



Grupo de Investigación
*ESTUDIOS
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Pensamiento Contemporáneo e
Innovación para el Desarrollo Social

SEMINARIO VIRTUAL

Freire's influence and relevance 100 years after his momentous birth Peter Mayo. (Universidad de Malta)

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PETER MAYO is Professor at the University of Malta. He is the author of well over a hundred papers published in journals or as book chapters and the author or editor of 24 books. In 2019 he was inducted into the International Adult Continuing Education Hall of Fame and his book of the same year, Higher Education in a Globalising World. Community Engagement and Lifelong Learning (Manchester University Press) obtained an Honorable mention in the book awards of HE Sig of the comparative and International Education Society (CIES) SIG. His latest two co-authored books are Lifelong Learning, Global Social Justice and Sustainability (with L. English, Palgrave-Macmillan, 2021) and Critical Education in International Perspective (with P. Vittoria, Bloomsbury Academic, 2021).

ABSTRACT: Paulo Freire is one of the most heralded educators of the previous century and his relevance for critical education continues to be felt today, a hundred years since his birth. His relevance for critical consciousness and social justice theory and activism, revolving around the old Aristotelian concept of praxis, has affected a variety of social movements and critical thinkers and activists worldwide. The legacy of his thought inspires people to think individually and most importantly collectively to imagine a world not as it is but as it can be, thinking that helps us transcend the present Capitalist framework. He is important to inspire people to think beyond the framework of capitalist social relations, thus helping to give the lie to the hegemonic that there is no alternative (TINA) to the Capitalist present. It is the element of praxis which renders Freire so relevant today that I shall unravel in this talk distinguishing it from simply praxis. I will indicate how it features at the heart of his political pedagogical philosophy which can be developed into a variety of sites, in and beyond institutional learning, in the fields of non-formal learning, social movement learning, landless struggles, public memory settings such as museums and heritage sites, popular culture, cultural studies in their broader dimension, workers' education, collective memory exercises, radical religious thinking and practice (e.g. Liberation Theology) and a host of other areas within the political and cultural domains. Comparative side references will be made where possible with kindred spirits such as Antonio Gramsci, Raymond Williams, Ada Gobetti, Gabriela Mistral, don Lorenzo Milani and Stuart Hall.

His relevance for being 'tactically inside but strategically outside' institutions and constructs such as the State will be addressed as well as his insights for a popular public educational system deriving from his experience in the turn of the decade between the late 80s and early 90s as Education Secretary in the Municipal Government in the megalopolis that is Sao Paulo in his native Brazil. This work and his reflection on this action for transformative action – Praxis – foregrounds the idea of a community engaged education.