

*There is neither a first nor a last word and there are no limits to the dialogic context.*  
Mikhail Bakhtin

# CREATIVE PROFESSIONALS AND POST-MODERNITY (transl.)

Page | 1

**Enrique Carretero Pasín, Universidad de Santiago de Compostela, Spain**

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**Interview by Ana Fonseca**

*This is a translated transcription of our audio interview, "[Profesionales creativos en la posmodernidad](#)." This interview was originally published in an extended version by Radio Heteroglossia on January 2015. The original interview has been shortened for this publication to fit our new, condensed format.*

**Ana Fonseca:** Thanks for listening to Radio Heteroglossia. I'm Ana Fonseca and our guest today is [Dr. Enrique Carretero Pasín](#). He is a philosopher, sociologist and an assistant professor and researcher in the Department of Sociology at the Universidad de Santiago de Compostela. He also teaches in the Institute of Criminology at the same university. Today, we will be talking about an article written by Dr. Carretero entitled, "[Profesionales Creativos y lo Imaginario desde un Enfoque Etnográfico](#)," [Creative Professionals and Imaginary from an Ethnographic Approach], published in 2015 in the academic journal *Aposta: Revista de Ciencias Sociales*, which analyzes the fundamental role that creativity and the imaginary play in certain professional practices, and the way in which the latter respond to and modify the socio-labour demands of modernity. Dr. Enrique Carretero, welcome and thank you for joining us today.

**Enrique Carretero:** Thank you.

**Ana Fonseca:** I would like to start by quoting your article when you say that, put on quotes, "one of the defining features of today's society, that which by definition adopts the obsolescence of the core values of modernity, is found in the eclipse of any historical purpose." I wonder if you could talk more about this.

**Enrique Carretero:** It's not my idea but actually an idea that has been present in intellectual circles I would say since the 90s, since discussions about the term of post modernity in the cultural sense took place. The idea being that, again since the 90s, something new was emerging and that certain practices and ideas no longer had the value that they had before. In other words, the perception was that a paradigm shift was occurring, that a cultural discontinuity was emerging. And one of the fundamental features that described this new cultural paradigm by different authors associated with what is called "post-modernity", was that the idea of the future among the collective started to crumble. In other words, -the idea that history had a purpose to fulfill, that all collectivities were oriented towards a determined historical direction, that there was a historical vector in charge of directing people towards the future and therefore the present was no longer the present, or not only the present but, since modernity, as a present acting as a vector of the future. Since the 90s, this idea seemed to start to weaken not only among intellectual circles, but also among the collective. As a result, some authors associated with what is known as post-modernity understand that the crisis of the idea of the present directed towards the future provoked a discontinuity in the idea of the present without being a vector of the future. In other words, the present is lived with intensity, but that present is not directed towards the future. In that new perception of the present, some understand a new cultural paradigm emerged in the years mentioned earlier.

**Ana Fonseca:** To what extent this current focus on the present more than on the future can also be the result of a social reality that seems to exist in diverse parts of the world, namely, in the context of our conversation today about creative professionals, that there is not enough employment opportunities for the majority of new professionals graduating from universities and colleges. To what extent do you think this can also be attributed to that other socio-economic and historical dynamic?

**Enrique Carretero:** I think economic factors are very important. But I also understand that the economy doesn't explain everything. There are also other elements that I think play a role that is, if I may, just as important. These are cultural factors. Meaning by culture a system of beliefs, of values, a way to understand life, a determined way to position oneself in life, and that escapes, or that can have some relation with the economy, but is not determined by the economy. So the idea that I find insightful is that one of the things that have been promoted by post-modernity is that the futurization of history- that we were talking earlier, this idea that the

future has to constantly be in our present- the effect of the futurization of history was that the present was kidnapped by the future. Therefore, the present wasn't lived for what it was, the present. This is a bit related to Nietzschean ideas about the present namely that we shouldn't live for the future but for the present. Then with modernity and its futurization of history, that idea of the present was repressed. Now, here within that cultural reservoir we also have the element of religion, this idea of differing happiness always in the future. This religious element, which has been studied by several philosophers and sociologists, has also influenced certain political and ideological projects. Which seem to preach ideas about reaching a better society, but it's always in the future. So, the present is peoples' hardwork directed towards the future.

What we have nowadays is that there is no future, due to economic reasons basically. What this leads to, - obviously it has a negative side to it,- but it is also true that looking at the positive side of any crisis, it removes conventional ideas in a society. It leads societies to restructure themselves. So, this idea that there is no future forces us to see the present from another angle. It leads us to approach the present certainly as the present. And when the present is treated as the present then there is where we see the constant dynamic of, innovate or succumb, create or be left out; almost in a Darwinian sense. Then, the cultural obligation is perhaps to position oneself in the present but adding a sense of relevance to what one does.

**Ana Fonseca:** Very interesting insights and, without doubt, the historical and cultural moment we are witnessing is quite definitive. Dr. Enrique Carretero, thank you very much for your time and for sharing with us your knowledge and points of view about these issues.

**Enrique Carretero:** Thank you very much, I hope it is of interest to your listeners.

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