

Cartography for researching curricula and childhoods in dissidences: an experimental exercise of invention

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ABSTRACT. This article explores the constitutive movements of a cartography invented to research curricula and childhoods in dissidences. Installing itself in the territory of post-critical methodologies in Education and Curriculum, it aims to show the cartographic making of a research that investigated the agencies of life and death that children in dissidences of gender and sexuality make in the curriculum. Cartography is a way to investigate a process in production, to follow an uncertain path, a certain time that lasts. Inspired by the production of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, it is concerned with studying subjective processes, following the agencies that make an event possible. The argument developed here is that in order to map curricula and childhoods in dissidence, it is necessary to organize encounters capable of apprehending the events, to compose with the sensations produced in between the places of the bodies and to narrate in dissidence, making the narrative experience a minor, intensive and geographic use.

Keywords: cartography; curriculum; post-critical methodologies; childhood; difference.

Cartografia para pesquisar currículos e infâncias em dissidências: um exercício experimental de invenção

RESUMO. Este artigo explora os movimentos constitutivos de uma cartografia inventada para pesquisar currículos e infâncias em dissidências. Instalando-se no território das metodologias pós-críticas em Educação e Currículo, objetiva mostrar o fazer cartográfico de uma pesquisa que investigou os agenciamentos de vida e morte que as infâncias em dissidências de gênero e sexualidade fazem no currículo. A cartografia é um modo de investigar um processo em produção, de acompanhar um traçado incerto, um certo tempo que dura. Inspirada nos trabalhos de Gilles Deleuze e Félix Guattari, ela se ocupa em estudar processos subjetivos, acompanhando os agenciamentos que possibilitam um acontecimento. O *argumento* aqui desenvolvido é o de que, para cartografar currículos e infâncias em dissidências, faz-se necessário organizar encontros capazes de apreender os acontecimentos, compor com as sensações produzidas nos entrelugares dos corpos e narrar em dissidência, fazendo da experiência narrativa um uso menor, intensivo e geográfico.

Palavras-chave: cartografia; currículo; metodologias pós-críticas; infâncias; diferença.

Cartografía para investigar los currículos y las infancias disidentes: un ejercicio experimental de invención

RESUMEN. Este artículo explora los movimientos constitutivos de una cartografía inventada para investigar los currículos y las infancias disidentes. Instalándose en el territorio de las metodologías poscríticas en Educación y Currículo, pretende mostrar el hacer cartográfico de una investigación que investigó los agenciamentos de vida y muerte que hacen las infancias en disidencias de género y sexualidad en el currículo. La cartografía es una forma de investigar un proceso en producción, de seguir un camino incierto, un tiempo determinado que dura. Inspirada en la producción de Gilles Deleuze y Félix Guattari, se ocupa de estudiar los procesos subjetivos, siguiendo los agenciamentos que hacen posible un acontecimiento. El argumento que se desarrolla aquí es que, para mapear los currículos y las infancias disidentes, es necesario organizar encuentros capaces de apreender los acontecimientos, componer con las sensaciones producidas en los entre-lugares de los cuerpos y narrar en la disidencia, haciendo de la experiencia narrativa un uso menor, intensivo y geográfico.

Palabras clave: cartografía; currículo; metodologías poscríticas; infancias; diferencia.

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Introduction¹

‘Organizing encounters, composing with sensations, and narrating in dissidence’ are the movements of a cartography designed to explore curricula and childhoods within dissidences. The cartography presented in this article constitutes an investigative practice produced in the interstices of encounters, connecting disparate subjects, composing with sensations and ongoing processes, operating with the ‘ethics of experimentation’. Cartography is a way of investigating a process in production, of following an uncertain path, a certain lasting time. Inspired by the works of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, it is concerned with studying subjective processes, following the assemblages that enable an event. Cartography is also an art of encounters. This is because everything in it is connection, mixture, composition, bricolage, intersection, combination. Therefore, it requires the researcher’s inhabitation of different territories, from the perspective of transforming oneself to understand.

Mapping a curriculum is to chart the lines that cross through it and constitute it. It’s about paying attention to the becomings and adopting a stance of openness and experimentation so as not to lose sight of encounters and their productions. In this movement, there’s an implication of a geographical-experimental approach that understands that “[...] life happens between the lines” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2012, p. 81-82). It is within the lines of a territory that events take place, the small resistances, molecular inventions, deviations from the path, demolitions and deaths, the becomings and escapes. In cartography, we move among things, in the middle, stripping away the foundation, nullifying the beginning and the end. The middle is the place of encounters, improbable connections, assemblages that enable and affirm difference. Thus, it’s in the middle, an intermezzo, in zigzag movements, in the interstices of post-critical curriculum methodologies, that we discuss the invented cartographic approach for researching curricula and childhoods within dissidences.

This article, situating itself in the realm of post-critical methodologies in Education and Curriculum, aims to demonstrate the cartographic process of a research study that investigated the agencements of life and death carried out by gender and sexuality dissident childhoods within the curriculum. It involves a cartography conducted over a span of two years, moving between dissident childhoods, school curricula, and curricula beyond the school space, in order to map what is being assembled in the in-between spaces of these diverse territories. In this ‘cartography’, we engage in the art of constructing an ever-unfinished and open map, following the processes of composing different lines traced or followed by dissident children and their families to make connections in the curriculum, dismantle what has already been done and built, reverse given meanings, and pursue a path that may lead to modes of existence that prioritize life. The ‘argument’ developed here is that, to map curricula and dissident childhoods, it is essential to arrange encounters capable of apprehending events, composing with the sensations produced in the in-between spaces of bodies, and narrating in dissent, transforming narrative experience into a minor, intensive, and geographical use. The children, families, teachers, and healthcare professionals populating the map of this cartography live in different cities and states across Brazil. Their paths and the lines of life they trace, though distinct and singular, converge in the experience of dissent. To introduce and discuss the lines constituting the map produced in this cartography and the methodological procedures devised to trace it, this article is divided into three parts from this point forward. In the first part, we spatially delineate and narrate some fragments that form the cartographed lines of the open and unfinished map we’ve devised, in order to present the investigated territory. In the second part, we, in turn, present, through three movements, the cartographic procedures created for the investigation we undertook. Finally, in the third part, we offer some concluding remarks that function as a brief manifesto to continue inventing encounters within research.

Entering the territory to mark its spatialities

A territory encompasses diverse geographical-existential spatialities. To map its cartography, it’s crucial to delineate its spaces while keeping in mind the lines that connect and interact, the assemblages that generate events, and the movements in motion. Below, we present the spatialities of the territory mapped in the research that underpins this article.

- Marking 1: In Aracaju, capital of Sergipe, a 6-year-old child wanders around the house, hugging a stuffed giraffe that he has had since he was a baby. Her mother is in one of the rooms, working. The child enters the makeshift office. The silence is interrupted by a summons. “Mom, I want to talk to you”. The woman turns.

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There is tension everywhere. "Will you still love me if I'm a boy?" asks the child. They both cry. "Sunshine, I hate tamarind, if you turn into a tamarind I'll still love you, let alone a handsome boy!", replies the woman. The child puts his hand on his heart and continues: "it's because inside I'm a boy. If you want to kick me out of the house..."

- Marking 2: A teacher struggles at home in the city of Aracaju, tormented by not knowing what to do. A film plays in her mind as she recalls the child's first steps, someone she's seen grow up. She mourns. She ponders a strategy for the child, who now has a different name, to feel embraced and for the gender transition to be ritualized at school as well. She decides to experiment. The next day, in the classroom, she puts into practice the strategy she invented. She is happy and relieved to see that the children are open to welcoming.

- Marking 3: Far away from there, in the city of São João del-Rei, located in the interior of Minas Gerais, a woman takes advantage of a Sunday afternoon to rest. She sits on a chair on her terrace, contemplating the movement of the street. This movement is interrupted by the arrival of a child. "Oh, mommy! I want to be a girl. I am a girl. I'm not a boy", exclaims the 3-year-old child. The woman kneels down, looks at the child, and responds, "Mommy asked God in heaven for a boy, I wanted a boy, and God sent me a boy". The child starts to cry. He cries a lot, while repeating several times, "I can't control my life!"

- Marking 4: In São João del-Rei, a teacher carefully looks at a child's drawings. She's amazed to notice that the drawings have become larger, more colorful, and vibrant after their gender transition. As she observes the now 5-year-old child, she remembers the shy 'boy' who hardly spoke and always looked down. She also recalls the tiny, colorless, and lifeless drawings. The sad and shy child gave way to a communicative, smiling girl who likes to lead and arrives at school full of bracelets, accessories and colors. There's a sparkle in the child.

- Marking 5: In Belo Horizonte, an 8-year-old boy goes to school wearing makeup. His nails are painted. He walks among the children lightly. Some ask to see his nails. The boy only shows them to those he trusts and is close to. During the break, one of them pulls the boy with a hula hoop to get a closer look at his nails. The boy manages to escape. The children become agitated. Some teachers talk among themselves, criticizing the child's family for 'allowing him to come to school as a girl'. One of the teachers decides to do things differently. To embrace the child and address the conflicts that arose in her class, she adjusts her curriculum plan and, during an Art class, draws a connection between the boy's makeup and painted nails and the body paintings of indigenous peoples. "In these cultures, boys also paint themselves," she explains. The boy becomes happy, and from that day on, he always goes to the teacher to show her the color of his nails.

- Marking 6: In the school's counseling room, in this same school, a mother weeps profusely after being called for a conversation with the guidance counselor. Her 11-year-old son had spread word around the school that he was going to kill himself after discovering that the boy he was 'in love' with had exchanged messages and declared that he liked a girl in their class. The principal is called in to mediate the situation. The mother cries heavily and begins to shout, saying she doesn't know what she did wrong to have a gay son. "We are all very religious at home, and my husband won't accept this". The principal explains that she is also Catholic but that "God is love, and Jesus welcomed all people as they are". The child waits outside the room, hearing the mother's cries. The guidance counselor advises the mother to give the child a hug and embrace them. Afterward, she goes to find the boy. He asks in a low voice, tears welling up in his eyes, "Is my mother crying because she found out I'm gay?"

- Marking 7: In the classroom, an 11-year-old child silently suffers and is called 'gay' by the boys. Some teachers, concerned about the situation, try to talk to the student, but he does not open up. Due to being perceived as a 'feminine boy' by other children, the offensive comments become increasingly intense. During PE classes, the child is isolated by the boys and embraced by the girls. "We don't want a little girl on the soccer team", one of the students comments.

- Marking 8: The clinic of the Center for Comprehensive Reference and Assistance for Transspecific Health (CRAIST) at the Hospital das Clínicas of the Federal University of Uberlândia (UFU) is incredibly crowded. People move back and forth, restless, as they await their appointments. In the examination rooms, healthcare professionals welcome, examine, and guide the patients. A child arrives. The clinic's attention turns to her. Accompanied by her mother and father, who seek support and professional guidance, the 5-year-old child quickly wins the heart of the team. After an initial conversation, the child's father asks, "But if she changes her mind in adolescence and decides this isn't what she wants and wants to go back? Will everything we've done be for nothing?" One of the professionals at the clinic responds, looking at the child and the father, "Is that smile nothing? We will have ensured a happy and protected childhood".

- Marking 9: In a school in Petrópolis, Rio de Janeiro, a 7-year-old child sits alone during the break. The child doesn't 'fit in with the girls' and 'isn't accepted by the boys'. As a result, she lacks friendship bonds. The school psychologist explains to the mother that it's 'immaturity' and advises that the child should 'repeat the year' to mature and make 'female friends' in her class. The child, becoming increasingly sad and isolated, starts vomiting before going to school. She no longer accepts the 'female name' and rejects anything socially read as 'girl stuff'. Concerned about the situation, the mother decides to secretly place an old recorder from home into the child's school bag without her noticing. To her surprise, she discovers that the teacher was acting with 'bias' and attempting to 'correct' the child's gender performativity, considered by the teacher 'inappropriate for a girl'.

- Marking 10: In Itaúna, São Paulo, a 10-year-old girl decides to tell her mother that she's 'pansexual'. Outraged, the child vents that her teacher wants to force her 'to wear dresses'. During the conversation, she explains that she likes someone, a girl, opens the laptop she uses for studying, and 'gives a lesson' to her mother, explaining each letter in the LGBTQIAP+ acronym. Surprised by her daughter's actions, the mother gets up and asks for a hug. The next day, she searches Facebook for groups related to 'pan kids', an abbreviation for pansexual. In her search, she discovers the group *Mães pela Diversidade* (Mothers for Diversity) and decides to join the collective.

We reactivate these narrative fragments to present some of the lines and traces mapped in the investigation that subsidizes this article. This is a cartography carried out across distinct territories, involving children, families, teachers, and healthcare professionals from various cities and states in Brazil, with spatial demarcations that make them unique. However, if we remove the fences that separate them in their distinct geographical-existential landscapes, we can perceive lines connecting them. In these territories, curricula and dissident childhoods become intertwined in various ways, and it's these assemblages and their outcomes that we map.

A curriculum, when connected with dissident childhoods, like any territory, is composed of many and varied lines. It's a territory where lines of death and life coexist and engage in disputes. Small deaths, such as the death of desire, the death of pleasure, the death of joy, the death of dreams, and the death of learning, can occur. At the same time, a curriculum is a territory where lines that interact and lead towards life can establish themselves, generating happiness and the desire to fight, resist, and exist in a different manner. After all, as Paraíso (2018, p. 49, emphasis added) asserts, "[...] despite all the powers that persist in showing the infertility of things, life's difficulties, the lack of exits, the fences of curricula [...], the ground we walk on is 'fertile', just as life is 'pregnant' with births and the curriculum 'pregnant' with possibilities".

To map territories 'pregnant' with possibilities, such as the curriculum, it is necessary to invent methodological procedures sensitive to novelty and creation. Next, we present and discuss three constitutive movements of the cartography of curricula and childhoods in dissent that we draw. These are, it must be said, open, incomplete movements, in which it is always possible to arrange other lines, which can give rise to new displacements and movements.

Movements of a cartography to research curricula and dissident childhoods

Movement I: organizing encounters

Encounters are at the heart of a cartography designed to research curricula and childhoods in dissidence. To encounter is to open oneself to connections, mixtures, and assemblages that the very methodological process enables. It's an active opening, crafted through relationships, always seeking what transpires in the 'middle' of bodies, things, and thoughts. To encounter is "[...] to find, to capture, to steal, but there is no method for finding, nothing but a long preparation" (Deleuze & Parnet, 1998, p. 15). In our experience of mapping curricula and dissident childhoods, this preparation required the 'creation of a porous body', capable of being affected and experimenting with sensations. To create for oneself a porous body within cartography means allowing the small encounters that form within a territory to pass through the pores of investigative action.

One finds not only people, but ideas, concepts, inspirations, events and movements that can come from anywhere. Therefore, in order to map, it is important to stay on the lookout, sharpen the senses, allow yourself to be crossed by the forces and intensities that circulate in a territory. It is also necessary to "[...] be open to encounters with all sorts of signs and languages, in the struggle for something to touch us lovingly and help us find a path to invention" (Paraíso, 2014, p. 42). Encounters that happen all the time and that, although different, can connect and produce the most varied effects. Encounters that need to be invented and organized, but that can also arise from unsuspected places. After all, unpredictability and novelty are matters of encounters.

Many are the encounters that intersect this cartography. The first of them relates to the encounter with the childhood of one of the authors of this article: a gay and effeminate boy who grew up in the interior of Pernambuco. In this sense, the lines and traces of the cartographic endeavor of this investigation entwine with the existential geography of a researcher who also experienced a dissident childhood, encompassing the joys, pains, fears, insecurities, and possibilities of inhabiting a child's body deviating from the norm. A child who grew up and made pain a struggle, assuming the affirmation of life in its multiplicity in the micropolitics of everyday relationships, in academic research in education and curriculum and, in his teaching, the affirmation of life in its multiplicity. The subjective mark of this researcher, therefore, enabled an openness to encounter in the process of research and an almost immediate connection with the pains, joys, and struggles within the cartography of curricula and dissident childhoods.

In the course of this cartography, when we were still feeling our way through the territory to be mapped, encounters with life narratives of children who experienced a dissident childhood in terms of gender and sexuality norms were also crucial. When these individuals reached adulthood, they wrote about their experiences. In encountering Paul Preciado (2020) and his account of his queer, lesbian, and transgressive childhood, we connected and felt outrage at the numerous forms of violence he endured in school, clinics, and his family. Traveling with the philosopher along the paths of his memories, we feel saddened by his father's contempt and his mother's guilt. Sensations that were connected with the affective memories of one of the authors of this article, who also faced paternal abandonment and saw his mother blamed for having a gay son.

"Who stands up for the queer child?" (Preciado, 2020, p. 69) is the question asked by Preciado in the title that opens his autobiographical account and which we take as a political, ethical and research problem. A question that runs through us viscerally, urging us to assume an ethical-political commitment to understand, map and chart the processes and paths navigated and invented by children who, by escaping the norms of gender and sexuality, experience dissidence and fight to exist in the difference that constitutes them. In the encounter with childhood narrated by Preciado, we made his problem-question a kind of lens to see, observe and record who is defending the queer child and the children who, in different ways, experience and trigger dissident ways of life.

We were also touched and mobilized by the encounter with the childhood of Hija de Perra, a Chilean trans activist who was a child during the harsh years of Pinochet's military dictatorship. A childhood traversed by the harshness of the days in the dictatorial regime and by the tyranny of gender and sexuality norms that, at a very early age, marked her effeminate body as deviant and devoid of intelligibility. In her affective memoirs, Hija de Perra (2015) recalls the horrors that ensued after her teacher found her playing with a doll. From the 'psychological treatment' that lasted four years, with the aim of 'curing her homosexuality', to the strategies she had to invent, exploring a gender performativity considered male, to circumvent the supposed 'therapeutic process'. Strategies that enabled the creation of exits and the tracing of lines that led her to a life of freedom and experimentation.

The encounter with Hija de Perra's childhood produced in us the desire to map the resistance strategies devised by dissident children to disrupt gender norms and evade the powers that seek to capture and normalize their bodies. From this encounter, we derived a sort of cartographic curiosity to comprehend what transpires among dissident childhoods, schools, curriculum, families, and clinics. This is because it was at school that Hija de Perra first witnessed her bodily performativity being framed as dissident. It was through a teacher that her family was summoned and advised to send the child to 'therapy' with the aim of 'reversing' her 'homosexuality'.

The experience of encountering these and other narratives, such as discussions about the experiences of effeminate gays, queer and black fagots in school childhood during their school years (Oliveira, 2020), the account of a queer Peruvian child's upbringing in the 1950s and 1960s, who had to invent a queer pedagogy of friendship to survive gender-based violence and exist in his difference (Cornejo, 2015), and the autoethnography of a declared war against an effeminate boy (Cornejo, 2011), enabled us to draw a connecting line between the different territories that align with dissident experiences of gender and sexuality, which permeate the lives of these children. From this line of connection, we noted the importance of, on the map drawn, propitiating and multiplying meetings with children in dissent, their families, professionals from their schools and health professionals, in order to register and understand the assemblages produced, in the present time, when childhoods in dissidents and curriculum meet, and observe what these assemblages lead to.

Moved by this drawn line, we 'organized meetings' with families, healthcare professionals, and teachers of children who, by deviating from the norms of gender and sexuality, experience a dissident childhood.

Children, families, healthcare professionals, and schools from different regions of Brazil gradually joined the investigation that underpins this article. Although geographically distant, they converge in the experience of dissidence and its resulting effects. In the cartography we draw, we learned that an encounter is a journey not taken alone. There's always a multitude, a flock, a pack, an accompanied solitude, a line that extends and connects our investigative endeavor to other endeavors, with other lives. This is because in an encounter, lives are intertwined and lines are drawn to facilitate experiences that may seem completely disparate. After all, a meeting, whatever it may be, "[...] is perhaps the same thing as a becoming or union. It is from the depths of this solitude that any encounter can take place" (Deleuze & Parnet, 1998, p. 14).

With each encounter with the families, childhoods, healthcare professionals, and teachers who populate this investigation, something in our cartographic process changed. The encounter with the childhoods of two trans children – a girl and a boy – for instance, prompted us to follow the lines that converge and diverge in the agencements that these children create, and to map the uniqueness in these processes. The encounter with the family and teacher of one of them urged us to map what happens when an external curriculum connects with the school curriculum, challenging it to open up and accommodate difference. We were also troubled, based on these various encounters, by the desire to understand what occurs when families open up to embrace and affirm difference, yet schools remain closed and rigid. Similarly, we were intrigued by what unfolds in these experiences when a school decides to join the fight for the lives of dissident children but faces difficulties and obstacles within families.

Throughout the cartography of curricula and dissident childhoods conducted, each encounter functioned as an event, an experience that displaced us, producing different sensations. In the path traced for the cartographic process, we saw, felt, and recorded that an encounter is always pregnant with possibilities, as it is an open, never-ending process. There is an element of the uncontrollable in the act of encountering, a line that opens up, allowing clandestine and wild things to pass through. No matter how much we plan, write preconceived scripts, formulate questions in advance, other issues, other reasonings, other entrances and exits "happen" and drag us along paths that were not anticipated on the map. Paths that are drawn in cartographic work and that move as we open ourselves up to composing with the territory, unafraid to experiment with sensations and the forces that flow through the nuances of life.

As the encounters are sensorial experiences that are in the order of sensitivity and immanence, in a cartography it is necessary to be open to compose with the sensations. In the following cartographic movement, we present and discuss the exercise of composition with the sensations that was carried out in the investigation that subsidizes this article.

Movement II: Composing with sensations

The cartography of curricula and dissident children that we have created operates with sensations. Being an immanent exercise that does not privilege thought over the body, sensations function as cartographic procedures that enable and inspire new ways of thinking, seeing, hearing, and feeling within a territory. Sensations are produced in the encounter of bodies. They are the effects of these encounters. Cartography, in this sense, is a sensory practice that creates things as it encounters them. It resides in the realm of the sensitive, as it is a pragmatics that is carried out on the surface of the skin, as we open the pores of our bodies to the affections that seek passage. After all, "[...] the subjectivity of the cartographer is affected by the world in its dimension of matter-force [...]. Attention is touched at this level, with an activation at the level of sensations" (Kastrup, 2015, p. 42).

In the cartography we devised for researching curricula and dissident childhoods, 'composing with sensations' was a methodological procedure that allowed us to grasp the movements and map the small, subtle shifts that children, their families, healthcare professionals, and teachers make within a territory. In this exercise of composition, to draw the map of our cartographic endeavor, we connected to lines laden with memories, desires, tears, struggles, dreams, embraces, smiles, farewells, new beginnings, human hearts, hopes, revolts, passions. Lines that move with delicate steps, even though they carry the 'rough flower' of wanting, the inevitability of a life, the frantic rhythm of an overflowing body.

Compose! Compose with! Compose with sensations! Sensation refers to a becoming, as it implies an opening and a becoming, an energetic entanglement. When two sensations resonate with each other, the link or the body-to-body occurs. It's a resonance that implies a purely 'energetic' interaction. Hence, sensation passes between bodies and holds much unpredictability (Deleuze & Guattari, 2010). Suddenly, a silent gesture

communicates the unpredictable. Sunlight streams through the windows, illuminating life. A child cuts her hair, constructing for herself an 'other' body. A mother embraces her child and cries with the urgency of someone who knows that every minute matters. A teacher opens herself to experimentation and invents, not without difficulties and suffering, paths to embrace the student arriving in his foreignness. A father writes a letter, bidding farewell to the 'boy' he saw being born and affirming to the world that he welcomes his daughter's gender transition with love. A woman listens to an old Caymmi record and dances alone in her apartment, carried by the warmth of a glass of wine and the pain of the grief she has to go through. A child cries for not recognizing himself in the gender compulsorily imposed upon him. A school and a curriculum are affected by a becoming that drags them into transition. The sign of love, which is in the order of acceptance and recognition of difference, is triggered and a curriculum opens the doors to hospitality.

In order to map the subtleties of these different experiences and apprehend the transits of events that emerge in the field of the sensitive, the cartography of curricula and childhoods in dissent needed to connect disparate lines, say of what they are composed of and what they form. Mapping forces, following their movements, naming sensations and becomings. Becomings are phenomena of double capture. When someone or something changes, what he changes into changes as well as himself. Thus, it was necessary to follow these disparate lines and record how they extend in a territory, to analyze which others connect. Keep track of its breaks and retakes. Pursuing the lines they make, their cracks and deterritorializations. All this cannot be done without operating with the sensations. After all, between the lines of a territory "[...] an intense molecular life [...]" (Deleuze & Guattari, 2012, p. 74) takes place, which needs to be mapped at the level of affections, of the forces that cross the body and the intensities that make the floor of a cartography vibrate.

We understand as 'affection' "[...] the affections of the body, by which its power to act is increased or decreased, stimulated or restrained and, at the same time, the ideas of these affections" (Spinoza, 2017, p. 98). In this sense, beings are defined "[...] by their 'power to be affected', by the affections of which they are capable, by the excitations to which they react, those to which they remain indifferent, those that exceed their power and sicken or kill them" (Deleuze, 2002, p. 52, author's emphasis). Affections are in the order of relationships and, therefore, in order to map them in the cartography of curricula and childhoods in dissent, it was important to analyze the encounters that children have and which of them increase or decrease the power of their bodies and lives.

"Everything is just an encounter in the universe, good or bad encounter" (Deleuze & Parnet, 1998, p. 73). From this assumption, we have traced a sensory map of the good encounters that dissident children have within the curriculum – those that bring joy, multiply forces, and extend lines leading to the affirmation of life and difference. For instance, consider the encounter of an 11-year-old gay boy who saw the school counselor as an ally in helping him come out and be embraced by his family. The life-affirming alliance forged in this encounter, which is part of this cartography, gave the boy the strength to fight and the courage to face difficulties stemming from religious conservatism at home.

A cartography does not operate with transcendent criteria. In this sense, there is no 'Good' or 'Evil', but rather 'good' and 'bad' that exist within the plane of immanence to be traced. "The good exists when a body directly composes its relationship with ours and, with all or part of its power, increases ours". The bad, on the other hand, "[...] exists when a body decomposes the relationship with ours, even if it composes itself with our parts... like a poison that decomposes the blood" (Deleuze, 2002, p. 28). In the cartography we have traced, we have followed and mapped lines of suffering, sadness, and pain that run through the dissident childhoods and territories under investigation. These lines are produced in the encounters of dissident children with signs of hostility, prejudice, differentiation, humiliation, normalization, and control.

To map encounters that amplify the potency of life within curricula that accommodate dissident genders and sexualities in childhood, it was necessary to pay attention to the compositions that occur 'between' bodies. In one of the curricula we mapped, for instance, the encounter between a trans child and the experimental teaching practiced by their teacher emitted signs of acceptance and 'hospitality'. By connecting with this teaching approach, we entered the territory of a curriculum to observe, follow, and map what happens when curriculum practices and pedagogies open up to composing with the foreignness of difference. In this experience, we saw, felt, and were affected by the movements of a 7-year-old child's journey, in relation to his family and teacher, which came together to create a network of protection and care, fighting against transphobia and ensuring a joyful childhood for him. We also saw and felt that this process did not unfold without suffering, doubts, tears, fears, and insecurities. Disparate sensations constantly mixed, triggering lines that sometimes led towards life and sometimes towards small deaths and farewells.

In a cartography that is practiced by exercising and experimenting with the sensitive, “[...] fragments of sensations, stolen between glances, build the encounter of research, in relationships with those who research and the mode of researching” (Lazzarotto & Carvalho, 2012, p. 24). In this exercise of composition, there is something that transforms not only the act of cartography but also the cartographer researchers themselves. In this sense, cartography is also an aesthetics of existence. From the encounter with curricula and childhoods in dissidence, composing with sensations, we don't leave in the same way we entered. In the act of composing, methodological procedures, the territory, and life converge, and everything is transformed. Everything changes. Everything is affected and moves from its place. From this encounter, as Milton Nascimento sings, “[...] nothing will be as it was before”.

Considering that composing with sensations and experimenting with the sensitive, in a cartography, is an experience capable of creating a ‘style’, a minor language within language, we explain in the cartographic movement below how we narrate the lines followed and traced in the territory we investigated.

Movement III: narrating in dissidence

Narrating, within a cartography of curricula and childhoods in dissidence, is an exercise undertaken with risk. There's always the danger of interpreting and being captured by the grammar of teleology, which seeks to imprint a final meaning, an intrinsic rationality, a desire for foundation, a search for truth in what transpires within a territory. To escape this trap, in the cartography we have delineated, it was necessary to perform a ‘twist’ in the narrative experience, transforming it into a ‘minor’ use, that is, intensive. This exercise of minimizing the act of narrating required “[...] a position of foreignness to what is habitually said [...]” (Passos & Barros, 2015, p. 164) and a methodological effort to undo the forms and extract from them the forces, the becomings and the movement.

Starting from the assumption that “[...] becomings are the most imperceptible, they are acts that can only be contained in a life and expressed in a style [...]” (Deleuze & Parnet, 1998, p. 11), it was important to invent a narrative style capable of giving outlet to the forces in the territory we are cartographing. A ‘dissident style’, like the childhoods and curricula that populate this investigation. A style “[...] is not a signifying structure, nor a reflected organization, nor a spontaneous inspiration, nor an orchestration” (Deleuze & Parnet, 1998, p. 12). It is “[...] an assemblage, an assemblage of enunciation. To be able to stutter in one's own language, that is a style” (Deleuze & Parnet, 1998, p. 12). In a dissident style, like the one we have invented to produce the map of this cartography, one works with the polysemy of voices, with the confusion of meanings, with the buzz of sounds, and with the moving desire to multiply perspectives around an object or event.

It is of the nature of dissidence to involve division, divergence, dissent, discord, contrariness, and questioning. This is because, from this perspective, we reject the uniformity of identity and sameness, full thoughts, the homogeneity of cohesion, absolute certainties, and unity at the expense of multiplicity. It is also of the nature of dissidence to encompass transgression, estrangement, displacement, and rupture. After all, what is at stake in dissidence is life in its constantly open processes of creation, movement, and reinvention. To narrate in dissidence, in this sense, involves estranging one's own voice, letting it escape, stutter, blending it with the voices echoing in the field, so that one no longer knows who or what is speaking. In this process, we were struck by a question that resonated in our cartographic work: “[...] how to speak without giving orders, without pretending to represent something or someone, how to succeed in making those who don't have that right speak, and to restore value to sounds as a fight against power?” (Deleuze, 2013, p. 58). From this question and our relationship with the mapped territory, we extracted some ‘methodological operations’ that guided the production of a narrative style in dissidence.

The first of these we named ‘speaking without giving orders’. This is because order belongs to the system of judgment, which prescribes and shapes bodies, imprisoning life within transcendent criteria. In the conducted cartography, we do not prescribe. Life is not judged based on superior values or foundations. Childhoods, curricular practices, and pedagogies are not subjected to the scrutiny of the ‘judgment of God’, that is, the regulatory tribunal of transcendence. After all, “[...] what exists is what insists on the surface of events and bodies. There are no explanations below - submerged foundations or meanings to be unveiled or interpreted - nor above, heavens of transcendence and representation” (Santos, 2018, p. 134).

In this sense, the conducted cartography is an ethical and narrative exercise carried out on a plane of immanence. Ethics, understood as “[...] a typology of immanent modes of existence, replaces Morality, which always relates existence to transcendent values. Morality is God's judgment, the ‘Judgment system’. But Ethics disarticulates the judgment system” (Deleuze, 2002, p. 29, author's emphasis). In order to speak

without giving orders and without imprisoning the writing and analyses we conducted on a territory, we were not interested in Good and Evil, metaphysical categories that drain life of its potency. Instead, we were interested in speaking in a way that allows the immanent to emerge, what is done in the in-between of encounters, what affirms life in its will to persevere. We were also interested in losing our voice, in order to cease speaking. Losing the voice so that the sounds of the Earth could resonate. So that other languages, minor dialects emerging within the very language, could appear and undo the grammar of prescription.

A second methodological operation that we consider important in the invention of a narrative style of dissidence is named 'speaking in chorus'. A flock, a pack, or a rhizome "[...] is not made up of units, but of dimensions, or rather, shifting directions. It has no beginning or end, but always a middle from which it grows and overflows" (Deleuze & Guattari, 2011, p. 43). With the children experiencing a dissident childhood and the curricula invented to embrace them in their difference, we formed a chorus. Their voices, desires, and aspirations resonate in every line of this cartography. We do not speak 'for' the children, nor for their families, curricula, and teachers. We speak and narrate 'with' them, in alliance, enlisting our bodies and thoughts alongside the bodies and lives of the charted territory. It is therefore a chorus cartography. A cartography that connects, in the narrative experience, the multiple voices of the children, their families, curricula, and schools, without aspiring to any unity or representation. Instead, operating with the multiplicity that emerges in the composition of voices and with the effects produced in the act of speaking in chorus.

A flock is more geographical than historical. This is because it moves by forming a rhizome, connecting its parts and dimensions, firing lines that are not of history but of a geographical-special making. Within the flock, there is no voice of the elder or patriarch, responsible for guarding long memory and preserving individual and collective identity of their people. In this sense, for instance, childhoods in dissidence and the curricula invented in relation to them do not constitute an identity and do not possess memory. They lack memory because the political struggles waged to recognize, make visible, and support dissident children and their childhoods, within their families and schools, are quite recent. It is a new topic, and therefore, families, educators, and children cannot seek it or retrieve it from 'long memory' and tradition. This novelty has required pedagogies for the future, curricula formed in action for a different future we dream of, and living conditions that need to be created for children and their childhoods to exist freely. In this sense, the flock is an antigenealogy. Within it, there is only "[...] a short memory or an antimemory" (Deleuze & Guattari, 2011, p. 43).

From the experience of forming a flock in the cartographed territory, we derive a third methodological operation that we call 'geographical narration'. To achieve this, we deterritorialize the concept of "narrative" from history and reterritorialize it in the geographical landscapes of our methodological process. Narrating, from the perspective of the 'geophilosophy' with which we operate, "[...] has nothing to do with signifying, but with surveying, mapping, even if they are regions yet to come" (Deleuze & Guattari, 2011, p. 19). Narrating geographically in a cartography of curricula and childhoods in dissidence required relinquishing the 'long memory' – the universal childhood, gender as the truth of bodies, cis-heteronormative family, identity-oriented curriculum – that works to imprint, interpret, and confine things and thoughts within arborescent metanarratives. Instead, we operate with the 'short' and rhizomatic memory of events, the almost fleeting brevity of encounters, the becomings that cannot be historicized as they constantly leak out, like a "[...] stream with neither beginning nor end, gnawing at its two banks and gaining speed in the middle" (Deleuze & Guattari, 2011, p. 49). Thus, as we narrate the life we experience in the cartographed territory, we are not interested in seeking the lost origin of things or unveiling what lies beneath an event. We do not want to dig the ground to uncover something buried deep in experience. For example, we do not seek the 'truth of gender', the 'original transsexuality', or the 'legitimate homosexuality'. Instead, we press our ears, hearts, and skin against the surface of the territory, to listen and feel things at the speed that makes them slide. We are interested in what is dissident, what deviates, what overflows.

As we work with dissident narratives, considering their moving spatialities, we start from the assumption that "[...] stories do not capture the body they refer to. Even the history of this body is not entirely narratable" (Butler, 2015, p. 54). Thus, even the "[...] account I give of myself is partial, haunted by something for which I cannot conceive a definitive story [...]. There is something in me and of me for which I cannot give an account" (Butler, 2015, p. 55). This understanding allowed us to look at the incompleteness and provisionality of the narrative experience we have outlined, in order to explore its potentialities. Thinking about this incompleteness and starting from it, we operate in the cartographic process by producing 'narrative fragments', in order to present, discuss, and analyze the lines of connections between childhoods, families, and curricula. The lines composing the life narrated in these fragments do not enclose or conclude anything.

After all, working with the logic of dissidence means “[...] starting from the middle, through the middle, entering and leaving, not beginning or ending” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2011, p. 49).

The narrative fragments that traverse and constitute the map we have drawn were recorded in the ‘diary of occurrences’, a term we coined for the field diary of the cartography. This diary was produced as a small inventory of lives, memories, affections, aspirations, silences, glances, inventions, joys, sufferings, doubts, anxieties, struggles, and other ‘occurrences’ that have been planted for some time in the hearts of children and adults who inhabit the existential geographies of the investigated territory. ‘Occurrence’, in this context, refers to what happens without ever ending. To what is always in motion, connecting to other lines and coming to life in other spaces.

Final remarks ‘or’ A Brief Manifesto for Continuing to Invent Encounters in Research

In this article, we began by discussing the ‘encounters’ that transformed us throughout the course of the cartography we devised to investigate curricula and childhoods in dissidence. These encounters sensitized us, prompted us to change direction, reinvent methodological procedures, and produce lenses capable of seeing not depth, but the surface of curricula that, influenced by the lives of children in gender and sexuality dissidence, are reshaped and open themselves to experimentation with difference. Encounters laden with beauty, strength, poetry, desire, struggle, tears, smiles, hopes, uncertainties, anxieties, rebellions, and dreams. Now, in these final words commonly referred to as conclusions, it is time to discuss ‘farewells’. But first, a reminder we learned from the voices of the mountains of Minas Gerais: “The train that arrives is the same train of departure. The moment of encounter is also a farewell”.

Speaking of farewells in a cartography that engages in mapping lines without a beginning or an end might sound peculiar. After all, we agree that in life, in a territory, and in cartographic endeavors, “[...] it is never the beginning or the end that are interesting; the beginning and the end are points. The interesting part is the middle” (Deleuze & Parnet, 1998, p. 52). Within arrivals and encounters lie departures and farewells. Therefore, we wish to make these final words a ‘small manifesto’ to continue organizing encounters, composing with them, reinventing the cartographies we create, the lines we trace, the research we devise, and the thoughts we set in motion through investigation.

The manifesto that follows blends into the territories we have cartographed. Within it, some of the learnings and inventions we’ve made in our engagement with the field are recorded. We want to turn it into a ‘minor use’, intensive, dissident, so as to continue inventing encounters capable of, in our research, finding the means to record the agencies that embrace these dissident childhoods in the curriculum and in life — children whose modes of existence are already clamoring for recognition.

Small Manifesto of Encounters in research

1. What matters in cartography are the encounters. Organize encounters. Let yourself be crossed by them. Create in composition with them.

2. To map is to open up the bodies. Produce for oneself a permeable, porous, available, deformed body. A body in dissidence.

3. Cartography enjoys compositions. Compose always! Compose with the childhoods and curricula we investigate, with the sensations produced in the encounters we organize, with the teaching practices we engage in, with the life that is woven in the territory we research.

4. Experimentation is in the blood of a cartography. To experiment is to escape the same, to undo forms, and to invent paths of creation. To experiment is to play with methodological procedures like children play with gender.

5. Cartographing by feeling. Cartography is a sensory art that is done on the skin’s surface.

6. Narrate the territory, the events, the experiences without playing the role of God’s judgment, without prescribing the best path, the fairest idea, the ideal plan.

7. Bet on the good encounters, on those that amplify the power of life. On encounters that allow a child, a curriculum, and a teaching approach to exist with freedom.

8. Reject the negative in research, in curriculum and in life. Distance yourself from what diminishes, imprisons, and halts the becomings.

9. Invent methodological paths that are diverted, transgressive and immoral. Paths capable of challenging normality, sentimentality and ‘good manners’ in research methodologies.

10. Cartograph like a drag queen getting ready. Disassembling practices, procedures, and thought patterns that repeat the same. Reassembling them like a diva, with joy, sequins and a lot of sparkle.

11. Becoming-child, becoming-queer, becoming-trans, becoming-lesbian... It is in becomings that a cartography is made.

12. Activate micropolitics. Pay attention to the micro, to what happens in the gap, in the in-between spaces.

13. Cartograph 'without fear of being happy'. Believing in life, in events, in the power of positive encounters, in the pedagogy of experimentation, in the strength of hospitality, in the 'yes' of the children, and in the new beginnings contained in every encounter and in every farewell.

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