, the practical dimension cannot relegate to a second position the theoretical construction of practice. The dialectical nexus between these two poles, theory and practice, which has animated social theorists since the 19th century, is the nucleus of Morelock and Narita's editorial project.

The analysis of popular education and social movements also reveals another important political dimension. Current debates on popular education have been gravitating to the need for new epistemologies and knowledges from the Global South, as well as pointing to the need for conceiving popular subjects arising from contexts others than the paradigmatic model of social change embedded in modern industrial society. This volume shows how the epistemological contribution of popular education can also be rooted in two normative concepts for social sciences: critique and emancipation. When critical epistemology touches the historical social terrain, abstract concepts start gaining content and the lived reality, mediated by the myriad of personal and collective experiences, can be challenged by the unreconciliatory force of critique. This is the spirit that has animated this volume.

This is the first issue of *Cadernos CIMEAC* that is published entirely in English. In a globalized structure of production of science, English became the standard. It affirms new asymmetries that, in the case of peripheral countries that

do not count on English as their native language, are based on the lack of funding for journals to proofread content and the relegation of local science to a subaltern position in the circulation of knowledge. Moreover, the very standards that are supposed to measure the intellectual merit of academic journals are grounded in metrics and standards that reinforce the sense of peripherization of non-English content.

Cadernos CIMEAC attempts to overcome those barriers. As an academic journal devoted to popular education, with a special focus on Latin America, we have never been comfortable to look only to our regional themes – nor are we interested in publishing content only in our major native languages in Latin America. Instead, since its first issue in 2011, the journal has constituted an international network of scholars and militants. This volume, thus, illustrates our editorial effort at broadening the scope of the journal to the international community, since we believe that the themes of popular education must be also analyzed through transnational lenses, following the universal contradictions of market economies spread by globalization. Without stumbling upon a naïve belief on how to better the structure of market societies or mitigate the distress, we still believe that emancipation must be the horizon of any leftist politics committed to the structural transformation of society.

Uberaba, December 2022.

Danilo Seithi Kato, Ph.D.
Editor-in-Chief – *Cadernos CIMEAC*
Federal University of Triângulo Mineiro (UFTM)

Felipe Ziotti Narita, Ph.D.
Editor-in-Chief – *Cadernos CIMEAC*
São Paulo State University (Unesp)