

FERNANDO BOMFIM MARIANA

Pedagogical piracy and the art of sailing:

writings on education and political culture



Postgraduate Program in Education – Professional Modality
School of Education of the University of Brasília (Brazil)
2023

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EDITORIA



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AND POLITICAL CULTURE

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Dedicated to insurgent students and teachers!

PRESENTATION

To sail the seas of education we need to recover our mechanisms for crossing the infinite. If education here is understood as infinite waters of an open sea, anti-capitalist political culture is our compass along inhospitable and unthinkable paths.

Devoid of national flags, our vessel continues without borders, and the only flags we can raise will be those of new insurgent piracy against alienated work relations and against social hierarchies – calling for another way of being among human and all forms of life in this planet. And others.

Pedagogical piracy battles to sink the warships of States and financial corporations – and their authoritarian principles that imprison the human condition in “citizen-consumers”. A navigability that tries to get closer to the art of living and, therefore, offers alchemical nuances between art and the sea.

In addition to assaulting renewed utopias and proclaiming the art of living, such pedagogical piracy follows another fundamental code: the courage to fight against school devices that oppress us, domesticate us, standardize us and massacre our free thoughts. Legislation of educational policies that impede our historical creation, our strength to launch ourselves on the journey of life,

our audacity to leave the dry land of accommodation and give new meaning to the adventure of life. Childhood and adolescence freed from workloads in prison- schools, from tests that prove nothing, from school content without any relation to the desires of a new society, from adult-centric hierarchies. Pedagogical piracy is a set of secular revolts in favor of knowledge aimed at social autonomy.

Numerous revolts can characterize pedagogical piracy, from the most destructive and violent ones that mirror the institutional brutalities of the school to the subtle sabotages that teachers and students wisely consolidate in their daily lives. But pedagogical piracy calls for a new vision of education in the same way that new lands in sight can appear on the horizons of those who set out to sea.

If the school is located on solid ground, education flows in the open sea. We can find islands, archipelagos and enclaves of emancipatory educational experiences spread across the world. Schools are our safe havens. And pedagogical piracy knows how to value this pier that supports us and that strengthens us for other journeys. Although the relationship between pirates on dry land has never been truly harmonious, on the other hand we are certain that there are unimaginable treasures to be discovered in wonderful school practices.

However, the art of living and sailing is permanently threatened by bureaucrats disguised as teachers, demons incarnated in pastors and priests, murderers disguised as police officers, genocidaires disguised as political leaders, slave owners incorporated in businessmen and entrepreneurs. The terrifying haunts of the State and Capital.

Despite this, life's passions arise in the most unexpected times and spaces throughout our cosmic adventure. And this sprouting takes place on the journey alongside all forms of life on the planet – in a secret agreement of mutual protection, communion and vital fruition. By seeking to understand the inseparability between education and political culture – two sides of the same golden coin, cover and back cover of this book¹ – pedagogical piracy announces another foundation of political power: a self-determined and self-regulated political power. And whose social control of powers is exercised through direct democracy, self-management structures² and other horizontal and creative social relations.

Straighten education in an anti-capitalist political culture, defog the telescopes for better visibility while sailing on the high seas, celebrate the passions of life by swaying with the foam of drinks and the oceans, diving in the sea of stars...

yo ho-ho
yo ho-ho-ho-ho

Spring 2023

PREFACE

ON THE ANTI-AUTHORITARIAN 'TRACKS': A SENSATION

Samantha Lodi

*What does one write for, if not to put its pieces together?
From the moment we enter school or church, education
dismembers us: it teaches us to divorce the soul from the body and
reason from the heart.*

Eduardo Galeano

I received this book with joy from historian and doctor in education Fernando Bomfin Mariana, currently a professor at the University of Brasília. First, because he is a friend that I admire, and friendship is not affection that is hidden; secondly, because, when walking through his critical writing, it is a fact that he comes across the art of writing. His writing, sometimes smooth, sometimes incisive, dialogues with metaphors such as “shipwrecked of a system anchored in exploitation and oppression”; with a figurative message, with a “drift message” that incorporates and transcends generations, there are figures of history.

Among the recent policy, which involves the health crisis and education, and the dialogue with history, art,

human rights, culture, memory, social movements, theory of evolution, technology, social movements and organization, Fernando makes clear his opposition to the State and all forms of coercion its developed and sustained. The State is repressive and promoted atrocities that look more like a dystopian scenario. The concept of “State terrorism” is at the base of all the debates developed in the texts. If a “time machine” existed, societal “tracks” would be problematized and would form a social memory. To the reader, what presents itself as fictional would be far from being so.

I could expound here, title by title, the seven texts selected for this collection, as already included in the summary, and briefly discuss each one. But, using the freedom that has been given to me, or that I gave myself, I here present the sensation that I had while reading them.

The art of life, life in a state of art, demands a critical reflection, and understanding of the reality and paradoxes in which we live. But it also demands from us a kind of aesthetic education that combines the full formation of the human being, with intellect and feeling. It is still possible to discuss art with human rights, and the contradiction of the State as the one that guarantees human rights.

The State limits rights, develops in practice a justice of privileges, and advocates a citizenship that restricts human potential while controlling possibilities for government participation. The police, militarism, agents of coercion. The spread of militarism and nationalism has the same purpose of control, in addition to encouraging war and segregation. “State terrorism” is the concept of understanding any kind of human violation or violation of freedom. The State positioned itself as sovereign and mediator, rooted itself so

deeply in social thought that many critics cannot think of a social organization outside of this pattern of control.

The current situation of the Yanomami people, which has shocked part of the world with the deathlike appearance of hunger, disease, and various types of violations, is a clear and revolting example of this terrorism. The State was and is responsible for the extermination of the native people, it enslaved them to force work while belching dignity. It sustained and sustains completely unregulated political power, which daily violates and tortures the poorest, leaving them in a situation of abandonment, and marginalizing their existence. State violence is directed by the color of the skin, by the geographic space it occupies, and by its income. Violence doesn't happen by chance.

The State also forged a very distinct memory of the experience, in which it firmly bet on its strength to elaborate history from the perspective of the oppressor, spreading monuments and paying tribute to those who supported this merciless and bellicose state. Among autonomists, there are different positions. Opposing the oppressive violence of the system is a necessary resistance from the oppressed, we cannot mistake it. In the texts, the antimilitarist and pacifist position is explicit. War also decimates a specific group and not the group that opted for war at the height of their chairs. It is important to remember that the peaceful path is far from being apathetic or passive. Peace is placed as a determined praxis, related to social justice, alterity, respect, and equality.

Louise Michel (1830-1905), a supporter of anarchy, was in a hurry to destroy the old world. What was urgent in his time became even more urgent. The old world is still here

and now, reconfigured, it learned new strategies, perfected its distraction mechanisms, and demobilized. The old control has been revamped by technology, expanding its dominion, which, while explicit and poignant, has been naturalized in a small consumer object that we carry, which is why, for some, it remains disguised, and for all, it is always efficient. The networks cradled the personal control of the least attentive and even of the most cautious, although to a varying degree.

Education permeates fundamental questions to think about social reconfiguration. Far from school totalitarianism, which involves architectural, bodily, and mental control by State designs to maintain privileges, education is thought of here in multiple sectors of development. Mutual support and solidarity as fundamental proposals for a new way of relating with *others* and nature.

Eduardo Galeano quotes Fernando Birri in “Las Palabras Andantes”, saying “Utopia... it is on the horizon. I take two steps closer, she takes two steps away. I walk ten steps and the horizon stretches ten steps further. No matter how much I walk, I will never reach her. What is utopia for? That’s what it’s for: walk”. Among those who keep utopia on the horizon, I also hope that education will provide emancipation and that, in a new world, there will be no State figure, only self-managed proposals permeated by direct action. May we have quality food and water for all, with respect for all biodiversity, with housing and health, with education and art, that there be dignity in existing.

There are “clues” that, to write this short text, I put together some of my pieces, linked by autonomists desires and similar thoughts. I don’t own any words I used here, I just gathered the sensations I felt.



CHAPTER 1

ART AND HUMAN RIGHTS: A BOTTLE THROWN INTO THE SEA

“Given to my body, that air spoke to me in cries of freedom. But freedom – I bet – is still just the joy of a poor path, inside the iron of great prisons. There is a truth that needs to be learned, of the hidden, and that nobody teaches: the alley for freedom to be made. (...) Crossings... Diadorim, the green rivers. The moon, the moonlight: I see those cowboys traveling in droves, at dawn, with the moon in the sky, day after day. I ask Buriti things; and what he answers is: my courage. Buriti wants everything blue, but he lacks a mirror and doesn’t part with his water. Master is not the one who teaches, but the one who suddenly learns. Why don’t they all get together, to suffer and win together, at once?”
(João Guimarães Rosa, “Grande Sertão: Veredas”)

Drifting among phrases and words, looking for encounters among topics as broad and complex as art and human rights, is like throwing a bottle into the sea with the certainty that fragments of this

message will arrive safe and sound to the next generations. Castaways from a system anchored in exploitation and oppression, the message drifts on. Perhaps the drift that we lack for a true encounter, that inspires us with movements freed from planned and delimited territories that restrict wanderers through life.

“In this beginning of the 21st century, human beings are distracted in space-time, imagining that Humanity’s rights can be created, recreated, sanctioned, and legitimized by the State. They forget that in the genesis of the State itself rises Leviathan, avid for merchandise – and that it is precisely from mercantile relations that the aegis of human rights is summoned. This supposed paradox is diluted by the most attentive ones who see the State itself – which universally proclaims human rights – as its first violator.

There is no capitalism without permanent violations of human rights, freedom, and equality. And the legal institutions that, de jure, would safeguard us from atrocities, are de facto unable to fulfill their intended purposes. Judicial systems are erected like fantasy sandcastles, which with each tide of capital crumble to earth. Political power is unregulated and exercised by representatives chosen by the alienated mass of the population – advertising and marketing techniques fulfill their function. The primary human right to chart our own purpose directly and

knowingly continues to be obscured by gods and bosses.

However, far beyond the phantasmagoric corporate spectrum, there are intense vital movements that, patiently and urgently, are elated in the webs and gifts of love and human emancipation. The incandescent freedom proliferates in the most remote autonomous zones, permanently built by the defenders of the genuine experiences of the self in which the right of the insurgent human being is rescued: the unstoppable, unimaginable, and infinite fruition of being and enjoyment of life.

The delusions of visionaries absorbed by everyday reality are the most logical justification for our reason. Far from totalitarian irrationalities, our dreams materialize in the social struggle for equality – racial equality, gender equality, parental equality... endless social equalities and self-instituting poetry of rights and movements.

To strengthen such movements, I suggest the exercise of an amateur artist – an amateur of the arts, culture, life, friendship, love, wine, wild sex, esthetic orgasm, of psychogeographic paths that do not aim to reach anywhere, only the walk for the sake of walk on a ground full of stars. A groping attempt of the act of walking.

It is precisely at the confluence of perspectives on the art of living that we will refound the practice of renewed human rights, equidistant from the ethereal rights already conquered, and excessively far from hatred, lies, disrespect, judgments, condemnations, persecutions, subjections, repressions, and oppressions.

Necessary fearlessness, yes, in the times of cowardice – it is enlightened by the most sublime forces that polish our precarious condition and rejuvenate the human being. Courage will not be lacking for those who have already followed this unusual and magnificent adventure for millennia.

But the desire is for this adventure to remain sublime for future relatives, bathed in clear waters and abundant food spread in the beautiful gardens of Earth. Will our children absolve us from the contemporary greedy impulse to consume everything and everyone?

We hope that there will be no resentment, since the sordid complicity among violators – which goes beyond any legal perspective of human rights – will be something memorable only in the nightmares of your ancestors: buried terrors.

Thus, life will surpass terrorist States and their entire productive chain of violence, legitimized in

their laws, charters, and constitutions: peace armies raping women, rulers stealing workers' bread, businessmen emulating supreme usury, priests repressing spirituality. Transcendence will take place in the alchemy of social struggle without mediation, without commodification of existence, and in the resumption of harmony among living species.

In the coming civilization, genders, ethnicities, and human differences will not perpetuate hatred, under the risk of re-blooming resentments that call for condemnation – and the resulting damages.

Finally, in a desperate, unusual, and hopeful attitude, I throw the bottle into the sea with the treasure map for the next generations, in which the right to love, freedom, and social equality are the greatest wealth to be permanently sought and found”.

For this reason, and for so many other reasons that are lost in language, I withdraw from these rights and let the juggling of words open the way for historical creations of new styles of everyday life – the proceeding precedes the words and the art of living founder of all human rights to be conquered.

CHAPTER 2

EDUCATION, POLITICAL CULTURE AND SOCIAL MEMORY: RESISTANCE TO STATE TERRORISM

Indifference to the past can revive societal ghosts that we already thought no longer existed. The relationship among education, political culture, and memory is treated in this text from an interdisciplinary approach, seeking to problematize the concept of State terrorism in Brazilian historiography from a perspective of social resistance through the creation of scientific knowledge with an emancipatory vocation.

In this sense, this chapter portrays some contributions to critical thinking about the definitions of State terrorism within analyses from the humanities perspective. These are searches around the impacts of violent and coercive governance processes, socially unregulated, and which invariably trigger fear and terror in humanity.

Intrinsically to this search, the writing inquires about the historiographical gaps in Brazil regarding the state of

knowledge about the central subject of the investigation: *State terrorism*. The present work aims to reflect on such questions, based on research carried out within the scope of the Research Group “Political Power, Education, Social Struggles”, based at the School of Education of the University of São Paulo between the years 2014 and 2018. Such research gains momentum following the State repression manifestations organized by the government in Brazil against autonomous social movements, not aligned with the developmentalist economic guidelines of the period: the violent coercive force of the State (notably Armed Forces and Federal Police) used throughout the Brazilian territory against native people – especially indigenous populations – and segments of organized civil society that tried to obstruct the project of society alien to anti-capitalist assumptions.

Notwithstanding this, scientific observations and research on the upsurge of State violence indicated real possibilities of emergence of a new type of fascism in Brazil, even because the nationalist discourse that emerged with the hosting of the Soccer World Cup in 2014, the mythologizing of populist political leaders, the incitement to an alienated and consumerist spectacle society, among other findings, indicated a terrifying future political conjuncture. Coincidence or not, the Brazilian population elects the candidate Jair Bolsonaro to the presidency of the federal government in 2018, who combines the characteristics mentioned above, but aggravated by hate speech, resentment, and perversion – and by the systematic practices of State terrorism in Brazil.

The brief contextual considerations bring us back to our object of study: State terrorism is not an imperative

exclusive to dictatorships: it reconfigures itself in democratic regimes, and requires new dynamics of resistance and overcoming from social movements. How can education, political culture, and social memory collaborate to regulate political power and avoid setbacks in the processes of human rights conquests in Latin America?

Initially, the text discusses the concepts of State terrorism on which we will base our attempt to rebuild a social memory. The political act of remembering will be the historiographical amalgam for us to overcome a mere contextual cut, seeking a critical look at political systems of repressive and coercive State apparatuses that remain active regardless of the historical moment. Despite this, the rescue of a social and political being, the protagonist of historical creation will be evoked – especially through a historical creation anchored in a social memory that facilitates the understanding of State terrorism processes aiming at its utopian occlusion.

From the problematization of forms of State terrorism, we propose the search for societal “clues” for a “certain” social memory. The “clues” will be shattered pieces of different concepts and ways of looking at the past, whose approach portrays a clipping of social memory that we wish to retain through our experience – referencing here all of Walter Benjamin’s contribution to the inseparability between memory and lived experience. That is why we say a “certain” memory, it is a piece that we consider legitimate for the reconstruction and strengthening of an emancipatory political culture. To do so, we will use the help a fictional and poetic writing resource, as we will see below.

The development of the text also offers an overview of multiple perspectives for multiple memories – some experiences are contextualized and made complex in the sense of re-signification of State terrorism processes through the collective effort of this act of remembering. The contributions of museums and memory centers are shown to be societal experiences of immeasurable value from this perspective of analysis since they facilitate the socialization of renewed historiographical visions in public spaces for the construction of knowledge aimed at strengthening social memory.

Finally, the article seeks to highlight the importance of education, political culture, and social memory to avoid the rise of historical revisionism and denialism, proposing social memory as a crucial epistemological category for resistance against future forms of State terrorism.

State terrorism yesterday and today in dictatorships and democracies

When we look at how the State terrorism is conceived, we can go down very fine lines among the institutions of the State. This is because State terrorism processes are hardly limited to the proclaimed legal spheres, but rather perpetrated by other social strata linked to militias, financial corporations, scientific centers, and other institutions that are part of a productive chain of violence.

For this brief study, we will establish a comprehensive concept in which *State terrorism* is understood “as any and all forms of violation of the human condition and freedom of life practiced by this institution”³, and

State terrorisms can be instituted, essentially, under the aegis of a Democratic State of Law, of a Dictatorship (civil or military) or, at its peak of development, under the State of War. In all cases, State terrorisms are characterized by a centralized and unregulated political power, by an economy anchored in the productive chain of violence, and also by a mass culture transmitted through the society of the spectacle⁴.

It is important to problematize the quote above, in particular by contextualizing it in the Modern State of mass society. The behavior of the citizen immersed in the recent mass society brings new contours to the forms of State terrorism, notably through the mechanisms of political propaganda started with J. Goebbels (at the time of German Nazism) and the subsequent developments of post-World War II commercial propaganda. Thus, social alienation as the psychoanalytical basis of mass society enables full political unconsciousness of the citizen who, in turn, takes no responsibility for possible atrocities committed by their own rulers. The magic formula for a concept of passive citizenship alien to the new dimensions of political and economic propaganda of mass society. Intensified by the new information and communication technologies, such forms of ideological propaganda penetrate the most subtle meanders of everyday life (through cell phone apps and virtual social media, for example), and define behaviors, forms of consumption, spiritualities, political stands, in short, redefine the human condition itself in its alienation: the alienation of our humanity. New wrong paths for the

oppression of State terrorism, whose oppressed end up *being* the executioners themselves. The oppressed

suffer a duality that settles in the “interiority” of their *being*. They discover that if they are not free, they can never authentically *be*. They want to *be* but are afraid to *be*. They *are* them and at the same time, they *are the other*, introjected in them, as an oppressive conscience.⁵

From this perspective, we can reflect about up to what extent our actions are really *our* actions – and not unconscious social practices perpetrated by the discourse of the *Other*, which rises in our imagination and determines our behavior *from the outside inwards* as a social and political being. It is what Cornelius Castoriadis defines as heteronomy. “The essence of heteronomy – or alienation, in the broadest sense of the term – at the individual level, is the domination by an autonomous imaginary that has taken on the function of defining both reality and desire for the subject”⁶. And it is precisely in the refusal to consolidate this domain of heteronomy that the author suggests “another relationship between conscious and unconscious, between lucidity and imaginary function, in a different attitude of the subject in relation to oneself, in a profound modification of the activity-passivity mixture”⁷. And what kind of relationship is this anyway? From the perspective of the philosophy of autonomy, it is a relationship of recognizing this continuous movement between the discourse of the Other and the discourse of the subject and trying to understand it from our conscience (*Ego*) to the detriment of our unconscious (*Id*).

The reflection is pertinent due to the evident historical finding that no societal process of State terrorism is materialized without the support of a significant portion of the population to which it is inserted, and that at different times its complicity – or the denial of monstrous evidence – defines the intensity of such processes.

The mental scenario that I am talking about is often related, of course, to denialist positions, which are almost always misleading and manipulative. As it is known, the main motivation for these was provided by perceptions induced by large companies – depending on the case, by governments as well –, under a strategy designed to sow doubts and, ultimately, to generate ignorance.⁸

The author warns, in particular, of the denial of a collapsing capitalist society (underlining the environmental crisis), but whose mental scenario to which he refers reliably illustrates the reasoning that ends in social alienation for issues crucial to human survival. And there is no greater humanitarian breakdown than the justifications of *war*.

It is not a question here of venturing into an analysis of war in the many historiographic approaches, but rather referencing it in its most recent propositions. In the first place, it is evident that wars became increasingly globalized at the end of the 20th century, following the tendency of the transnationalization of capital and its productive chain of violence that moves rapidly to the various parts of the planet, that can generate profit maximization and the accumulation of wealth. However, the justifications of wars change over time, falsifying history with other arguments. Now,

wars continued in the predominant form of “humanitarian interventions”, such as the pioneering case of the War in Bosnia, between 1992-1995, and soon after, the War in Kosovo, in 1999. And right after the attacks of September 11, 2001, in the United States, the so-called “war on terrorism” became widespread and took on various forms that continue to this day, in the second decade of the 21st century.⁹

Still, according to FIORI (2018), wars – and here I urge a direct analogy with other State terrorism processes not as evident as wars – have classic and modern theses and arguments that underlie them: the *classic* (“promotion of peace”, “just war”, and “holy war”) and the modern (“civilization”, “hegemony”, and “progress”).

From the perspective of surveillance, control, and punishment policies oriented toward everyday life, I highlight the role of using information and communication technologies for the constitution of a police-like society, where conduct affects the

belief in the police, in the citizen-police that watches over others and is constantly monitored by electronic devices (...), and they agree with surgical summary executions and torture in an era of a plethora of rights, democratic panacea and pride in the State of Law in refinement.¹⁰

The threshold between the Rule of Law and a permanent State of Exception is a frontier very well explored by AGAMBEN (2007), where he precisely questions the

boundary between the legality of a State and its legal systems. In this work¹¹, the author still presents a captivating critical examination of the controversy between Walter Benjamin and Carl Schmitt about the State of Exception.

But how does the adventure of Humanity faces so many misadventures? How could we clarify the forms of State terrorism that, in addition to those observed today, spanned centuries, and were perpetuated in the reframing of time? What is the importance of remembering them in the scientific environment of recovery of social memory as an immeasurable value to political culture? Evoking History in the required intensity of precise resistance may suggest transcending the outlines of the academic word, and in this sense follows a brief poetic fictional textual concession for the *act of remembering*.

The time machine

So that we can move freely through different eras, we invite the reader to materialize one of the most famous utopias of any historian: a time machine. This imagery teleportation machine may help us to break some time-space barriers and enable us to remember some necessary *clues* for our investigation.

First clue

Let us calculate the first place and date that is quite intriguing to our eyes: 1492. On the 12th of October, the waters of the Atlantic Ocean are calm, and the serenity of the vessel Pinta lulled by the early morning does not distract

the eyes of the sailor Rodrigo de Triana, who sees land after weeks of sailing.

What follows afterwards?

No other pestilence could the devil invent to destroy that entire world, consume and kill all those people there and depopulate as he has depopulated such large and so populated kingdoms, and that alone was enough to depopulate the world, as was the invention of “*repartimiento*” and “*encomiendas*” of those people, who distributed them and entrusted them to the Spaniards, as if they entrusted them to all the devils, or like herds of cattle handed over to hungry wolves.¹²

In this future greatest ethnocide in history, a gloomy fog glows with the figures of Christopher Columbus, Hernán Cortez, Pedro de Alvarado, Pedro Álvares Cabral, and hundreds of other nebulous images that pervade centuries after centuries of slaughter in the name of a civilization that, above all, idolizes a God who dissociates good from evil.

More than five centuries of different contours of the State in formation. More than five centuries of violence and terror against native people.

Second clue

We anchored in the Port of Ahudá, in 1822. A large flow of black people gathered in a mass trapped in different ways. In the distance, and at the same time omnipresent, Francisco Félix de Sousa walks through heaps of cotton, deposits of arms and ammunition, precious metals, and other goods for the slave trade leveraged in the region.

Commanding one of the most important fleets of slave ships, Francisco Félix contributed with his business to the formation of the Empire of Brazil – independent on the glorious 7th of September. He shines as one of the icons of those 350 years of the slave trade across the Atlantic Ocean, in which about four million Africans were uprooted. On the outskirts of the Port of Ahudá, we witness the movement of black people of different ages around the Tree of Oblivion – a sinister carousel for all those who would embark far from the continent and erase their ancestral land from their memory. The overseas?

*What's the matter, child? the sand of the road
glittering to twinkle
It looks like the burning blade of a sword.
The sun shines on the savannas. Warm is the wind.
In the shadow of the palm tree
The farmer leans over drowsily.
(,,,)
No. You lost your mother to the fierce whip
And you wander dizzily fumbling the night.
You cry before you laugh... poor child!...
What do you want, unfortunate being?...
– My friend, I want the iron of revenge.
(“The child”. The slaves, Castro Alves)*

Third clue

Kirov, 1933. Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Cold very cold. Huge, dark doors. A lot of noise from people working: there are shovels, pickaxes, tools, iron on iron, and

iron on stone. Hunger, lots of hunger. But only the taste of snow in an inhospitable, desert, white landscape.

The tracks are laid down for a ghost train, whose itinerary is just the detour of a socialist revolution. The red star proclaimed on the wooden scaffolding at the entrance to shelter houses differs from the stars in the sky: when it exploded, it did not shine. Instead of light, it emanated blood.

On the prison pediments, the principle of work is inscribed: “Work is a matter of honor, a matter of glory, a matter of valor and heroism”.

Ten years later, in 1943, in another region of the USSR:

On December 28, 1943, before dawn, soldiers with flashlights appeared at every house in our village at the same time. And it was said: ‘Stay together, you will be sent to Siberia.’ They gave us between ten and fifteen minutes to get ready. We took only warm clothes; we had no food at home. They rounded us all up at school, then took us to the station and put us in the cattle cars. We were fed, and every day they brought a bucket of soup, sometimes there was herring in it. At the stops, soldiers would shout: “Any corpses? Any corpses?”¹³

Fourth clue

Now we teleport to Auschwitz, Poland, in April 1941. We observe several workers starting a peculiar work: one of the units of the network of concentration and extermination camps in Nazi Germany. Subjected to slave labor, these prisoners are at the service of the IG Farben

company. While the tractors are leveling the land, in other places workers are digging drainage ditches, laying cables, and carrying out various other actions aimed at constructing buildings and roads.

On that occasion, we saw Carl Krauch, one of the most prominent executives of the Reich responsible for strengthening the economy of Nazi Germany. The giant chemical industry conglomerate IG Farben uses tens of thousands of enslaved deportees for its purposes – revealing that in addition to the death camps, we find other sub-headquarters at Auschwitz directly related to increases in German economic productivity. Soon the principle of work will be coined on the façade of Auschwitz: “Work frees”.

Fifth clue

The 1970s in South America. With the direct support of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) of the United States – an agency specialized in espionage operations and clandestine and paramilitary actions – Operation Condor institutionalizes the dictatorial regimes of State terrorism in several countries, with the connivance of their rulers. Kidnappings, torture, assassinations, and exiles make up the practices of government violence, and their perverse details could not be expressed in words: the smell of death is indescribable.

Brazil, city of São Paulo. In a dark room in the basement of the political police building, we see Carlos Alberto Brilhante Ustra, head of DOI-CODI¹⁴, starting his torture procedures with political prisoners who serve them in the ritual of horror: his jouissance and pleasure is the stimulant of human destruction – psychosis given to him by

the official position he occupies in the Brazilian government. His refinements of sadism and violation of the human being are perceptible to the ears of those who listen to his dialogue with Mephistopheles.

Sixth clue

London, the year 1611. Let's see the haze hovering in the city's atmosphere, yellowish incandescent lights spread through the narrow streets, and on the left bank of the river Thames, we can see the Globe Theatre. Several onlookers leave the venue, dumbfounded, and we randomly manage to approach one of these astonished passers-by.

His name is Simon Forman, an English astrologist and herbalist, very close to the playwright William Shakespeare, author of the play that ended not long ago in that theater. He tells us a little about the play he assisted – Macbeth. Appearing in a trance-like state, he tells us about three witches, generals, betrayals, ambition, greed, power, and a murdered king. Death.

I've almost forgotten what fear feels like. There was a time when a shriek in the night would have filled me with dread, and a ghost story would have made the hairs on my skin rise up as if they were alive. But now I've feasted on true horrors, and horror is so familiar to my bloody thoughts that it can't startle me.

("Macbeth", William Shakespeare)

Perhaps this last clue is quite different from the others that offered us discretion on State terrorism. Values that nourish a strange human condition and that can create perverse political systems – naturalization and insensitivity of terror. Could art in its cosmic hiding places support us in perseverance and in the drive for re-existence?

Multiple looks, multiple memories: the societal experience revisited

From the clues offered by our curious teleportation machine, we can now revisit those acute moments experienced by Humanity observed by other eyes. Looking at societal terror processes to remind ourselves of something. But what and for what? In an attempt to remember our trips through the teleportation machine, our meeting now overcomes the deviation of fiction and finds in some locations and institutions the safe harbor of another memory – the socially constructed memory, chosen in favor of new historical creations. Those are museums, cultural centers, schools, books, monuments, sounds, perfumes, natural landscapes, and everything that the future of memory can offer us.

But why didn't the teleportation machine take us to other times and spaces? Why weren't we taken to countless other historical contexts whose humanity had been plagued by the institutions of terrorist governments? Perhaps the clues that have been offered to us so far want to indicate some specific piece, *some memory*...

The previously collected clues indicate something, in fact. The formation of the Brazilian State was based on

two permanent pillars: the mass extermination of native people joined by the denial of their existence and slave labor in its different political and legal contexts. “Genocide and slavery” represent much more our flag than the motto “order and progress”. Or would these be peculiar synonyms of the people without memory?

In addition to the two structuring pillars of Brazilian society, the presented clues also indicate two historical experiences of State terrorism that were remarkable in the 20th century – the Nazi and Stalinist regimes. These *clues* take us back to the assumption that both the left ideological discourse (communism) and the right ideological discourse (nazism/fascism) can produce the atrocities of State terrorism, and that their historical practices resulting from such discourses will never be forgotten. It is not the case that we equate these ideologies – even because communism presupposes socially egalitarian and emancipatory theoretical pillars, while the prerogatives of Nazism and fascism foreshadow violent autocracies and social inequality among human beings. What I am referring to is the serious mistake of orthodox Marxist historiography that distorts historical facts and neglects the possibility of forms of State terrorism in the shadow of governments with leftist ideology – especially in its theses and arguments about “progress”. *Belo Monte* and many other projects of ethnocidal development will not be forgotten¹⁵.

The clues compiled about the South American military dictatorships, in turn, refer us to the historical process that we witness in Brazil today. Revisionism and denialism of torture and other atrocities committed by the State - during the Military Dictatorship - shine in the public debate, and

this is perhaps related to a deliberate policy of forgetting that has been in force since the inception of the State in Brazil.

This also means that all imposed forgetting policies, because they are the opposite of a process of elaborating the past, will not help to forget a painful past, even if, at first, they silence it. These policies prepare much more for the return of the repressed past, the repetition and permanence of violence, a form of perverted memory that, in fact, prevents us from *getting rid of*, from disconnecting from the past to be able, in short, to live better in the present.¹⁶

Also, according to the author,

Although Brazil has signed several international treaties against torture, international jurisdiction is simply ignored when it comes to the dictatorship torturers and murderers, under the pretext of reconciliation; this also means that Brazil is the only country in South America where torturers were never tried (nor denounced as such), where there was no transitional justice, where the Army did not make a *mea culpa* of its coup tendencies.¹⁷

To fight against forgetting policies is to open new opportunities for another history – and the case of Brazil does not reflect the posture of other neighboring countries, in which the State justice did not behave as a co-author of the crimes against humanity committed in the military dictatorships. On the contrary: in addition to building a memory that is immersed in the public debate through

various societal spaces promoted by organized civil society¹⁸, the judiciary powers of these countries have condemned hundreds of murderers and torturers, civilians, and soldiers. Meanwhile, in Brazil, several authorities continue to publicly proclaim ideas of positive apology for torture, genocide, and the destruction of the planet.

To paraphrase Walter Benjamin, the “astonishment at the fact that the episodes we are experiencing in the 21st century are *still* possible is not a philosophical astonishment. It does not generate any knowledge, other than the knowledge that the concept of history from which such astonishment emanates is untenable”¹⁹.

Revisionism and historiographic denialism, social memory, political culture, State terrorism

Brazilian historiography is peculiar regarding its state of knowledge about the “State terrorism” terminology. Although it is the result of genocide and slavery – a binomial of *State terrorism* that has devastated a territory for more than five centuries – historians timidly use the concept.

But the references are not scarce in the tragic history of Brazil: despite the examples mentioned above, the dynamics of the Brazilian State have always orchestrated its maintenance of the funeral march of violence, regardless of governmental circumstances. The murderous police State in its genesis, and the silent and complicit history of its executioners. It is not strange, therefore, to find in one of the largest cities in Brazil one of the monumental icons of this *necropolitics*: the Monument to the Flags, by Victor

Brecheret, in São Paulo, exalts the murderous undertakings by the Bandeirantes in the formation of the Brazilian State between the 17th and 18th century. The memory of the oppressor is flattered by the oppressed citizens of São Paulo.

Still in this sense, the neglect of social memory in Brazil is not unusual. Despite countless other examples of the exaltation of names of genocide leaders, symbolism, and insignia of terror and violence, social memory takes place in the field of experience. It is precisely through societal experience that we can remember something, and this is the meaning given by Benjamin to the act of remembering.

There has never been a monument of culture that was not also a monument of barbarism. And, just as culture is not exempt from barbarism, neither is the process of transmitting culture. Hence, as far as possible, the historical materialist deviates from it. It considers it its task to brush history against the grain.²⁰

Walter Benjamin's consecrated point of view, whether synthesized in *brushing history against the grain*, opens countless paths for the historian's craft, as well as for their partners. The act of remembering goes beyond the alleged objectivity of history and offers us analytical creative power in an infinite range of renewed forms of historical creation.

The social memory built, therefore, by the core of the act of remembering, converges in turning culture complex – *culture* as a *mirror of the life* that we want to incorporate into our art of living. A process that is as slow as it is urgent because if on the one hand, it will be in permanent construction, on

the other hand, it implies immediate transformations in our relations of being and living with the Other.

However, in populations and people that are careless of their reflections on social memory, the history of the winners rises to the history of the losers and often erases a fundamental memory for History. Such carelessness even offers an open field for historical revisionism and denialism.

Historical revisionism implies reinterpreting history. Revisions can both contribute to modifying analyses of a given phenomenon or historical fact and serve to justify interests of a different nature. In the first case, it is a fully accepted academic procedure that contributes to the advancement of knowledge of the past; in the second, the revision stems from intentions outside the field of history, because it does not take into account the academic standards that guide the procedures of historical investigation and the historical method and, depending on the interests in question, manipulates data/facts and presents a distorted interpretation from the past²¹.

Analogous to the historian's reasoning, we can conjecture something similar in the area of Education, especially in the historical perspective of building an education focused on autonomy and human freedom - vehemently denied by groups absolutely alien to the scientific knowledge of pedagogy and that insist on the reinstating of authoritative practices at school. What does the return of militarized schools in Brazil in 2019 represent if not a farce managed by forces of the productive economy

of violence in the area of Education, and who seek to impose anti-dialogue policy through bureaucratic decrees?

In this sense, the convergence of education, political culture, and social memory emerges as a field of transdisciplinary knowledge essential to unmasking such dehumanizing forces in society. The role of the school is central in this endeavor: research on self-experience and collective experience can emerge in a context of rescuing our ancestry – not restricted to identity aspects, but also in the conformity of political, economic, and social relations throughout the cycles of History. Social memory is only possible in reflection about what we choose to remember, and what we choose to forget.

The rise of historiographic revisionism is anchored in distortions of History, and is often manufactured based on interests outside the human sciences. (CAPELATO, 2016). It is the duty of scientific research to strive for the wide dissemination of a culture of thought that rejects ignorance as the *modus operandi* of knowledge, preventing obscurantism from supplanting intelligence in the political life of the planet.

Social memory as resistance to State terrorisms

However, it was very difficult for him to think coherently about it while noticing that the pain, instead of disappearing, only eased, with its tail in the air. How many more times would the scorpion

*sting him? If only I could, using secret alchemy,
transform its poison into a benevolent substance!*

(“The Passenger Walter Benjamin”, Ricardo Cano Gaviria)

It is precisely from the intentions of political forces representative of the violence productive chain economy that societal ghosts are revived, whether these are not just illusory visions of a distant dystopia, but an organized system of State terrorism that affects the daily life of communities, populations, and people spread across the planet.

It is difficult to perceive the future – temporality that exceeds the assumptions of the Humanities but is always the object of our alleged predictability. How could State terrorisms be prohibited in a well-structured political society? Dialoguing with anthropology, let us remember how Pierre Clastres problematizes the question of the prohibition of violence in primitive societies, as well as the regulation of political power (CLASTRES, 1983). In his studies, Clastres points out that in societies without the State, or rather, in societies against the State, violence accepted in society has a well-defined limit, and is even controlled and sanctioned by rites of passage – rituals that even include marks and mutilations of the body. On the other hand, the political power of the chiefs is always under suspicion, and subject to immediate replacement of their representatives if it is not faithful to the social designs.

In our society, whose political power is exercised in an absolutely unregulated way – as well as the violence that sustains it – we perceive the opposite of the maturity of primitive societies. Torture takes on infinite dimensions (hunger, cold, various punishments), the implemented

policy detached from civil society, the laws conformed to the purposes of a minority group of *uetic psychotics*, whether these people are true cannibals who consume the lives of others aiming for private goals and profits - in this perspective, imperialism, slavery, exploitation of workers and other forms of gross consumption of life would be representations of cannibalism. (FORBES, 1998)

But the social memory conceived in this text suggests a new historical creation, in which each societal experience overcomes its contradictions of endogenous self-destruction, and releases imagery energies for times to come that are more consistent with the potential of human life. A social memory that does not make a *tabula rasa* of ancestral worldviews, nor relegate humanity's founding entropic moments to oblivion – especially because it is in this chaos that we are heading somewhere...

Between Thanatos and Eros, humanity devours itself, contracting and expanding its passions. I wish we could awaken Eros and seek other paths for our political culture, transforming education into something aimed at the proliferation of life impulses.

CHAPTER 3

EDUCATION AND ANTIMILITARIST POLITICAL CULTURE: THE CONTRIBUTION OF AUTONOMOUS AND ANARCHIST SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

The defense of an antimilitarist education is one of the most important and significant possibilities for links between education and political culture. In this text, I reflect on some assumptions of antimilitarist education and political culture, based on concepts, meanings, and everyday experiences that reside in autonomous and anarchist social movements – distinctly guided by anti-authoritarian and anti-capitalist resistance.

The antimilitarist struggle is among the most current and radical ones. Radical because it belongs to the very beginnings of such movements, and current due to the unfolding of the productive chain of violence – transnationalized on a large scale and economically

incorporated into the general conditions of production in the main capitalist States – whether of liberal capitalism (United States, Europe, and others), or of State capitalism (Russia, China, and others). Decoding some aspects of the productive chain of violence is a research project of enormous scope, but the ideas circumscribed here seek to undermine this chain and imagine a society beyond its imperatives. My recent academic works already point to this utopian quest (MARIANA, 2008, 2014, 2017, 2020), and I think that the decoding of State terrorism systems is an elementary research theme for humanities. Autonomous and anarchist scientific thoughts invariably contribute to this.

Initially, I emphasize the uniqueness of anarchism as a counterpoint to wars. Even in particular historical moments whose anarchist practices made use of violence, anarchism never produced dictatorships or authoritarian and bloodthirsty political systems – contrary to the liberal capitalist, fascist, Nazi, or Bolshevik ideologies. These ideologies have allowed the emergence of wars and military atrocities unmatched in history. And even Marxism, which so much inspires a communist society, develops in the shadow of the Gulags and massacres of Russian-Soviet imperialism: its theoretical meanings will never be alien to its social and historical practices. Even with its endless contradictions and ideological derivations, anarchism presupposes an anti-authoritarian society, socially self-managed and of mutual kindness among the living beings of the planet.

The anarchists have always been opposed to war, but not all are opposed to violence. They are

antimilitarists, but not necessarily pacifists. For them, war is the supreme example of authority outside society and at the same time a powerful confirmation of authority within society. The organized violence and destruction of war is a vastly augmented version of the organized violence and destruction of the State: war is the health of the State. The anarchist movement has a strong tradition of war resistance and war preparation. Some anarchists supported wars but were always considered renegades by their comrades, and this total opposition to national wars is one of the great unifying factors for anarchists. But anarchists distinguished national wars – between States – from civil wars – between classes.²²

At the same time, civil disobedience has an important contribution to actively rejecting the devices of the capitalist system. Henry Thoreau, in his famous work “Civil disobedience” (1849), marks the reflections on the repudiation of the payment of taxes required by the State to finance wars – annexation of Mexican territories by the United States in its historical context –, and points to several other forms of renunciation of the State through the positioning of the condition of the human being beyond a coerced citizenship.

Mandatory military service is one of the assumptions of National States – sometimes for the political organization of the bodies of its population, through the composition of its Armed Forces, sometimes to carry out wars and “special operations” (quotes for the euphemism used by bureaucrats

for possible killings). The mandatory military service for the entire adult population is something peculiar to the Modern State, and perhaps this is the first and most significant interference in the control of subjects. One of the most important challenges to this massive population control system is the act of not enlisting in the Armed Forces, or desertion. A rare challenge nowadays, since the lack of a draft certificate leads to the marginalization of the subject, and – in its most diverse forms – the destitution of the most elementary rights to life. Desertion, i.e. the abandonment of repressive and deadly actions of the Armed Forces, in turn, is a criminal act.

In her magnificent text, “Mandatory military service for women? I refuse! I denounce!” (1933), Maria Lacerda de Moura already developed some radical principles of the antimilitarist struggle. In the first place, Lacerda de Moura did not spare the Nazi, Fascist, and Bolshevik dictatorships, not even the US military initiatives and others that she called “a social organization of civilized cannibals intoxicated by the science of killing”, or “the collective suicide of the human race through the gigantomania of scientific warfare technique” (MOURA, 1999, p. 34). It is important to emphasize the interwar historical context of the writings of the anarchist Maria Lacerda de Moura, in which the war industry employed male, female, and child labor. Notably, in the Soviet Union, the forced exodus of peasant women to arms factories is observed – but that is not much different from other States that consolidated their national economies in the productive chain of violence. The antimilitarist and anti-nationalist lucidity of Lacerda de Moura even defies mandatory military service with her life:

I refuse to enlist or attend the general draft. I refuse to cooperate, in any way, in the army of extermination of human life and disrespect for individual freedom. I already consider myself enlisted alongside those who will be voluntarily sacrificed to nationalist rage. I'd rather die than kill. (...) Who can convince me that I should kill someone? What human strength can arm my arm to take my brother's life? Who has the right to impose on my conscience the duty to take up arms, to manufacture weapons, or to contribute to the massacre of a war?²³

But nationalist rage does not calm down resentful and perverse hearts. The fury in defense of a patriotic flag can reach organizational madness in the State's own internal social security policy, and it is in these madnesses that the military police forces are framed. Financed to maintain the capitalist hierarchical order, sometimes alienated from their purposes, sometimes voracious in the materialization of their atrocious desires: the policeman presents himself in everyday life as an empowered subject in the monopoly of violence. In the specific case of Brazil, the Military Police operates beyond the legalities established in the State spheres. Responsible for numerous extrajudicial executions, the so-called "death squads" represent a paramilitary faction that kills with impunity all citizens who affront the order established by the military caste. In addition to the "death squads", several paramilitary groups are organized around security work for sectors of the financial elite: the militias protect businessmen and professional politicians who spare

no effort to guarantee their private interests. The private militias boast veiled permission from the judicial authorities to take over the State's monopoly of violence for the blatant benefit of protecting their privileges and usuries.

It is important to highlight the differences between private militias and popular militias. If the former focuses on consolidating social inequality, popular militias self-organize in favor of platforms for social struggles for rights and social equality. The main historical difference between private militias and popular militias can be found in the hegemonic social order in which they are configured. The popular militias (in general composed of workers from different origins, in addition to native populations) are formed based on the need to defend social rights, territories, and public goods in general. Private militias (generally composed of military and police officers – some of whom were exonerated from their institutions due to extremely violent behavior or dementia) are formed based on the need to defend capitalist privileges, or to appropriate public lands and safeguard private goods in general. Popular militias, or even popular armies, can represent social ruptures antagonistic to militarism – even if their approaches regarding the use of weapons are delicate border areas (as in the Carnation Revolution, in Portugal).

Recent examples of popular armed organizations linked to the purposes of the Social Revolution can be found in the Zapatista Army of National Liberation and in the struggle of women in Kurdistan, in Rojava – very well analyzed in GENNARI (2002) and in COMIT DE SOLIDARIEDADE RESISTÊNCIA POPULAR CURDA DE SÃO PAULO (2016), respectively. Territorial control and

the dynamics of social autonomy – anchored in the basics of horizontality and self-regulation of political power – are antagonistic elements to the militarism of the State and its hierarchies and alienations. Such social movements make a broad contribution to an educational sense focused on preparing for social life and thus transcend schools, popular education practices, memories, and pedagogical notebooks.

Beyond words – it is in the reunion of the poetry of life that the historical creations of these social movements materialize the heterotopias of a new world, in which human beings are continuously building resistance against “urbancentrism”, against speciesism and, ultimately, against all forms of biophobia that spread through the productive chain of the violence industry. And by redefining pacifism from the perspective of radical criticism, such movements entangle a daily life of dignity in social struggle, which certainly inspires us.²⁴

Learning from more acute popular struggles can be significant in situations of resistance against State oppression, and this knowledge is often crucial for us to reach one of the main idealizations of education: preparation for social life. Autonomist political culture brings together a set of skills to strengthen social autonomy in relation to the capitalist system. In this sense, anarchist and autonomous collectives allow an antimilitarist education not only through the production of knowledge in periodicals, magazines, fanzines, videos, etc. but especially in direct actions. Direct actions in public spaces express other perspectives on violence: the distorted gazes that dilate and condemn the

shattering of glass in a bank or an occupation by landless workers in large estates are the same ones that are blinded by a moment of daily violence against minorities or violations against life and human rights.

In this sense, the concept of peace becomes more complex and distances itself absolutely from apathy or passivity. Peace, in the meaning proposed here, engenders its inseparability with social justice, equality, otherness, anti-authoritarianism, and respect for other autonomists assumptions. That is, we never conceived peace as something neutral, but rather as a praxis determined by political meaning.

In “Pacifism and Balance of Terror”, Maurício Tragtenberg elevates the importance of the world pacifist movement against what he calls the “balance of terror”, namely, the balance established by the US and Soviet arms industries. Tragtenberg denounces the exorbitant military expenditures, the sale and proliferation of weapons to backward capitalist countries between the 1960s and 1980s, and the contradiction in the use of resources by the military-industrial complex – including scientific research for military purposes – in relation to the need to overcome endemic hunger in the world. The text makes important reference to manifestos of pacifist movements that call for “peace without weapons, replacement of military education by teaching peace in schools, dismantling of nuclear arsenals in the East and West, the prohibition of women performing military service”.²⁵

Surprisingly, Tragtenberg’s article, originally published in 1984, is exceptionally up-to-date, as it states that

The pacifist movement has a future to the extent that, in addition to its expressed claims, it shows its effort to overcome obsolete capitalist structures in the West and State capitalism in the USSR and East. Without this, it runs the risk of converting pacifism into empty rhetoric.²⁶

It is impossible not to contextualize the author's idea today, especially in the context of the war in Ukraine started by Russia in 2022. The rhetoric of NATO defenders and defenders of Russia converge solely in the search for something infamous: supposed justice in war and a justification for military-industrial complex spending. In the case of Brazil, what most demonstrates the empty rhetoric of most of the so-called political sectors of the *left* is, on the one hand, pronouncing themselves in favor of social justice, and on the other hand, supporting Russian military operations in Ukraine. Under a naive (or complicit) idea that the enemy of my enemy is my friend – that is, Russian imperialism helps us in the social struggle by fighting US imperialism – such political sectors neglect the military atrocities of both countries involved in this war (which, incidentally, concentrate the largest number of Nazi and fascist organizations on the planet), in addition to alienating themselves in the face of the transnationalization dynamics of the large military industry companies (which operate in world conflicts using mixed capital and, in a macabre economic dynamics, nourish each other with the competition of their products in the market of the military-industrial complex).

In my doctoral thesis (MARIANA, 2008) I already discussed certain dynamics of the transnationalization of arms companies, in particular when problematizing the socio-environmental impacts of war industries in the context of International Nuclear Disarmament Agreements. The case of the Kirovskii zavod (nuclear missile incineration plant in the city of Perm, Ural Mountains region, Russia) is a good example: the nuclear missile burning program – where the weapon scrap is burned, and the nuclear warheads are reconditioned – has funds from the transnational Washington Group International transferred to the Russian company Mashinostroitel. On the one hand, the results are catastrophic for the inhabitants of the Perm region, who are exposed to the highly toxic dioxides that are released during the missile burning process. On the other hand, the capital generated by US and Russian military industry companies boosts the global arms economy.

Antimilitarist collectives raised public awareness of the importance of closing the Kirovskii zavod.

Action strategies developed by the population, against the burning of missiles and rockets in Perm, are driven by the success of previous popular protests. The resistance against the missile burning program in Perm has broad popular support, mainly from the Zakamsk community, in addition to the actions of five activist groups operating in the city: Anarcho-ecological Resistance Movement, Chemical Security Union, Moscow and other Russian cities Autonomous Movement, Ekaterinburg Movement against

Violence, Guardians of the Rainbow. The activities carried out by the people of Perm and activist groups encompass a very wide range of actions: permanent protest camps in front of the Kirovskii zavod power plant, blockades of administration buildings, leafleting, public meetings, theatrical performances, manifestations, and protests.²⁷

In the text called “The future of the anti-nuclear movement”, Murray Bookchin problematizes the dynamics of such movements and interprets them as the central importance of direct actions. He highlights that the “wealth of the antinuclear movement consists in realizing almost intuitively the need to break from the system and to act effectively outside of it”²⁸. For Bookchin, the slogans “No to Nukes” and restricting our political criticism to the specific issue of the anti-nuclear struggle are not enough. In reality, it is about overcoming the hierarchical exploitative relations of society and nature, as well as the exploitation of human beings over human beings. And the principle of direct action, in this sense, facilitates the development of another political culture sensitive to our capacities for self-organization of social life – beyond a technical bureaucracy of “experts” and professional politicians uncommitted to guaranteeing environmental balance of planetary life.

The principle of direct action is nothing more than the enlargement of the free city assembly, the means by which each individual rediscovers the hidden energies in himself and regains confidence in his abilities and his own knowledge. Direct action is the means by which the individual

can directly assume control of society without resorting to representatives who seize not only power but also the personality of a passive and bystander constituency that lives in the shadow of the elected.²⁹

The educational principle intrinsic to the political culture of direct autonomist action complexifies the restricted notions of citizenship focused on mere action in the spheres of the State, expanding the potential of education to social life. The human condition reduced to the citizenship condition imposed by State orders becomes questioned, and the very possibility of a society against the State (CLASTRES, 1988) based on assumptions of direct democracy beyond the aristocracies of representative democracy (GRAEBER, 2011), rises again before a civilization alienated in nationalisms and its resulting militarisms. And imagining the possibility of other societal configurations beyond the State – wild, nomadic, indomitable, rebellious – is the central point of an antimilitarist education.

The ordering of the living being depends on human consciousness. The concern to harmonize species according to a balance of life rejects the statistical balance that poverty, epidemics, war, and massacres have hitherto opposed to the wild proliferation of flora, fauna, and human society. (...) This is how the old reflex of obedience is perpetuated by inertia, which for so long concealed the will and conscience of granting the living being the privilege of founding a social project.³⁰

The nationalist assumption of social organization is the same assumption as of militarism. It is born from the subjugation that both imprint on other ways of being in a society. Thinking of an autonomous place for communities, populations, and people coexisting in the same territory of the Nation become reckless for national sovereignty. Incidentally, the self-determination of people has always been configured as something risky in nationalist projects, as they call into question the logic of the centralization of political power – and the monopoly of the use of violence. Being the possibilities for building political autonomy that point to the future, indigenous and quilombola territories in Brazil represent such contradiction – even embedded in a genocidal, racist, and slaveholder State.

The nationalist ideology is institutionalized in the Nation-State and distances itself from its own people: its preponderance before human life is exhorted by the need to die for the Fatherland in case of war. Such alienation is also corroborated in the triad sentence “God, Fatherland and Family”: a single God who captures all other forms of human spirituality; a single homeland that crushes all other experiences of social organization; a single family guided by blood ties that denies the self-construction of the identity of human groups. Incidentally, it is essential to highlight the irrationality perpetuated by such institutions, which reach their most expressive perversities in the mutually incompatible ideas of “just wars” or “holy wars”.

Militaristic alienation reaches its ostentation in the ideological motto “orders are orders” – in which lower ranks carry out orders from higher ranks without being able to question them, and not even in cases of violation

of human rights. And many times military orders become autonomous in relation to their subjects, who do not even understand the nature and purpose of a given order. The military motto “orders are orders” is masterfully satirized in Jorge Furtado’s cinematographic work, the short film “The Day When Dorival Faced The Guard”³¹, which has become a timeless antimilitarist work of art.

Social alienation and hierarchy are key features of capitalism and, in turn, militarism. All educational practices that oppose these elements contribute to exercising awareness/responsibility for our actions and to an egalitarian and horizontal society. But in the context of wars and the development of the productive chain of violence, we observe two different displacements in the field of education. On one hand, the dynamization of innovative school experiences that incorporate a culture of peace to confront and transcend an aggressive society; on the other, a culture of hostility marked by militarized schools, and by wars and conflicts that cause disruption or even destruction of entire school systems, and deaths of students, teachers, and education workers.

In our antimilitarist memory – a significant element for our reflection – the execution of Francisco Ferrer Y Guardia, Janusz Korczak and their students in the death camp, the educational experience of the Colméia founded by Sébastien Faure, “a victim, like so many other works built with love, of war hated forever”³², will never be relegated to oblivion. And may this memory never be guided by hate or despair. I beg permission to convey Case Angatu’s idea of indigenous (re)existences to bestow all the victims of the aforementioned hostilities through our sublime ancestry:

“Instead of resentment, we should cultivate memory like a plant that sprouts and takes root in our *angas* (souls). When we leave this physical human form... we will enchant and become part of the nature”.³³

Autonomous school experiences contribute to a tradition of humanizing and emancipatory pedagogical practices. Several studies have already discussed such practices that remain guardians of an anti-authoritarian education, such as TOLSTOI (1977), SOLÀ (1978), MORIYÓN (1989), LIPIANSKY (1999), and others. Currently, the Paidéia School – an anarchist school located in Mérida, Spain – incorporates education for non-violence in one of its assumptions:

Wrath generates us the violence, and its materialization is war; but the war is not only the confrontation of the armies to impose the hegemony of their domain, the war is also the daily attitude that constantly confronts each person with the same ones that surround him, and this underground and persistent war is the germ of any act of death; when joy, which is a congratulatory feeling, is annihilated, the only thing that is produced is sadness; that's why, when it's time to choose, we choose what devalues and negativizes us, instead of concentrating our energies on enhancing value and positive feelings. (...) If we were capable of eradicating from our personal essence the desire for power and transform it into the desire to create, military wars could possibly not take place.³⁴

We live in a unique historical moment of Humanity: the effective possibility of extinction of the human species and of the infinite forms of life on Earth. Such unprecedented potential is made possible by the development of planetary armed forces – in particular nuclear, chemical, biological, and other weapons.

Militarism insults us: from its military dictatorships to humanitarian armies and their “special operations”, from sexist violence to disciplinary pretensions and uniforms drenched with blood. Wars are crimes against humanity. Even if the development of the productive chain of violence reaches monstrous proportions, antimilitarist education and political culture will always represent one of the fundamental movements for us to rethink the human condition and our paths as living beings.

To humanize society is not to hierarchize human beings. Emancipating society from capitalism is, above all, fighting political and religious fundamentalisms, abolishing borders, and demilitarizing the world in all its extensive shady tentacles. And overcoming the human condition means rediscovering the legitimacy of full life in all living beings that are in environmental harmony.

DEMILITARIZE



SCHOOLS & GOVERNMENT

CHAPTER 4

POPULAR EDUCATION, POLITICAL CULTURE AND STATE TERRORISM

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If clippings of time are historians' tools, I try to appropriate this tool to try to look for clues about the permanence and continuities of State terrorism practices in contemporary capitalism at the beginning of the 21st century - clues that could try to elucidate the unregulated political power (especially the power of transnational capital) as a premise of a society tormented by heteronomous institutionalities that are contrary to emancipatory practices and the autonomous anti-state communities that are to come. At the same time, I believe that such clues can try to identify the commodification and spectacularization of culture as a strategic mechanism for the amalgamation of the politics of the organization of the masses, which, incorporated into the society of control, surveillance, and punishment, feed back the practices of State terrorism.

I am not forgetting the other forms of State terrorism that preceded the milestones of the post-Industrial Revolution capitalism consolidation. The complexity of such forms would escape the purposes of this text since they would be closely congruent with other types of production – and that would open a much broader theme, much more interesting and consistent. I also try not to make a *tabula rasa* of the genocides that have recently occurred between civilizations, notably between the Judeo-Christian and the civilizations of native American people. In this way, although dialoguing with the past of societal misadventures of State terrorism (in particular with the various slave systems, due to their ties between politics and economy), this text focuses on our own historical moment.

State terrorism, as any form of violation of the human condition and freedom of life practiced by this institution, follows the genesis of the Modern State. The legitimized monopoly of coercion added to the fundamental judicial derivations for its operation (even if such derivations are never *de facto* regulated by society), allows the State to legitimize a political power that unrestrictedly uses violence.

The restriction and limit of institutionalized violence occurs, historically, due to the actions of social movements and community mobilizations. If the astonished rise of Leviathan did not witness popular uprisings for an emancipated human condition, perhaps our planet would be unaware of the permanent construction of human rights – human rights that lie far beyond State proclamations and envision a permanent dynamic of social struggle for any guarantee of rights. According to VANEIGEM, “there are no acquired rights, there are only rights to conquer”.³⁵



In this announced clipping of time, State terrorisms can be instituted, essentially, under the aegis of a Democratic State of Law, of a Dictatorship (civil or military), or, at its peak of development, under the State of War. In all cases, State terrorisms are characterized by a centralized, unregulated political power, and by an economy anchored in the productive chain of violence, and also by a mass culture transmitted through the society of the spectacle.

The contemporary conjecture of State terrorism consolidates a society of surveillance, control, and punishment, with the monopoly of coercion by the State culminating in a huge contingent of the incarcerated population. When not incarcerated, the citizen of the mass society State is duly tracked in their day-to-day life, from tracking their purchases, the routes taken in the territory, the messages and virtual groups of the social media that they are part of, and many other details hitherto unthinkable by dystopia fiction writers. Genetic tracking and the political and economic rise of gene banks find in the standardization of an ideal stereotype of human beings the confluence with the old Nazi ideals, however transposed to the 21st century.

Obviously, in the State terrorisms during wars, the horror of Leviathan arises in the much more complex contexts prior to the formation of the Modern States. In ancient wars that only engaged warriors, the population could serve the power holder who subdued his enemy, and the atrocities committed against the non-warrior population were characterized as barbarism. In the State of War terrorisms after the formation of the Modern States, the civilian population started becoming

hostage of their warriors, culminating in societal processes of generalized devastation and genocide, such as the two great world wars of the 20th century, and whose spectrum of atomic bombs dropped on the Japanese population illustrates the sordid example.

In military or civil dictatorships, State terrorism finds variants of a State of War, however applied directly to the internal population of the national territory. Exceptional laws contrary to human rights are commonly legitimized, and the coercive power of the State over its own population becomes unregulated by its citizens. The South American military dictatorships of the second half of the 20th century strongly reflect such political regimes. The physical and psychological torture imposed by the State on its own population represents only the tip of the iceberg of the State terrorisms of the Dictatorships, and fear and horror are now conceived as social values necessary for the maintenance of the imposed order.

In the case of terrorism practiced by the Democratic State of Law, we find several complexities that make it difficult to analyze and, on several occasions, its forms of resistance. This is because, *de jure*, the State does not admit practices of State terrorism in a democracy, emphasizing a human rights discourse that covers up such practices. One of the most striking examples is the practice of torture, murder, and summary trials in the streets by the military and civil police – instituted and sanctioned in the Democratic State of Law. But this example is a *fait accompli*, public and notorious, and does not represent something new for our reflective analysis. The biggest challenge is to identify the subtly sanctioned forms of State terrorism in contemporary democracies.



But in order to try to enter the challenging search for some clues of the terrorism of the Democratic State of Law, we must now make a brief historical digression. During the Cold War, the ideological bipolarization of the world yielded the exorbitant economic wealth of capital accumulation to the great war industries of capitalist and “communist” countries (meaning, *State capitalist* instead of “communist”³⁶). While the central States became the main producers of weapons (in particular the United States and the Soviet Union), the peripheral States avidly consumed their goods. Driven by the ideological polarization of the world between *capitalism* and *communism*, we are frightened watching the process of globalization of arms race, irrigated by the blood of thousands of wars provoked in the name of fratricidal homelands among themselves. Central countries produce, peripheral countries consume: *cold* war only for the central countries, bloody and world war for peripheral countries. And so military capitalism becomes globalized, inaugurating the beginnings of contemporary forms of State terrorism.

If the political and ideological polarization between *capitalism* and *communism* was in line with the economic purposes of the war industry during the Cold War, it was precisely at the end of the 1980s that such polarization began to create obstacles to its growth. Antimilitarist and pacifist movements, autonomous in relation to US or Soviet ideologies, began to occupy the streets at the end of the 1960s and gained enormous momentum in the following decades. The countless wars created by professional politicians and their sponsors faced, before their foreign enemies, their own population

mobilized in very important protests for the construction of new economic precepts. But these new political and economic precepts find duality and brutal contradiction.

On the one hand, the precepts of social life aimed at popular and community economy, guided by the anti-capitalist social movements that emerged in the last decades of the 20th century. On the other hand, the reconfiguration of the war industry in the transnationalization of its capital – now surpassing the industrial productive sector (material merchandise) and integrating the goods and services sector, and all sorts of immaterial merchandise provided by the tertiary sector of the economy.

Social movements and anti-capitalist community mobilizations from the 1950s/1960s onwards were essentially characterized by their independence and autonomy in relation to political parties and trade unions. Although still participating in potential political platforms that also included partisan currents, these autonomous movements provided a new understanding of struggle, whether the fact that these collectives excel in self-organization and horizontality within the movement itself. Far beyond slogans related to equality, freedom, socialism, and others, such autonomous movements began to practice the principles they advocated for society from their own internal organization. While political parties and trade unions were increasingly approaching the bureaucratic structures of the State (generally through their members acting as managers in which they could contemplate demands either from the working class or from the bourgeoisie), these autonomous movements rejected the assumptions of political submission to the State, thus being characterized by the radical nature of actions and critical thinking.

It is in this context that alternative bookstores, fanzines, manifestos by oppressed minorities, etc., appear in larger number, in addition to a large increase in radical opinions about the defense of life and freedom, systematized at the same time in original and creative forms of thinking the science. Thus, they renew the emancipatory scientific bias (not instrumentalized by modern capitalism) of several intellectuals and political activists of the late 19th and early 20th century, often reinvigorating critical thinking in schools, universities, and other institutions that made certain heterotopias possible. GALLO expresses the importance of educational heterotopias for us to carry out utopian actions in the gaps and between the lines of political systems for the *creation of the different* in overcoming the *topos* of the modern school.

If the *topos* of the modern school is that asymmetrical power of the normalization of bodies through discipline and social planning through biopolitics, daring to juxtapose other spaces of a symmetrical power exercised as a game, of experimental and autonomist relations, in which teaching and learning are adventures of thought. (...) Let these heterotopias be the possibilities in which the teachers are corsairs, launching themselves into an adventure of teaching, without the slightest pretense of controlling anyone's learning.³⁷

On the other hand, direct actions and street demands take on extremely new formats. Thousands of antimilitarist struggles proliferated across the planet, echoing from the cries "Make love, not war", to the more recent "Food not bombs". But it's not just antimilitarist struggles that take to

the streets. Numerous collectives that defend social equality (whether gender equality, racial equality, parental equality, equal opportunities, and others) use direct actions to paralyze the functioning of the capitalist system, abandon functions in the repression apparatus, and shine as real alternatives of the society.

In this sense, the contribution to art and culture of these autonomous movements and community mobilizations is phenomenal, and a milestone for our contemporary life. New behavioral assumptions, from attempts to organize alternative ways of life in communes, colonies, or communities far from large urban centers, and even social occupations of abandoned buildings and public spaces degenerated by the mercantile society³⁸ embrace the grandiose network tie – and that would make possible what we today, so forcefully, see as one of the viable escape valves for the political centralism of collective organizations. The meeting of diversity and plurality of the human condition, guided by the struggle around social equality, opposes the attempts to standardize the human being, transformed into a mass by the culture of spectacle and mercantile culture.

IV

It is precisely in the context of popular resistance against State terrorisms in the 20th century that democratic regimes emerge. Despite its institutional engenderings of openness to citizen political participation, other spheres of political power were also framed concurrently to such a process. Alongside democratic regimes open to popular

participation, councils and other transnational forums (in general, private meetings between heads of state and representatives of transnational corporations) will occupy a central place in defining global political and economic guidelines that, in turn, are located in a de-territorialized *locus* of the Nation-State and completely alien to democratic regimes. The World Trade Organization (WTO) is one of the most exponential prototypes of this new form of political power. Such councils and forums represent some of the most important spheres of the Extended State, so well conceptualized by BERNARDO (1998; 2000) – the author reflects against those who insist on the concept of diminishing the political power of the State in capitalism. It is through the expansion of the spheres of the political power of the Nation-State, and its extrapolation to spheres of the transnationalized economy, that the State begins to operate its breadth of action and interference in people's lives. Parallel to this process, the less important spheres of political power, restricted to the Nation-State and which do not make an effective counterpoint to the capitalist system, can now be occupied by representatives of the people through a representative (or indirect) democracies – consecrated via elections as the apex of political freedom.

Indirect democracy, or representative democracy, presupposes the choice of our representatives through elections. The elections, organized by the State, follow eligibility criteria that are absolutely immobilized by political parties. Party organizations, in turn, are economically subsidized by sectors that seek to achieve their main objective (or mission, in corporate language): maximization of profits through big gains. Invariably, political parties

establish their platforms and their projects for society in line with the economic sectors that finance them. Its representatives are more effective as long as they convince the citizens that the proposed idea of society contemplates their aspirations. The first problem found in this system is precisely this mechanism of inseparably linking profit to politics, subjecting politics to the corporate objectives of capitalism.

Well, let's point out the extreme difficulty of regulating these representatives. Even having a publicly explicit charter as a "government program" or something like that, these representatives receive in practice a kind of *carte blanche* to deliberate and execute on behalf of the people. Having this *carte blanche*, the political representatives of indirect democracy can, however, deviate from the assumptions of their "government programs", and adapt other political directives whenever the economy presents any risks to the prevailing economic order. Freed from commitments to their constituents, professional politicians can finally exercise their *political being* on behalf of citizens and decide on the future of social life in *de facto* unregulated ways (even if, legally, the representative democratic system still allows for processes of removal of these representatives upon certain proof of inappropriate or illegal conduct).

Another problem is that the Judiciary System within these democracies constitutes one of the most distant powers in relation to the power of the people, and its judges and prosecutors, far from their alleged impartiality, seek to corroborate a project of society based on the partisanship and judicialization of political life in society – two sides of the same state coin.

V

The problems arising from the partisanship of political life are not restricted to the missteps of elections exposed above. The partisanship of political life is embedded in all institutions of society, and this process results in countless obstacles to social emancipation.

First, I highlight the replacement of debates, reflections, and practices aimed at a new project of society by projects of political power. The logic of political action becomes directly linked to party directives, and the possibilities of construction and social transformation linked to the approval of the *intelligentsia* of the parties.

Concomitantly with such processes of legitimization of political life through a one-way street by the State, we identify the legitimization of justice through the State. There are very few public spaces available today for us to be able to question the legitimacy of the Judiciary as an institution that promotes social justice, without incurring the set of crimes qualified as *lesa patria*, and at the same time without destabilizing the Democratic State of Law. We observe, astonished, that the most evident processes of instrumentalization of justice, distorting the most elementary precepts of the Judiciary, are some principles of the Democratic State of Law: the foundations of human dignity; the social values of work; political pluralism; building a free, just and egalitarian society; the eradication of poverty and marginalization, and the reduction of social and regional inequalities; the promotion of the good of all, without prejudice of origin, gender, color, age and any form of discrimination; the prevalence of human rights; the self-determination of people; the defense of peace; the peaceful

resolution of conflicts; repudiation of terrorism and racism; and others.

The abysmal distance of such foreshadowing of the State and its real possibilities of guaranteeing effectiveness through the Judicial Systems of the Democratic State of Law forces us to shift the institutional focus to *de facto* enable the guarantees of our most elementary human rights. If we cannot guarantee human rights through the State, I believe that only social movements and community mobilizations can play a crucial institutional role in the continuous and permanent historical creation of guaranteeing human rights – based on the emancipatory and autonomous social struggle in relation to the State. One of the greatest challenges for social movements, in this sense, is precisely to confront the contradiction of the State – *through its representatives in the Judiciary, Executive, and Legislative Systems* – with regard to the proclamations and enforcement of human rights. Regarding the role of education in such dynamics, KOLTAI suggests a focus on the inviolability of constitutionalist principles derived from the universalist doctrine of human rights, in particular on “freedom of opinion, the presumption of innocence and the right to a fair trial”.³⁹

In this way, the legalisms (understood as supposed processes of impartial objective *ipsis litteris* readings of a given law) come to represent a dangerous ideology, much more than a method of interpreting legislation constituted under the aegis of the Democratic State of Law. Neglecting the founding assumptions of the Democratic State of Law, and distancing itself from reflections on the projects of society that could elucidate the contradictions of everyday life supported by the law, the legalist (who can be a judge,

prosecutor, lawyer, parliamentarian or any ordinary citizen) projects an inconceivable *merely technical interpretation* of the constitutional order – and advocates, almost invariably, in their own interest. A chimerical political impartiality materializes in the construction of knowledge in the legal sciences, haunting a society steeped in social conflicts and the judicialization of life – guided by the commodification of judicial processes, and in countless convictions and punishments enacted without the citizen's broad right of defense.

It is in this sense that corporate judicialization through the State is something that brings terror since other forms of justice (other than that through the State and the representatives of the Judiciary System) do not reach the horizon for its concreteness. But corporate judicialization is still the principle of all established political parties, even because it reveals its own legitimacy granted to every form of political representation. Two sides of the same coin: partisanship and judicialization, via the State, politics and social justice.

VI

The political culture of representative democracy also recovers and recontextualizes some elementary principles of totalitarian regimes that, in modern times, represent astonishing mechanisms of State terrorism. Goebbels, for example, as the main exponent of the formulations of the political propaganda of the German Nazi State, introduced the strategy of the political slogan as a way to reach the unconscious of the masses, prioritizing irrationalism to

the detriment of human conscience. We know the result was catastrophic: the psychic lethargy of the population, numbed by jingles, slogans, and other media artifacts, enabled a high degree of political alienation, opening doors to various atrocities, persecutions, and genocides.

Currently, the public debate fostered by the electoral processes of the Democratic State of Law is camouflaged by the rejuvenation of such propaganda techniques, naturally reinforced with the new information and communication technologies. Our representatives are not elected because of their ideas and political programs debated in the public spaces, but largely for the number of times their name and their number registered in the courts are repeated incessantly, night and day, by loudspeaker cars, on pamphlets, stickers and the entire set of advertising and marketing props made available by large specialized companies.

Visual and sound pollution, in addition to representing the political totalitarianism of this form of government (since we cannot be immune or protected from the avalanche of propaganda from these large companies and their clients), is part of one of the main cultural elements of State terrorism today. Even children and adolescents (who don't participate in the electoral process) are victims of the brainwashing allowed by the Judiciary System, unconsciously internalizing musical jingles and slogans and continually repeating the same irrationalities in schools, parks, and other public spaces in their communities.

A political culture anchored in irrationalist precepts and unconscious actions will certainly produce new monsters, far beyond those already created by the fascism of the 20th century⁴⁰. What is most frightening, however,

is the complicity of the population in this process, allied to the process of voluntary servitude⁴¹, whose result is the abdication of the political being and the idea of the historical creation of society as something human.

But political alienation goes beyond its impacts on the political culture that is directly linked to the possibilities of choice of our representatives. Political culture has gained new contours with the promotion of the virtual condition of Humanity – which arises with the advent of new information and communication technologies. In the specific case of television, MANDER (1999) describes in his work “Four arguments to put an end on television” a detailed compilation of the impacts of television dynamics on human beings in relation to sensory deprivation, human hyperactivity, ingestion of artificial light and obscuring of the mind in general⁴², also discussing the various consequences for the annihilation of free thought and for the fusion of the real and imaginary worlds.

In addition to the impacts of political culture on the sphere of individual subjectivity, the sphere of collective dialogue also gains new characteristics in the context of new information and communication technologies. Contradictory to each other, they allow renewed articulations in a network of resistance and social struggle, on the one hand, and the updating of forms of political alienation, on the other. The study by DIAS (2015), for example, points out certain inferences of virtual social media in the formation of the working class – both in their emancipatory possibilities of social reorganization provided by anti-capitalist periodicals and in the virtual pitfalls of alleged public debates offered by transnational electronic media companies.

VII

Another striking cultural characteristic of State terrorisms is the evidence of nationalism and its various forms of manifestation in society. Nationalism has always embraced intimate congruences among education, culture, and ideology. GUIBERNAU (1997)⁴³ alerts us to the processes of education involved in nationalist political conjunctures that obscure or annihilate the autonomy of people and populations in relation to their own forms of language, culture, self-government, and social reproduction. Still in this sense, OLIVIO (2009) compares indigenous community education in Mexico to the official State education system, denouncing compulsory pedagogies as appendices of the ongoing indigenous holocaust. For the preservation of the State, the nationalist ideology and its cultural translations succeed in the subordinate and artificial construction of political unity.

National anthems, for example, still echo as a behavioral representation of the condition of citizenship to which we must be submitted. Worship by lyrics of glory to the fatherland is culturally established as a civic duty, and many times its public performance is obligatory in several State institutions. In most cases, the lyrics exalt important military conquests and, invariably, the submission of human beings to the State, as well as their duty to blindly respect its institutions – even if violations of the human rights of other people are necessary for the maintenance of order. The unpatriotic human being becomes suspect of misconduct and, ultimately, can answer for countless crimes against the Fatherland.

Mainly in territories of continental dimensions, the political unity of the State is guaranteed, in part, by

the nationalist culture – and in another aspect by the militarization of areas where there may be disputes with other States or indigenous and/or autonomous populations. Disputes with other States are more or less common depending on the relation between their roles in the general conditions of production of global production chains and their geopolitical contexts.

VIII

Since the end of the 20th century, the implementation of the Initiative Project for the Integration of Regional Infrastructure in South America (IIRSA) demonstrated the confluence of the productive sectors of the economies of the Broad States of the continent, and their resulting process of transnationalization of capital. Overcoming nationalist conflicts, and maximizing the profit derived from the transfer of natural wealth to advanced capitalism countries, Latin American Nation-States united to achieve the same objective, establishing free trade areas and invading territorial areas of traditional and native populations – and making unfeasible corporate possibilities that are not in line with the capitalist project.⁴⁴

The only difference between IIRSA and the FTAA (Free Trade Area of the Americas) initiative is the mediation of the projects by the governments of the National States. If in the context of the FTAA, the governments of the South American continent guided their policies by neoliberalism, the current conjuncture of IIRSA incorporates several governments from the progressive sectors, self-named *leftist*

governments, facilitating the mediation of social conflicts inherent to the implementation of the developmental capitalist economic matrix. In this case, partisan social movements are paralyzed, and popular resistance is anchored in the countless manifestations of native people and populations, in addition to autonomous movements and collectives in general.⁴⁵

Due to internal conflicts within the Nation-State itself, especially in States that coexist with numerous native and traditional populations, transnational capital is hardly able to incorporate such populations into its nationalist ideological principles. As absurd as the idea of convincing indigenous ethnic groups to die for their country is the dystopia of national integration of these autonomous people and populations. The *urbancentrism*, in this case, is enhanced by a certain *statecentrism*, in which citizenship reappears as a totalitarian attempt to absorb the political complexity of these people and populations. Arrogant, Leviathan seeks to cannibalistically swallow autonomous people and populations, but their creative and infinite poetic forms of resistance still present options to a way of life detached from Judeo-Christian civilization.

Let us examine the human condition linked exclusively to the condition of a citizen. Abdicating the status of a citizen becomes inadmissible in a totalitarian society project. Transformed into a citizen, the human being can be both violated and protected by human rights in the Democratic State of Law. The native and traditional populations, including not only those involved in the State's classification systems (indigenous, quilombola, caiçaras, riverside dwellers, among others), have always been

far beyond the precarious human condition of citizens. Such political complexity has always been part of fruitful anthropological analyses, notably in CLASTRES (1988), whose main contribution to this analysis orbits around the question of political power in societies organized *against* the State. In “Studies on political power, ideology, work, and education”, BRUNO (2004) also discusses the interfaces of such complexity, recovering the practices of regulated political power as a founding element of the social being and increasing the debate about the need for a political culture that is not limited to the horizon of the State.

IX

The economy of abundance that always captivated the premises of the Judeo-Christian civilization in its first contacts with native people (whose idyllic paradise on Earth was located in immense forests kissed by the oceans) has distanced itself in recent centuries from the current structures of the capitalist economy, focused on the wide productive chain of violence and the unregulated consumption of natural wealth.

The identification of the productive chain of violence obviously transcends the rationalist criteria of a mathematically delimited economy, since the concept of violence used here can be the scene of countless contours (objective and subjective) stemming from its meanings. Armed violence, for example, can be combined with different forms of symbolic violence, and by separating them we are running the risk of analytical simplification.

In the meaning that I intend to attribute to the term productive chain of violence, the war industry and military services constitute the main branches of activities. Its economic materiality as a commodity of death and its tangibility in our daily lives – supported by the political and ideological discourse of public security or defense – makes armamentism one of the greatest economic exponents of the central States of contemporary capitalism. The goods are varied and are merged with the wide range provided by the aerospace industry. Through data compiled by the *Stockholm International Peace Research Institute* (SIPRI)⁴⁶, we can attest not only to the economic growth of large arms corporations but mainly to the magnitude of an economic matrix oriented by violence.

The novelty of the war industry after the historical period of the Cold War (marked by the fall of the Berlin Wall) is the transnationalization of its capital, which followed the trend of economic transnationalization observed after the 1960s and 1970s. Parallel to the “Toyotist” mode of production, large corporations transnationalize capital not only for its greater circulation and volatility (and greater speculative potential) but also for the Restricted State to be faithfully serving its purposes. At the beginning of the 21st century, the main military units deterritorialized and monetized their profits beyond the borders of the Nation-State, as already mentioned in *AO LITERRIA PELA AUTODETERMINAÇÃO DOS POVOS* (2006).⁴⁷

The productive chain of violence finds in its General Conditions of Production (GCPs) the energy matrix of fossil fuels and all the tentacular articulations of the petroleum society, including its variations in the car society, in the

infrastructure development society, and in other countless ramifications that presuppose a project of a society exclusively guided by capital. The project of a capitalist society excludes the possibility of life for native people and is based on the depletion of natural resources and the impracticability of life of other species. And the indissociability of State terrorism with the productive chain of violence finds its confluence in a strange culture of death through mass society.

The commodification of life in all its biological and social functions takes on the same scope as political totalitarianism, and the economic protagonism of the production of immaterial goods (especially those derived from virtual social media) even causes nightmares in orthodox Marxisms and their fundamentalisms about the development of productive forces.



The mass media, directing their efforts to their main objectives of maximizing the profits of their companies, do not hesitate to incessantly broadcast violent audiovisual programs, whether they are sensationalist news or through films strangely named as *action films*. *Action films* becomes just a euphemism for films of violence, whose appeal to *Thanatos*' impulses shows that large movie production companies understand the profitable cost-benefit of explicitly showing all the possible and imaginable symbology of death on the screen.⁴⁸

Such "action" films trivialize and insert into the daily life of mass society various plots of revenge, betrayal, careerism,

greed, lies, psychoses, etc. having as a culmination the scenes of murder, tortures, and genocide that without doubt captivate the viewers attention – awakened in *Thanatos*' passion for a bizarre enjoyment of life (often the plots based on *Thanatos*' passions are fused with those of *Eros*, projecting the main characters as ultra eroticized extremely violent and psychotic heroes or heroines). Obviously, the impact of this significant set of cinematographic production corresponds to the billionaire profits of its industry, and it has repercussions on the symptoms of the trivialization of violence in everyday life, whose influences on social reality are as fluid as they are concrete.

With regard to police and crime news TV programs, success is almost absolute in this logic of horror. The politics of daily fear, essential for the smooth functioning of the productive chain of violence, is exacerbated by the grotesque details transmitted (sometimes in real-time) to frightened spectators in their homes, whose locks and bars can no longer convey any sense of security, comfort and safety. Even in small towns and villages, where the heinous crime rate is low compared to large urban centers, the population internalizes this daily fear, naturalizing a social life full of dangers in the imminence of a great atrocity. According to BAUMAN, the “blood-chilling and nerve-shattering specter of *unsafe streets* keeps people away from public spaces and keeps them from seeking the art and skills needed to participate in public life”.⁴⁹

This amalgamation between fiction and reality of audiovisual violence permanently conveyed by the media mechanisms of large capitalist companies creates a new form of the society of the spectacle of violence. The

alienation resulting from this phenomenon is certainly one of the preconditions for the haziness of the antimilitarized historical creation, since the blinded mass society does not see real possibilities of social life devoid of arms industry, police, militias or armies – even if these are the main causes of the very violence that society fears. In the antilogy presented by the media violence culture, we need guns and police to fight what they themselves cause.

XI

The relative absence of the expression State terrorism in the vocabulary of political sociology is curious, especially when it could be related to current democratic regimes⁵⁰. Terrorism, although allocated by the television media as a practice of fundamentalist and extremist groups, is constituted as a political practice of the State regardless of the way in which it is constituted - under the State of War, under civil or military dictatorships, or even in the Democratic State of Law. Accepting this hypothesis means allowing resistance to institutionalized atrocities more easily, and reframing the importance of social movements in this scenario.

The practicing of terrorism in the Democratic State of Law is far beyond the Restricted State, and find support in the possibilities opened in the spheres of the Extended State. In the context of clandestine fundamentalist and extremist organizations, we can affirm the various close ties with governments – especially States with greater production of weapons and war products, whose circulation of capital

presupposes war activity for its economic precepts. In the society of surveillance devices, control, and punishment, the private paramilitary militias exemplify the important role of the Broad State institutions in the development of the repression forces – which, obviously, work together with the Restricted State police forces. The difference in the actions of paramilitary militias in relation to the numerous violations perpetrated by the military forces of the National State, or even by the *humanitarian army* of the United Nations (UN)⁵¹, lies in the assumption of public regulation of the latter since both are historically involved with massacres and other major atrocities.

The dynamics of terrorism in the Democratic State of Law are consubstantialized regardless of the ideologies of their governments. For the maintenance of the State's own order, both self-named “left” and “right” governments grant themselves the legitimacy of freely enjoying coercion. Obviously, governments that are admittedly more authoritarian have a greater chance of increasing the intensity of social repression, as they would be less demagogic in comparison with the institutional violence committed by so-called “left” governments against the population.

The complexity, violence, and intensity of forms of State terrorism vary according to the guidelines of the economic model decided by a small minority of managers and bureaucrats. However, some practices have become common so that the political and economic order of the State is not broken, such as: continuous investments in military production units (renamed into national defense products) and in the professional qualification of repressive forces (armies and police); empowerment of police linked

to federal governments (federal police and secret police); disruption of grassroots democracy through the co-option of its main leaders to occupy positions in the bureaucratic structure of the State; repression and criminalization of social movements and political imprisonment of their main leaders (framed in anti-terrorist laws imposed on Restricted States by transnational organizations of the Extended State); economic investment in agribusiness, to the detriment of the multiple forms of popular community economy; pollution and destruction of ecosystems and biomes, and prioritization of large infrastructure works for the global economy to the detriment of micro and small infrastructure works for the local and regional economy; legalization of activities with huge profit margins by transnational companies (and consequent increase in the Gross Domestic Product of National States); prioritization of the economic sector of goods and services, as well as incentives for speculative capital derived from immaterial goods; structuring of mass culture through the society of spectacle and violence, stimulating forms that we could classify as *anti-cultural* (since they disrupt the artistic diversity of society, imposing forms of dissemination and mandatory consumption of products removed from any cultural harmony, and still inciting antinomic behavior to human rights and the art of living); in short, contradictory practices with the refinement of the human condition. Paraphrasing Freud, I believe that *the State prohibits individuals from committing terrorist acts, not because it wants to abolish them, but because it wants to monopolize them.*

When trying to denounce such processes, the political counterculture of abstention or annulment of votes represents

one of the main mobilizations of civil disobedience against representative democracy. Even in the Democratic State of Law, the percentage of the population that confirms an alleged political-party apathy is extremely high. In the case of Brazil, for example, since the redemocratization process in the 1980s, this percentage has reached an average of over 30% of the population eligible to vote. However, due to the scarce detailed information and the enormous complexities of such a movement (since it includes from the citizen who is momentarily disillusioned with the candidate options to even the anarchist, autonomous, anti-capitalist social movements, and others), the analyses of permanent civil disobedience in the polls is rare.

XII

The productive chain of violence, and its respective General Conditions of Production (GCP), consolidate themselves as the pillar of the capitalist economy and of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the States. Parallel to this, the centralization of political power – and the fundamental role of political parties in this process – generates a new form of management, namely the organization, control, and surveillance of mass society. Orbiting these two primordial aspects of State terrorism, but not less important, is that mass culture is situated in the context of the spectacular and mercantile civilization⁵² – whose main characteristic is the obstruction of the art of living.

Far from the perspectives of equality in diversity, the capitalist concepts of the human being are much closer to

equality in the standardization of the human condition, and update a panoptic society⁵³ that foreshadows new contours of surveillance, control, and punishment. Those who do not fit into the project of standardizing the human condition can only opt for marginalization and the ghetto – be it ghettos of countless prisons or ghettos of temporary free zones. Both situations are interposed in corporate life, deriving dystopias or heterotopias, and this is the main challenge for popular education in general: the clear positioning in its philosophical premises about such contradiction.

Contrary to centralized State conceptions, I believe that it is only in strengthening the autonomy of social movements in relation to the State and in the right of self-determination of traditional and native people and populations that we can, *de facto*, concentrate the force of historical creation to oppose the new forms of State terrorism at the beginning of the 21st century. Autonomists principles have always been fundamental in times of recrudescence of State structures, and it is these principles that can redefine political actions and direct transformative and emancipatory actions.

Far beyond the shallow political definitions between “left” and “right” (or the conceptual pitfalls between “socialism”, “capitalism”, “State socialism”, “State capitalism”), the definition of *anti-capitalist political praxis* (in particular in the criticism of the division of labor and social hierarchization) represents one of the central aspects of social movements that intend to overcome the pseudo-revolutionary discursive verbiage of political parties or reformist mobilizations – which are in perfect harmony with capital and with the processes of alienation of mass societies.

Among some of these anti-capitalist political praxes, I believe that the occupations of public spaces linked to the deepening of debates about projects of society make up one of the pillars of contemporary popular resistance – allowing the emergence of the full exercise of authentic dialogic and collective pedagogies of resistance. At the same time, the historical claims of autonomous movements emerge at the beginning of the 21st century, invigorated by the possibilities of a history of social struggles that conquered human rights far beyond their restrictive State frameworks.

The spaces of organized civil society organizations and autonomist cultural movements cannot escape the complexification of debates about the socially instituted meanings of terror – including incorporating the human contradictions inherent in the daily lives of their activists, and never splitting the reflections about an autonomous project of the society within the revolutionary day-to-day itself. This is one of the points of congruence between the perspectives of the art of living and anti-capitalist activism.

Popular education and emancipatory political culture, understood as all forms of free thought and free exercise of everyday tasks aimed at creative possibilities of the art of living, offer important counterpoints to the specters of State terrorism that can plague us for a long time to come. Not just in the temporary constructions of anti-capitalist time-spaces, I think that social upheavals and poetic insurrections constitute the driving force of times to come, and perhaps of a new civilization!



紅花アサギナリニシ
1978年（昭和53年）に、この樹木は、
当時の国産アサギナリ（アサギナリ）
の代表として、この公園に移植された。
樹木は、現在でも、この公園のシンボル
として、多くの人々に愛されている。

CHAPTER 5

GAZES AND MOONLIGHTS OF FREEDOM: THE HUMAN EMANCIPATION CULTURE IN THE MST AND THE EZLN MOVEMENTS

The social movements that question the centralized and unregulated political power, and the productive chain of the violence industry, are carriers of the embryos of new projects for society and, perhaps, of the new civilization to come. The Landless Rural Workers Movement (MST), in Brazil, and the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN), in Chiapas, are an example of this collectivity that goes beyond the human misery of apathy, subservience, complicity, and connivance with the humanitarian atrocities and, questioning reality, reach renewed historical creations that give back to the human condition a sense of dignity, social equality, and social emancipation experienced in everyday life.

The journey of Brazilian peasants is a labyrinth of singularities of social struggle today. The calloused hand

and the sweat from working on the Land still haven't managed to stab the dark face of the State, which sometimes allows the vital breath for survival in the countryside, and sometimes prevents the breeze of social autonomy beyond the capital. Parallel, and certainly rediscovered in infinity, the trails of the Mayan peasants. Who could bring them closer? The more weeds grow on these trails, the more hooded gardeners rise, sheltered by the morning sun rays and the glare of moonlight.

Time is different for these social movements. They live the future without permission and, clandestine in the timeless cultivation of life, rise against oppression and capitalist cruelty. The space is different for such movements – they unveil third banks of rivers that plunge into the abysses of power and greed, and inaugurate free territories. The time-space of the birth and growth of popular uprisings is managed by the MST and the EZLN: it is a permanent exercise in the beautification of human existence, a continuous pedagogical praxis linked to a philosophy of education in motion, and it symbolizes a dream for students and teachers of our entire planet.

The rediscovery of historical memory is also valuable for peasant workers on the move. The congruence between the traditional autonomous knowledge of the backcountry and indigenous populations started to have resonance in academic knowledge, notably in the area of scientific research in the humanities focused on social movements. For researchers, such wisdom shines on the horizon of knowledge far from its strange forms instrumentalized by large transnational corporations, rejuvenating other possibilities for us to understand this knowledge linked to

social transformations and overcoming the adventure of human existence: an exceptional case of the book “Words that walk the world: stories and mystics of the MST and the EZLN”, by Sebastião Leal Ferreira Vargas Netto (2014). Gratitude to all those who allow the words of freedom to drift around the world.

Beyond words – it is in the reunion of the poetry of life that the historical creations of these social movements materialize the heterotopias of a new world, in which human beings are continuously building resistance against “urbancentrism”, against speciesism and, ultimately, against all forms of biophobia that spread through the productive chain of the violence industry. And by redefining pacifism from the perspective of radical criticism, such movements entangle a daily life of dignity in social struggle, which certainly inspires us.

What tradition of social struggle are we talking about? Not the orthodox traditionalisms that prevent new visions about themselves, but rather a tradition focused on the open future of humanity, whether this is, above all, a future based on the virtuous rebelliousness of human beings, and on the intense pulse of the flow of life.

Spirituality, in this sense, flourishes curious and eager for a utopian idea. As if the heterotopias lived and realized in camps, settlements, towns and cities were not enough, the revolutionary peasants still herald a new civilization. And visionaries of another time: the morning dew is common to the MST and the EZLN. Incidentally, the very appearance of vital energy in everyday life is what nourishes such spirituality in this self-instituting future. And if the prerogatives of the Judeo-Christian civilization still persist

among rural workers in Brazil, an ancient Mayan memory involves the Zapatistas.

The flags that wave – not those of the ghosts of nationalism and patriotism, but those raised in occupied fields that will hopefully free us from the totalitarianism of the State and Capital – announce another foundation of political power, a political power in which there are no such unregulated coercive forces, whose social control of instituted powers, chiefs and leaders, enlightened people and gurus, are actually executed, *de facto*, by members of society in humanizing political units, especially made possible through this point of view of direct democracy translated by self-managed structures or by horizontal and creative relations of power.

The issue of work in the MST and the EZLN is framed by different roots, but both are characterized by an essential communitarian indication for a popular economy that inaugurates the distant ideal of the end of the economy. When common and collective work does not slide into the social division of labor and resulting alienations (where State capitalism reappears dark and gloomy), its self-determined dynamics celebrate a symbiotic connection with nature, respect for all forms of life, cultivating before all the food, love, and the *enchanted word* that will always be abundance, never merchandise.

It was this type of cultivation that motivated the writing of this text, which makes up the afterword to VARGAS NETTO's book (2014). And for cultivating the friendship with the author Sebastião Vargas, I end with the words of one of our most inspirational authors – the Uruguayan Eduardo Galeano – who, in *celebrating the human voice*,

writes: “When it is truthful, when it comes from the urge to speak out loud, there is no force that can stop the human voice. If you take away its mouth, it speaks through the eyes or hands or pores or anything else. Because all of us, all of us, have something to say to the world, something, some words that deserve to be celebrated or forgiven by others”.

CHAPTER 6

GOODBYE TO SCHOOL? SOCIAL ECOLOGY, FREEDOM EDUCATION AND TEACHING WORK IN RESISTANCE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

“Humanity has been suffering for thousands of years from a plague, from a disease worse than leprosy, from a disease worse than malaria, from an epidemic even more frightening than smallpox. (...) Imperialism, colonialism, torture, slavery, conquest, brutality, lies, fraud, secret police, greed, violations, terrorism. (...) The illness of violence exercised against other beings, which consists, precisely, of consuming the life and goods of other beings, this pathology, this uetic (or cannibalistic) psychosis, constitutes the biggest contagious disease known among human beings.”

(Jack Forbes, in “Columbus and other cannibals”)

A word derived from the *Cri* language, the conceptualization of “*uetic*” formulated by Jack Forbes – a poet and essayist of Native American origin and professor of Native American Studies at the University of California – offers us an important starting point for analyzing the COVID-19 pandemic on a planetary scale.

The concept of *uetic* can be synthesized as a cannibalistic psychotic pathology, be it the consumption of other beings through the exploitation of work and indifference to humanity, or contempt for other animal species and the destruction of nature (FORBES, 1998). Could the hierarchy among human beings and the lack of control of our political governments, the premise of economic extortion that governs transnational capitalism, and the anthropocentric and speciesist views in our society contribute to the eventual causes of the COVID-19 pandemic?

This essay seeks to reflect on issues that may eventually contribute to the breadth of the view on COVID-19, making complex some themes that go beyond superficial approaches limited to the tragic consequences of the pandemic. Initially, I present again the contribution of *social ecology* as a radical criticism of the hierarchy among human beings and the separation of humanity from nature, based on previous studies (MARIANA, 2008) and recontextualizations in the face of the current conjuncture. Subsequently, I make considerations about the current situation of schools and their new dynamics of remote teaching required by the COVID-19 health crisis, as well as some pre-assumptions of autonomist education in the face of the school's

instrumentalization processes for the purposes of corporate digital culture. Thus, the role of teaching work is presented in its contradictory configurations, whether in the dynamics of alienation or emancipation of work. Finally, I emphasize some reflective notes that encourage the visualization of heterotopias and the imagination of new utopias that nourish our insatiable desire for love and freedom.



In the mid-19th century, the renowned natural scientist Charles Darwin began a series of trips around the world. Through his zoological and botanical observations, then based on several areas of science that were in full swing in the middle of that century - Lavoisier's chemistry, Charles Lyell's geology, Adam Smith's economy, Thomas Malthus' demography, August Comte's philosophy - Darwin launches the first categories of evolutionary scientific analysis based on the theory of natural selection, exposed in his work "The Origin of Species" (1849).

Essentially, the theory of natural selection establishes that in different living species, only the living beings that best adapt to the environment would survive. Evolution would resemble a mechanical process, according to the logic of better or worse adaptability, based on different survival strategies developed by different living species. Darwin discards the Lamarckian conception whose sudden transformations would be inherent to all species, proposing, in its place, a theory of slow, gradual, and accidental changes.

However, Darwin's theory undergoes different reinterpretations, such as the formulation of *social Darwinism*, whose beginnings can be traced to the evolutionary theory of Herbert Spencer and Thomas Huxley. For Spencer, competition for life (and the survival of the fittest individuals) represents the only path to all human progress. Huxley, in turn, published the article "The Struggle for Life: A Program" in 1888, summarizing social Darwinism. Social Darwinism is Darwin's evolutionary theoretical formulation applied to social life, establishing biological hierarchies among human beings and, in this sense, seeking to justify the massive degeneration of poor individuals due to their non-adaptability to the environment. In order to do so, Huxley is inspired by capitalist theories of liberal economics, Malthusian demography, and also by Gobineau's racist essays on the inequality of human races.

Outraged by the development of evolutionist debates, Russian scientist and writer Piotr Kropotkin decides to refute such interpretations of Darwin's theory of the evolution of species. Based on several articles published in the magazine "The Nineteenth Century", Kropotkin elaborates his scientific-philosophical work in which he proposes to demonstrate that, besides the principle of struggle and competition for survival, another more important factor corroborates the evolution of species: mutual help. The author does not consider that mutual help contradicts Darwin's theory of natural selection. Kropotkin maintains that the struggle for existence among species does not exclude cooperation among them. In the case of human beings, mutual support would ensure the development of human intellectual faculties and moral qualities, offering

better opportunities to live and reproduce. He even quotes the work “Origin of Man”, written by Darwin after the “Origin of Species”, where the author explains that “the communities that agglutinate a greater number of sympathetic members among themselves and left a greater number of descendants, thrived more”.⁵⁴

Going beyond the fundamental elements of the natural sciences and the zoological knowledge relevant to his studies, Kropotkin approaches the question of mutual help and cooperation in different moments of human history, seeking the philosophical foundations of his theory of human evolution.

Disturbed by the constant genocides practiced against primitive people, the author’s first writings focused on mutual help among savages⁵⁵, seeking to deconstruct Huxley’s idea that presented “the primitive men as something like tigers or lions, destitute, of all classes of social conceptions, which do not stop at anything in the struggle for existence (...)”, or even the thought of the English philosopher Thomas Hobbes, for whom “the primitive men (...) lived in an eternal internal war, until they appeared among the legislators, the wise and the powerful who established the principle of peaceful coexistence”.⁵⁶

Kropotkin presents societies, groups, clans, and tribes as the primitive forms of organization of humanity, generally with a “notable degree free of warlike shocks”⁵⁷, making use of the ethnological studies of his time. The examples cover several regions of the planet, from the vast Russian territory and various locations of the European continent, to the ethnological research carried out in Greenland, Arctic America, Australia and Oceanic Islands, Southeast

Asia, Himalayas, the coast of the Indian Ocean, southern Africa and, in South America, from the Gulf of Mexico to Tierra del Fuego in Patagonia, crossing the communities of the Brazilian jungle. From these societies, the author offers some interpretations of the complex matrimonial organization, the distribution of wealth, the development of tribal solidarity, and their good mutual relations, highlighting

that he savage educated in the ideas of tribal solidarity, practiced on all occasions, good and bad, is as incapable of understanding the moral European who has no idea of such solidarity, as the average European is incapable of understanding the savage. Furthermore, if our sage had to live among a tribe of half-starved savages, whose total available food was not enough to feed a man for a few days, then he would perhaps understand what guides the savages in their actions. In the same way, if a savage lived among us and received our education, perhaps he would understand the European insensitivity towards our fellow men and the royal commissions that deal with the issue of preventing the various legal forms of homicide practiced in Europe.⁵⁸

A second set of theoretical productions related to the study of evolutionary theories arises with the so-called Chicago School (1920s), and the emergence of sociobiology - recovery of social Darwinism. Among its precursors, E. O. Wilson and his work "Sociobiology: the new synthesis" stand out. Sociobiology seeks to establish direct relationships

between the biological and the social, justifying hierarchies among different ethnicities of humanity through genetic inheritance. And it seeks explanations for a supposed racial superiority among people, based on the innate meaning of the values of domination, territoriality, and competition in human beings.

One of the most striking counterpoints to this theoretical approach is consolidated with the formulation of social ecology. A radical criticism of sociobiology, social ecology set out to expand the ecological vision, inseparably articulating different social themes around environmental issues – and developing the idea of inseparability between human beings and nature.

Among its main theorists is Murray Bookchin, a contemporary American writer, whose main thesis is that none of the main ecological problems can be solved without a profound social transformation. In his text “Sociobiology or Social Ecology?”, Bookchin reaffirms Kropotkin’s critical evolutionary foundations by saying that “Mutual Support, Kropotkin’s celebrated work, summarizes, in an exemplary way, the data known at the beginning of this century”⁵⁹, and also emphasizes that “mutual help, self-organization, freedom, and subjectivity are, when felt from the principles of social ecology (unity in diversity, spontaneity, and non-hierarchical relationships), values that find all their meaning in themselves.”⁶⁰

Bookchin’s criticism even suggests the possibilities of cooperation among different species and with

the regulatory mechanisms that allow homeostasis,
that is, the balance and stability of biological,

chemical, and geological conditions at a global and planetary level. (...) The classical theory of evolution tends to look at a certain species outside its ecosystem and tends to make it an isolated entity and ultimately very unreal.⁶¹

But what do Kropotkin and Bookchin warn us about where humanity stands to face the COVID-19 pandemic? Perhaps the first answer is clear in the voice of government authorities and far-right movements opposed to social isolation as an elementary procedure to prevent the spread of viral contamination: the strongest human beings would be able to survive. In 2020, the Brazilian ex-president Jair Bolsonaro's statements are symbolic: "If I catch the virus, I won't feel almost anything. I was an athlete and got stabbed", or "This is for the weak". The idea goes back to the most backward and cruel conceptions of human evolution and adaptation of living beings to the environment - not only for recovering social Darwinism but at the same time neglecting the political, economic, and social conditions of the majority of the Brazilian population. Registering such discourses is a fundamental part of the act of remembering, anticipating the possible resumption of forces representing the productive chain of violence, social inequality, and the hierarchy between people, populations, and communities. It is social memory as resistance to State terrorism (MARIANA, 2020).

In this sense, it is urgent to recover the assumptions of *equality*, whose philosophical interrogation may indicate future paths for our actions. As a social imaginary, the idea of social and political equality is situated within the scope

of the effective possibility of historical creation and social autonomy. Equality, historical creation, social autonomy linked with a deep meaning of freedom. For Castoriadis,

The autonomy of individuals, their freedom (which implies, of course, their ability to question themselves), has as its content, also and mainly, *the equal participation of all* in power, without which, evidently, there is no freedom, just as there is no liberty without equality. How could I be free if others decide what concerns me and if I cannot take part in that decision?⁶²

Political power and equality: the crucial problem of equality is that it is passively assimilated as an innate right to human beings, not a political act in favor of an autonomous society. Also according to Castoriadis, “the demand for equality also implies equality of our responsibilities in the formation of our collective life. (...) Its meaning is also, and mainly, that of an equal activity, participation, and responsibility”.⁶³

The possibilities of creating societal institutions give dynamism and permanent possibilities of social self-institution. However, some secular institutions present norms and values so ingrained in the bodies and minds of their subjects that they resemble something immutable, insurmountable in their new inventiveness. This is the case with school.



It doesn't take much study or even much time to perceive the school as the first institution that domesticates us, shapes us in the behavioral patterns required by social rules, and establishes the ethical and moral norms to be respected and reproduced throughout our lives. It is also through educational institutions that human beings develop a relationship of being and living with nature - feeling like an integral part of planet Earth or, as in most cases, disconnected from the environment around them. Finally, we are educated not to run, not to scream, not to talk, to play only in the miserable intervals between classes, and to be quiet in the classroom. In fact, a classroom usually presents unsanitary conditions, packed with students, therefore providing all the conditions for the propagation of viral and other diseases. But the school as a whole does not lag behind...

Conceived by architectural patterns fundamental to panopticism and the behavioral assumptions of the surveillance and control society, schools are more like prisons than lively places of freedom. From the critical scientific contributions about the school, we can mention the dynamics already denounced by the autonomous social movements tradition, and whose study by CORRÊA (2000) summarizes when discussing some elements that would be the *guarantees of schooling*, among which I highlight: the invention of specific spaces for education (the classroom, in particular); control of the time in which activities are carried out (hours, time for tasks and breaks, etc.); selection of knowledge, attributing a universal character to

it (curricular contents, in general adapted to the demands of university entrance exams and the market); invention of the knowledge-capacity relationship (the teacher teaches, and the student learns – moral authority and power of the teacher); disqualification of other forms of education (legal nonrecognition and even illegality of autonomous popular educational initiatives); frequency control (absences punished even with detention processes, even if the student reaches satisfactory goals); ranking, evaluation, and certification (separation of the pedagogical process by age, meritocracy and awarding of a diploma).

All these guarantees should be immediately abolished, especially in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The principle of human survival is established by the globalized practice of social isolation. The inexplicably relentless form of contamination demands this of us, and the functioning of cities and family nuclei changes in absolute radicalism, even if this radicalism is something that takes us back to the substantial origins of social organization. And it is precisely in this reflection on the creation of new possibilities for social organization that I believe that pedagogical practices should reside in the context of the pandemic.

From an autonomist perspective, the exercises inclined towards such creation can free us from the instrumentalized curricula positioned absolutely alienated from the demands of society. Reinventing learning content and directing it to the demands of our exceptional everyday life is the focus.

However, what do we observe today? A desperate attempt to normalize the same categories that founded the structures of the 19th-century school. And, for there to be an aura of democracy and innovation, a discourse of inclusion

in the digital culture that can make the legitimacy of this school viable. Nonetheless in the digital culture, even if the dynamics of this failed pedagogical reproducibility can lead to abysmal differences in the required teaching-learning relationship.

The forced adaptation to curricular content, methodologies, and assessment methods, control of the time and space of virtual “classrooms”, and the mandatory “cyber presence” - a digital set of schooling guarantees in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic passed on via mechanisms of information and communication technologies - it is absolutely the refined reproduction of the secular school, however, recontextualized for the demands of corporate education of the large transnational companies of education commodification, whose elementary precept will be the proletarianization of the teaching worker - by dividing the work and alienating it from the pedagogical process, establishing a complete dependence on digital platforms, software, and computer programming (in addition to the mass migration of personal and professional data to the operational mega servers).

There is also a very serious problem regarding digital culture and remote learning: hyper-exposure of children, young people, and adults to computer and cell phone screens, even though health regulations establish a much lower hourly load of visual exposure in digital culture than those required by schools. According to the Brazilian “Health in the Digital Era Working Group” (SBP, 2018), the maximum time children can be exposed to screens varies on average from 1 to 2 hours a day (children aged between 6 and 10 years), or from 2 to 3 hours a day (11 to 18-years).

The consequences can be disastrous: disturbances of perceptions and cognitive functions, unsociability, anxiety, depression, stress, sleep and eating disorders, and body and musculoskeletal dysfunctions, among others.

In this context, social inequality increases dramatically. The fallacy of the inclusion of digital culture is unmasked when we look at the different forms of possibilities of family nuclei in relation to remote teaching in progress during the COVID-19 pandemic: filling online forms, correct behavior in virtual meetings, carrying out online activities, and other requirements mediated by information and communication technologies. The aptest to participate in activities are integrated, while the least apt end up suffering embarrassing difficulties to perform tasks and activities. Homes with better necessary conditions (availability of assistance to children and young people, adequate space for studying at home, harmonious family structure, etc.) will surely be successful in online learning, while unstructured and the non-assisted homes merely satisfy the digital inclusion protocols. The strongest survive; the weakest suffer. Goodbye to school?



Restoring the principles of autonomist education from the beginning of the 20th century - whose workers quickly realized the unsanitary conditions of their workplaces and homes, and therefore changed the direction of the meaning of the school and its pedagogical practices - we must rediscover the health care of our environments: cleanliness,

ventilation, and natural lighting are the main challenges for a society built by closed and unhealthy architecture. Perhaps these are some of the biggest challenges for the return of activities in schools with the COVID-19 pandemic, which, by the way, could be carried out immediately at any time if there were working conditions that guarantee health safety protocols. But, after all, what conditions would these be?

Firstly, the guarantee of education policies of large-scale investments making the area a priority for social development. Opening of more schools, hiring more teachers, and the architectural readjustment of the existing schools could easily bring fresh air to working relationships and immediately alleviate the burden of huge number of students assigned to teachers in the classroom – not to mention the unsanitary classrooms with a number of students per square meter that exceeds all existing regulatory guidelines. That is, a society that chooses education as a priority may require several emergency readjustments for the return of classes in schools. Contrary to this assumption, the case of Brazil is unfortunate in this context: in December 2016, the approval of the Proposed Constitutional Amendment – PEC 241 (or 55) – froze new public investments in the areas of health and education for 20 years.

But it is not enough to invest in an education based on the pillars of institutional violence, on the architecture of the schools-prisons, and on the assumptions that alienate the school community from its relations with the educational territory and the environment in general. The guarantees for the return of presential classes in schools should be consolidated in renewed guarantees of schooling that could

find emancipatory foundations for life. Otherwise, wouldn't it be time to say goodbye to school for good?

Freedom education has a long tradition of pedagogical practices aimed at social emancipation. There are countless examples and hundreds of studies on the subject, generally made invisible by academic educational authorities and school bureaucrats. At the beginning of the 20th century, we can mention the Orphanage of Cempuis, the educational institute "La Ruche", the Rationalist or Modern School in Spain, the school communities of Hamburg, the experimental kindergarten "Solidarity International", the school of Yasnaia Poliana, the Popular University in Rio de Janeiro (MARIANA, 2008), the Modern Schools of São Paulo, founded by João Penteadó and Adelino de Pinho (MORAES, 2013), among others. Currently, we can cite other related practices, such as the Paidéia School, the Ponte School, the Fontinha School, the Democratic Schools movement, the experiences that make up the CONANE (National Conference on Alternatives for a New Education) in Brazil, and thousands of other initiatives around the world.

The principles that emerged from these experiences still echo today as radical questioning of the school and education, and imply other professional positions of education workers and school communities as a whole to reinvent the school. Among these principles, I highlight questioning authoritarianism, hierarchy, and alienated work through processes of school self-management and social self-management; collective learning across different ages and genders; workshops; classification systems as opposed

to hierarchical evaluation systems; autonomous funding of school experiences or popular education.

The contributions of freedom education in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic are multiple and diverse, and they obviously fit into the respective contexts in which certain praxis can develop. Contrary to predetermined models or miraculous pedagogical prescriptions, liberating practices are inserted, above all, in their own educational territories – and thus demand different aspects in their self-instituting dynamics. Regarding this, I list below some autonomous social movement themes compiled in the Brazilian educational context:

- integral health education: strict hygiene care, healthy eating, quality of sleep, digital detox, physical exercise, mental health;

- education for the “Educational Territory”: abolition of traditional schooling devices (especially grades, attendance, and curricular contents) and self-creation of projects for the development of the integral human being with monitoring of teachers in different places, including at school;

- education for the “Educating City”: valorization of urbanism that allows the valorization of nature with the dynamics of experimentation of life in the freedom of human beings⁶⁴;

- education for biocentrism and social ecology: perception of homeostasis and criticism of speciesism and anthropocentrism, with emphasis on denouncing the conditions of suffering, abuse, and insalubrity of animals used to produce food for human beings;

- education for solidarity: coordination with segments of organized civil society and creation of support networks,

aiming to overcome individual welfare concepts and stimulating self-government exercises;

- education for free thinking: individual and collective self-taught movements in favor of scientific thinking and the study of ancestral traditional knowledge, fighting irrationality and political, economic and religious orthodoxies;

- education to value community-based production chains: establishment of direct relationships between popular economy producers (notably small family farmers) and conscious consumers, fighting middlemen and large supermarket chains;

- education for the spirituality of life: combating religious dogmas and theocracies, and valuing human and planetary wonders to the detriment of supposed after-death lives and situations;

- education for skills consistent with the demands of the situation of social isolation: self-management of the house in household chores, from cleaning, cooking, decorating the house and the neighborhood, and even increasing recreational activities beyond digital culture, such as diverse artistic activities, and games for all ages;

- education for social emancipation: strengthening of political concepts of direct democracy and community bonds aimed at equality and otherness, and the daily struggle against patriarchy, genocide of native populations, slavery and undignified work, tyrannies and dictatorships in general.

IV

In the social context of the COVID-19 pandemic, teaching work continues to obey the logic of capitalism: workers who are able to regulate the same workload exponentially intensified by digital culture activities are able to achieve the productivity assumptions of their labor force.

However, education workers who do not have such conditions are subject to conditions never foreseen to properly exercise their functions. In the first place, teachers are required to have a complex qualification in information and communication technologies, something that, in addition to requiring expensive equipment and stable internet connections, requires a high degree of prior study, technical tests and continuous reevaluations to achieve the desired results. At the same time, the overload of work immersed in the digital culture is highlighted, which obligates the teacher to triple shifts of online activities, exceeding the daily average of eight hours, entering the evenings and weekends. In the case of working women, the patriarchal legacy still requires a leading role in strenuous household chores, such as preparing food, organizing the household, cleaning clothes, caring for children, and other tasks.

During the pandemic, the psychosis of productive work establishes that the worker should, among other things, deny any other tasks required by the context of the pandemic, in particular, deny care for the family and for oneself. At the same time, school institutions obstruct even one of the greatest inalienable rights of every human being: the right to family mourning and social mourning.

On the other hand, recalling one of the most important premises of Paulo Freire's thought, the teacher is both oppressed and the oppressor (1987). And, when analyzing the situation of students in the context of education in this current pandemic, we realize that teachers themselves often reproduce the mechanisms of digital authoritarianism to which they are subjected.

Facing this context, the weakest must adapt to the example of work productivity of the strongest, or otherwise they will be subject to the most diverse mechanisms of judgment and punishment: an example is the process of mass dismissal of teachers from private schools – often notified through digital work platforms. The logic of the commodification of education by large private companies only accepts competition, personal success and the elimination of their competitors.

But teaching work, in general, faces several challenges in the context of transforming your own home into a productive workspace. The readjustment of the behavior of family members becomes fundamental for the good performance of the worker, such as the change of use of certain spaces that were once reserved for resting and enjoying life. Besides that, the architecture of the house transforms completely to meet the work demands.

At the same time, we observe the deregulation of remote work required in the home office mode related to several aspects, such as physical ergonomics, the guarantee of access to equipment, labor gymnastics, training courses, psychosomatic exhaustion, breaks, salary irreducibility, contractual add-ons, respect for image rights, technological support and technical guidelines, reorganization of the

school calendar, freedom of teaching in virtual environments, and others.

Teachers getting ill becomes something intrinsic to the profession itself and, contrary to the guidelines for strengthening health and increasing physical immunity to resist the COVID-19 pandemic, the teaching worker resigns to such imperatives - sometimes due to pressure from their managers, or for internalizing the moral values of the Judeo-Christian civilization that defines work as a glorious martyrdom to reach the kingdom of heaven. The struggle of unions, in this sense, remains conditioned to the role of their managers, and instead of the teachers' movements leading to radical transformations in society, they only decide about the rearrangement of the furniture in their homes to better adapt to online teaching.

Bureaucrats and education managers, teachers, and other teaching staff who are responsible for consolidating this education framework in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic boast of what they should be ashamed: the normalization of an education that accentuates the social division of teaching work and relationships alienated from their emancipatory purposes, the widespread illness of school communities at all levels and the dehumanization of learning communities. To paraphrase Raoul Vaneigem, I think that talking about an innovative and transformative education without experiencing it, in reality, is talking with a corpse between the teeth.

V

Contrary to the logic of uetic psychosis that prevails in societal dynamics and drives the decline of human beings, let us praise the initiatives of mutual support, cooperation and ecological balance – primordial factors in the evolution of the human species. The area of education allows us to make incredible rediscoveries in the realm of relationships among human beings, and teaching work, when inspired by loving and humanizing encouragement, spreads seeds of the art of living. However, the COVID-19 pandemic calls into question educational practices that neglect communalism and harmonious relationships with other forms of life: it is a crossroads of no return, whose wrong path could lead to the extinction of the human race in a short time.

To avoid the misdirection of our dehumanization, it is necessary to embrace the planet Earth literally, to contemplate and be enchanted by life, and to exercise elementary care among all species. In accordance with the thinking of José Maria Carvalho Ferreira⁶⁵, social emancipation would pass through some plausible reasons for a new historical meaning for humanity: learning to live with nature, learning to love nature, learning to extract with wisdom what we need from nature; deconstruction of most cities, avoiding exorbitant population concentrations; learning to live in a self-organized way, learning to self-manage in all the space-times of everyday life in which we participate; definitely abolish money, and reconstruct the mind, psyche, and body that one can live without money, without a State and without wars. Utopias?

A teaching work without utopias is a bankrupt work that, emptied into the indispensable structures of the human psyche, does not soar toward the urgent transformations of the world. But a teaching work cannot survive only on utopias. The art of living an emancipated education is not a task for the future, but a daily practice that appears in the gaps of a completely failed educational system. It's a blessing. It is a gift, a present of the present, something that we live intensely. This is where the magnitude of *educational heterotopias* resides, whether they are the "constitution of other spaces, of experimental, alternative schools, which invent another way of thinking and doing the school", and the "creation of other formed spaces and creative relationships, in the established space"⁶⁶. Educational heterotopias are vivid realities that allow "teachers to be privateers, launching themselves on an adventure of teaching, without the slightest pretense of controlling anyone's learning".⁶⁷

Heterotopias are possible adventures. They are Zapatistas defying the imperialism of the capital, women in Rojava rebelling against the Islamic State, activists freeing animals, flowers cracking the asphalt and sprouting in necropolis cities. And the adventure of defending a public, free, secular, and quality education also shines on the horizon of the teaching worker as a heterotopia - as well as the struggle of workers for decent work and not alienated from its purposes and fruits, dedicating precaution against the psychosis of labor productivity, notably in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Such an adventure is facilitated by living, from now on, a daily life that is as close as possible to the art of living, taking care of the importance of direct sociability and

without mediation – without the mediation of virtual or mercantile relationships, in particular. An adventure that encourages us to harmonious connections intertwined with dialogues among human beings, and other animals and life forms – exercising whenever possible social equality, mutual help, and communalism for the continuity of the process of the evolution of the species.

A return to normality of pre-COVID-19 pandemic life under the same pillars that underpin social inequality, violence, the surveillance and control society, hierarchy, alienated work relationships, and anthropocentrism is the same as saying goodbye to the creation of a new world – and also of another school. School understood, in this case, as a space-time of creativity and imagination. A place to dream.

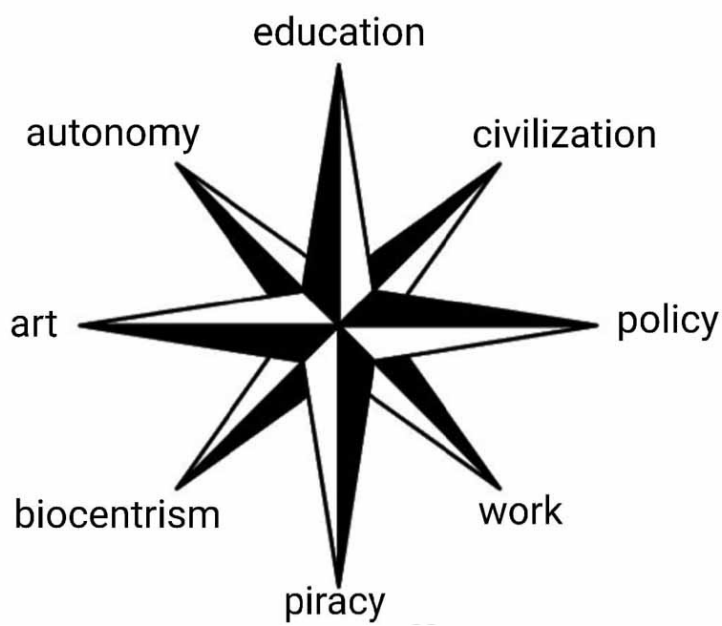
CHAPTER 7

FLYING THROUGH THE BRAZILIAN CERRADO

This morning I woke up sweetly to a lullaby in the sunlight: a grandmother was rocking her grandson. Was he reciting it for the boy or for the world? Setting out for the morning flight, I was perplexed by the absence of humans on the streets. I visited Maria-faceira. She immediately greeted: what peace, Bem-te-vi! Behind its fleshy fruits I saw the Olhos d'Água park – sure to have good paths. On the way I noticed a man sitting, angry with his aura of death: he was wearing a Brazil football t-shirt, and shouting at people to go back to their jobs. Arriving at the park, I saw free animals, dancing in the sun, running and playing their lives. The melody of silence never heard emanated from the Earth. Where were the humans, anyway? I asked the Capitão-do-campo: — Friend, you who are long-lived here in the Cerrado, why did human beings disappear? And the huge tree replied: — Flying bird, didn't you hear about the stampede? Everyone is confined to their homes, except a few. A new creature is in the air, invisible, and enters when you breathe. Shortly, I continued

my floating. Observing the interior of the houses, my gaze: families together, sometimes laughing, sometimes crying; distant couples side by side, or intertwined in passionate love; children and old people dreaming, rising to the clouds of another awakening. The slow city, pleasant to take care itself. And I asked myself: will one day, together with this humanity, be able to fly? I returned to the same place as in the morning, and the revered lullaby calmed fears in the moonlight. And so the journey into balm continued...

* Eyewitness testimony of a bird in the daily life of Brasília, capital of Brazil, in times of COVID-19. 04/17/2020.



AFTERWORD ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sebastião Vargas

*“I say: the real is neither at the exit nor at the arrival:
it is available for us at the crossing.”*

João Guimarães Rosa

“YOU HAVE TO CHANGE EVERYTHING IN THE ROOT

Seriously Mr. Professor?

Oh really & joking”

Nicanor Parra

I met Bomfim in the 1990s when we were studying History at the University of São Paulo. I have intense memories of him around that time, but curiously I don't remember him in any formal education space, such as classrooms... On the other hand, his presence animated an entire informal network of interactions among a plurality of engaged individuals, groups and collectives in radical cultural, political and artistic processes that began to be

named as *liberationist, horizontal, anti-authoritarian, autonomist, anarchist...*

In a very peculiar way, Bomfim embodied several of the sensitivities and interests that united us: the possibilities of self-management (put into practice in numerous spheres of student politics, as during the 2001 USP Student Strike); cooperativism (as a member of a cooperative of painters); investigation of the psyche through altered states of consciousness; genuine respect for popular culture and expression; from criticism to passivity (spectacle); enthusiasm in creating situations that plunged into the abyss of poetry and the marvelous (our soccer team “Lubambo Chuva & Sol” that played on a clay field channeled the last three points); study, participation, and dissemination of the autonomist tradition; a decision to learn and support the concrete manifestations of the social struggle.

It is precisely this decision to follow, theoretically and practically, the most radical struggles waged by the Brazilian people that instigated Bomfim to “migrate” to the area of Popular Education. He was specifically interested in self-educational and emancipatory processes that he theorized as pedagogies of the “insurrection” in his master’s thesis entitled “Autonomy, cooperativism and the Landless Workers Movement (MST): educational contributions to self-management and pedagogies of the insurrection” (2003). I went with Bomfim on some of the numerous field trips carried out in this highly original research, in which I had my first contact with this thriving social movement. Already in his doctorate, Fernando Bomfim focuses on a central theme for contemporary autonomous thought and defends, also at USP, the thesis “Education, and ecology:

practices of social autonomy or renewed discourses of transnational capital?” (2008)

But let it be clear that this information about his “education” only gives a tiny notion of his activities and interests that transcended (and continue to transcend) the “small world of academics”. At that time, Fernando led a life guided by the sign of nomadism: he constantly moved between MST rural settlements and encampments spread across Brazil, his work in sociopolitical training of artists and artisans in the south of the State of Rio de Janeiro and long journeys that astonished all of us who had the honor of sharing his adventurous stories and lessons learned.

After the V World Social Forum, held in Brazil in 2005, I lost contact with him for many months. At our reunion (probably at the end of 2006) he revealed to me, in his lighthearted way and full of healthy self-sarcasm, that he had decided to “check out the situation in Russia in loco... so I managed to get on a ship in the port of Antonina and...” he hands me a book entitled *State Terrorism in Russia: the war in Chechnya in the ways of the industry of violence*. The work was signed only by “Ação Literária pela Autodeterminação dos Povos” (“Literary Action for the Self-Determination of People”) – a demonstration of its contempt for the “productivist” eagerness that torments the academic environment. But it was also a form of protection, because the book, apart from presenting the various forms of struggle for social autonomy of the Caucasian people, analyzes the creation of the political structures that support the practices of State terrorism in Russia and bravely denounces the war crimes committed under the responsibility of President Vladimir Putin “such as murder, torture and political

persecution of all individuals or organized groups that rise against any justice of this war – a war that, like any other, will never be justified as long as there is humanity”.

From 2009, Bomfim settles in the city of Caicó as a professor in the area of “Social Movements and Popular Education” at the Higher Education Center of Seridó (CERES) of the Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte. Since this work, which the reader has in his hands, is intended for an audience that may not be familiar with Brazilian social geography, some clarifications are needed: Rio Grande do Norte is one of the smallest Brazilian states, located in Northeast region, one of the poorest regions of the country. But it is also a region of extraordinary strength in experiences of social struggles that are very emblematic of our history: indigenous resistance (Confederação dos Cariris) and quilombolas (Palmares) that span centuries; several episodes and characters that express the messianic traditions of sertanejo Catholicism (Canudos, Pau de Colher, Caldeirão); social banditry (cangaço); the struggles of the Peasant Leagues; pedagogical experiences (it was in Angicos, in Rio Grande do Norte, that educator Paulo Freire began his revolutionary methodology). The Northeast is also the origin of powerful cultural manifestations and, of course, the cradle and stage of the most acute artists and thinkers we have had. They are “feel-thinkers” who demonstrate that material poverty can be accompanied by cultural and existential wealth, that the world is contradictory and mixed, that not all contradictions are resolved in synthesis, but remain in a creative tension of knowledge and practices of formidable fruitfulness. For many of these “feel-thinkers”, the true core of the Northeast is the backland. But as the

Taoist from Cordisburgo wrote in “Great Backlands: Veredas” (“Grande Sertão: Veredas”): “The backland is everywhere... the backland is within us... the backland is without a place”. Finally, the backland is inside us.

By settling in Seridó, an emblematic area of the northeastern backland, Fernando Bomfim opens himself to a whole range of rebellious teachings and traditions that emanate deeply from history and the land. And, as the Zapatistas so well teach, he starts walking and... inquiring. He quickly founded the International Laboratory of Social Movements and Popular Education, whose acronym LAMPEAR refers simultaneously to the terrible *cangaceiro* Lampião, but also to the glow of fireflies (insects that have their own luminosity). With his charisma, commitment, and energy, Bomfim quickly achieved a synergy between students and researchers that made LAMPEAR in fact a storehouse for the production of knowledge aimed at experimenting with emancipatory experiences in the middle of the backland. I had the privilege of witnessing and participating in some of the numerous actions carried out by this autonomist space. Some examples: 1. The “Lampear na Comunidade” project, which stimulated a series of debates and interventions in the most diverse places (schools, public squares, neighborhood associations, unions, rural settlements, etc.) about the radical critique of capitalist society – production relations, social hierarchy, consumerism, patriarchy and other themes that, in the words of the participants, “provide the enchantment for social equality”; 2. The Art and Culture Group “Travessia...” (inspired by the magnetic work of João Guimarães Rosa) aggregated self-organizing initiatives for artistic and cultural manifestations, evoking the “art of living

and the search for the wonderful on the planet as a principle of the concept of art” – the cultural soirées, the film club “A Colmeia”, the ecological trails in the semi-arid region, the cultural interventions in academic events, the publication of pamphlets and books (from famous authors like Raoul Vaneigem to young poets from Rio Grande do Norte), field trips (especially to popular schools and territories of indigenous people and traditional communities; 3. The AFESOL Cooperative Incubator (Articulation and Strengthening of Solidarity Economic Enterprises) which acted to sharpen the critique of work through professional training in the popular economy, adding agroecological and self-management productive experiences in the Seridó region.

His journey through the Brazilian backlands ended in 2018 but left deep marks on all those who could share his paths. That same year, Fernando moved to the School of Education at the University of Brasília (FEUnB). These are the years of the rise of the extreme right to power in Brazil and the crisis of the Covid-19 global pandemic.

The work that Fernando Bomfim offers us now comes at a very opportune time, as it instigates reflections that will be fundamental in this historical period that begins with the end of a fascist government in Brazil and the beginning of a government that raises too much hope with the “state-centric left”. It also proposes a self-critical reflection on how we, intellectuals from “commodity people”, are positioning ourselves in relation to this “Fourth World War” – a central concept of the Zapatista political theory proposed in the text “7 loose world puzzle pieces”, (“7 piezas sueltas del rompecabezas mundo”), 1997, by subcomandante

insurgente Marcos – whose target is the planet itself, not only its majority population (the poor) but also what we call territories, resources, environment (“environment cut in half” in the expression of the shaman and intellectual Yanomami Davi Kopenawa). In short, this war against what “we” call nature, but which the native people know to be much more: culture, community, history, spirit, ancestry, dreams, future, life, mother... *Nuestra Madrecita Tierra*.

In times of environmental collapse, multiple crises (cultural, economic, and social), and global pandemic, when the hallucinated Capitalist Hydra (which in its continuous theft disguised as “progress” now coordinates the heads of State and parastatal fascism; of the agents of ecocidal and genocidal devastation, and organized and disorganized crime) returns to devastate the planet with its heads of war, ignorance, fascism, and destruction, it is fundamental that we take the public debate absolutely seriously on the construction of this “other policy” helped by the imaginative, utopian and poetical (onipolitical) power of societies, groups, and individuals that, in fact, want an (alter)native solution to the bifrontal State and Market beast. In this context, anarchist ideas and intuitions assume the character of a counterpoison, a fortifying ‘serum’ for the reconstruction of a leftist project that sews a flag with the most resistant red and black threads.

Calling someone an anarchist invites identification with an unpredictable series of associations that will most likely never mean the same thing to any two people, including two anarchists. Perhaps Fernando Bomfim is one of those many anarchists who prefer not to lock themselves into any labels or “isms” that unnecessarily circumscribe

their freedom of thought and pace. Or not, because his life trajectory is evidently linked to what we could call here the contemporary anarchist movement. A very broad, discontinuous, decentralized social movement, open to informality and steeped in countless contradictions: the first of them, seeking to live and prefigure anarchy here and now, in this world and society completely averse to it.



NOTES

— Presentation —

1 This book is a collection of texts originally published in Portuguese in: ENSAIOS DE TEATRO. Porto: Teatreia Associação Cultural, novembro 2016. (Chapter 1)

SILVA, F. T.; VILLAR, J. L.; BORGES, L. F. (orgs.). História e historiografia da educação brasileira: teorias e metodologias de pesquisa. Curitiba: Appris, 2020. (Chapter 2)

RIDPHE_R Revista Iberoamericana do Patrimônio Histórico-Educativo, Campinas, SP, v. 8, n. 00, p. e022031, 2022. (Chapter 3)

PITTA et al. (orgs.). Terrorismo de Estado, direitos humanos e lutas sociais. São Paulo: Editora Entremares, 2017. (Chapter 4)

VARGAS NETTO, Sebastião L. F. V. Palavras que caminham o mundo: Histórias e místicas do EZLN e do MST. Rio de Janeiro: Publit, 2014. (Chapter 5)

FERREIRA, J.M.C. (org.). Contingências da pandemia gerada pela Covid-19 nas sociedades contemporâneas. Lisboa: Clássica Editora, 2022. (Chapter 6)

MAPA: Jornal de informação crítica. Portugal: número 27, maio-julho 2020. (Chapter 7)

2 In “Dictionary: work, profession and teaching condition” (Mariana, 2010) I present the following definitions in the entry “Self-management”:

Self-management: Process of transforming heteronomous government structures into ones self-instituting structures of society, based on anti-hierarchical, anti-state and anti-capitalists dynamics. Self-management is a political concept, far beyond a technical concept aimed at a new mode of administration or management. The concept is strengthened through autonomous and self-managed struggles of European workers at the end of the 19th century until the middle of the 20th century (Paris Commune, strikes in Russia in 1905; uprising in Kronstadt in defense of the soviets; Spanish Revolution; Councils in Hungary in 1956; Syndicate Solidarnosc in Poland in 1980; and others) and becomes more complex in popular movements contemporaries in favor of freedom and social emancipation (autonomists collectives, anarchists, indigenous and original people movements, landless rural workers, unemployed or homeless urban workers, and others), whose renewed

forms of struggle and management of society present plausible alternatives for self-government. Etymologically, the prefix “self” focuses on the ability of human beings to control their social life. The organizational bases of self-management reside in assemblies decentralized, maximum decision-making bodies, where debate, reflection and decisions are made about everything that refers to everyday public life. The representation takes place without delegation of power, which means that the representative does not decide, but is the spokesperson of collective decisions. Self-management councils bring together representatives from different assemblies. In residents’ associations, self-management affects the possibilities of direct community control over its own territory, eliminating hierarchical forms and oppressive (notably patriarchy), and creating harmonious social relations with the environment. In the student movement, self-management recreates the nature and form of the struggle, providing students with autonomy in the face of partisan and bureaucratized entities (MARIANA, 1992). In workers’ movements, self-management favors spaces of social struggles outside unions, whether occupations, factory committees or bodies similar autonomous processes – union managers completely lose their role, and general assemblies replace any form of representation, rejecting hierarchies internal or external. In economic production units, *workers reappropriate space and time, redefining them, destroying hierarchies, eliminating the duality leaders/directed, the division between manual and intellectual work* (BRUNO, 1990, p. 32). The process of autonomous institution of society (CASTORIADIS, 1982) is embodied in the federation of self-managed social spheres, aiming at expanding of the movement and the overcoming of the political structures of the State and the capitalist economy. *Where there is self-management there can be no army, no police, no State.* (INTERNATIONAL SITUACIONISTA, 1997, p. 199), and the critique of the commodification of human life in all its aspects (work, leisure, art and culture, love, dreams) will occupy centrality in the production of knowledge intrinsic to such a movement, showing that *the right to live passionately involves the total liquidation of the spectacular mercantile system* (RATGEB, 1974, p. 83). Self-managed creation has infinite diversity in its socio-historical dimensions and, by pointing to possibilities of overcoming the human condition in relation to the exploitation of human beings by human beings, enables political preconditions for the construction of new civilizations.

Educational self-management: Education self-management is the autonomous management of education resulting from everyday life socially emancipated collective. Does not include the school as an essential institution for such process, since the skills needed by future generations for reproduction can be learned in everyday life in different ways. The educational self-management is traditionally practiced by indigenous peoples and populations who find a high degree of social autonomy. It also has specific contours within the historical contexts of self-management struggles. In the Paris Commune, revolutionaries like Louis-Eugène Varlin understood the struggle itself as a pedagogy. *Managing fights was, in his opinion, the only training to later manage the society and the economy* (BERNARDO, 2000, p. 94). During the Spanish Revolution, the Council

of the New Unified School reflected the self-managed contours of the struggle anarchist, also incorporating the principles of autonomous pedagogy – based on self-education, in humanizing pedagogical relationships, in the abolition of grades and tests, in anti-authoritarian teaching and radical criticism of the capitalist system, in addition to other specific characteristics to each historical situation. In Brazil, Modern Schools, in São Paulo, and the Popular University, in Rio de Janeiro, are examples of educational activities self-organized at the beginning of the century by the anarchist labor movement (MORAES, 2006). Currently, educational self-management is carried out within popular social movements under their most diverse configurations, translating as fundamental pedagogical practices in approaches to policy and management in education. The experiences of self-management struggles frame the foundations of pedagogies of uprising (MARIANA, 2003), whose philosophical-educational foundations are based on preparation for free and emancipated social life. This individual strength, as well as your application to the social process, can be understood as direct action (BOOKCHIN, 1998). At the same time, the creation of alternative educational spaces, or even experimental schools that invent innovative ways to move away from discipline and biopower of current school structures, assist in educational heterotopias (GALLO, 2009). In the university environment, the creation of channels for real participation of teachers, students and technical staff in power structures would obstruct the bureaucratic sclerosis of the institution, returning to the university a sense of existence through pedagogical self-management (TRAGTENBERG, 2004).

— Chapter 2 —

- 3 MARIANA, 2017, p. 34.
- 4 Ibidem, p. 35.
- 5 FREIRE, 1987, p. 17. The italicized italics are my own to emphasize the contradiction between an autonomous and heteronomous human condition.
- 6 CASTORIADIS, 1982, p. 124.
- 7 Ibidem, p. 126.
- 8 TAIBO, 2019, p. 208.
- 9 FIORI, 2018, p. 77.
- 10 PASSETTI, 2013, p. 63.
- 11 See chapter 4: Struggle of Giants over a void (AGAMBEN, 2007).
- 12 “Proposition XXVIII”. LAS CASAS, 1997, p. 491.
- 13 “Memoirs of R. Gungeeva, born in 1937, deported from the Kalmykia region, USSR”. GULAG HISTORY MUSEUM, 2019, p. 35
- 14 Information Operations Detachment – Internal Defense Operations Center, a body affiliated with the Armed Forces in Brazil and one of the main responsible for the practices of State terrorism during the Military Dictatorship (1964-1985).

15 Reference to the construction of the Belo Monte Hydroelectric Plant, approved as a project of national interest in the government of President Dilma Rousseff, and which still represents today the social project promoted by left-wing governments in South America through the IIRSA plan (Initiative for Integration of South American Regional Infrastructure).

16 GAGNEBIN, 2015, p. 12.

17 Ibidem, p. 05.

18 In the city of Buenos Aires, Argentina, the buildings of the former Escuela de Mecánica de la Armada (ESMA) were transformed from the year 2004 into a social space to preserve the memory of the remains of that place that, once, was a true field of clandestine concentration of the Argentine dictatorship. The “Espacio Memoria y Derechos Humanos” has become one of the references of public space maintained by the State that recovers the memory of State terrorism – which even in this contradiction does not refrain from the political act of remembering and fighting against oblivion.

19 In the original quote (BENJAMIN, 1994, p. 226) the author refers to the 20th century, not the 21st century.

20 BENJAMIN, 1994, p. 225.

21 CAPELATO, 2016, p. 22.

— Chapter 3 —

22 WALTER, 2000, p. 27-28.

23 MOURA, 1999, p. 36-38.

24 MARIANA, 2014, p. 200.

25 TRAGTENBERG, 2011, p. 449.

26 Ibidem, p.449.

27 MARIANA, 2008, p. 42.

28 BOOKCHIN, 1998, p. 16.

29 Ibidem, p. 18.

30 VANEIGEM, 2003, p. 129-130.

31 FURTADO, 1986.

32 FAURE apud MORIYÓN, 1989, p. 144.

33 ANGATU, 2017, p. 129.

34 MATEO apud LUENGO, 2006, p. 123.

— Chapter 4 —

35 VANEIGEM, 2003, p. 19.

36 The term *State capitalism* is used by political philosophy to more accurately designate the term *communism*, since it comprises the social hierarchy and the division of labor as precepts of capitalism – present in the so-called “State Socialist” experiences, notably in Soviet Russia after the annihilation of the plurality of emancipatory political groups gathered in the soviets by Leninist and

Trotskyist groups (annihilation made clear after the massacre of the Kronstadt uprising and the Makhnovist insurgent army).

37 GALLO, 2009, p. 295.

38 Not only in the assumptions suggested by BEY (2010) in “TAZ – temporary autonomous zones”, but also in the self-determined territories of traditional populations and original people.

39 KOLTAI, 2004, p. 100.

40 In “Labyrinths of fascism: at the crossroads of order and revolt” (2003), BERNARDO reflects the complex historicity of fascisms – not only in their most forceful political practices, but in their convergences with political sectors that call themselves “revolutionary left” and in its renewed formats today.

41 Let us remember LA BOÉTIE (1997), and his “Discourse on voluntary servitude” from the mid-16th century.

42 Especially in his third argument, entitled “Television and its effects on individuals” (pp. 193-323).

43 In the work “Nationalisms – the National State and nationalism in the 20th century”, see in particular the third chapter “National identity, literacy and national consciousness”.

44 For details of the societal impacts of IIRSA as the basis of the general production conditions of the violence production chain (in addition to the generalized dynamics of State terrorism), see MARIANA (2008).

45 These social movements end up being characterized by a certain isolation from political struggles, except for some collective actions and meetings, such as ELAOPAs (Latin American Meetings of Autonomous Popular Organizations), which allow for a certain elasticity in the margins of direct actions and the formation of an autonomist political culture.

46 Data accessed on the website www.sipri.org, on May 1, 2016.

47 In the work “State Terrorism in Russia: the war in Chechnya in the missteps of the violence industry”, see in particular Annex 5: “Pierm and the anti-militarist struggle in contemporary Russia” (pp. 108-110).

48 Other death symbols are also present on the screens. I analyzed the Brazilian movie “Tropa de Elite” (2007) as an example of the implicit neo-nazi symbology in films (MARIANA, 2012).

49 BAUMAN, 2003, p. 104.

50 Even so, several thinkers focus on the analysis of forms of State terrorism, such as AGAMBEN (2007), SANGUINETTI (1981), and others. In the recent work organized by BRANCO (2013), several researchers point out their reflections on the logic of terror, incorporated by the State in its institutionalities.

51 See COLETIVO GASTEIZKOAK (2008), in “Humanitarian armies and military sexist violence”.

52 For the critique of spectacular-mercantile civilization, see DEBORD (1997) and the texts of INTERNATIONAL SITUACIONISTA (1997).

53 In the sense of reconfiguration and societal updating of FOUCAULT’s (1987) concept.

— Chapter 6 —

- 54 KROPOTKIN, 1989, p. 19.
- 55 Kropotkin describes savages (people who inhabit jungles) within the same connotation as primitive or ancestral people.
- 56 KROPOTKIN, 1989, p. 51.
- 57 Ibidem, p. 53.
- 58 Ibidem, p. 62.
- 59 BOOKCHIN, s/d., p. 60.
- 60 Ibidem, p. 71.
- 61 Ibidem, p. 61-62.
- 62 CASTORIADIS, 1987, p. 326.
- 63 Ibidem, p. 331.
- 64 Something close to the theory of “Unitary urbanism” of the Situationist International (1997).
- 65 Such thoughts by J. M. Carvalho Ferreira are detailed in MARIANA (2018).
- 66 GALLO, 2009, pp. 294-295.
- 67 Ibidem, p. 295.

— Illustrations —

Page 17: M.V. Louise Michel – photo fragment extracted from mvlouisemichel.org

Page 65: Illustration taken from warresisters.org

Page 95: Chinese parasol tree / Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park (photo from the author’s collection). This tree was exposed to the radiation of the atomic bomb at a distance of about 1300 meters away from the hypocenter – and survived.

Page 129: Illustration designed by the author

Page 139: Centro de Adiestramiento Marítimo-Terrestre Zapatista – photo extracted from enlacezapatista.ezln.org.mx (kindly recommended by João Branco and wonderfully blessed by Ixchel*)

* Ixchel: Mayan goddess of the moon, water, birth, medicine and weaving; known in some Mayan texts as rainbow-woman.

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