BLOOMSBURY REVELATIONS

PAULO FREIRE

PEDAGOGY OF THE HEART

Translated by
DONALDO MACEDO and
ALEXANDRE OLIVEIRA

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PEDAGOGY OF THE HEART represents some of the last writings by Paulo Freire. In this work, perhaps more so than any other, Freire presents a coherent set of principles for education and politics. For those who have read Freire's other works, the book includes new discussions of familiar subjects including community, neoliberalism, faith, hope, the oppressed, and exile. For those coming to Freire for the first time, the book will open up new ways of looking at the interrelations of education and political struggle. Freire reveals himself as a radical reformer whose lifelong commitment to the vulnerable, the illiterate, and the marginalized has had a profound impact on society and education today.

The text includes substantive notes by Ana Maria Araújo Freire, a foreword by Martin Carnoy, and a preface by Ladislau Dowbor.

PAULO FREIRE is the author of the bestselling *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* as well as *Education for Critical Consciousness*, *Pedagogy in Process* and *Pedagogy of Hope*.

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FOREWORD

Martin Carnoy, Stanford University

The late Paulo Freire was the most important educator of the second half of this century. He was also a political activist—a passionate progressive who believed in the inseparability of learning from political consciousness and of political consciousness from political action.

In this book, Paulo Freire looks into his own life to reflect on education and politics, politics and education. He reveals himself as an uncompromising democrat and unrepentant radical reformer. He lived through military rule, exile, and even the holding of political power as São Paulo's Secretary of Education. In that office, he made policy for the education of hundreds of thousands of pupils. All of these experiences have only increased his commitment to the excluded, the powerless, the marginalized, the hungry, the illiterate.

Much of the book is about Brazil and particular issues of Brazilian politics. Brazil is in many ways unique. One of the great new industrial economies, enormously wealthy and enormously poor, it has the most unequal income distribution of any of the world's major countries. Its political system, multiparty and highly democratic at one level, is still run on the basis of *clientelismo,* in which politicians maintain power by using public resources for very specific private interests. And, although as Freire argues, the educational system is now internally democratic in many municipalities, it is one of the most stratified and least accessible in Latin America. Even with rapid enrollment growth in the past ten years, only about one-third of fifteen-to-nineteen-year-olds attend secondary school. Teachers' salaries have fallen drastically during that same period (as in much of the rest of Latin America), and the conditions in basic education are desperately poor.

Even if Paulo Freire was first and foremost Brazilian, or even more particularly, a Northeast Brazilian, from the cradle of Luso-Afro-American civilization, his ideas are in the world and from the world. He is an anomaly among educators because he is truly international. He is as well known in Nicaragua or in France as he is in Brazil. He also has an enormous following

in the United States, not just among intellectuals but among primary school teachers and adult educators.

So his Brazilian thoughts address worldly issues. We in the North need to pay much greater attention to them. For better or worse, we have entered the global age and we entered it together with Paulo Freire, the Brazilian *Nordestino,* sitting in the shade of his mango tree.* Our social condition may appear to be altogether different, but as we push below the surface of our everyday lives, we find that the questions we are asking ourselves require the same larger considerations. Freire addresses progressives everywhere, urging them to remain active, authentic, democratic, nonsectarian, and unifying. But to do this, he argues, progressives must continuously examine their underlying strategies. New conditions demand new answers to some of the same old difficult questions: What is the role of a progressive politics in the world system, now a new global-information economy? What is the role of progressive intellectuals? And what is the role of democratic education, again now in the information age? These are questions just as fundamental to those who want progressive change in the North as they are to Paulo Freire.

What are these new conditions? The first is that world economy has changed profoundly in the past generation. It has become *globalized.* Globalization does not simply mean international trade and movements of capital and labor. In that sense, the economy has always been global. The recent change represents a profound shift of economic time and space, from the local and national into the global arena. A communications and information revolution has made this shift possible, but so has the spread of lower-tech industrial technology, education, and large accumulations of capital to areas outside of the United States/Europe axis. Production is less and less conducted in one location or even in one country. Capital *and* labor *and* knowledge are increasingly conceived of in global terms. Whatever the powerful role of capital flows in influencing national development in the past, these have been expanded, particularly in the speed by which capital can move from country to country, and by the very *size* of the movements.

The globalization of national and local economies is changing the underlying basis of the nation-state. The capitalist nation-state in the period of agricultural expansion and industrialization was largely defined in terms of the boundaries of its national raw-material base, national industries, and national market. To expand economic and political control, nations had to

*The original title of this book is *À Sombra desta Mangueira*, translated as "under the shade of this mango tree."

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occupy more territory. Losing economic and political control meant losing territory. That definition is changing very quickly. As globalization changes the concept of economic time and space, the political control vested in national territories changes. Nation-states still have a role in influencing the course of their development. They also have a range of policy choices framed by political forces. We can see this in the variety of approaches to capitalist development found among highly industrialized countries. But the increased competition for capital and for goods and services made possible partly by the information and communications revolution has changed the conditions and possibilities for national policies. National (and local) politics today is increasingly constrained to *shaping the culture of global capitalism as it is manifested nationally and locally.* Economic globalization means the globalization of local social movements. Local politics means the localization of global capitalism. Local becomes global and global becomes local.

Modern politics has always been intertwined with economic production. When capitalist states are inflexible, inefficient, and obsolete, they drag down their economies. When production systems have difficulty changing, they drag down their states. This is not only the case for countries such as Brazil and Mexico, it is also true for us in the North. But what does it mean for a state to be "flexible" and "efficient" in the information age? This is a fundamental political question for national and local politics. It is also the basic issue in defining authentic national and local culture in the global-information age.

Neoliberals and progressives seem to agree on one major criterion for a flexible and efficient state. It must be democratic, where the measure of democracy if free and open elections, including all adult citizens as voters regardless of gender, race, or ethnicity. This constitutes a second major new condition, both for the left and the right. In the past, neoliberals easily opted for the authoritarian state to ensure unconditional capitalist control of capital accumulation, even when the democratic decision was to restrict that control. Progressives also easily rationalized authoritarianism to maintain control of the process of capital accumulation in the hands of the state, even when elections would have decided otherwise.

But for all their new agreement on the principal of democracy, neoliberals and progressives have a fundamental disagreement about the *meaning* of the democratic state. For neoliberals, flexibility and efficiency mean a minimalist state that allows business maximum freedom to accumulate capital; this on the assumption that unfettered capital accumulation will produce maximum economic growth and the greatest social good. The neoliberal model for

national and local culture subordinates them to the needs of the global market, to individual competition in an isolated, Darwinian struggle for survival. Competition is not just local or even national. It is global. Brazilian capital competes against French; workers in São Paulo against workers in Shanghi. The neoliberal state is left to facilitate competition and to educate labor for competition in a global environment. Education is measured in terms of students' ability to score as well on mathematics tests as pupils in Korea or Japan or Germany.

For Freire, the flexible and efficient state in the information age is very different. It helps its constituents become critical activists shaping the economy and society into a humane, participative system that accumulates capital but not in an exploitative, highly unequal fashion. The efficient state is also one that protects its citizens against the risks and excesses of a free market. This contrasts sharply with the "incomplete" democratic politics of neoliberalism—a politics reduced to enhancing isolated individuals' solitary competitiveness in a Darwinian struggle. Freire's state is *constructive,* one where citizens are reintegrated through forming new political and social networks based both on information *and* critical analysis of their own situation in the global environment. Freire's state is also one of *solidarity,* including the marginalized, even when the global market has no room for them and exclusionary local ideologies segregate them.

How can the solidarity state hope to keep domestic capital from flying off into the ether of the global flows? How can such a state, rooted in the empowerment of citizens and workers, hope to attract international technology transfer and capital investment? Neoliberals argue that it cannot; that it would *inherently* drive capital and new technology away. But with Paulo Freire at our side, let us consider this carefully. Capital needs a stable political environment for high returns over the long term. Stability is impossible in societies marked by great income and information inequality, uneven participation, exclusion, and the absence of a critically aware citizenry that is prepared to solve political problems in its own interest. Political and social stability needs *reintegration* of isolated individuals so as to create a new collective will, what some analysts have called *social capital.* Capital also needs flexible workers, and to be flexible, workers need families and social institutions that are integrative, capable of building and sustaining educational as well as training networks, and supporting workers, in periods of unemployment and training. These are precisely what the solidarity state delivers. Democratic, progressive states that aim to create more equal distribution of income and reintegrative, participative social institutions with

an eye to promoting savings, capital investment, and human capital development, are fundamental to high productivity growth and reasonably high long-term rates of return to capital. This is neither the welfare state nor the neoliberal state; it is new form of reintegrative state.

Nowhere in Freire's answer to the neoliberal view of the state do we find a critique of participating in democratic elections. This is no accident. That ancient debate between Kautsky and Lenin about whether elections are a means for revolutionary workers to gain control of the capitalist state (Kautsky) or nothing more than a bourgeois "trick" to co-opt the revolution (Lenin) is relegated to the historical archives. Freire's position is centered in the democratic, antimilitary movements of the 1970s and 1980s. Participation in elections is a hard-won right belonging as much to workers and peasants as to the bourgeoisie. Thus, the role of a progressive political party goes beyond Gramsci's counterhegemonical, or "educational" function. Freire's conception of a progressive party is educational in the Gramscian tradition. Yet, it is also a means to strengthening democracy, to gaining political power, and to advancing its social objectives through the democratic but still market-supporting state. Having achieved a transition to democracy, Freire writes, the left in Brazil now enters another political phase: *intimacy* with democracy, living with it and deepening it so that it has real meaning in people's everyday lives.

But it is fair to ask what happens to a progressive party in the context of the new globalization and the new democracy, especially when the party gains power. Freire argues that to retain its authenticity, a party of the left needs constantly to open itself to dialogue, to change. This is precisely the historical moment for such questioning. Is globalized capital so powerful that the state is limited to the neoliberal agenda? Freire says no. He believed that even as capital circulates in global space, it must land somewhere to realize profits. A progressive transformation of the state need not overthrow the market or capital accumulation per se to humanize economy and society. The solidarity state can provide the basis of a more flexible, competitive, and innovative economy by developing the new reintegrative networks required for workers and families in the information age. Yet these networks need to be developed on terms that represent the interests of workers, the poor, the old, the excluded—not just capital's needs.

Does globalization in the information age put new limits on what the state can transform, especially at the national level? This is a more difficult question. To accomplish its goals, a progressive political party needs to develop local and national politics that are consistent with the social and

economic changes wrought locally by the globalized economy. Worldwide neoliberal ideology attempts to define the limits of those politics. However, as Freire put it so well, (in Brazil) the left, whether it be in the form of left party or in the form of the current progressive-intellectual leadership of a center-right coalition, has to go beyond the limits of the neoliberal definition to develop its own conditions of capitalist development. The impetus for pushing beyond the limits of the neoliberal definition worldwide has to come from social movements associated with political parties and alliances, whether it be left parties in Brazil or labor unions in France. All of these local struggles of definition are struggles over the *culture of global capital* in the information age.

Strategies for defining the new limits for flexible and efficient states are necessarily localized in national and local realities. Surprisingly, there are similarities among realities in Europe, the United States, and Brazil. One of these was especially important for Freire and the Brazilian left: the current president of Brazil is one of the world's leading progressive intellectuals and a brilliant political thinker and strategist: Fernando Henrique Cardoso. Cardoso heads a "center-right" coalition. From the standpoint of Brazil's major left party, Freire's Workers' Party (PT), Cardoso has abandoned his progressive ideals and is working well within the neoliberal definition of the state's role in the new global economy. But the outcome of the Cardoso regime is hardly clear. Education enrollment is expanding rapidly, and the democratizing educational policies pushed by PT-run and other local administrations are being supported rather than opposed at the national level. Furthermore, Cardoso appears committed to a strategy of deepening democracy—of refashioning the political involvement of the great mass of the Brazilian poor and marginalized—as a means of eventually redefining the culture of Brazilian capitalism. Is this a mistaken strategy in a country where the process of capital accumulation has long been at the mercy of particular interests within and outside the country? Is it a mistake to solidify democratic political stability, undo the debt-driven economic chaos of the 1980s, and build the base for a new social policy in the next millennium? Consistent with his own intellectual openness, Freire does not completely turn the page on this chapter of Brazilian history. Freire *and* Cardoso both knew that Brazil's economic and political future depends on greater equality of income and wealth. Cardoso believes that Brazil needs first to grow more confident of its economic future and to expand political participation even if the tilt toward neoliberal economic-stabilization policies delays equalization. Freire believed that the very *process* of equalization is needed to develop

the new Brazilian economy outside the suffocating confines of global neoliberalism. Is there any wonder that Brazil's progressive intellectuals are divided on which strategy is "correct"?

Similar discussions are taking place in other countries, under political circumstances that are very different. The United States should hardly be lacking confidence in its economic future. But in the new global environment, buffeted by competition from Asia and the flight of its domestic industry abroad, by corporate downsizing, stagnant wages, and a disintegrating system of social support, United States workers are afraid. The successful onslaught of neoliberal ideology and a growing distrust of politicians has converted those fears into a "flight from the state." In this environment, President Clinton has, like Fernando Henrique Cardoso, tilted toward economic policies that would reassure finance capital, and toward social "investment" policies that focus on education to rebuild public confidence in the state. Is this strategy a wrong one? Many progressive intellectuals in the United States believe so. But unlike Brazil, there is no progressive political party or parties where alternative strategies can develop and be presented to the public. The progressive wing of the Democratic Party would have to reorganize itself and rebuild its base (using the increasingly active labor unions and newly reawakened civil-rights organizations), to push Clinton toward a broader, deeper social agenda. Without that push, neoliberals will continue to win the battle over the culture of American capitalism, and in winning that battle, to shape similar battles in other countries, including the nations of Europe and Brazil.

In Italy, Romano Prodi heads the first center-left coalition to govern the country. But Italy is part of the new Europe, and Europe is reshaping itself as a regional economic power, the better to compete in the new global economy. Prodi's government is confronted by the conditions of the Maastricht Treaty (monetary union), which include stringent reductions in public debt and public deficits. The reductions, driven by a conservative German definition of healthy economic policy are inherently contractionary. They necessarily require a reduction of the social safety net and possibly reduction of educational spending, this in an Italy that desperately needs to invest in expanding and raising the quality of its university system. Prodi's situation reinforces the notion that even a center-left coalition, led by political parties opposed to a neoliberal conception of the state, in a country where a large part of the electorate continues to believe in activist state intervention and social policies, faces powerful economic and ideological forces that dominate the coalition's strategies and policies.

What do progressives—especially activist progressive intellectuals—need to focus on in the new context? Freire puts it well in these pages: push against limits, create space, redefine the social agenda. In Freire's "intimacy" with democracy, the struggle is at least partly ideological. He exhorts us to think of political strategies and state policies that will humanize the culture of global capital as it lands in our locality. But the struggle is not only ideological. Social policy has real economic and social consequences for the poor and marginalized, *and* for the rich and the middle class. The consequences are not just symbolic. They shape people's lives and their place in the material world.

In no social policy has the new global information economy made Freire more relevant than in education. Freire has redefined the political meaning of education and recast the underlying struggle over education. For him, education has the potential to be liberating, and liberating education is the path to knowledge and critical thinking. Knowledge is the foundation of the new global information economy. Globalization has enhanced the importance of knowledge, of innovativeness, of critical thinking, and the capacity to solve problems. Economic progress in any country increasingly requires a broad base of highly conscious, self-confidant, critical-thinking, participative, literate, and numerate individuals to compete in the new world economy.

Beyond that, as businesses restructure to be more productive, they are moving away from Fordist, assembly-line industrial production to *flexible* work organizations. Flexibility can mean many things. But its essential elements are the capacity to adjust quickly to changes in product demand and production technology. The up side is that in firms that focus on raising productivity, flexibility has meant the opportunity for workers to engage in multiple tasks and more interesting work, and to feel empowered. The down side is that many firms see flexibility in terms of lowering labor costs—to increase some workers' opportunities, to rid themselves more easily of others, and to make all jobs subject to potential elimination. Both these forms of flexibility disaggregate labor from the "job" as a permanent source of income and self-definition. The worker is individualized, separated from traditional social organizations based on the worker's job or workplace, and made to rely on his or her acquired capacity to adjust to change, to participate in diverse productive activities, and to be independent and creative.

Paulo Freire's thoughts on education in these pages as elsewhere speak to this transformation at several levels. Education that *works effectively* to keep poor children in school and learning is absolutely essential to the notion of

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