

**UNESCO-CCNGO/EFA seminar in the framework  
of the Porto Alegre Forums**

**“Alternative Discourse in Education:  
Towards New Notions of Quality to Promote Lifelong Learning  
for Social Transformation”  
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**TRANSCRIPTION OF THE DEBATES**

**DRAFT 28 JUNE 2003**

**Carlos Zarco Mera:** Buenas noches, Bienvenidos, Bienvenidas. Estamos aquí para tratar de construir un espacio de reflexión colectiva. Para eso, primero vamos a tratar de saber quienes estamos acá, entonces por favor las personas brasileiras, mujeres hombres de Brasil si levantan su mano por favor [okay]; bueno como los visitantes somos amables y ustedes son nuestros anfitriones queremos darles un aplauso por ser nuestros anfitriones, a los brasileiros [aplausos]; personas que vienen de América Latina, de países de América Latina, por favor Caribe, bueno es un buen número se ve que vienen de América Latina porque vienen un poco tarde [risas] okay, personas que vienen de Europa, países de Europa, allí hay un buen número, bienvenidos, bienvenidas; las personas que vienen de África, buen grupo de Asia? Países de Asia . Países de la región árabe, bueno pues parece que entonces tenemos una reunión completa, no somos las Naciones Unidas pero somos naciones en proceso de unidad, en proceso de intercambio de acercamiento y vamos a intentar entonces construir esta reflexión porque el tema de este seminario, ahí está con letras muy grandes como pueden ver. Dice: ‘discursos alternativos sobre educación hacia nuevas visiones de la calidad que promueva un aprendizaje a lo largo de toda la vida para la transformación social; quien pueda repetir ese título de memoria va a tener un premio en la reunión’. Entonces, la idea es que vamos a empezar, no sólo queremos hablar de los discursos alternativos en educación, pero queremos intentar aquí, entre todos y todas, nuevas maneras también de construir este conocimiento, estos discursos, estas ideas para la transformación social, porque todos y todas los que estamos aquí, justo queremos una educación crítica, una educación liberadora, una educación para la transformación social. Por eso, primero queremos pedirles a todos y a todas que vamos a tener unos breves minutos de intercambio con la persona que ustedes tienen junto o atrás o adelante, porque probablemente hay dificultades de idioma, algunos que estén cerca, pero viéndolos así parece que se sentaron con confianza los que hablan portugués, español, francés y demás . Entonces la pregunta es la siguiente ¿por qué estamos aquí queriendo reflexionar sobre discursos alternativos calidad de la educación para la transformación social? Intercambiemos muy brevemente, ahí con el compañero, con la compañera, porque una parte central de los discursos alternativos es que todos y todas somos intelectuales, que todos y todas somos especialistas en la vida, aquí nadie puede decir yo sé más menos, todos sabemos algo, entonces vamos a iniciar en la primera parte con una reflexión entre especialistas, o sea, todos y todas los que estamos aquí. La idea, entonces, es intercambiar cuáles son como principales preguntas cuestiones que levanten tema; ustedes que son especialistas en la vida y en prácticas educativas y en organización social. Lamentablemente luego no vamos a

poder escucharnos todos y todas porque no es posible, pero sí pediremos que tres o cuatro personas puedan comunicarnos lo que intercambiaron en el grupo, no lo que piensan solo personalmente sino lo que una o dos ideas de lo que intercambiaron. Entonces les pido, por favor, que puedan intercambiar rápidamente, también aquí los compañeros que estamos arriba vamos a hacer lo mismo; entonces, principales preguntas/ideas que queremos poner en el inicio de esta reflexión.

Entonces les invito por favor a que hagamos esta charla breve.

Bueno, estamos entonces en un primer momento de intercambio, queremos invitar a tres, cuatro personas que tendrían que venir aquí para tomar el micrófono y compartir muy brevemente una o dos de las preguntas o cuestiones que intercambiaron en esta breve charla. ¿Alguien quisiera compartir? Entonces, uno, dos y tres, suficiente por favor, entonces ya tenemos a las tres personas y por equidad de género, quizás un hombre que se anime a pasar. Son tres mujeres, por favor, si comparte sus preguntas con nosotros.

**Woman in Portuguese :** Bom. Nossa reflexão ali no grupo foi o seguinte: uma das preocupações nossas com relação a garantir a aprendizagem é sobre a questão da cola na sala de aula. ¿Porque que o aluno cola? Si o aluno cola ele no está comprometido com o saber. A corrupção começa justamente na sala de aula, com a cola. Então não haverá transformação social si nos não garantimos a aprendizagem para que o aluno construa o saber e se comprometa com essa, o bem comun, a coletividade. Então para mim, uma das preocupações, hoje, na escola, é a corrupção da cola.

**Huguette Redegled :** Nous nous sommes posés la question de savoir pourquoi nous étions là, à Porto Alegre. Nous voudrions entendre un autre discours pour que le changement s'opère dans les établissements scolaires, chez nous, et surtout changer les discours de nos gouvernants. Nous vivions dans un monde qui ne permet aux plus pauvres d'avoir une éducation de qualité et nous souhaitons chercher les réponses ensemble, ici, et lutter ainsi ensemble pour avoir des réponses à nos questions. Je pense que c'est ce qui nous a fait venir ici à Porto Alegre.

Notre petit groupe était très international puisqu'il y avait une dame de Zambie, un monsieur de Thaïlande, un monsieur de France et puis moi-même. Nous avons quatre points je crois que nous aimerions partager. La première chose : il nous semble important d'être ici parce que ce n'est pas un discours, c'est la vie. On n'est pas dans des théories. Cela nous met devant les attitudes que nous voulons avoir les uns pour les autres et donc aussi cela touche à la qualité des relations. Quelqu'un d'autre a dit parce que c'est notre "business", c'est notre affaire de faire attention à ce que les gens apprennent, on ne peut pas ne pas se sentir concerné par l'apprentissage pour soi-même et pour les autres, c'est une sorte d'obligation morale. Un troisième point c'était de dire : c'est très important d'apprendre pas simplement les choses à l'école, c'est important bien sûr le curriculum, mais c'est aussi très important d'apprendre des capacités, des choses de la vie, je n'arrive pas à traduire le mot en français, "skills" comment on dit, des outils pour la vie. Et le dernier point, c'est que c'est très important de développer en nous, de cultiver en nous, une attitude de partage du savoir et du savoir-faire, c'est très important de ne pas rester entre nous avec toujours les mêmes gens ou souvent les mêmes gens, mais de vraiment se mettre dans une

attitude et dans des conditions pour à la fois partager et recevoir aussi ce que les autres partagent. A cela, il a été ajouté que cette attitude est surtout importante par rapport aux populations pauvres, parce que souvent on pense qu'elles n'ont pas grand-chose à apporter. Enfin, nous avons souligné qu'il faut aussi garder à l'esprit le besoin de développer des capacités à discerner ce qui peut être utile dans ce qu'on apprend des autres, c'est-à-dire ne pas simplement recevoir ou faire des discours mais être dans un partage actif, voilà. Merci.

**Carlos Zarco Mera :** Antes de continuar esta reflexión colectiva, vamos a ver una pequeña presentación como video que el compañero Manish de la India va a compartir con nosotros. Él vino medio hora antes para preparar su presentación porque ustedes saben que cuando se usa la tecnología siempre hay que estar preparados para lo inesperado. Pero parece que ya funcionó.

**Manish Jain :** Just to help set the mood for the evening, we had a conference last month in India on the topic of “Unfolding learning societies”, so this is a little slide show to give you a feel for the kinds of questions raised when we are talking about alternative discourses. These kinds of questions and issues have been emerging in India.

#### *Manish Jain shows the slides*

**Carlos Zarco Mera:** Bueno, tuvimos aquí un primer intercambio de aprendizajes. Una de las preguntas cuestiona la razón detrás de nuestra costumbre decía por buscar respuestas en vez de buscar preguntas, y en ese sentido realmente queremos que entre todos y todas podamos intentar plantearnos preguntas y tratar también por qué no, de buscar respuestas pero de una manera que nos exija realmente tratar de desaprender y aprender. Para este diálogo, este intercambio es organizado por la UNESCO y por varias redes de ONG que participan conjuntamente con el mecanismo de la UNESCO llamado consulta colectiva con ONG, y que contiene redes de Asia, de Arabia, de África, de América Latina. Debido a esto invitamos a algunas personas que están teniendo una intensa experiencia en el campo de la educación en diversos terrenos; aquí a mi izquierda, está Munir Fasheh, de Palestina, es director del Foro de Educación Árabe y profesor del Centro de Estudios sobre Oriente Medio, aquí también tenemos a nuestra compañera Aminata Traoré, ella es psicóloga y socióloga y organizadora del Foro Social Africano que ahora se va a expresar acá en el Foro Social Mundial y trabaja en una iniciativa muy interesante que se llama “iniciativa para la ética y la estética”, de este lado tenemos a Manish Jain de India y él está en un instituto que se llama “para repensar el aprendizaje y el desarrollo” y Carol Medel Añonuevo, de Filipinas, con una amplia experiencia de investigación y trabajo por la equidad de género. Entonces quisiera, porque también nosotros hicimos un primer intercambio ahorita que deseamos efectivamente qué preguntas tenemos, a parte de las que ya habíamos pensado un poco, entonces quiero pedirles quién de ustedes quiere empezar compartiendo una primera idea para para continuar nuestra conversación. Munir, por favor.

**Munir Fasheh:** First, I have a comment on the title “alternative discourse in education”. We fall

into the same logic if we try to find a discourse which is universal. So the question here is not if we are finding a discourse or not, but it is about regaining something very fundamental - which is the ability of every human being to make sense of the world. This is for me one of the most important characteristics of what we call a human being. It is the ability to create meaning, to form meaning, and I think this is where I have a big problem with schools because they wipe out that ability totally.

In schools, the meanings are given in the curriculum, the words are given in books, and all the answers are given as ready answers. So, we, as creators of meaning (I do not like the word "creators" as much as "co-authors" of meaning), author meanings together. Notice that the word author comes from authority, which means once you author the meaning, you have authority over others. So the only way I can deal with this is if everyone of us is an author of meaning. And I think this is one of the ideas that I would like actually to talk about in this meeting and emphasize, because during the past two days in our sessions, amidst almost all the words that were used - maybe there was some words that I missed - I did not hear a word that was not originated in Western countries. And I mean by Western countries mainly Britain, France, Germany and right now, of course, overriding all of these is the United States. At least in Europe there was some diversity between the Germans and the French and the British, but right now there is this uniformity of thinking which is very tragic. So, for example, I will take the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights". What is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights? It means some twenty people in New York got together and decided, in my absence, what are my "rights". In this situation, the only way really to regain my rights is not to tell them that I have a different Universal Declaration of Human Rights, but to say that no one really has the right to tell somebody: "I know your rights better than you". This idea of somebody giving himself or herself this upper level, saying "I want to transform the world, I want to change the world" is a very, very inhuman idea. Right now, after having worked in education and society and all kinds of communities, I discovered that I can not change anyone. If I have ever have the power to change somebody, it means again that I am putting myself in a position where I am doing to do harm to the person -- no matter how good my intentions are, no matter how "human-oriented" my plans are. I cannot change anyone, except only one person - myself. And I have been working at least for the past twenty years on changing myself. But it is important to note that I am not changing myself in isolation of others. I am changing myself in cooperation and interaction with others. Others are also, of course, changing themselves. By interaction, we are changing together.

At that point, I would like to introduce a word from Arabic, because I think it's a beautiful concept, and again it is about putting our own words and our own meanings. I think Portuguese may have some similarity with Arabic in the sense that every word in Arabic has a root. There is no word in Arabic to mean "an individual", in the sense of separate from history, separate from the society, etc. Now, the word for "dialogue" in Arabic is "tanakosha". "Tanakosha" comes from a root in Arabic, which is the same as "chiselling a stone". Now when you chisel a stone, in a sense, you form some shape out of the stone that you make into a statue or something else. In Arabic, when we discuss, the meaning is to "chisel each other's minds", to "chisel each other's souls", to "chisel each other's hearts" - which means I make you a little bit more beautiful, and you make me a little bit more beautiful. It doesn't mean that I want to change your point of view with my point of view. Nor does it mean that I do discuss with you only so that one of us will win. Rather, the purpose of our discussion (according to the root meaning of the word), is to try to come out of the discussion a little bit more beautiful as people. I think that this idea is totally

different from the current debates and current dialogues where eventually there is a winner and there is a loser, or there is somebody who has really better arguments, etc.

I will stop probably here, and then will pick up again, but this idea is to bring in our own words, looking at ourselves. Whether we are two years old or eighty years old, we are constantly creating meaning. We should not ever lose sight of this very important fact and how we can introduce it in anything that we call learning or in any activity of life. There are several examples, but I will give just these two examples. "Human rights" is a universal concept that killed diversity, pluralism and killed the dignity of human beings in almost all societies except Western society. In a different way, of course, it maybe killed Western society, but I don't want to talk about it as if I am representing the West. I'm talking about representing my own experience in my own country, and I feel that I can see it everyday – the concept of human rights has actually robbed me of all my rights.

**Aminata Traoré :** Je vais commencer par là où Munir a terminé, c'est-à-dire la question du sens. Le sens de notre présence à Porto Alegre est d'abord une démarche de questionnement sur l'état du monde que nous ne parvenons plus à décrypter, sur l'état du monde, sur notre propre présence, le sens de cette présence, en tout cas pour la région du monde dont je suis originaire, c'est-à-dire l'Afrique. Lors du premier forum social, j'ai été amenée à utiliser une notion qui est celle du viol de l'imaginaire. Je disais alors que ce dont nous souffrons le plus, le Sud en général, et l'Afrique en particulier, c'est de ce viol de l'imaginaire. Ne jamais parvenir à vous dire qui vous êtes, où vous en êtes dans votre propre histoire, qu'il y a toujours quelqu'un qui sait pour vous, qui décide à votre place, qui veut vous conduire là où lui il pense être l'objectif à atteindre, un idéal de société. Et après j'en ai fait un livre et c'est clair que le débat continue. L'état du monde qui nous vaut cette nouvelle forme de convivialité, parce que nous ne la connaissons pas et c'est fabuleux, je crois, dans l'histoire de l'humanité. Pour la première fois, des milliers de personnes s'acheminent vers Porto Alegre. Nous n'appartenons pas nécessairement à des institutions internationales ou gouvernementales, même si aujourd'hui nous devons notre présence ici à l'Unesco. Ce qui est extraordinaire, c'est cette solidarité, cette convivialité pour contrer la marche macabre du monde.

Parce qu'il est clair que rien ne va plus et c'est pure folie, précisément parce que l'ouverture à l'autre s'est faite et continue de se faire dans la violence. Et cette ouverture qui se poursuit, qui nous est imposée, cette forme d'ouverture à l'autre que nous ne décidons pas. On a décrété que nous sommes dans la mondialisation, on n'ajoute pas qu'elle est libérale et marchande. Dès qu'on dit mondialisation, en tout cas dans certaines régions du monde, nous avons l'impression et c'est cela qu'on nous a toujours servi, que nous sommes des sous-hommes, des êtres arriérés, tant que nous ne faisons pas comme les dominants, les gagnants de la guerre froide et des conquêtes d'antan. Donc, toute la question aujourd'hui, c'est de comprendre cette capacité de destruction, double destruction, destruction de l'homme dans sa tête, dans sa capacité de s'imaginer et d'imaginer sa place dans le monde, son rapport à l'autre. Cette forme de destruction symbolique, la violence symbolique, va de pair maintenant avec la violence économique, matérielle et militaire. On vous oblige à vous comporter d'une certaine manière, sinon vous avez droit à la guerre. Et c'est cette réalité insupportable qu'il nous faut questionner aujourd'hui.

Et l'éducation dans tout ça ? Parce que l'éducation a été destructrice. Je suis contente d'être ici et

de pouvoir m'adresser à vous dans la langue de la puissance coloniale, bon, mais encore ? Il ne s'agit pas de moi, il s'agit des centaines de millions de petites filles africaines et d'enfants aujourd'hui qui sont condamnés à devenir des exclus, ou à entrer dans cette mondialisation par la petite porte parce qu'ils n'ont pas eu la chance de passer par cette même école, cette école qui déforme. Cette école déforme essentiellement. L'Afrique n'a pas été construite parce que nous sommes allés à l'école des colons qui ont voulu pour l'Afrique une certaine destinée. Ces colons qui aujourd'hui distribuent des points : un état vaut mieux qu'un autre parce qu'il s'est appliqué dans la mise en œuvre des réformes néo-libérales. Ainsi, plus vous êtes prêts à être phagocytés, mieux vous êtes jugé par le système, et c'est ça qui ne va plus.

Alors comment aujourd'hui réinvestir dans l'homme, comment reconstruire l'homme ? Je crois que c'est ce défi qui nous interpelle. Comment reconstruire l'homme, investir en lui de manière à le réconcilier avec lui-même et avec les autres ? Parce que la haine, ils ont réussi à nous l'inculquer, à travers la compétition. Est-ce que nous allons après tout ce lavage de cerveau et après tout ce qu'on nous a inculqué en disant que nous n'avons d'existence que dans la compétition, pays contre pays. Mais à l'intérieur des pays, malheureusement, les rapports sociaux sont totalement démolis parce que, au sein des familles, et même des ménages, les gens ont l'impression qu'ils n'ont d'existence qu'à travers la compétition, dépasser constamment l'autre. L'apprentissage vous apprend d'abord à être l'ennemi de l'autre. Alors comment nous désolidariser de cette forme d'apprentissage ? Comment nous désolidariser de cette école qui déshumanise ? Comment nous désolidariser de cette école qui fait que vous avez le sentiment de n'exister que quand vous parvenez à consommer ?

Si discours alternatif il y a, ce discours se définit par rapport à la nature de l'état actuel du monde dans lequel nous ne nous reconnaissons plus. Donc l'autre monde possible que nous revendiquons ici depuis plus de trois ans passe d'abord par comment revisiter l'apprentissage pour aller puiser au plus profond de nous-mêmes dans la mémoire, dans le patrimoine, ces savoir-faire et ces savoirs être qui nous ont permis d'exister, de résister jusqu'ici. C'est tout cela qu'on veut démolir à travers les médias, à travers une pensée hégémoniste. Maintenant par la force, on a beau dire qu'on ne veut pas d'une guerre, mais ils vont nous imposer la guerre.

**Manish Jain:** I think I'll also start with the title "Alternative Discourse in Education". From the perspective of our work in India, as shown in the slide show, we would rephrase it slightly different, as "Alternative Discourses to Education." I think this "in" and "to" is a very essential distinction for us, because if we look at the idea of education and the historical basis of how it has emerged within a certain paradigm of development, I think the starting point has to be questioning around the notions of development we continue to hold on to -- notions of development which are not our own, which have been imposed upon us, where the entire reference points come from a different place.

If we are to actually talk about "Alternative Discourses to Education," it means that we're opening up a whole set of different kinds of questions. Questions around nationalism, national identity, national boundaries; questions around an industrial, military paradigm of growth; questions around what it means to be modern, what it means to be civilized, what does progress mean. I think these are the kinds of questions that are facing us today and, unless we ask these kinds of questions, the trap of globalisation is going to get worse. In India, what continues to pull

more and more communities into this destructive process of globalisation is both the unfulfilled promises of development - the dangling in front of us the promise that with this kind of development we will have greater equality, greater democracy, greater freedom, and so we keep chasing after this model of development. At the same time, this model of development has produced very unsustainable kinds of structures, institutions, even nations, which continue to pull on the entire world's resources to feed their insatiable appetites. Unless we actually open ourselves to that kind of discourse of asking questions around development, I think that these questions of education will remain within a certain framework. We won't be able to get out of it.

I'll give you an example from India. Many of you are familiar with Gandhi and the Indian freedom struggle. Gandhi and others, including people like Rabindranath Tagore, made an attempt to get out of this framework of development. They used a word called "*swaraj*" to articulate a different worldview. Swaraj can be translated as "rule over the self," and this represents a very different framework for defining our individual and collective priorities - starting with actually trying to figure out what does it mean to have "rule over the self" and also thinking about what are the processes for doing this so that our ends and means are consistent. I think that this notion of *swaraj* opens us up to a different framework of thinking about learning. In our work right now with Shikshantar, we are continuing to develop this idea of swaraj.

The core question in facing us today then is: What does it mean to reclaim control over our own learning? Institutions of education have taken that control from us; they define it for us all the time. But I think that we can learn without the experts to always tell us how. When we hear this idea of co-authoring meaning, or this idea of reviving our imagination, I would say that reclaiming control over our own learning is essential step.

For us, part of that process starts with what we call "unlearning". Unlearning certain mental frameworks we've been conditioned by - mental frameworks, narratives and assumptions about who we are, what our future is, what our past is, what our problems are, what our potentials are. Unlearning certain fears we have, unlearning that there are no alternatives, unlearning stereotypes about our neighbours and about the Other. This process of unlearning is very important, I think, when we are talking about alternatives to education, and it is something that we have been doing a lot of research on. The most interesting (and provocative) thing that we have found so far is that there can be no curriculum for unlearning. It raises the question, then: What are we talking about when we are talking about education where unlearning is necessary? If we're trying to think of another world, or other worlds, then we have to unlearn the world we have all been indoctrinated in. The problem is that there can be no curriculum for doing that. So what do we do?

**Carlos Zarco Mera:** Puede ser una buena tarea elaborar un currículo para desaprender; vamos a invitar a Caroll que nos comparta una primera reflexión.

**Carolyn Medel-Anonuevo :** First of all, let me start by telling you my story. I come from four generations of teachers. My grandmother, when she was graded after she finished elementary school, during American colonization in my country, became a teacher. My mother was a science, high school teacher, I used to be a university professor for ten years at the University of the Philippines in my country, and my eldest daughter is now a lecturer in the university in my

country as well. So, in my experience of teaching and learning, I have seen the different ways of learning through these four generations. When I was teaching, I always started my class by saying, “I will not teach.” For me, the role of teaching was to provide an environment for learning.

Through the past years, I have slowly deconstructed this idea that the role of teaching is to provide an environment for learning, because I think, for me, what one has to contend is: What are we learning? I think that Munir, Manish and Aminata have all raised this question: What are we learning? Coming from the women’s movement in the Philippines, I have, in my past life, been very conscious that women should learn about their rights, that women should discover themselves, that women should be able to talk about their sexuality, that women, most important, should be able to learn about power.

Now that I am working at the UNESCO Institute of Education in Germany, I am confronted with a different learning, because I am not in my own cultural context, I live outside my country. I’m confronted with learning about other cultures. And it is not so easy to learn a certain culture which is quite dominant. And I have come from my own background. The Philippines was colonized for 100 years by the Americans, so we have our own American colonization, and we had to learn about what it is to be a little brown American. And during my 10 years stay in Germany, I think I realize that there are many things that have to be learned. To learn as a woman, what it means to be an empowered woman, what it means to be in a society where you have different contexts, what it means to be a migrant woman in such a context. In the Philippines, we are saying that we are now 8 million Filipino migrants all over the world. I always tell my co-migrants that in one way I have a privileged migrant position because of that. On the other hand, I also share the experience of confronting different cultures.

I think that as we are here in Porto Alegre, it is a moment of confronting cultures and learning from other cultures, and I think this is one important moment to try to interrogate each other about our cultures. So, for me, alternative learning means learning about other cultures, and it is not so easy to learn about other cultures. I think the challenge for this continuing conversations as we are dialoguing across different cultures is try to transcend our own dominant ways of thinking.

**Carlos Zarco Mera:** Muchas gracias Carol. Hay en esta idea del discurso alternativo que para que la educación sea liberadora tenemos que hacer un fuerte ejercicio crítico de valorar lo que hemos aprendido y como mucho de lo que ocurre ahora en Palestina, él hablaba de “crear” y en el caso de Palestina esta no es una palabra o una metáfora. Cuando Aminata habla desde África y dice “nos colonizaron y hablamos francés y queremos pensar diferente en ese idioma, con el que nos colonizaron” cuando Munir dice “qué es el desarrollo por ejemplo, cuáles son los principales conceptos que manejamos en la educación y si hemos detenido a pensar colectivamente qué significa” cuando Munir dice esa declaración de derechos humanos universal la hicieron 20 personas en Nueva York y ellos dijeron cuáles son los derechos universales o cuando Carol nos cuenta esta experiencia del significado de ser mujer, maestra y el diálogo migrante y el diálogo intercultural. Yo quiero, frente a esta complejidad poner un tema. Nosotros cuando decimos en la educación popular o en la educación alternativa que educamos para empoderar a la gente, es una frase permanente en nuestras prácticas, decimos que que queremos que las mujeres se



empoderen, que los pobres se empoderen, que los jóvenes se empoderen, que los pueblos indios se empoderen. Yo quisiera abrir un poco este tema de “por empoderar” en la educación desde su reflexión, ¿cómo podremos problematizar un poco esta expresión? Si quieres contribuir Munir .

**Munir Fasheh:** For me, the word “empowerment” is another one of the words that I feel is part of the problem. Whether we talk about “educating others” or “empowering others” or “saving others” or “helping others”, it always out of a relationship of somebody who knows more and who is actually treating the other as “less”, instead of putting enough effort to understand and to realize what the other has. And this is really where unlearning comes in. The person who helped me unlearn a lot of what I had learned or what I was educated in through schools and universities was my mother who was illiterate. I was “educated”, my mother was not and did not have any of my symbols. I somehow thought that she was ignorant and that she always needed somebody to tell her how to do things. But all of a sudden something really clicked in my mind, and I discovered, and I’m still discovering (she died in 1984) not only how much she had that I can understand, but how much she had that I can not even understand.

I have a doctorate in “education” and she had zero “education”. The environment that she created for us at home – she and my father – is something that I couldn’t create for my children. I have a doctorate in education, but I couldn’t, because the creation of an environment is not something that you can do just from reading books. It is something that you learn from life through so many different ways. One of the ways that have been wiped out in education is wisdom. And wisdom has been locked in jail since Kant declared that somehow thinking is above life, is above existence: “we think, therefore we exist,” instead of “we exist, therefore we think”. I don’t know whether he was negative or stupid or whatever but, for me, that was one of the problems that I had to unlearn from my mother. Because her thinking and her life were so much a part of each other that you could not even separate them. For me, things were separated. I studied mathematics, and I taught mathematics at every level for a long time, and then I discovered – and this is the story of my mother – that my mother really had an understanding of mathematics totally different and really superior in every sense to my understanding of mathematics.

So, back to the word “empowerment”... When they talk about “women’s empowerment” or “empowering women”, I say: Who would really empower whom? I couldn’t empower my mother in any way, in any sense, while she empowered me for the past thirty years while I have been really trying to rethink education and development and the whole process that is called progress. This idea that somebody has the right and authority to know what is good for another is, I think, the seed of dehumanising the other. It is the seed that we really have to unlearn to regain our humanity. I will probably give my mother something, but she gives me other things. This is not decided by who has a higher degree, who has a higher rank, but actually by our relationship to our environment. Her relationship to life and her relationship to her surroundings and to her culture was almost organic. For me, my relationship to my surroundings was always through words – they really control (and limit) my whole understanding. This is very problematic for me.

**Carlos Zarco Mera:** Sin duda los movimientos de mujeres en el mundo han sido un claro actor educativo porque nos han ayudado a desaprender muchas cosas, a cuestionar muchas otras, pues

Carol, en tu experiencia en los movimientos de mujeres este tema del poder, del empoderamiento, ¿cómo lo piensan?

**Carolyn Medel-Anonuevo:** Of course “empowerment” is a very slippery term. The World Bank uses the word “empowerment”. The private sector and big business use the word “empowerment”, and so a big question among women’s groups, among the women’s movement is should we use the word “power”? On the other hand, we also say that there are different kinds of power which we have to learn and to appropriate. This would be the “*power to*” which means the capacity to change, the capacity to become an agent of one’s life. And this is what women have been trying to learn. For many years, for many decades, for thousands of years, they have learned that they are properties of men – that what men want to do they can do to women, they can violate women, they can rape women. There’s violence against women. Women have to realize they have their own capacities.

Another kind of power is “power with”. It means that women and men can work together, and if they are able to work together towards certain goals, realizing that there can also be conflicts between women and men, “*power with*” can be a viable force. Often, individual women think that they can do it on their own: “I’m a successful woman so I have arrived.” But what women’s movements, what groups are saying is that we have to work together, and working together can be very powerful. For us, it is very important to look at these different meanings of power. To be able to appropriate the term “empowerment”, one has to be critical about the root word “power”. Unfortunately, many groups don’t look at the term “power” because it’s a very strong word. Women won’t want to talk about power, but I think this is one of the key words that women have to learn.

**Aminata Traoré :** A propos du sens de notre présence ici, nous sommes en train de défier un système extrêmement puissant, mais ce processus est un défi envers nous-mêmes parce que la déconstruction d'un système de pensée, la remise en question des concepts touche à toute l'architecture de notre pensée du développement et de la coopération. La difficulté se situe à ce niveau parce que, à partir des mots, les institutions ont constamment refait peau neuve et souvent il s'est avéré que ces notions ne correspondent pas à grand-chose pour les peuples qu'on prétend aider.

Deuxièmement, il se trouve que cette initiative de penser le monde et de le transformer émane de ceux qui, comme la Banque mondiale, sont à l'origine de la plupart des maux des peuples. L'intervention de la Banque mondiale pour renforcer le pouvoir des femmes est une curiosité politique pour moi parce que c'est la banque qui a infligé, deux décennies durant, de manière unilatérale, des politiques d'ajustement structurel à nos pays sans que la grande majorité des Africains sachent ce qui leur arrive. Aujourd'hui qu'est-ce qu'ils demandent au nom de la maîtrise des dépenses ? L'école est payante pour tout le monde y compris les plus démunis. La santé, pareil. N'importe quelle femme dans mon pays peut mourir en couches parce qu'elle ne peut pas payer 25.000 francs un "kit". Alors où est le pouvoir quand le droit à la vie est bafoué ? Il y a un proverbe chez moi qui dit "quand celui qui cherche l'aiguille camoufle l'aiguille du pied, elle devient introuvable". C'est extrêmement dommage que ce soit ces mêmes institutions qui ont

décrété un certain type de développement, et qui ont détruit une bonne partie du monde, qui revendiquent l'initiative de transformer en donnant le pouvoir aux femmes. Et pour faire comme Munir, je vais illustrer concrètement mon propos.

Je me réfère à un village de pêcheurs en Côte d'Ivoire il y a une quinzaine d'années, 20 ans. Nous débarquons dans ce village au nom de l'égalité entre les sexes et du pouvoir des femmes. On observe quelques jours, on se rend compte que les femmes passent des nuits entières à fumer le poisson et pendant ce temps, les hommes dorment. Nous concluons donc que les femmes sont surexploitées, et il fallait qu'on change cet état de fait en parlant aux femmes et en parlant aux gens. Et curieusement ce sont les femmes, le rappel à l'ordre est venu des femmes, parce qu'elles ne comprenaient pas. Elles nous disent : "qu'est-ce que vous voulez à travers ce projet ?". Nous avons dit "nous aimerions améliorer vos conditions de travail et votre statut". Alors ensemble avec les hommes elles sont venues nous dire que certes, elles passent des nuits entières à transformer, c'est laborieux, c'est long, mais elles ne peuvent pas transformer, fumer le poisson si les hommes ne vont pas à la pêche ; et les hommes qui vont avec des pirogues à la pêche affrontent chaque jour la mort parce qu'il y a la barre sur les cotes qui fait que des pirogues chavirent. Le souci des femmes, ce n'est pas la durée et la pénibilité du travail, c'est la vie de leur mari et de leurs fils qui sont en danger quand ils vont chercher le poisson. Elles nous ont dit "est-ce que pendant que vous réfléchissez au type de fumoir, vous allez réfléchir au type d'embarcation qui limite la mort de nos maris ?" Nous étions venus avec un projet unijambiste qui ne visait que les femmes dans un environnement donné. Mais la lecture que nous faisons de leur réalité n'avait strictement rien à voir avec ce qu'elles-mêmes vivaient, sans oublier que dans les dépenses, au sein des ménages, il y a des formes de solidarité qui font que les femmes ne nous autorisaient même pas à toucher à la question de leurs revenus.

Dans les rapports Nord-Sud, il y a ce clivage entre la vision féministe du Nord et des rapports homme/femme, cette solidarité entre femmes aussi prend un sacré coup quand les femmes du Sud rendent compte de ce type de réalité. Nos amies et nos sœurs du Nord n'acceptent pas qu'on leur dise parfois "Apparemment c'est très difficile pour nous mais nous aimerions pouvoir penser certaines solutions de l'intérieur". Je voulais juste dire ça pour dire que pour en revenir au changement, à l'apprentissage. Le défi, ce n'est pas seulement un défi aux dominants et aux puissances de l'argent, mais c'est un défi de tous les jours vis-à-vis de nous-mêmes dans nos pratiques de solidarité, dans notre approche du développement qui est parfois en porte-à-faux avec ce que les gens veulent pour eux-mêmes.

**Manish Jain :** I think for me the problem with the empowerment discourse is that it gets again framed within a certain set of institutions, so we empower people within a certain framework. And what happens as a result of that is a few things. One is those is that institutions have defined power as a zero-sum game, so it forces everybody to fight against each other for certain limited power within the framework of those institutions. The other thing that happens is that our own notions of power, and our ability to develop and to generate different forms of power somehow gets reduced. I can give you an example from India about this whole empowerment discourse that is going on within the framework of the modern-colonial, neo-colonial institutions. Its has actually disempowered people because it has reduced their option for resistance and for creation. It says that, as an empowered person, what you should do is to go and file your case in court, or you should go and sit on strike in front of the President's office or the Collector's office or

something like that, or you should do a letter-writing campaign. But if we think about it, our notions of power have been actually reduced. This is a real problem because they are always defined in relation to a particular set of institutions.

When we talk about *swaraj* (I mentioned this idea earlier), the idea is that we start to create our own reference points – that we do talk about power but we talk about it in relation to a different set of possibilities, a different set of structures, a different set of assumptions, which are not always going to be within a framework of scarcity in which we have to always fight one another. There are also notions of power that stem from a worldview of abundance: power is there and I can actually share my power without losing anything in the process. The problem is that anybody today who thinks through the lenses of institutional frameworks thinks that they cannot share their power because they're always doing calculations about "how I'm going to lose this or that". Until we get out of those limited frameworks, I don't think that we can actually really regenerate new possibilities, new worlds, new opportunities.

**Carlos Zarco Mera:** Hay un tema también de cómo articular nuestro cuerpo en los discursos alternativos y en la calidad de la educación. Nosotros vamos a intentar articular nuestro cuerpo con esta idea de los discursos alternativos, entonces fijense: primero con su mano izquierda tenemos que subir y bajar, eso es muy importante, coordinar que sea bien hecho, subir y bajar. Muy bien, que ustedes sientan la mano agradablemente. Bueno, la mano derecha hay que hacerla izquierda. No, no, no. Por favor, así: izquierda y derecha, muy bien ¿ok? Compañero allá y así .. ¡eso! ¿okay? ¿listos? Bueno, entonces mano izquierda, mano derecha. Entonces ahora con las dos manos vamos a intentar coordinar los dos movimientos [risas] Ven por qué históricamente la izquierda y la derecha no se pueden llevar bien? Hay otro muy sencillo, si nos ponemos de pie por favor pie, este es muy sencillo porque ponemos las manos arriba, las dos manos y poco a poco se trata de tocar el techo del auditorio ¿vamos? poco a poco, se trata de ¡tocar el techo!, ¡vamos, vamos! ¡muy bien! ¡bravo!, no, no, algunos, alguna, aquí Carol ya quiere bailar.

**Manish Jain:** I just wanted to add one more point about this notion of empowerment, which I think is really critical to what we are talking about. It is the assumption that we need experts to come and empower us, some professionals to empower us. However, the idea of *swaraj* means that this search, this struggle for meaning, for generating one's own power, has to come from a different place. It doesn't come from experts who come and run training courses on empowerment, and tell us the latest theory from the West on empowerment. For example, these days, one thing I am very disturbed about is what is happening with the notion of creativity. There are now "creativity kits" which are packaged and sold to us by experts! Something that is so natural to our way of life, that permeates everything from our food to our clothes to our festivals. Why is it that we now need some professional to come and give us a course on creativity? I think this is where the trap starts.

I believe that today, in India, we are still colonized. We are not free, because we continue to depend on these big institutions to define who we are -- institutions that are not in our hands. The logic behind those institutions, as long as they continue to exist, is actually spreading more violence and more destruction in the world today. So how do we actually transcend these to

liberate ourselves from the framework of those institutions? This is not to say that we do not engage with those institutions, it is to say that we need to engage with them from a different place. We do not engage within their rules. We have to create our own rules. This is the kind of unlearning that I am really interested in. How do we start to create our own rules to redefine the terms of engagement? Otherwise, as you know, they have all the money, they have all the sophisticated language, they have everything, and we are not even able to see or understand what we have anymore. That is the problem.

**Carlos Zarco Mera:** Entonces tenemos temas de cultura, desarrollo, poder, derechos humanos, lenguaje, realidades sociales y políticas de exclusión, de colonización y todo esto desafiando el tema del aprendizaje de la educación. Se han levantado varios planteamientos, queremos invitarlos a que ahora veamos qué idea o ideas fueron retenidas después de esta ronda de diálogo. Que me queda? Que me cuestiono? Invitamos a que comenten esta idea con el vecino, o la persona mas próxima a Uds. que tienen atrás o adelante o a un lado. Qué punto quisieran levantar enfatizar. A partir de este primer momento de diálogo y después vamos pedir a dos o tres personas que nos compartan algunos de estos puntos. Entonces si quieren rápidamente intercambiamos en este momento puntos que nos cuestionan, que nos iluminan en esta reflexión.

Breves intervenciones. Ya está. La compañera aquí y allá. Otra vez tres mujeres, mañana les daremos oportunidades a los hombres. Sí, acá por favor...

**Woman in Portuguese :** Nosso grupo discutiu a questão de que nós aqui somos efetivamente uma elite privilegiada. ¿Como podemos estar discutindo isso? Mais é na base, junto as crianças que não tem formação, que não tem apoio económico. ¿Como é que a gente pode estar dando essa esperança de motivação, de modificação da situação internacional para os nossos professores, nas nossas regiões, nos nossos países, para que eles possam efetivamente acreditar nisso que nos estamos querendo acreditar? Então vamos fazer essa mudança na base, junto ao nosso professorado, dentro das universidades e através dos institutos do estado, outras ordens, ¿nao é?, como a gente pôde estar efetivamente

**Woman in French:** Vraiment, moi je n'avais pas envie de parler avec mes voisines, c'est de la violence. Je ne sais pas, peut-être que ce que vous avez dit, c'est plus haut que mon niveau intellectuel. C'est très symbolique, disons que je suis d'accord avec vous, l'école détruit, tout s'impose, mais quelles sont les alternatives, quelles sont les solutions ? Vraiment, je ne suis pas arrivée à comprendre, excusez-moi.

**Woman in Portuguese:** Nosso grupo discutiu a questão de que nós aqui somos efetivamente uma elite privilegiada. ¿Como podemos estar discutindo isso? Mais é na base, junto as crianças que não tem formação, que não tem apoio económico. ¿Como é que a gente pode estar dando essa esperança de motivação, de modificação da situação internacional para os nossos professores, nas nossas regiões, nos nossos países, para que eles possam efetivamente acreditar nisso que nos

estamos querendo acreditar? Então vamos fazer essa mudança na base, junto ao nosso professorado, dentro das universidades e através dos institutos do estado, outras ordens, 'nao é?, como a gente pôde estar efetivamente

**Claude Vercoutere :** Il y a un peu plus d'un an à Brest, nous avons organisé un forum et dans ce forum il y avait beaucoup de représentants des pays africains et tous, sans exception, ont dénoncé la mondialisation, la globalisation économique comme une nouvelle forme de colonisation. Cela c'est pour moi un principe fondamental que de lutter contre la globalisation. Le deuxième point, et il fait un peu partie du premier, c'est la bataille pour la défense de la diversité culturelle. Le jour où la culture mondiale sera uniforme, le monde sera mort. Donc ça, c'est une bataille qui nous est commune et qui est le premier combat à mener, un des premiers combats à mener. C'est la condition de la lutte contre la misère du monde.

Seulement, il y a un certain nombre de points avec lesquels je ne suis pas tout à fait d'accord. Quand vous dénoncez les droits de l'homme, je peux le comprendre, mais moi les droits de l'homme, ça fait partie de ma culture depuis la Révolution française ! Vous faisiez allusion à vos parents, mais moi c'est mes arrières-arrières grands-parents qui se sont battus pour lutter contre l'oppression et puis qui ont gagné, qui ont perdu, qui ont regagné. Mais moi ces droits de l'homme-là j'y tiens ! Alors ce n'est peut-être pas une raison suffisante pour les transférer dans le monde entier, ça d'accord, mais quand même. C'est vrai qu'aujourd'hui je suis mal à l'aise quand la Déclaration universelle des droits de l'homme est brandie dans une main et que dans l'autre main on promeut le "big business" et on fait appel aux dollars, aux euros ou aux yens, ça je suis d'accord. Ce n'est pas la même bataille. Et pourtant, on nous la présente bien sur le même plan ! Et je suis aussi solidaire de cette bataille-là. Mais dans le même temps, si je comprends qu'il y a des cultures qui refusent les droits de l'homme, je veux bien, je suis d'accord, mais à une condition, c'est qu'elles n'oppriment pas non plus, je sais que dans les sociétés où on préconise les droits de l'homme on opprime, qu'il y a de la misère, mais il y a aussi des formes d'oppression qui touchent les faibles, qui touchent les femmes. Donc si on est contre les droits de l'homme, il faut en même temps préciser ce qui est absolument inacceptable.

Je voudrais aussi revenir sur un autre point, c'est sur la condamnation de l'école. Moi je comprends qu'on puisse condamner l'école, mais quand même si je dois beaucoup à mes parents, je dois aussi beaucoup à l'école laïque française, et ça, je ne le renierai jamais. Que cette école ne fonctionne pas comme je le souhaite, ça je suis d'accord, ça fait 30 ans que je milite pour la transformer. Et c'est difficile. Pourquoi ? Parce qu'on forme les enseignants pour la didactique, mais on ne les forme pas pour la vraie pédagogie, pour en faire aussi des éducateurs. Et puis parce que, comme on l'a dit aussi dans notre colloque, on ne leur donne pas les moyens de le faire. Mais si on démolit l'école, on laisse le pouvoir aux nantis, à ceux qui ont tout trouvé dans leur berceau en naissant. Je m'excuse, je suis le fils d'un mécanicien ajusteur. Il m'a appris beaucoup, je l'ai dit. Mais c'est l'école qui m'a fait aussi. Et je ne suis pas d'accord pour qu'effectivement on laisse le pouvoir à ceux qui trouvent toute la richesse en venant au monde dans leur berceau ! Merci.

**Coumba Touré :** Je voudrais d'abord vraiment remercier ce panel. Cela fait très longtemps que

je n'avais pas assisté à un panel comme celui-là, où on a laissé vraiment les gens participer, où ça s'est passé de cette façon. J'aimerais vraiment féliciter les gens qui ont organisé cela. Ma question par contre que je soulève, après vous avoir écouté - parce que c'était vraiment extraordinaire d'entendre vos idées - donc, après avoir accepté qu'il faut qu'on change de paradigme, après avoir accepté que l'école telle que nous la connaissons en tout cas dans les communautés est une institution oppressive sinon criminelle quelquefois, après avoir accepté beaucoup de choses que vous avez dites, qu'est-ce qu'il se passe, qu'est-ce que l'on fait en face du pouvoir qui peut éliminer physiquement ? Parce que lorsqu'on change de paradigme et qu'on le dit, qu'on ne veut pas suivre le chemin tracé pour nous, qu'on ne va pas juste écrire une pétition, faire une loi ou quelque chose comme ça, qu'on décide de faire différemment, et que l'on dépasse une certaine ligne on se retrouve en face de gens qui sont prêts à tuer. C'est arrivé pendant très longtemps. Donc ma question est : qu'est-ce qu'on fait après tout ça ?

**Samir Jarrar:** Thanks for opening the discussion. I had a big problem listening to you and if I didn't know at least three of you very well, I would have done something foolish. I am bothered by the fact that what you've done here is you've put yourself in a trap. All we have done in the last hour and a half, roughly, is fallen in the same things we are trying to change. We give the word "empowerment" to the World Bank, and we gave other ideas to colonizers, and we made them the force that are looking over our life and forcing us. At a certain point in time, yes there was colonizers, and there still is globalisation. There is a World Bank and other institutions that are even worse in this world but if you are going to keep falling in their hands by spending all our energy trying to deconstruct them, we are not going to be able to help those that are growing now and looking for a better future. This discourse is very good at the intellectual level for a small group. Here, I'm afraid, as a member of the audience, it really made me feel that I have no hope whatsoever.

All these things are happening, but much of it we are doing to ourselves. Within a paradigm of education, I think the school too has failed totally in delivering what we want. Can anybody in this room tell me one country in the world that's happy with its schooling system? Raise your hand! *Nobody raises hand* This proves the point. We are spending zillions of dollars on schooling with a certain curriculum, and all we have done over the last fifty years at least, that I'm aware of, is we are trying to find means and ways to make this thing that does not belong, this paradigm of education that does not belong, produce something that it was not designed to produce. So what we really need as an alternative is an alternative way of thinking towards what needs to be available for us to help our people learn.

This means we need to start looking for a positive rather than a negative. I don't want to see "not what", but the "yes of". I don't want to use my time saying no. I want to say yes to the alternatives, whatever the alternatives are. My thinking tells me that what we need is a group of visionaries who should revisit the paradigm of education and look at what the human being is going to be doing in the coming fifty years from now. They can call back the educators to develop the type of things that needs to be shared with the people to learn how to improve their living. They might find out that maybe 80% of what is in the school needs to stay there, but they might also find out that that much needs to be cut. Do we still need 16 years for human being with a brain to go to the level that we can make a computer reach in a couple of hours?

**Man in Spanish (26.9):** Conversamos con un pequeño grupito y bueno, mi visión es un poco diferente; yo creo que estamos escuchando varias culturas y nos están dando visiones diferentes a las que nosotros normalmente tenemos. Creo que ese es un nuevo .. no sé si será un nuevo paradigma, pero el tener que ser flexible a las culturas, el reconocer la diversidad es un tema central. Comentamos, de toda la conversación de ellos, comentamos dos hechos: la primera, como dijo él, el amigo de Palestina, que en realidad era dramática, no había una contradicción aparente, él es un doctor en educación y dice, no sé si lo entendimos bien “yo soy doctor en educación pero mi madre es una analfabeta, mi madre me dio un hogar y un ambiente familiar propicio para que yo me forme, y era una analfabeta, yo soy un doctor en educación y he tenido dificultades para lograr eso” Eso es una crítica muy radical, una autocrítica muy radical; yo lo vinculé a muchas imágenes familiares, porque no es mentira, es algo parte de la realidad y podemos mirar en sectores pobres, muy pobres cosas similares. Eso es un latigazo, habría que reflexionar más sobre eso. El otro punto fue el tema del empoderamiento, entendimos que la compañera de África y el compañero de la India cuestionaron esta frase porque venía de fuera, que venía de un discurso del Banco Mundial y en el grupo decíamos eso está bien, eso es correcto. Estas ideas, estos conceptos deben partir de la realidad de cada país, la compañera de África decía bueno, las mujeres en mi país quieren que se respete su realidad, y entonces por qué vienen con ideas que no responden a nuestra cultura y nosotros decíamos bueno, eso es correcto y también nos hacíamos la pregunta pero, hasta qué punto es correcto , porque en todo caso la compañera de Filipinas, que ahora está en la UNESCO y está en Alemania de migrante había defendido este punto de vista, entonces no llegamos a una conclusión, pero va a la discusión de fondo, es decir, cómo nosotros, los países latinoamericanos en este caso, defendemos nuestra cultura, generamos una pedagogía local, que recoja las raíces de nuestros países y cómo nos vinculamos, cómo se producen estos procesos de desarrollos locales con estos procesos de mundialización, que el señor de Francia hace un momento dijo bueno, tampoco hay que separarse. Es un proceso complejo, yo creo que sería interesante de profundizarlo.

**Carlos Zarco Mera:** Se levantó el tema de que acá lo comentamos también cuando intercambiamos de las alternativas, porque dice allá discursos alternativos sobre educación, entonces decíamos ¿qué significa alternativos? A qué o por qué y luego la compañera decía bueno, y qué alternativa hay frente a esto que ustedes han dicho, cómo generar nuevas dinámicas, entonces sobre este tema de lo alternativo, las alternativas, invitaría a los compañeros si quiere alguno de ellos intervenir, compartir alguna idea ¿Aminata?

**Aminata Traoré :** Le dernier intervenant me rassure, sinon j'aurais eu l'impression que nous avons perdu notre temps à critiquer la Banque mondiale et les institutions. Moi je crois qu'on n'a même pas parlé suffisamment de ces institutions, eu égard à leur capacité de nuisance. On aurait pu faire plus. Maintenant quant aux alternatives, c'est au pluriel. Je crois que la quête, cette quête qui va être longue, commence d'abord par la remise en question des certitudes. C'est ce que nous avons fait depuis le début parce que la certitude consiste à croire qu'il y a un enseignement et des pédagogies plus ou moins bonnes et des êtres, qui sont comme des réceptacles, à qui on enseigne ces choses-là pour que ces êtres puissent s'adapter.

La force et la faiblesse de ce type de forum, c'est aussi la pluralité du monde. Nous parlons de



points de vue différents, d'expériences différentes. Moi, je parle de mon expérience de dominé, de peuple dominé depuis plus de 5 siècles, de peuple meurtri par l'esclavage, la colonisation, la néo-colonisation et la mondialisation, donc c'est cette expérience qui m'est familière. C'est cela que je veux partager en disant que le type d'enseignement qui est donné aujourd'hui aux Africains ne nous permet pas de résoudre nos problèmes, et que cet enseignement a essentiellement consisté à renforcer en nous le sentiment que nous sommes des sous-hommes, et que tant que nous ne ressemblons pas aux dominants, nous ne sommes rien. Ceux qui trahissent sont payés et nos dirigeants le savent mieux que quiconque.

Revenir sur ses certitudes, les re-visiter, en disant qu'aujourd'hui vous ne pouvez construire qu'en puisant en vous-même, c'est la question du "self-confidence". Il s'agit de l'école des enfants comme de celle des adultes, c'est de cela qu'il est question : comment revenir à l'homme ? Dans mon introduction, c'est ce que j'ai dit. Aujourd'hui, si nous devons juger l'éducation et l'apprentissage de la vie à travers l'état actuel des lieux, l'état de la planète, je crois qu'il n'y a pas de quoi être fiers. Nous sommes arrivés à un degré de désacralisation de la vie et de banalisation de la mort qui est tel que nous devons nous poser la question de savoir : Que reste-t-il d'humain en nous ? Et cela nous mène à la question suivante : Comment nous ré-articuler avec la culture ? Madame vous dites que ça vous dépasse ? Mais je ne pense pas qu'il y ait quelque part un paquet d'alternatives qu'on puisse utiliser : ça ne marche pas comme ça. C'est un processus de questionnement et les difficultés sont réelles même si nous parvenons à nous rendre compte que l'éducation pourrait être autre chose, comme je l'ai dit, réinvestir dans l'humain. Mais aujourd'hui dans l'état actuel des rapports de force, où est-ce que nous allons trouver les ressources financières et logistiques nécessaires pour recentrer l'éducation sur l'homme quand l'école est devenue une marchandise ? Parce que l'école, la formation, l'éducation se vend comme du pain et les médicaments. Et ce sont les enfants des pauvres, justement, qui n'ont pas droit à ce pain-là ou, en tout cas, ce n'est pas du pain de qualité.

Nous sommes dans la marchandisation du monde, et il y a longtemps que l'on a vendu l'éducation et le rôle central que la Banque mondiale joue dans ce processus, je suis obligée de le dire. Il n'y a plus de pouvoir dans mon pays, c'est la Banque qui décide de tout et c'est pour ça que je suis obligée de l'interpeller. Ce n'est pas pour me faire plaisir, c'est parce que je n'ai pas le choix. Pour répondre à la question de ma sœur Cumba, mais comment le dire et avoir droit à la vie ? Parce que le simple fait de dénoncer vous met en péril malheureusement, sous nos cieux. Heureusement, notre chance aujourd'hui, c'est justement ce mouvement social mondial parce que les dirigeants, tous les tyrans du monde, se rendent compte que quelque part il y a un contre-pouvoir qui est en construction.

Ce qui est important aujourd'hui c'est de créer, au niveau de chaque pays, une masse critique de citoyens et de citoyennes, d'hommes et de femmes qui comprennent que la transformation aujourd'hui ne se fait pas dans l'intérêt des générations actuelles et des générations futures mais continue d'être une démarche de dépossession, une démarche de pillage. Aujourd'hui les pays les plus riches qui obligent les nôtres, qui les pressent, parce qu'on ne parvient pas à corriger les déficits, ces mêmes pays savent qu'en leur propre sein il y a des libertés qu'ils ne peuvent pas prendre sinon les gens seront dans la rue. Mais dans nos pays on n'a pas le droit de manifester. Alors tout cela pose de sérieux problèmes. Aujourd'hui, nous plaidons pour nos vies, pour la vie des enfants. L'Afrique a donné le meilleur d'elle-même, parce que toute cette richesse accumulée à l'échelle de la planète, quelque part on la doit aux esclaves qui sont venus il y a longtemps dans

ces régions du monde. Mais comment se fait-il que cette même Afrique soit considérée aujourd'hui comme la région la plus arriérée, avec le mépris le plus total, précisément parce qu'on n'a pas fait comme les maîtres l'exigeaient de nous ? Et je remets en question cette école qui ré-institue l'esclavage à travers la mondialisation.

**Munir Fasheh:** First, I would like to say how wonderful it is to hear all these different points of views. That does not mean that I agree with all of them, but I definitely feel that this really tells us a little bit about where we can go into the future regarding education and other aspects: having a space for all views to be presented, and for me this is the true meaning of pluralism. I would like to use “pluralism” more than “cultural diversity”, because it is possible to have cultural diversity in a zoo sense, in the sense that we are all in cages, but we don't talk to one another. We have diversity in a zoo, but the animals in the different cages don't talk with each other. Right now I work in Boston, and Boston is like a zoo. There is the Hispanic neighbourhood, there is the black neighbourhood, there is the white neighbourhood, there is the Chinese neighbourhood, and actually there is no dialogue among them. To me this is not real diversity. This is diversity of, as I said, the kind that exists in a zoo.

The kind of diversity that I care about and that I really love is when I can listen to what others have to say but I am not forced by anybody to agree with them. First, I do not compare and second I do not measure. I do not really like to conclude that there is one view which is absolutely better than the other. I will go on believing what I believe in, but having the dialogue with others ongoing. This really leads a little bit towards pluralism, towards an alternative. A basic thing, in my opinion, for alternatives is to move away from universal thinking that has universal tools. All of us probably believe that what we believe in is universal. That's not necessarily harmful, but it becomes harmful when I develop universal tools like education has done.

I'm not against schools for those who want them, but I'm against imposing them on those who do not want them. If you like schools, that's fine. Build schools, send your children to schools, that's fine. But don't impose them on me. And I have the right to regain the taxes going to a central office that decides what my children have to learn. I have to have that option and have to have that demand – the demand for the means rather than the demand for a particular meaning or a particular way of doing things.

I got my doctorate from Harvard, and during the period I was studying there three teachers were expelled. These teachers were not expelled by a government. They were expelled by the senior faculty, and they were expelled because these teachers actually made a lot of sense to people like me, who come from outside, who really want people to think differently. It was a professional, institutional act that expelled the three teachers, and they were actually very, very good. One of them was the teacher of Noam Chomsky. He was expelled from the School of Education by the senior faculty, because he was supporting, at the time, Nicaragua and Palestine.

Now, I want to talk very specifically about an alternative that I was involved in. In a sense, I was privileged because schools in the West Bank, in Palestine, were closed for 4 years by Israel, so I was fortunate to live 4 years without schools. I don't think any one of you as a community has had that privilege. That is you do not know what it means to live without schools. I do. They

were closed completely. No schools, no university was open for 4 years. And what was really amazing is how much we learned and how much we did without them. Actually, we learned so much and we did so much that Israel had to put a law against teaching in neighbourhoods, and anyone who was caught teaching in a neighbourhood would be liable to ten years, up to ten years of imprisonment and having his home demolished. That is the price for really creating an alternative. So alternatives – it's not that they don't exist – but sometimes the presence of the school does not allow them to exist. And when the schools were closed down, we really flourished as a community. We did a lot and we really were surprised how much we were able to do when our institutions and our professionals were paralysed. People rose up. Many of the things that we thought were impossible happened. Israel actually had to go to two places to suppress this uprising of people, this ability of people to do things by themselves. One was the PLO. They asked the PLO to come and they would give them authority to suppress the ability of people to run their own affairs. Second, it happened in terms of controlling mosques, because mosques became very social organizations (by the way I'm not a Muslim, I am a Christian). I really witnessed that the mosques in Palestine were transformed almost immediately into social organizations, not institutions. There were spaces that were open for people to do anything. Churches did not, were not able to take that up.

So when people ask, "What are the alternatives?", what you are actually saying is, "Let's again regain diversity in learning and talk about pluralism in living." As I said, pluralism and trying to measure people according to a universal measure do not go together. So one thing we have to start to demand is to stop measuring people against one another, because there is no idea that I find more dehumanising, more degrading than grading people. If you reduce a human being into an A student, that is one of the worst things that you can do, even if that student is an A student. Because by telling that student, "You are an A student," that student becomes a slave to your words and to your measurements, and loses connection to his or her inner world, and control over the growth of his or her inner world.

There is another thing that I want to talk about that I learned – again because I was privileged to be in a place where institutions either did not exist or did not have a lot of resources. Because we did not have a lot of resources, we had to be very creative and very inventive. And I have several examples of this. I will give very quickly one example, and, if you are interested, I can give more. I was a science and math teacher, and we didn't have laboratories, we didn't have any of these things that usually are considered as part of teaching science and I said, "Let's start clubs, science clubs and math clubs." And the students asked, "What do we do? There is no lab, there is nothing. What can we do?" I said, "Science does not start with a lab. Science starts with a question that you have and you would like to pursue. So, let's start, if there are 20 students, each one will come with a question. Then, we form a science club, and we move from there." I asked, "Do you have flies in your classrooms, you know, the flies?" Of course, almost every classroom, especially in hot weather, has flies, every home has flies. I said, "Alright, if you really allow students to observe the flies, everything as much as possible about the flies, and bring together what they observe and compare. That will be the best curriculum for the learning and teaching of science." So we have plenty of things. This is the concept of abundance that is, there is a lot we can use, but somehow we are made not to see it.

**Manish Jain:** So many questions. One thing I will just say right away is a direct response to the question about the discussion we were having on empowerment. I was trying to articulate, and maybe this is again a cultural difference, but there is a different notion of power, of sharing power, of growing power, that is in our culture, and it's related to *swaraj*. My point is: Can we start to create our own language, our own meaning, around these kinds of terms, which has a different world view? I think that this is what, in India, is unfulfilled from the freedom struggle. Our own articulations are missing. It's not that we are giving up something, but can we articulate it from a different set of vantage points, a different set of reference points, a different world view? That's the point. My question is, to you, "What does it mean to create another world?" That's what attracted me to this place, this forum. What does it mean to create another world? And, with that question, there are two questions I would like to share to elaborate this.

One is: What does it mean to create another world that is neither driven by Western neo-liberalism nor dictated by Western socialism? Is there another world or other worlds beyond these two worlds? This is what I'm trying to explore, and with this exploration, my first question to myself is: What can I learn from illiterates? This is what Munir has raised, what Aminata has raised. What can I learn from illiterates, in my quest to create other worlds? In India, I can point to you three very strong examples of where that learning is very alive today. In the issue of water, in the issue of health, in the issue of food, there are many things we are learning from illiterates. There are other knowledge systems that exist which provide us glimpses to another world.

In the issue of water, we have a drought in my state. None of the engineers in our state have any solutions that we can afford. The solutions are coming from illiterates who have developed over thousands of years indigenous ways of rainwater harvesting in the desert. Some of the engineers, to their credit, have become open enough that they're actually going and trying to learn these ways. In terms of food, we are experiencing today the devastating impacts of the Green Revolution - fertilizers, pesticides, etc. Another world is emerging from those illiterates, those illiterate farmers who have still retained control over their local seeds, who have still retained knowledge about other ways of nurturing the plants and soil, other ways of dealing with pests. The issue of health: today everyone is aware of the rising costs of medical care. There is another world, another way of knowing, which is linked to indigenous knowledge systems around health, around medicinal plants. In Brazil, I know there's a whole, huge community in the Amazon talking about this. These people are all illiterates! The whole education system has written them off for the last fifty years!

The question then comes: "If we recognize these as valid knowledge systems, how do these knowledge systems actually regenerate themselves?" Because what is happening in India is that people are polluting this knowledge: they are taking medicinal plants, they are pulling out the techniques, but they are losing the worldview which keeps regenerating and creating those techniques. So, what is the other world, what are the other worlds? Schooling has a value in some communities. But schooling has done nothing to regenerate those other ways of knowing, those other knowledge systems. Schooling has no concept of those other knowledge systems! It doesn't have any concept of the languages in which those knowledge systems are produced! So, the question are: What are those knowledge systems? How do we actually tap into these without destroying them? How do we actually learn from these other knowledge systems? Are we open to actually explore that? Otherwise, this whole business of "another world" does not mean much.

The second question is in terms of our own understanding of ourselves: What is our role in

creating that other world? How does our own dependence on text, the creation of textual minds – which is what schooling has done to us – limit us in our articulation of other worlds? How does the fact that we have been totally inculcated with dominant narratives around who we are, what our histories are, what our stories are, prevent us from creating our own stories? How does that prevent us from looking at our own experiences? Today in India, if you are given an exam question, and you write an answer based on your own experiences that it doesn't match the answer in the textbook, you're wrong. You're wrong! So, where is your value then in creating this other world? What is that damage? What are the limitations of the textual mind that we have, and how do we start to get out of that? How do we start to find our own expressions? How do we start to create, tapping into our wide range, wide base of experiences? The whole problem with schooling is it devalues those experiences. Only the things you get in the formal classroom are the things that are called "valuable learning"! How do we actually start to validate the learning we are having in life? Are the experiences that we have to articulate, are the experiences we have to share, are the experiences that we are going to generate our own stories with, going to help us create these other worlds? These are some of the questions that I'm struggling with and interested in.

**Carolyn Medel-Anonuevo:** I think the search for alternatives is a very difficult and complex process. I would like to share my personal experience in my search for alternatives, first in my personal life and second in my political life. I was raised in a militaristic atmosphere. As a military officer, my father would always tell us, when we were growing, that you should not question. You have to obey. We were run like in a military school where we had to follow orders from my father. And, of course, coming from the university, being part of the movement, I said to myself, "I think I would like not to raise my four daughters in this manner." But, as I lead my life, I realize that I will always have this past, an authoritarian past, a militaristic past within me, so every day is a struggle for me. Sometimes, I joke my friends that maybe it's good that I'm living in Germany and my children are in the Philippines and I come to see them not so often because otherwise perhaps I would be teaching them in the same way that my father has taught me, in a militaristic atmosphere. So for me an alternative for parenting to be more democratic has been a very difficult process in my daily life.

And as I think about alternatives to education, alternatives to learning, I also would like to share about my experience in my own country. I think one of the criticisms for this movement is that it has not been able to engender a certain critical thinking, to question, because again, you have a war. When you have a war, you don't question, just like in America now. There's a war up there – we're waging a war against terrorists, so let's not question, let's not have dissent. But slowly, I think, and it's the women's movement, the feminists have raised this issue, that if you want to change things, you just don't talk about structures. Power is not only about economic structures, about the State. It's about ourselves, it's about our relationship at the intimate level, it's about relationships with our body. So, through the years, these alternatives from looking from a very structural point of view, like let's attack the structures, let's dismantle the structures, let's have people's war, has been a very dominant part of my thinking, and a very dominant way I look at alternatives. But I think through the years, as I encounter other social movements, as I encounter other cultures, I have been faced with another alternative.

It's important to be self-reflexive; it's important to question. But, on the other hand, one

limitation of this, and this is maybe one criticism that has been raised, is that you just question and question and question, but when will you act, when will you change, when do you transform? And I think it's important to question. Alternative learning, alternative education involves asking questions. As Manish was saying, perhaps it's not enough to have the answers, what's more important is what kind of questions. But, I think at the moment I'm not yet finished with my journey to what are the real alternatives. Slowly as I live, for example, in Germany, I appreciate my experience in Germany, not only encountering a different culture - and a dominant culture - but also to be able to have a dialogue, with my colleagues for example in the institute. I realize that questioning, constant questioning, can also be paralysing, because unless you move, unless you act, you will just be critical. You have to be active. For me, at this moment of my life, this is where I look at an alternative, to be a reflexive actor, to question, but to act, and not to be paralysed by continuously questioning concepts and discourses, but to realize what these concepts are, and, from there, act and transform and change.

**Carlos Zarco Mera:** Para ir cerrando nuestra reflexión, cuando hablamos de educación enseguida vienen palabras, ya se han mencionado, como pedagogía, didáctica, enseñanza, aprendizaje, en fin, hay una serie de palabras que hemos aprendido o sabemos que hay que aprender para hacer educación, tratando entonces y Munir ya ponía algunos ejemplos muy concretos. Tratando entonces de pensar en consecuencias para nuestras experiencias educativas, para los procesos educativos en que participamos, entonces les preguntaría ¿cómo en su reflexión, ubican ustedes esta idea de la pedagogía? Se habla mucho de pedagogía liberadora, de técnicas, de métodos, en fin, a este nivel ¿cómo ha sido su experiencia? o alguna reflexión.

**Aminata Traoré :** Avant de parler de pédagogie, je voudrais répondre à l'une des préoccupations. Il y a une jeune personne qui a posé une question sur les valeurs. Je pense que c'est important de s'attarder sur cette question parce que tout est là. Aujourd'hui, nous sommes victimes du consumérisme, d'un sentiment de vide quand nous ne parvenons pas à acquérir ceci ou cela. En fait, la dépossession dont nous parlons se joue aussi à ce niveau. Le sentiment de n'exister que parce qu'on possède. Après chaque exercice ici à Porto Alegre, les gens nous posent la question de savoir jusqu'où nous sommes prêts à aller, chacun d'entre nous, pour que l'autre puisse vivre un peu mieux, à la fois au sein de sa propre communauté et ailleurs. L'une des valeurs à promouvoir à cet égard est certainement la sobriété, mais comment être plus sobre ? Pourquoi les puissants de ce monde qui savent parfaitement que l'humanité est en danger en raison de ses comportements prédateurs ne parviennent pas à faire preuve de sens des responsabilités ni de sagesse ? Parce qu'ils ont peur de ne plus avoir ce qu'ils ont déjà ou d'être amenés à renoncer à ce qu'ils pourraient avoir. La question fondamentale dans l'éducation, peut-être, c'est toujours ce combat entre l'avoir et l'être. Faut-il vraiment posséder matériellement pour avoir le sentiment d'exister ou alors peut-on exister au-delà ? Je ne parle pas de l'utile, mais du futile, des gadgets. La question n'est pas de vivre chacun correctement, de dormir, de se soigner, la question c'est de savoir comment posséder le maximum soi-même. Il en est ainsi des Etats-Unis par rapport au reste du monde, leur sécurité énergétique ne doit pas être remise en question, à tel point que cela peut justifier davantage de tuerie ailleurs.

Comment inculquer à nos enfants, comment nous poser des questions nous-mêmes chaque fois

que nous consommons ? Est-ce que les actes que nous posons, les choix que nous opérons, contribuent à enrichir ceux qui sont déjà riches ou bien sommes-nous capables de faire autrement. C'est là que la culture trouve sa place dans ce débat, comme Munir le disait. Peut-on nous acheminer vers des systèmes éducatifs différents, pluriels, mais riches justement en raison de la diversité des cultures dans lesquelles nous puisons ? Moi, je me dis aujourd'hui que mon pays dit « pauvre », ne l'est pas de mon point de vue. Le Mali n'est pas pauvre, il a été décrété pauvre précisément parce que nous avons eu droit à des leaders qui aspirent à des modèles qui nous obligent à emprunter pour acheter ce qui n'est pas à nous. Donc, le Sud passe son temps aujourd'hui à rembourser des dettes pour des choix extravertis, dépendant de l'expertise, dépendant de la production d'ailleurs. Nous voulons être riches, mais riches à l'instar des autres. Chacun d'entre nous voudrait pouvoir consommer comme quelqu'un des Etats-Unis ou de la France. Le résultat, c'est énormément de frustration et cette réalité a un lien, comme je le dis, avec le surendettement mais aussi même les questions migratoires. Pourquoi tant de gens partent ? Nous partons parce que nous ne pouvons plus nous contenter de ce que nous sommes, de ce que nous savons faire pour nous-mêmes. Pourtant, localement, il y a des réponses humainement, socialement et écologiquement valables. Ce serait long d'entrer dans ces alternatives qui existent.

Là où l'Afrique a été piégée, c'est qu'elle s'est enfermée jusqu'ici dans un processus de production qui consiste à répondre à la demande de l'Occident. Le coton que nous produisons, nous ne transformons pas notre coton, nous l'exportons, le café nous l'exportons, c'est-à-dire que l'eau et les terres fertiles sont consacrées à des productions qui répondent à la demande de l'étranger et non pas à nourrir l'Afrique. C'est des questions essentielles, et des alternatives existent. Question d'alternatives ? Ce n'est pas parce que nous procédons à ces remises en question que des solutions n'existent pas, il y a énormément de solutions qui ont été répertoriées, capitalisées, mais dont personne n'a voulu tenir compte parce que ça n'arrangeait pas et les élites du Nord et les élites du Sud. Parce que le Sud est également malade de ses élites. Ce que nous sommes en train de dire, ces alternatives qui devront être libératrices, s'adressent d'abord aux peuples. Je crois que l'ancrage de ces processus de transformation dans le terreau de la culture peut d'abord profiter aux plus démunis d'entre nous.

**Munir Fasheh:** There's an article from a friend from Mexico, Gustavo Esteva, on the pedagogy of liberation saying that we have to move away from pedagogy, because having a pedagogy means somebody that knows what is good for others develops techniques and means to train people. I would say that the question is not a different pedagogy as much as a different set of values, convictions and perceptions. When I was working in the area of math, most teachers had difficulty every time I was saying: "There is no student, there is no person who is not logical. Every person is logical." They had difficulty with that, because for them there is only one logic, and that logic is basically a dominant logic. Instead of saying he or she embodies a different logic, we say they are illogical. This was one of the biggest problems that I had in my dialogues with teachers. Most of them did not really buy this - a different belief - which is that every child is logical. It is possible that we do not understand that logic, it is possible that we do not agree with the logic, but our labelling of the child as illogical is something that I do not agree with.

I also believe very strongly that every person is a source of knowledge. Every person is a source of understanding. Every person is a source of meaning. If we really practice this in our relationship with others, in particular with students, and look at students, children and others

people with which we do not agree as a source of a different kind of understanding the world, of relating to the world, then our relationship with the other is never up and down, it is always horizontal. It is always dialogical. It is always about chiselling each other's minds. We do not have to agree, but we become better or more beautiful.

**Carolyn Medel-Anonuevo:** Maybe let me share a pedagogy which has been used by women's groups, and here I would like to refer to my experience with the Gender Education Office of the International Council for Adult Education and REPEM, the Latin American Popular Educators Women's Network here in Latin America. For me, I think this is an example of how women all over the world can learn from each other, and it's a pedagogy which has evolved through interacting with each other, knowing that we can not just say let's be critical about our governments, but concretely, *how* can we be critical about our governments. In this Education Watch Project of REPEM, they have managed to make governments accountable by first looking at the situations in their countries: what is happening as far as adult education is concerned, how are women participating in adult-education classes, how are women given leadership positions in adult education. And this, for me, very important international project shows that when women coming from their own national experience can share at the international level the many diverse situations of different women from Asia, Africa and Latin America, one can have an effective tool - in fact a pedagogy - where I am learning about my government, I am learning about how to make my State accountable, my government accountable, and not just criticising without giving alternatives. I think this is one constructive way of changing, by saying, "Okay, let's see what is an alternative," and this is what we present to the government and use it as an educational tool to see how we can build other alternatives. So, for me, this is a very important example of how an international network has managed to develop its own pedagogy based on its situation. I think it is important to realize that pedagogy has to be based in context. It is important I think, to be able to see the range of experiences that we have and learn from these experiences.

**Manish Jain:** I just had a baby daughter, my first child, who is ten months old now. One thing I've been observing quite a bit and, not only observing but actively engaging in, is the process in which children learn from other children. I have been trying to understand what that is. When one actually starts to understand that, then this talk of pedagogy, as something that can be planned, goes haywire and actually does not have much meaning. Because of the simplicity of the process of children learning with other children, the spontaneity of it, the beauty of it, is something we need to try to understand when we think of another world.

I have been trying to put that within a larger framework to understand processes of dialogue. Carol's point around questioning and paralysis is well taken, but that questioning usually does not take place within a context of dialogue. That questioning takes place within a context or culture of debate. Without a culture of dialogue, you are right, the questioning does not lead to any action, and this is probably the whole trap of post-modernism and deconstruction of the West, because it is not done within a culture of dialogue.

When I try to understand where that culture of dialogue can grow from, one point of reference is through watching children, to explore how to create genuine dialogue. The problem is that, in this



framework, dialogue requires several different things. The first thing it requires is time. During the last fifty years in India, we have been beaten on the head to act, act, act, act, and the time to actually dialogue and think and create and act together is not there. The second thing about dialogue, that you can learn from children, is how dialogue emerges. Genuine dialogue emerges out of active engagement of the head, the heart and the hands. That is what we learn from children, which we do not have in academia and schooling, that fragment all of those things. So, a dialogue which is based on this active engagement with the head, the heart and the hands is a dialogue which is about questioning, it is about feeling and it is about doing. How do we start to generate that kind of dialogue? The third is a dialogue that is based on inter-generational relationships. It's not only about children learning alone with each other (or just youths, or adults). I also happen to live with my grandmother. So, there is a different level, a different kind of dialogue that happens when the inter-generational dimension comes in. Somebody was raising the question of family earlier, but many of these opportunities for inter-generational conversations have actually been lost. The dialogue that used to happen around many kinds of spaces has been systematically taken away from us.

How do we actually create physical space which is conducive to the kind of dialogue that we need to have, because, you know, quite frankly this business of creating another world or alternatives, it doesn't happen just like that. It requires questioning, it requires doing, it requires continuous engagement. I don't feel like we have even begun to even understand what it is, when we use this word "alternative". What does that actually mean? I think that is the first question to raise: How do we actually create the space to even think about what alternatives really mean? Most of what we see in the development discourse, in the education discourse are not alternatives. It is within the same set of rules, within the same institutions, within the same game, within the same conceptual frameworks. For me, the idea of dialogue is essential, because it's about listening, listening in a different way. It's about even suspending our own beliefs, temporarily suspending them to actually understand what the other person has to say without immediately processing them through our own frameworks. We have in our cultures, in all of our cultures, many different forms of dialogue, and I think that we need to start to reclaim those forms, understand those forms, and bring those forms into other kinds of spaces.

Before we end, I want to apologize for this format, because this is not conducive to real dialogue. We are trying despite the constraints, but it is still not real dialogue. And so maybe the next time we meet we can try to think of a different kind of space, a different kind of time, a different kind of way of expressing ourselves, which might actually generate dialogue. Then, we can really talk about alternatives.

**Carlos Zarco Mera:** Bueno, yo estaba pensando eso, que quizás los auditorios del futuro van a ser circulares, que quizás las sesiones de diálogo van a durar cuatro o cinco horas porque todos vamos a estar discutiendo, que quizás en lugar de al final preguntar ¿qué conclusiones tenemos? nos podemos preguntar ¿qué preguntas nos llevamos después de este diálogo? Entonces quizás sea bueno llegando a la casa, anotar las preguntas que cada quien se lleva o puede formular después de este diálogo. Muchas gracias por su participación. Gracias a Manis, a Carol, a Aminata y a Munir y gracias a ustedes.