JULIJA TULEIKYTĖ*
Vilnius University (Lithuania)
ORCID: 0000-0002-1270-3761

MICHAEL HVIID JACOBSEN**
Aalborg University (Denmark)
ORCID: 0000-0003-0237-1318

Education as (de)humanization.
A possibility for a creative dialogue
between the social philosophies
of Paulo Freire and Zygmunt Bauman[1]

Edukacja jako dehumanizacja.
Możliwość kreatywnego dialogu pomiędzy filozofiami
społecznymi Paulo Freire'a i Zygmunta Baumana

ABSTRACT

This article examines the works of two social critics – Paulo Freire and Zygmunt Bau-
man – with regard to the idea of education as a cause of dehumanization and/or human-
ization. The key terms and ideas the authors use in their critique of dehumanization
within social relations are compared: Freire's concept of *banking model of pedagogy* is
analysed in contrast to Bauman's philosopheme of *adiaphorization*. With both similar and
very different understandings of what it means to be human, the two authors search for
alternatives to the *status quo* and to power relations of human subjects being treated as
objects – be it, in Freire's case, the oppressed in the 20th century Brazil or, in Bauman's
case, the Holocaust victims in the 20th century and persons in the contemporary 21st cen-
tury consumer society. The article aims at founding the thesis that both authors promote

* Filosofijos Fakultetas VU, Universiteto 9, 01513 Vilnius, 311 kab., Lithuania,
e-mail: julija.tuleikyte@fsf.vu.lt

** Departament of Sociology and Social Work, Aalborg University, Fibigerstræde 13,
75, 9220 Aalborg Ø, Denmark, e-mail: mhj@socsci.aau.dk

humanization, although in different ways, and that Bauman's *humanization through metaphors* is in times of liquid modernity a contemporary form of Freire's modern *critical pedagogy*. The article also aims to generally present Bauman's conception of education as the author so far has been much less introduced in educational sciences than Freire is, and a comparison of their education philosophies reveals how modern and postmodern principles of the two theories and their practical implications complement one another and engage in a possibility for a creative dialogue.

KEY WORDS
Paulo Freire, Zygmunt Bauman, education, critical pedagogy, humanization, metaphors, *conscientização,* dehumanization, banking pedagogy, adiaphorization

Introduction

In this article, we want to explore, examine and discuss the ideas of two critical theorists, respectively Paulo Freire and Zygmunt Bauman, within the specific context of education. Whereas Freire was a 20th century educator and philosopher who coined the concept of critical pedagogy in a modern manner, Bauman was a 20th-21st century social philosopher and a general sociologist with the label 'a prophet of postmodernity' (Smith 2000). Particularly in Freire's pioneering work on 'the pedagogy of the oppressed' there is a lot to be extracted about pedagogics and education, but also Bauman's critique of instrumental rationalism of modernity and his work on 'liquid modernity' contains a critical engagement with contemporary educational practices and purposes.

Although both scholars came from a Marxist background – and thus represented a critical/normative social science – their ideas on education were not identical. There is nevertheless an important potential for creative theoretical and analytical cross-fertilization between them as this article aims to show. The analysis relies on the fact that both Freire and Bauman forge a normative conception of education as a formal and informal shaping of human culture and, through it, of the world and humans themselves. A comparison of their conceptions of education tackles the key premises of their social philosophies: views on what it means to be human, with regard to reality, cognition, liberty and morality. To explore that, three philosophemes are addressed in the article as the key concepts: *education*, *humanization* and *dehumanization*.

Although the authors use different terminology and methodology in their work, arguments can be found that both Freire and Bauman regard education as a means for humanization (on a prescriptive note) and an arena of dehumanization (on a descriptive note). We presume that both theories – with Freire's ideas on *banking education* and Bauman's focus on socially produced *adiaphorization* – provide critical analyses of the impact on social reality through means of dehumanizing formation. Moreover, with Freire's conception of *critical* pedagogy and *conscientização* as well as with Bauman's 'humanization through

metaphors' (Jacobsen and Marshman 2008), visions of alternatives to dehumanizing power-driven relations are offered. Both writers, albeit from different vantage-points, have thus provided important ideas that are useful for understanding and analysing education in a contemporary context.

The article therefore aims to creatively put the theories into a comparative and confrontational dialogue in order to reveal how each of them relies on same, similar or different premises. We aim to search how they might support one another and address particular shortcomings of the other one, enabling their potential even further. In the beginning, we will provide a general overview of the social philosophies of the two world-known thinkers, whose names are not that often seen together, so that their usual audiences, which are most likely familiar with the writings of one author with regard to education much more than the other, would get better acquainted. Eventually, we will try to prove the hypothesis that Bauman's 'humanization through metaphors' is a contemporary version of the 'critical pedagogy' that Freire offered to in the 20th century, as it takes into account traits of the contemporary social world that are often addressed in educational theory and practice in the 21st century.

Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy

Whereas Bauman is known as one of the leading figures in postmodern theory as well as in critical theory, Paulo Freire is considered to be the most prominent figure of critical pedagogy.

Critical theory is often reported to provide analyses of power-propelled impositions and unfair social arrangements on human freedom, as well as on equality or justice. It critically reflects products of social engineering such as dehumanization, and offers grounds for alternatives and a call for action. Through the lens of education, the same principles are followed by critical pedagogy, as a branch of critical theory.

Freire is considered to be 'one of the most important figures in the history of critical education' (Apple 2013: 23), 'the most influential educational philosopher in the development of critical pedagogical thought and practice' (Darder et al. 2017: 5), and it is often noted that '[f]ew educators have received as much widespread acclaim and worldwide recognition as the Brazilian educator Paulo Freire' (McLaren and Giroux 1994: xiii) who inspired plenty of scholars to engage in what has further began to be recognized as critical pedagogy. According to J. L. Kincheloe, '[w]ith Freire, the notion of critical pedagogy as we understand it today emerges', which 'is grounded on a social and educational vision of justice and equality' (Kincheloe 2008: 69). In compliance with offering a way to detect oppression in educational models

and to enable human freedom through means of education by awakening responsibility for use of power and aspiration of justice, Freire coined one of the most important premises of critical pedagogy – that is, that education is always political, and shared his 'emancipatory pedagogical vision' (Darder et al. 2017:6) with the world. Accordingly, as Peter McLaren and Henry A. Giroux notice, 'Freire's presence on the world stage as a 'man of his time' has provided the conditions for countless individuals, regardless of race, gender, class, and caste, to break free from their historically contingent and entrenched vocabularies to face up to their fallibility and strength as agents of possibility' (McLaren and Giroux 1994: xiii). As Michael W. Apple has noted about Freire, '[f]or him, an education that was not connected to the struggles for emancipation and against exploitation was not worthy of the label 'education' (Apple 2013: 24).

In his book *Pedagogy of the oppressed*, published in 1968, Freire tried to show that critical pedagogy is the only real pedagogy worth its name. Referring to the social status of poor, formerly enslaved or in a variety of ways oppressed people in Brazil, who were deprived of their human power to reflect and act, he presented a vision of education that offers a 'critical and dynamic view of the world, strives to unveil reality, unmask its mythicization, and achieve a full realization of the human task: the permanent transformation of reality in favour of the liberation of men' (Freire 1972: 74). Through the lens of human relations in educational structures, Freire analysed power-based post-colonial slavery-rooted relations in the Brazilian society of his days by paying much of his attention to, as Moacir Gadotti notes, '[t]he circumstances of the Northeast of Brazil at the beginning of the sixties, where half of the inhabitants lived in the *culture of silence* – they were illiterate. It was necessary to 'give them the word'' (Gaddotti 1994: 15), and expressed his concern about how to turn liberation *de jure* into liberation *de facto* in terms of justice and equality, through education. As further development of critical pedagogy theories shows, Freire's philosophy of education has transcended the boundaries of Brazilian society into a much more universal or global phenomenon. As Gaddotti noted in 1994, '[t]he importance of Paulo Freire's ideas does not come just from their universal value, but also from the fact that the world situation today is not very different from that in which Paulo Freire developed his ideas' (Gaddotti 1994: xxii). We can add that the situation has not essentially changed in a significant way today as well.

Freire's critical stance towards relations of oppression in the social world can be extrapolated to various societies in different times and places, where humans are treated as objects instead of subjects. The 'faces' of power-induced oppression might vary with regard to social contexts. For instance, neoliberalism, as a cultural trend noted to pri-

oritize profit before other values in a socially empowered manner, is one of the prevalent targets of critical pedagogy today. As critics of the current neoliberal tendencies note, economic logics today have prevailed in most of the globalized world, challenging and blurring the distinction between humans and economic units in many aspects, and tending to thus socially deprive people of their essential difference from things. Such consumeristic or commodifying trends to treat people were criticized by Freire for their dehumanizing effect. As Gadotti quotes Freire's words about objectifying tendencies in schools in 1981 and, in contrast, alternative narratives,

> Parents, ideologically controlled by consumerism, demand that in schools children consume knowledge. Later, universities transform them into stores of knowledge. Parents demand that schools become supermarkets for their children. But today there are places where we can change this practice (Freire 1981).

Both when Freire was alive and after he died in 1997, his works have inspired alternative educational visions critical of dominant consumption-oriented strategies all over the world. His work has invited thinkers to analyse oppression and coercion in prevalent education models and engage in critical pedagogy, as '[c]ritical pedagogy is fundamentally concerned with understanding the relationship between power and knowledge' (McLaren 2017: 67).

According to McLaren, even though 'critical pedagogy is as diverse as its many adherents', the founding stone is critical theory and its premise that people '*inhabit a world rife with contradictions and asymmetries of power and privilege*' and can 'recognize the problems of society as more than simply isolated events of individuals or deficiencies in the social structure', systematically assessing them in an '*interactive context* between individual and society' (McLaren 2017: 56; original italics). Meticulous and conscious analysis of why the world today is the way it is, suggested by education specialists following the footprints of Freire, John Dewey, Erich Fromm, Antonio Gramsci, Michel Foucault, the Frankfurt School or others, opens up a collection of paths for alternatives. Complying with Freire's methodological openness to be *re-read* and *re-invented*, contemporary versions of critical pedagogy since then have developed their unique contemporary faces and bodies, and it is progressing further on.

However, not that many of the contemporary 21st century critical pedagogy texts are both empirically based diagnoses and abstract philosophical conceptions with a strong overall picture on ontology, epistemology and ethics, in a way Paulo Freire's social philosophy is. Freire's work in education philosophy is exceptional and outstanding, and, despite plenty of educational theories which exhibit their strengths in a variety of aspects, it is still difficult to find a philosophical match for it even today, more than a hundred years after Freire's birth.

Zygmunt Bauman's creative metaphors

If we look for a grand-scale social philosopher of the social world of today who engages in critical pedagogy *per se*, we suggest that Zygmunt Bauman would be the one. Even though, ironically, it seems, that he does not mention Freire and critical pedagogy in his texts.

Zygmunt Bauman is a social philosopher and sociologist, by a number of researchers considered to be the most prominent social thinker of our days (by Mark Davis), one of the most discussed commentators of the contemporary social world (by Shaun Best) and one of the most influential social thinkers nowadays (by Michael Hviid Jacobsen), who in his work reflects the liquidity of the contemporary world with his 'liquid sociology' (a term suggested by Davis, 2013).

In this article, we aim to analyse the role of education in Zygmunt Bauman's texts in two aspects: as an object of his philosophy, and as his philosophy itself. In addition to briefly introducing Bauman's ideas on education that he has directly expressed, we will focus even more on how his writing style and use of metaphors is an act of education and what important implications for educational theory and practice follow, with regard to education as humanization.

Bauman is an important figure with critical views on the consequences of social engineering in both modern and late-modern – or in his own words postmodern or liquid-modern – society. Throughout his work spanning almost six decades, and particularly in the work published in the new millennium, Bauman provided a comprehensive, impactful and in-depth analysis of social changes and social relations at the threshold of the 21st century, in the times of globalization, individualisation and rampant consumerism, and his descriptive and prescriptive insights have also come play a certain role in the contemporary reflection of education, its means and goals. His analysis on 'the double-edged – simultaneously 'enabling' and 'constraining' – character of culture' (Bauman 1999: xii) functions as a foundation for the scrutiny on how education works, because in Bauman's social philosophy it is culture that performs the functions of education in the general sense.

Several places in his work did Bauman deal specifically with the topic of education (see, e.g., Bauman 1967, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2011b, Bauman and Maszzeo 2012). In fact, some of his earliest work was concerned with educational problems in Communist Poland in the 1960s – a piece of work when read today was indeed surprisingly visionary and thought-provoking (Bauman 1966). At that time, Bauman also worked on the philosopheme of culture, and the premises for his later postmodern texts on how education overlaps with culture can be traced there. Focusing on 'education as instrumental to social life', Bauman analyses the effects of education on the social world by noting that 'ambitious

teacher will judge the effect of his work not by the fluency with which his pupils can recite his lessons by heart, but by the way they actually behave in natural situations occurring in actual life, as distinguished from the artificial situations of the schoolroom' (1967: 329). In some of his modern writings, Bauman regarded education to be a path to the social world of the future, and a way of searching for alternatives to the existing social reality. He paid much attention to the idea of active utopia, noting in 1976 how important it is to find potential in the present for 'a situation which is not entirely determined by the structure of its own past, and from which more than one string of events may follow' (Bauman 2009).

In many of his works in the 21st century, Bauman further developed his approach to the field of educational thematics by regarding education in the broad sense to be transmission and expression of culture. He targeted the very *consumeristic logic* of the consumer society as a cultural trend that shapes one's relation to reality, to other humans and to oneself, without traces of ontological, cognitive and moral normativity. He also commented on the direct challenges to education in the contemporary world. For example, in his speech to the Coimbra Group Annual Conference at the University of Padova in 2011, Bauman shared his worries that 'education (including the university education) faces now the deepest and most radical crisis in its rich-in-crises history: a crisis affecting not just this or that of its inherited or acquired customs, but very *raison d'être*' (Bauman 2011b).

It's worth noting that Bauman's ideas on education have had an important – however so far not widespread – impact within the educational/pedagogical field. For its unique content, rich analysis and interdisciplinarity, his texts are cited on a variety of topics. Bauman's thought is sometimes consistently, but often sporadically, referred to by critical pedagogy defenders, helping them to conceptualize the stance of critical pedagogy towards the trends in contemporary educational systems. For instance, Henry A. Giroux, the author of the first textbook that used the term *critical pedagogy* in 1983, uses elements of Bauman's social philosophy in his critical reflection on the drawbacks of neoliberal values and consumerist logics in the field of education. In his book on Bauman and education in liquid modernity, Shaun Best notes that 'Henry Giroux draws upon Bauman's work to explain the role of education within neoliberalism' (Best 2020: 10). Peter McLaren, as well, refers to Bauman's work on the logic of the market when criticizing capitalist views on education and social life. In its encounter with neoliberal marketplace and global consumerism, '[c]ritical pedagogy offers an alternative vision and set of goals for the education of humanity' (McLaren 2015: 54), therefore Bauman's critical work on the consumerist outlook – in which 'he uses metaphors in order to develop and practice critical social thought' (Jacobsen and Marshman 2008: 22) – in

many respects goes along with the aims of critical pedagogy very well. In this article, we will try to show that Bauman's texts even are critical pedagogy themselves.

Besides the fact that Bauman's substantial and critical insights about liquid modernity in general as well as his more specific focus on the educational challenges of liquid-modern consumer society are useful when applying his work to an educational research context, so is the particular way he was practicing and writing sociology, which deserve much attention in education sciences. It is the dialogical character of his texts that constitutes much of his critical pedagogy – which he does not mention directly, but nevertheless engages in. A key component in Bauman's work was to write imaginatively and to avoid the restrictions of rigid research procedures. In this work, Bauman opted for an interpretative approach (he called it 'sociological hermeneutics') in which a number of important metaphors played a significant role. Metaphors were thus a much used methodological or analytical device by Bauman. In this way, metaphors are not only something 'we live by' as George Lakoff and Mark Johnson (1980) famously stated, they are also something we research and interpret with. Throughout his work, metaphors are used particularly in Bauman's descriptions of societies ('solid modernity', 'liquid modernity', 'heavy capitalism' and 'light capitalism'), in his metaphorical description of people ('pilgrims', 'nomads', 'tourists' and 'vagabonds') as well as in his outlining of different forms of utopia ('gamekeeping', 'gardening' and 'hunting'). And these are just the tip of his metaphorical iceberg (see, e.g., Jacobsen and Marshman 2008). Bauman's metaphors all served the purpose of sharpening the sociological imagination in order to make it easier to understand the real world – sometimes perhaps bordering on sociological caricature. According to Pieter Nijhoff, one of the main strengths of Bauman's metaphorical way of working was his insistence to 'transforming social constructs … into personages with hands and feet. Collective representations, treated by Durkheim as 'things', will be 'agentified' by Bauman when he finds it appropriate' (Nijhoff 1998: 97). Almost all of Bauman's metaphors share an unmistakable humanizing aspiration – they seek to transform abstract or somewhat reified categories (societies, groups, processes, thoughts and actions) into something that has to do with what people do, who they are, what they think or how they live their lives under specific social circumstances. We might therefore say that Bauman wanted to use his metaphors for 'humanizing' purposes. Moreover, most of Bauman's metaphors contain a certain critical edge as they try to show how life as it is lived by people is often a differentiated, polarized or even stratified experience. Although Bauman admits that notions such as 'modernity', 'postmodernity' and 'liquid modernity' that abound in academic work (including his own) are but abstract intellectual idealizations aimed

at making the fundamental messiness of the world comprehensive and amendable to systematic inquiry (Bauman 1992: 11), he nevertheless applies these abstract categories (often phrased as metaphors) in order to show how the conditions of human and social life have changed and how human life is always embedded in and framed by particular social circumstances. However, his metaphors also 'show' what the reader allows them to reveal, creating space for a dialogue between the author and the reader.

Bauman's texts thus, in a metaphorical way, turn into an imaginary classroom. A specific dialogical relation and awareness is formed there. With the help of his metaphors, Bauman's critique of short-lasting, superficial and distortive knowledge, contingently and instrumentally occupying the field of education, challenges the *status quo* of the educational world both theoretically and interactively. As Freire's conception of critical pedagogy is that of liberating praxis – 'reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it' (Freire 1972:28) – we can say that the metaphor functions in Bauman's critical pedagogy as a tool to transform and transcend mere poetic wording by turning it into a practical sphere in order to transform human relation with reality. Furthermore, humanizing metaphors are what crucially makes Bauman's social philosophy critical pedagogy. In a world in which dehumanization challenges humanization, such metaphors might very well be of utmost importance.

The Social Sources of Dehumanization: Three Cases

In the following, we will make use of the above concepts and perspectives for comparative purposes. A comparison of Freire's critical pedagogy and Bauman's creative and humanizing metaphors will be deployed to show that the authors find education to be a possible means both for dehumanization and humanization. In the beginning, we will look at how the authors analyse dehumanization in different contexts.

As mentioned above, Freire and Bauman's theories have roots in Marxist soil, and they both focus on the existing social reality as an outcome of interaction between what Marxists call the 'haves' and the 'have-nots' – the capitalists/oppressors and the proletariat/oppressed. Freire's critique addressed the relation between the oppressors and the oppressed in the 20th century Brazil, whereas Bauman's attention embraced the 20th century social reality as well as the early decades of the 21st. Bauman scrutinized a few cases of socially produced moral indifference towards people: the dehumanizing behaviour against the Holocaust victims and the imposition of commodification of people in the contemporary liquid-modern consumer society.

First we shall look at Freire's ideas about the social sources of dehumanization before turning to Bauman's ditto.

Case 1: Regarding people as 'things' (Freire)

First, a comparison of the 20th century cases of dehumanization analysed by the two thinkers shows much resemblance of socially produced alienation principles in societies in different parts of the World. Freire contended that the concept of 'equality' in Brazil of his times, after people, who had previously been disempowered and had suffered injustice, exploitation and inequality, officially gained equal rights, was merely a façade that did not correspond to the real situation. According to him, the disempowered people in reality still stayed disempowered due to particular social arrangements, such as power-driven narratives forged within the culture. Freire reported existing formal and informal education to function as a mere means of making persons alienated with themselves, with their lives and with the world. As culture and the educational system produced a distortive relation to reality, the oppressed were prompted to internalize the oppressor within themselves, and this practically kept strengthening the *status quo*.

In his work, Freire paid particular attention to the objectifying character of cognitive indifference which the control-imposers employed towards the oppressed: 'In their unrestrained eagerness to possess, the oppressors develop the conviction that it is possible for them to transform everything into objects of their purchasing power; hence their strictly materialistic concept of existence' (Freire 1972: 34–35). Thus, as Freire noted, via injustice and oppression, people experience dehumanization, as '[f]or the oppressors, 'human beings' refers only to themselves; other people are 'things'' (Freire 1972: 33–34). He went on to suggest that 'the more the oppressors control the oppressed, the more they change them into apparently inanimate 'things'. This tendency of the oppressor consciousness to render everything and everyone it encounters inanimate, in its eagerness to possess' (Freire 1972: 35), makes even oppressors themselves become essentially affected by dehumanization.

Such socially produced dehumanizing alienation was first and foremost noticed by Freire in schools, the educational systems of which, based on what he called a 'banking approach', treated students as mere 'bank accounts' for storing knowledge, or considered them empty vessels to be filled with information. Within a structure of asymmetrical power relations, vertical and hierarchical relations between teachers and students were developed. Whereas teachers were given a role of being active holders and sharers of knowledge, students were regarded to be simply passive receivers. The major task of a student was thus to comply with the designated role: that is, to follow, obey and uncritically accept the content provided by the teacher.

According to Freire, as education relies on power and has a transformative potential, it is always political – conscious cognition can lead to

humanization, whereas concealment and monologuous narration can lead to dehumanization. If the product of the oppressor's consciousness is internalized by the oppressed students, alienation prevents seeing themselves as holders of freedom and active participants of history. Thus, the educational system instrumentally manipulates learners into obedience and into maintaining the *status quo*. According to Freire, '[w]ithin the inauthentic view of the world and of themselves, the oppressed feel as if they are 'things' owned by the oppressor' (Freire 1972: 40) – as if they have no say about the world or themselves, and about who they are or should be. The 'banking pedagogy model' is thus a pedagogy of hierarchical social relations, a 'pedagogy of the colonizer' (Gadotti 1994:51), or, to put it simply, a pedagogy of oppression and dehumanization.

To sum up, Freire was worried that oppressive education becomes a tool of dehumanization, as both the oppressors and the oppressed lose reality due to distortion when human subjects are treated as inanimate objects. When equality is denied and freedom is hidden with the means of education, not only do the oppressed in the system become deprived of their human essence, but the oppressors lose their humanity as well.

Case 2: adiaphorization production in modernity (Bauman)

The blurring of social differences between humans and things is important to Bauman as well. In his critically acclaimed book *Modernity and the Holocaust*, first published in 1989, Bauman paid particular attention to social arrangements that show dehumanization as an inherent outcome of rational instrumentalization found in modern society as such. Bauman was particularly critical of the Holocaust and the atrocities which, according to him, consistently followed from the way social relations between people were engineered in modernity in an almost factory-like manner. He analysed particular cases in which a person's action would be regarded as merely an inconspicuous part of a much bigger chain of events, the results of which he or she did not determine or control. Relying on Hannah Arendt's idea of 'the banality of evil', Bauman noted that 'the process of rationalization facilitates behaviour that is inhuman' (Bauman 1991a: 155). He repeatedly noted that during the Holocaust plenty of people bracketed their moral sensibility and sensitivity and they did not address moral questions as if some painkillers or 'moral sleeping pills' (Bauman 1991a: 26) were used in order to silence their moral impulses. In such cases, people were morally indifferent and thus capable of acting without willing to take proper moral responsibility for their actions.

Bauman's scrutiny of a set of situations in which moral sensibility was deactivated helps to explain (yet not excuse) the inhumanities and atrocities that the Holocaust brought about. Bauman's first wife, Janina Bauman in her book *Winter in the Morning* had insightfully

observed that 'the cruellest thing about cruelty is that it dehumanises its victims before it destroys them. And that the hardest of struggles is to remain human in inhuman conditions' (J. Bauman 1986: viii). This statement applies not only to the Holocaust but also to other types of dehumanization. Moreover, not only does dehumanization refer to behaviour towards its victims (such as the Jews and others incarcerated in the concentration camps), but it also applies to the perpetrators. Following Baumans' (both Janina and Zygmunt's) views, a conclusion can be made that inhumanity arises with the help of the socially upheld arrangements that support or make possible evil actions whilst neutralizing the moral conscience of the perpetrators or exempting them from responsibility.

In his 1990 speech as recipient of the Amalfi Prize – published as an appendix in *Modernity and the Holocaust* (1989) – Bauman provided a detailed analysis of how modern society manipulates human morality by radically challenging many conventional (e.g., functionalist) understandings of the sources of morality. It was here that he proposed the terms 'adiaphoric' and 'adiaphorize', later in a more processual manner calling it 'adiaphorization' (which he both in his critique of modernity and in his liquid-modern writings also called 'moral indifference' and 'moral blindness'), using it to refer to actions exempted of moral significance or responsibility.

Analysing the intricate processes involved in the perpetuation of socially sanctioned lack of morality, Bauman observed that

> all social organization consists therefore in neutralizing the disruptive and deregulating impact or moral behaviour … Through these arrangements, organization does not promote immoral behaviour; it does not sponsor evil … yet it does not promote good either, despite its own self-promotion. It simply renders social action *adiaphoric* (originally, *adiaphoron* meant a thing declared indifferent by the Church) – neither good nor evil, measurable against technical (purpose-oriented or procedural) but not moral values. By the same token, it renders moral responsibility for the Other ineffective (Bauman 1991b: 215).

Referring to the Holocaust and to how human lives were destroyed as if they were of no importance in the overall machinery of organized actions, Bauman names three types of social arrangements that each in their own way underpin 'adiaphorization': '(1) stretching the distance between an action and its consequences beyond the reach of moral impulse, (2) exempting certain groups of people (defined as 'others') from the realm of moral responsibility and from 'faces' that require our care and compassion, and (3) dissembling human objects of action into mere aggregates of functionally specific traits, thereby separating what happens to them from any moral evaluation and preventing them from appearing as a 'whole person' (Bauman 1991b: 215–216).

The first one of these strategies fragmentizes human activity and rearranges it into a hierarchized structure, so that the outcomes tran-

scend the area of moral responsibility – a phenomenon which Bauman revisited in later books such as *Collateral damage: social inequalities in a globalized age* (Bauman 2011a), where social injustice and suffering is described as the unintended consequence of the consumer society – such as, for instance, emergence of losers in the increasingly globalized consumer game, named by Bauman as 'flawed consumers' (1998b).

The second strategy type is defined by social interference into how the Other is faced. Under Bauman's notion of 'the Other', lies the premise coined by Emmanuel Lévinas, implying that human moral responsibility is normally addressed by the 'face', and Bauman often employs it in his moral philosophy arguments. When analysing the atrocious effectiveness of the Holocaust, he notes that it 'was the method of making invisible the very humanity of the victims' (Bauman 1991a:26) that helped it happen. When 'effacing the face' comes into action, at some point humans become epistemically concealed as objects of morality and their essence as that of ontological entities gets denied. Hidden behind a socially constructed curtain of culture, persons are thus not recognized as faces and not treated as humans.

Eventually the third arrangement, according to Bauman, 'destroys the object of action as a (potentially) moral self. The object has been dissembled into traits; the totality of the moral subject has been reduced to the collection of parts or attributes of which no one can conceivably be ascribed moral subjectivity' (Bauman 1991b: 216). After reducing persons to elements, their presence in the world of morality is again prevented, and persons are treated as things.

Bauman stated elsewhere in *Modernity and the Holocaust* about this specific process of reifying the human victim that '[o]n no occasion was the victim granted the role of an actor, an agent, a subject' (Bauman 1991a: 156). Bauman thus aimed to point out that the rational organization of the genocide of millions of victims was in no way an accidence or a mistake, but rather a rational outcome of the overall social arrangement of modernity, which did instrumentalize human beings and thus consistently – yet almost unnoticeably – guided modern society into systematic killings.

Such socially produced strategies of adiaphorization are products of education in a way that they function as instruments to affect human mindsets and actions through cultural means supported by power. And although Bauman originally applied the idea of 'adiaphorization' with the aim to analyse the Holocaust atrocities and inhumanities – indeed an extreme and exceptional historical example that is perhaps difficult to translate directly to more mundane and less atrocious cases – the notion can also be used to understand other and less extreme forms of socially imposed suffering in the contemporary society and its educational system in liquid modernity.

Case 3: commodified/commodifying education in liquid modernity (Bauman)

After his critique of modern cultural trends in the 20th century, Bauman continued to persistently analyse adiaphorization processes, now in the 21st century, in a number of works published after the 'liquid turn' (a timeline point suggested by Shaun Best). In the new millennium, Bauman reported tendencies of human relations, with both humans (themselves and others) and knowledge (education), turning into commodification. According to him, in consumer society, in a manner of Simmelian blasé, not only people do experience adiaphorization as moral indifference, but everything undergoes indifferent treatment – and education is no exception.

When analysing contemporary culture, Bauman dedicated some of his direct attention to the topic of education and wondered how teaching and learning resonated with the most characteristic traits of liquid modernity. In his 'liquid-modern work' associated with his writings following the publication of *Liquid modernity* in 2000, it was Bauman's contention that with the transformation from what he metaphorically called 'solid modernity' to 'liquid modernity' (contemporary times), the task of education – previously concerned with slowly building up skills and knowledge over a long stretch of time and through many educational steps on the road to competence – now increasingly is a matter of being constantly flexible, always keen to de-learn and to become an educational chameleon that is never stuck in one career track and always keeps his/her options open – adjusting and adapting not least to the increasingly competitive market-place of education. The society Bauman analysed during this later period is marked by features of what Bauman aimed to grasp with a metaphor of 'liquidity', referring to the fluctuous and transformative state of liquids in contrast to the stability of solid modernity. The education arena in his liquid modernity texts shares properties of social reality such as uncertainty about future (Bauman and Mazzeo 2012) and pointillistic time, where '[e]ach point might have been lived-through as a new beginning' and composes a fragmentary 'graveyard of imaginary or unfulfilled possibilities' (Bauman 2011b). All spheres of life, including education, in liquid modernity start to follow the principle of quick de-learning, as 'a 'nowist' life tends to be a 'hurried' life', and 'the warrant of success is not to overlook the moment when acquired knowledge is of no more use and needs to be thrown away, forgotten and replaced' (Bauman 2011b).

Whereas in 'solid modernity' education was regarded as a 'product' or as a 'property' to be obtained if enough strenuous and time-consuming effort was put into it (Bauman 2003: 16–17), education in 'liquid modernity' now rather becomes a consumer market of commodities – an endless 'process' of constant learning and equally constant de-learning.

Bauman critically points out how contemporary school systems tend to focus on training students' 'ability to instantly forget what has been learned' and skills with which 'to discard and replace' knowledge, and, we can say, such trends become the *status quo* to be followed. The task of education now becomes to enable the individual not to learn in any fixed manner but to constantly forget what one previously learned in order to fit in and stay on the move (Bauman 2011b). In a liquid-modern world in which nothing keeps its shape for long, flexibility and obsolescence become paramount competences in order to achieve success and to be successful. It was thus Bauman's critical view of liquid-modern life that the art of forgetting now becomes as important as the art of getting to know. People living in liquid-modern society in general (e.g., regarding their career plans, personal finances, intimate relationships and anything else) but perhaps particularly those who are about to embark on an ever more extended, utterly unpredictable and contingent educational odyssey need to become 'artists of life' who are always ready to change his or her tracks and career prospects (Bauman 2008).

The content of education in liquid-modern consumer society thus, we can say, is shaped by instrumentality that makes one powerful in the social hierarchies rather than by sticking to the principles of correspondent truth, justice or morality. It seems that in the liquid modern educational systems, the principle of competition encourages its participants to give up any cognitive claims towards the supposedly objective world and makes education rather a door to consumerism than a door to reality. Bauman in his conversations with Riccardo Mazzeo shows deep concern with the youngsters who feel anxious and uncertain about reality, and show tendencies to withdraw from it under the shelter of the online world of games, virtual relationships, depression, alcohol or drug abuse (Bauman and Mazzeo 2012). Just like in analogy to the scrutiny of atrocities of solid modernity, Bauman's analysis of liquid modernity points out vast extent of indifference in the contemporary social world.

To distinguish the different tasks of education principles in solid modernity and liquid modernity, Bauman provides a collection of metaphors, such as: smart missiles for the liquid, and ballistic missiles for the solid. However, both education systems rely on some type of reductionist instrumentality. In the education systems of solid modernity Bauman finds features that, we can say, correspond with Freire's 'banking pedagogy model': 'Philosophers of education of the solid-modern era saw teachers as launchers of ballistic missiles and instructed them how to assure that their products will stay strictly on the pre-designed course determined by the initially triggered momentum' (Bauman 2011b). In this type of scenario, knowledge as an object is transferred to students as objects who are supposed to uncritically follow the instructions, just like a missile is programmed to carry out the task set. This was precisely the popular modern education system that Freire criticized for

the fact that it does not enable human subjectivity and dehumanizes the student.

However, Bauman does not picture the shift from solid modernity to liquid modernity to be a sequel with a happy ending. He continues to criticize the adiaphorizing function of education even after the liquid turn, and even though smart missiles are less determined before launch than ballistic missiles. According to Bauman, although contemporary education systems tend to de-institutionalize and individualize learning by transferring more responsibility for the student and thus, we can add, reduce the vertical relation between a student and a teacher, this relation has actually transformed into one between a client and a supplier, or between a shopper and a shopping mall (Bauman 2005). After Bauman makes a conclusion that institutionalized teaching in liquid modernity lost its monopoly as the gatekeeper of knowledge, knowledge becomes the object of general culture. And in the culture of consumer society, individuals are often found in vertical relations with the market laws above.

Bauman's portrayal of contemporary education thus surprisingly falls into the same category of the banking pedagogy model as the solid modern teaching, but market plays the role of the teacher here. As students are trained to 'change mind or revoke their previous decisions with no second thought and regret' and are taught that the 'knowledge they acquire is eminently disposable, good only until further notice and of only temporary usefulness' (Bauman 2011b), it seems it is not the reality principle that knowledge is built on. It resembles more of a flexible token on a liquid-modern casino table, as '[c]onsumer market is adapted to the liquid-modern 'casino culture' which in turn is adapted to that market's pressures and seductions' (Bauman 2011b). In this way culture in liquid-modern consumer society produced by media and education systems acts as a medium between a person and the world, and contributes to the social production of epistemic and moral indifference. Thus it grows 'the tendency to a 'blasé attitude' toward 'knowledge, work and lifestyle' (Bauman 2011b), and Bauman finds adiaphorization to be as prevalent (yet also somewhat different) in the liquid-modern consumer society as it was in solid modernity with its potential for the Holocaust.

One of the manifestations of adiaphorization in addition to commodified education in liquid modernity is the commodification of its participants – human beings. The society of this liquid-modern consumerist world, according to Bauman, has accommodated the market logic of selling and buying, by which people are treated as if they are commodities on a shelf in a shopping centre. Economic principles thus permeate all spheres of social life – be it relations with your bosses, workmates, friends, significant others or even oneself. According to Bauman, the basic law of the liquid-modern consumer society is that '[i]n the society of consumers no one can become a subject without first turning into

a commodity' (Bauman 2007) – thus humans treat humans (others as well as themselves) as things, or as mere objects in an outside-source narrative.

The macro-scale effect on society of socially developed production of adiaphorization in culture and education, leads not only to indifference towards individuals, but also towards entire groups of people. Following the examples of socially produced adiaphorization in the 20th century, in his 21st century writings Bauman provides us with a rich collection of metaphors to emphasize social polarization strengthened by moral indifference. As globalization differentiates people into those who have purchasing power in the consumer society (good consumers) and those who do not (flawed consumers), or those who can choose (what to buy, but not whether to buy) and those who are chosen, or those who can move around the planet (tourists) and those who cannot move or who are forced to move (vagabonds), the principle of mobility in times of globalization becomes one of the main tools of power and of inequality (Bauman 1998a). Liquid lives are respectively put on social scales, valuing 'tourists' over 'vagabonds', winners over losers, capable consumers over 'defective consumers', social classes over the 'underclass', or humans over the 'human waste'. The human existence of the latter categories is denied – morally and epistemically, blurring conscious awareness of the extent of adiaphorization and dehumanization. Even schools and universities today treat students in an instrumental manner, disregarding the learners' existential interests as having no power of being properly taken into consideration. As Giroux points out referring to Bauman, youth in the neoliberal society and its education system priorities is often regarded as having no important existence (Giroux 2009: 31).

To sum up the analysis of the three cases of dehumanization, it can be concluded that the banking model of education is criticized both by Freire, who coined this term, and by Bauman, who did not use the specific term, but critically scrutinized the principles of prevalent formal and informal education structures in solid modernity as well as in liquid modernity for their reductionist instrumentalizing approach. The two thinkers addressed the commodifying treatment of humans as the cultural teaching or inoculation of how to experience the world and oneself, what knowledge to gain and what moral (or adiaphorized) and existential choices to make. Existence of a variety of individuals and groups of people was in a way denied in the banking model of education by the cultural norms and impositions as well as by institutionalized education in the three cases mentioned above, which are: the disempowered and oppressed persons in Brazil, the victims in the Holocaust, and the people who live in the liquid-modern consumer society but happen to escape the unwritten laws of the neoliberal market. All of them, in one way or another, are excluded from humanity and are treated in an

adiaphorized and morally indifferent manner. Nevertheless, no less are the ones who comply with the rules of the consumer society treated as objects, because turning oneself into a commodity is the basic law there. According to Bauman, even education as such is turned into a marketplace in the consumer market, and its content is produced in a way a commodity is.

All in all, both authors criticize education which produces indifference – in a form of alienation in Freire's texts and with a shape of adiaphorization in Bauman's works. As such types of education use power to propel humans to essentially treat themselves and other human beings merely as things or instrumentalized objects, they function as dehumanization.

Critical pedagogy as humanization

In the following text, we will introduce Paulo Freire's conception of humanizing education and try to show how the problem of humanization is addressed by Zygmunt Bauman and what makes Bauman's texts a humanizing education.

As should be evident from the foregoing presentation of ideas and the three cases, to both Bauman and Freire the normative role of education as a general concept is one of the key objects of research when critically addressing the *status quo* in societies. Both authors presume that it is not only an individual who affects social reality, but much more the macro-cultural organization of social reality that affects the circumstances of individual lives, and their texts analyse how the two sides of the coin work. Both theories presuppose some kind of necessary reflexivity of culture which they find to be a product of a two-way interaction between the individuals and the phenomenon of society exceeding and encompassing the sum of them. The classic chicken or egg conundrum, referring to circular dependence and ambivalent causation dilemma, is one of the widely used allegories in Bauman's writings to emphasize the ambiguity and ambivalence of human lives. On the one hand, both authors find humans strongly affected by social organization. On the other hand, both Freire and Bauman picture a human individual not only as an entity functioning *within* the framework of social determination, but also as someone who has definite access to freedom and choice, as well as obligation to take responsibility for his/her own lives (and the lives of others). Both Freire and Bauman are worried about the societal conditions they diagnose, and they suggest means for cultural revertion or transformation of objectified and alienated humans into what they supposedly really are or should become – subjects. Even though the thinkers suggest different tools of critical pedagogy (Freire more explicitly through uprising or resistance, Bauman through liquid-modern means of metaphorical language) and choose different methods to engage in

it, both authors pair up critical reflection of dehumanization cases they analyse with a normative task of humanization set in the background.

In face of dehumanization, both Freire and Bauman search for alternatives, which are often hidden and invisible in *status quo* situations, but might be accessible for a more critical emancipatory sight. As J. L. Kincheloe notes, critical pedagogy aims to 'push humans to new levels of social and cognitive achievement previously deemed impossible' (Kincheloe 2008). One of the metaphors Freire uses to point out a path out of the *status quo* is *hope*. In his book *Pedagogy of hope*, first published in 1992, Freire observes that '[h]ope is an ontological need. Hopelessness is but hope that has lost its bearings' (Freire 2014: 2). He sets it a goal for critical pedagogy to achieve: '[o]ne of the tasks of the progressive educator, through a serious, correct political analysis, is to unveil opportunities for hope, no matter what the obstacles may be' (Freire 2014: 3). According to Freire, 'dehumanization, although a concrete historical fact, is *not* a given destiny but the result of an unjust order' (Freire 1972: 21). He continues by stating that 'to surmount the situation of oppression, men must first critically recognize its causes, so that through transforming action they can create a new situation – one which makes possible the pursuit of a fuller humanity' (Freire 1972: 24). Critical education in the face of dehumanization is thus portrayed by Freire as a societal necessity and collective ontological need of human-beings-in-society.

In opposition to the banking model of education, Freire proposes an approach oriented to transform the vertical stratification in educational systems into a horizontal relation between students and teachers. He promotes dialogue as the only way not to put students' consciousness to sleep, and as an educational means to prevent teachers from depriving students of their active subjectivity. Freire regards dialogue to be a critical inquiry into reality and cognition – that is, into *conscientização*, a conscious awareness, which he portrays as the only possible way out of the dehumanization produced within monologous educational system. In Freire's views, dialogue and conscious 'awakening' (Freire 1972: 40) from the *status quo* leads to liberation, which is regarded to be exactly what makes humans more fully human.

Critical pedagogy is thus shown as the only way to help the oppressed recognize within themselves the internalized consciousness of the oppressor, emancipate from it and find the hidden reality and its possibilities. Freire notes that '[f]reedom is not an ideal located outside of man … It is rather an indispensable condition for the quest for human completion' (Freire 1972: 24) that is 'acquired by conquest, not by gift', and must be 'pursued constantly and responsibly' (Freire 1972: 24). Freire finds humanization to be the ontological and historical calling of every human (Freire 1972: 31). According to him, 'the problem of humanization has always been, from an axiological point of view, man's

central problem' (Freire 1972: 20), and 'while both humanization and dehumanization are real alternatives, only the first is man's vocation' (Freire 1972: 20).

One of the basic premises of Freire's philosophy is that the 'pursuit of a fuller humanity' is achieved by praxis, which consists of both awareness and action. As Dennis Collins sums it up, for Freire '[t]o know' is to act politically for hominization: 'to know' is 'to exist' (Collins 1977: 65). When dehumanization takes place, critical education which brings *conscientização* – awareness of what it means to be human, reflection of dehumanization and a vision of the alternative – and which calls for action of emancipation, thus works as humanization. Freire considers it to be a historical necessity for societies where dehumanization processes take place.

Such position relies on a Hegelian view that humanity has got historical tasks to perform, and is built on a premise that objective reality exists, and corresponding truth can be found. As 'subjectivity and objectivity are not dichotomized in a true act of knowing' (Collins 1977: 55), Freire believes critical pedagogy to be the way to make reality accessible to humans by helping them to realize that they can take part in it as active subjects: '[w]hereas banking education anaesthetizes and inhibits creative power, problem-posing education involves a constant unveiling of reality … the latter strives for the *emergence* of consciousness and *critical intervention* in reality' (Freire 1972: 54). According to Freire, 'objective social reality exists not by chance, but as the product of human action' (Freire 1972: 26–27), so he finds individual agents capable of revolutionizing against oppressive social arrangements, and constructs his critical pedagogy as a way to realize human historicity.

Such modern features of Freire's critical theory have received quite some critique. Walter Kohan notes that Freire's direct struggle for emancipation against the grand narratives which guard the *status quo* does not conceal the fact that Freire's descriptive and prescriptive picture of the world is in danger of becoming a grand narrative itself. On the other hand, the predominantly modern features of Freire's social theory can be partly escaped by the variable element he puts into the structure of his critical pedagogy – that is, the transformative brick of *dialogue*, understood in both a direct and a metaphorical manner. A direct inclusion of dialogue as a method into the education system enables emergence of live knowledge about the world and the human role in it. In a metaphorical way, dialogue requires space for the Other, the unexpected, the ambivalent, something that transcends the grand narrative – therefore in the framework of critical pedagogy it becomes a cornerstone that can turn a wall into an open door when in use. Freire even himself was dialogical and open to critique – he gladly welcomed interpretations towards his insights and was prone to amend his texts himself. He directly invited the readers to *re-invent* his texts. As Col-

lins summarizes one of his basic premises: 'Men, situated in history, are unfinished' (Collins 1977: 49), and 'reality is experienced by men as a process' (Collins 1977: 45), and, it seems, Freire indeed wanted his critical pedagogy to be open for dialogical conversations with the participants of the shifting world it describes.

A creative dialogue with Zygmunt Bauman's social philosophy reveals new forms of critical pedagogy in the contemporary times.

Ambiguity and humanization through metaphors

Philosophical premises under Bauman's conception of education and its implications on his ambiguous metaphorical style of writing will be an analysed in the following text, with regard to education as humanization.

First, it can be noted, that the modern dichotomous picture of objective truth and reality on the one side of the boundary and a distortion of it on the other, which in Freire's texts represents an analogy with the allegory of the Platonic cave emphasizing essential distinction between copies and their originals, can be strongly criticized from a postmodern perspective, and it often is. Postmodern outlook pays even more attention to the shifting cultural experience of reality, social powers which shape images of reality and, in Jean Baudrillard's terms, the Mobius loop of simulacra, where the real and the fictitious overlap so much that it becomes impossible to distinguish one from the other. In dialogue with Baudrillard's theory of culture flooded with hyperreality – an inflation of signs with no other references than other signs (Baudrillard 1994) – and with other postmodern theories, Bauman's liquid modern social philosophy addresses contemporary issues that Freire's social philosophy does not – that is, the ambiguity of social reality and a need for an educational theory that explicitly addresses it.

In the following, we will try to show how Bauman's social philosophy falls under the category of critical pedagogy. However, it is not purely modern, but rather a postmodern version of it. In order to reveal that, an abstract philosophical analysis of Bauman's style of writing and an inquiry into the contradicting premises underpinning his images of society, morality and adiaphorization will be deployed to clarify his philosophical views on education.

As Mark Davis (2013) and other interpreters of Bauman's social philosophy have noted, the thinker's theoretical approach is as ambivalent as the object it analyses – the social reality. On the one hand, Bauman constructs his philosophy on the premise of some sort of objective grounds. Just like Freire, he gives much attention to the idea of awakening in the face of moral indifference. For him, adiaphorization might as well as dehumanization for Freire be (and often is) a product of social manipulation. Bauman described cases in both solid and liquid moder-

nity, where millions of people took part in atrocities acting as oppressors without fully realizing the moral and ethical dimension of their choices, emptying their deeds of moral content, in accordance with the requirements of particular social norms. Thus, when Bauman uses a metaphor of 'sleeping pills' for desensitizing the moral impulses of humans, he must therefore presume that at least two types of relation with reality exist – one experienced directly and with less manipulative influence on how it is perceived, and one that is mediated by strong cultural intervention which reduces the ability to receive corresponding data about reality, thus distorting its portrayal. The image of reality before the sleeping pills and after the pills in such case must definitely differ.

On the other hand, the reality existing before the pills might have already been affected by other interactions, and all in all Bauman provides quite a slippery concept of human relation with social reality. He also does not give any clear answers to what it exactly means to be human, even though he gives plenty of hints related to problematics of morality, freedom and responsibility. As mentioned, human-beings, for Bauman, are both essentially free to choose and are to a certain degree determined by society, and are both free to create social reality and confined within what others have created. Another premise in his writings is noticeable as well – that humans paradoxically have the freedom to choose not to be free, and that they often do. And although Bauman promotes individual and collective responsibility and is sometimes regarded as a moralizing author, in his work the acknowledgment of the ambiguity of human nature, of the spontaneity (almost justification) of manipulation, and of moral indifference in social coexistence, gives his moralizing texts a multifaceted and, in a way contradictory, liquid form. In his book *Postmodern ethics* (1993), Bauman even discovers the other side of adiaphorization – a type of indifference that is not produced by manipulation, but is a consistent outcome of living in society as such. Bauman finds positive traits in the very target of his harsh critique – that is, in moral indifference. He notices that it would be too painful and even impossible to live in a society where no adiaphorization as a painkiller existed. Thus, a certain level of moral indifference is shown to be an almost indispensable attribute of society in general, and what falls under the umbrella of dehumanization can in a way lie in the very human nature. A conclusion in such case can be made that *it is sometimes human (although not necessarily humane) to engage in dehumanization.*

Another ambiguous case is the way Bauman composes his views on sociology and ethics in his social philosophy. In *Postmodern ethics*, Bauman refers to the phenomenological theory of ethics provided by Emmanuel Lévinas, where ethics is regarded to come *before* ontology and epistemology (and thus before sociology). As Lévinas states that the ethical relation in 'the moral party of two' comes first, and thus before any type of societal relation, in a Lévinasian view society and

cognition comes into the picture only with 'the third person' entering the relation, therefore morality is *pre-social* and by no way can be given birth through societal means (for instance, education). In large parts of *Postmodern ethics* and in other texts, Bauman fully agrees with this ethical perspective. An ethical relation, creating an infinite space for never-ending responsibility, which would otherwise be awakened by moral impulse, can be muted in society by epistemic relations and political assessments, choices and actions, and Bauman concludes that moral indifference is a product of society as such. As moral impulses become silenced in one way or another – as soon as the person finds herself or himself in society – adiaphorization cannot be fully avoided in any societal form, since all forms of social co-existence require some kind of neutralization of moral impulses, preventing them from being infinite and impossible to live with.

Such Bauman's views on ethics seem to contradict his position as a sociologist, and make it really complicated for researchers to interpret the overall picture of his social philosophy. What others find to be contradictory premises, Bauman subsumes together under the same philosophical conception. In contrast to modern dualistic rigidity in Freire's social philosophy, ambiguity surprisingly becomes justified in postmodern discourse.

Bauman also does not directly provide his readers with a solution or an alternative to adiaphorization and the forms of dehumanization that come with it – or perhaps he does not and does at the same time. Nevertheless, Bauman's moral stance is flickering in between the lines in most of his texts. Even though he does not tend to state it directly (and such methodological choice is done deliberately), our statement is that it seems that *for Bauman morality is not social, but moral indifference is*, therefore, *overcoming moral indifference must paradoxically include social means* (Bauman and Tuleikyte 2014: 219). It can be argued that Bauman is consciously relying on description on this matter and avoiding direct prescription in order to be true to the postmodern negation of grand narratives, but he still slips his message to the reader in an implicit manner, as if his texts could work as self-negating prophecies. Can social reality perhaps get more chances to be transformed after the reader realizes the fright of the *status quo* and wakes up with the sudden conscious realization of the situation? In many of his texts Bauman is preoccupied with uncritical thinking and coins his statements as paths to alternatives. In his book *Socialism the active utopia*, published in 1976, Bauman gives much attention to utopian thinking and notes that 'By exposing the partiality of current reality, by scanning the field of the possible in which the real occupies merely a tiny plot, utopias pave the way for a critical attitude and a critical activity which alone can transform the present predicament of man' (Bauman 2009). Nowhere does Bauman provide the reader with a clear strategy of how freedom

should be exercised and adiaphorization avoided in the manner how Freire does it with his ideas on education as direct means for revolution, but Bauman clearly does not support the principle of TINA ('there is no alternative') that prevails in the liquid-modern consumer society. He challenges the reader to search for authentic alternatives. For instance, it seems that Bauman's texts aim to provocatively shock the reader by stating that everyone in the consumer society is socially required to function as a commodity (using a *re-read* Freirean vocabulary, that would apply to the situations of the oppressed and the oppressor in the same person simultaneously), and thus to indirectly address the potential human capacity to escape from a commodified consciousness (in Freirean analogy, that would be *conscientização*). Bauman seemingly aims to affect and upset the reader, but to remain ambivalent as well. And what helps him do that, is metaphors.

Despite evident influence of general trends of artistic, fictional and poetic, methods on postmodern social theory, metaphors in academic texts are still a somewhat unusual sight. However, they play a consistently crucial role in Bauman's social philosophy, as it was noted above. Michael Hviid Jacobsen and Sophia Marshman have suggested that 'Bauman uses metaphor as a device to recall us to our common humanity, as a means of reawakening our sense of responsibility for the Other and of human possibility', and have paid attention to the 'inherently moral character of his metaphors' (Jacobsen and Marshman 2008: 22). In contrast to some describing Bauman's writing style as incoherent and contradictory, they define his work as 'humanization through metaphors'. Such a move in a way legitimizes ambiguity in the academic discourse as a sort of method (similar legitimization was performed by Mark Davis, naming it 'liquid sociology'), although calling it a 'method' might be a modernistic oversimplification. The term 'humanization through metaphors' unifies what for a conventional sight might seem chaotic, and puts some order to it. Inconsistency becomes consistency when it relies on a premise that it is reality that is inconsistent, and the theory consistently reflects it. The notion of 'humanization through metaphors' becomes a conceptual tool which can be creatively used for showing that metaphors in a way solve many of the contradictions in Bauman's social philosophy that were mentioned above. After the potentially humanizing role of metaphor is acknowledged, it can be concluded that *metaphor is where Bauman's moral philosophy and sociology meet*.

Instead of a relationship, which, according to Freire, 'involves a narrating subject (the teacher) and patient, listening objects (the students)' (Freire 1972: 45), Bauman uses his metaphors as a tool to make the monological texts of his books dialogical, thus respecting the readers' subjectivity without trying to transform them into passive recipients of information. Metaphors challenge grand narratives and awaken critical thinking. Freire was deeply worried that '[e]ducation is suffering

from narration sickness' (Freire 2003: 57) and noted that '[t]he correct method lies in dialogue' (Freire 1972: 42), and it seems that Bauman's social philosophy in the 21st century centres around the importance of dialogue in a very contemporary way. His ambiguous moralizing rests on the premise of duality between truth and not-truth, but at the same time aims to avoid grand narratives, as the dialogue happens in between the lines, with no banking pedagogy methods involved.

Many of Bauman's ideas about education as culture in the broad sense are mostly not sanctioned by educational institutions and are not attributed the title of 'education philosophy'. Bauman himself also renounced the title of a 'public intellectual' – the label that Henry A. Giroux, using conceptual ideas of Antonio Gramsci and other thinkers, ascribed to him. However, it can be said in Freirean words, that what Bauman renounces is probably the role of a teacher who engages in a banking education model, in which the public intellectual or the educator – as a subject – would fill up the readers/students as objects, or as banking accounts with knowledge as another object. The latter type of education model and the activity of a public intellectual would eventually become simply a transaction of objects to objects. In contrast, Bauman engages in a dialogical relationship with his readers – he does not provide clear answers or recipes for solutions. He shows no exit signs and thus does not lead his readers out of the social situations he analyses in his texts directly. Nevertheless, Bauman opens up a door for lively air to flow in. It seems he both gives the readers space to escape from his narrative and invites them to go along with his texts by addressing the issues of contemporary social reality with vivid provocations which challenge readers into dialogical response and action.

In a way, it can be claimed that what Bauman does in his work is doing the impossible – paradoxically taking the reader out of the situation of adiaphorization that is peculiar to society as such, and creating an alternative path to where the reader's moral impulse is awaken. The term 'humanization through metaphors' emphasizes the role of metaphors as an indirect means to offer the reader space for finding the solution to the situation herself or himself, as a human being, with a clear objective – to awaken the moral impulse with the help of social means. *Adiaphorization is thus not only moral indifference, but epistemic indifference as well*, and cognition might therefore be an important element in enabling the moral impulse to work after it has been cognitively silenced by society.

In other words, the previously introduced Bauman's intake of the Lévinasian presumption that moral issues are first, before any cognition and before *conscientização*, openly challenges the role of education as such. If Lévinasian views were followed in detail, no socially organized teaching as such could be regarded as having power to reduce moral indifference in society. However, the way Bauman uses metaphorical lan-

guage and forges his liquid sociology seems to be a deliberate conceptual attempt to awaken the reader's moral impulses in the situations where socially manipulated forms of dehumanization are prevalent – that is, doing the 'impossible' by getting epistemic relation to reality closer to the moral one with the help of metaphors which humanize.

To summarize: what Bauman does in his texts is a contemporary version of critical pedagogy. His 'humanization through metaphors' invites for praxis as reflection and action. As Jacobsen and Marshman noted, 'metaphors are not only conceptual devices – they are potentially reality-shattering and agenda-changing social acts aimed at presenting an image of how the world 'ought' to be or 'should'/'could' be' (Jacobsen and Marshman 2008: 22), and so 'this kind of sociology can have a *transformative* capacity, it can make people think about things more deeply, it can shock the reader out of their moral ennui, and it can – at least potentially – instigate social action' (Jacobsen and Marshman 2008: 21). It was important for Freire that 'when men are already dehumanized, due to the oppression they suffer, the process of their liberation must not employ the methods of dehumanization' (Freire 1972: 42). It seems that Bauman finds a way how to humanize people without using dehumanizing methods and how to in part prevent education from certain social situations which tend to obstruct human moral impulses. Metaphor allows Bauman to create a space where the reader would find herself or himself almost in a *pre-social* state. When Bauman employs metaphors and engages in provocative writing, 'it is the ends to which he uses these devices that reveals his uncommon and constant commitment to 'humanity'' (Jacobsen and Marshman 2008: 19), and metaphor is therefore where humanization as education starts.

Thus, the key principles that help Bauman solve 'the impossible' within the reality that postmodern perspective reveals, is the critical pedagogy suggested by Freire, adapted to contemporary times. Freire's conceptualization of the dehumanizing and humanizing powers of education helps as an instrument to better reveal Bauman's dedication to humanization and to recognize that his social philosophy is a sort of critical pedagogy. However, Bauman's social philosophy is not a modern version of critical pedagogy, the one that Freire directly coined, but a postmodern re-reading of social reality with a critical pedagogy approach that is as Baumanian as it might be Freirian.

Conclusion

This article has provided a compact comparison of Paulo Freire and Zygmunt Bauman's social philosophies with regard to education as dehumanization and humanization. Both authors analyse ways of dehumanization that are peculiar to the specific societies they forged their

analyses about, and, although in different ways, both authors criticize education as a social means to produce indifference in society – towards individuals (others and themselves) and groups (for example, oppressed persons in Brazil, the victims of the Holocaust or the 'flawed consumers' and even people in general in the liquid-modern consumer society).

The two critical thinkers regard education to function as a social and cultural impact on humans in the broadest sense of the term, accommodating both formal and informal teaching/learning under the umbrella of the concept. Freire's metaphor and conception of 'banking pedagogy model' (when human subjects are instrumentally treated as objects, irrelevantly of their status in ontological, epistemic and moral terms) is found to be helpful both in identifying and comparing the oppression in educational systems and societies that Freire criticizes, and in the socially produced adiaphorization that Bauman finds in modern instrumentality or postmodern consumerism and its accompaniment – the fleeting character of knowledge in liquid modernity schools and universities. Cases of oppression and alienation in Freire's social philosophy, and cases of adiaphorization ir Bauman's social philosophy, are shown to be objects of dehumanization produced by education as a form of culture on an individual, or by institutionally organized activities targeting human mindsets and actions.

Freire and Bauman presuppose social reality to be the result of human praxis, and not only dehumanization in both of their theories is considered to be a possible outcome of education, but also both of them offer humanizing solutions in education. And although critical pedagogy is not an explicit object of Bauman's writings, the dialogical use of metaphors with the intention to humanize his reader proves to be a type of education that ultimately aims to emancipate. In other words, it is a contemporary form of critical pedagogy for the reader in times of liquid modernity.

All in all, both theories in many respects, as shown, may complement one another. Freire's philosophemes prove to be useful for reading Bauman, as they help to conceptualize the underlying modern premises of Bauman's postmodern theory, and Freire's ideas on critical pedagogy help us name the educational activities and goals that Bauman engages in – that is humanization. Bauman's 'humanization through metaphors' might be implemented in education as a more or less concrete method of Freire's *conscientização*, opening up a postmodern perspective to the latter one's modern features.

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