

## **CURRICULA, CULTURES, AND DIFFERENCES: THE CREATION OF POSSIBILITIES IN EDUCATION**

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Curricula for power and not empowerment; for the actual happening of intensities and not for superior civility or acculturation; for the freedom to create value and not to form competencies. Curricula to create one's own destiny and not for the control of life. Curricula to let us be affected by the joys of creative differences in ourselves and other people and not to become prisoners of a desire for power from others in us.

Many say that we are still a long way from being able to create such curricula. Some even say that they are impossible. They say that what we see everywhere are curricula reproducing reactive modes of existence, which seek to obey the objective of providing success, recognition, and the subjugation of intensive forces. They say that curricula only reproduce and transmit "a" given culture. But we question these widespread sayings about the reproductive curriculum of sad powers, a culture, and subjugations. After all, we believe in the possibility of making a difference in existence and the curriculum. We believe in boosting curricula – which contribute to increasing the power

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of existing of those involved in the teaching and learning processes – and not in curricula that seek empowerment.

Differences are creative movements; they are the engines of life. And life grows through unusual paths and expands everywhere, like a river that finds a detour to go through and follow on, even amid stones. That is why differences boost more life into curricula. As we connect, in this thematic call, **curricula, differences, and cultures**, we also wish to make counter-culture to question what has already been given and done, in a persistent fight against sad passions, subjection disguised as civility, and the powerlessness in us. After all, it is the powerlessness in us that works not to let differences play their games in the curriculum and life, hindering the movements that create more life.

Curricula, cultures, and differences are connected differently in curriculum theories. Through this connection, we have long known of the contested nature of the curriculum. This is recognized by different theoretical approaches to the curriculum. Therefore, the *contested-territory* quality of a curriculum may be associated with different struggles around the production, selection, preservation, dissemination, teaching, and learning of know-how, cultures, and knowledge. It may be linked to this counter-culture that, we bet, can be done in the curriculum.

We know that the decision about what to teach is always political, ethical, and aesthetic and implies constant disputes, confrontations, contestations, and resistances in a curriculum. Struggles and alliances, on the one hand, of social and cultural groups and movements that try to gain space in curricula to see their know-how being produced, made visible, and taught; and, on the other hand, of groups that exercise power (political, cultural, and economic) that permanently reorganize and rearticulate to see their interests always preserved in curricula. Hence, the curriculum is a contested space, and there is no "consensus around what knowledge should be taught, what subject one wishes to produce or train, nor about which elements of cultures need to be preserved and valued" (Paraíso, 2023, p. 7). There are struggles for the curriculum to become a territory that hosts and affirms differences and is *connected with life* (Paradise, 2023). A curriculum connected with life because it is the possibility of making a "lifelong curriculum" (Paraíso, 2023, p.

154), precisely because we already know that "the lives of many people depend on the curriculum" (Paraíso, 2010, p. 588). In addition, if "Curriculum-and-Life" are always connected by these "traces of union", as stated by Paraíso (2023), it "overcomes obstacles" and can always "provide what to think, what to do, what to say, and what to create, indefinitely, in education, moving to make and embrace differences" (Paraíso, 2023, p. 154), fighting, deviating, transgressing, and insurrecting to "make **life triumph**" (idem).

This *thematic call*, "Curricula, cultures, and differences: the creation of possibilities in education", sought to bring together researchers who question the topic and affirm curricula and cultures that constitute themselves as an event in and with differences. Thinking of curricula and cultures as an event means displacing a multiplicity of meanings and circulating and proliferating new images of education. Many articles have been submitted to this *thematic call*. Many were approved by reviewers who accepted our request to make the evaluation, whom we hugely thank for the contribution made to our work. Of these approved articles, ten were selected for this composition, which we now present.

Thus, the texts presented here, by authors from six Brazilian states and one author from the United States of America, are constituted as a web of exchanges, a specific composition, meetings, and interlocution interconnected by the nouns that give the title of this dossier: curricula, cultures, differences. Varied pieces of research that are infected by the same principles of affirmation of life and differences; of a counter-cultural action for a culture to come; of curricula as territories of the creation of possibilities.

With topics that vary around issues of gender, sexuality, class, race, ethnicity, and other markers of differences, the pieces of research presented here address differences in education and curriculum using diverse approaches. In times of neoconservatism and in the face of reactionary and conservative educational policies, the challenges of the current times are countless. For this reason, we consider urgent the reading and dissemination of research movements that seek to follow the processes of creation and resistance in/of schools. Social, cultural, and political movements that problematize the processes of struggles, resistances, and affirmations of impoverished, black, indigenous, forest, fauna,

flora, and LGBTQI+ people. Research that rethinks the Earth and, with it, education, curriculum, and life.

In this context, some questions seem to mobilize thinking from the studies presented here: What new experiences of subjectivation may we create from the available pedagogical devices? What are the possible desiring lines of inventing new ways of producing cultures and curricula that act as thoughts of differentiation in daily school life? Which research movements seek to investigate the processes of creating desubjectivations that can invent new ways of being in the world? What differential thoughts may be created to move and expand cultural and curricular inventions that enhance the processes of collective resistance? What lines of force escape the attempts to crush the dissident demonstrations so necessary today? What vestiges of intensive living create policies of joy in curricula?

The invitation to you readers of this *thematic call* is to proliferate alternative lives in curricula and schools. Alternative lives that renew creations and resistances in education and curricular thinking. The ten texts presented below, which make up this thematic call, can undoubtedly contribute to fueling this endeavor.

Hence, the first text of this *thematic call* – *Derrida e a diferença: currículo como zona de tradução* –, by Elizabeth Macedo and Thiago Ranieri, is an important reflection on curriculum theory and differences. In dialogue with Derrida, the authors present a reflection on curriculum theory and differences and defend the curriculum as a translation zone. They interrogate political texts from the exercise of creating future memories with school, problematizing some pedagogical beliefs and moving towards a curricular theory committed to radical alterity; a curriculum theorization that may take into account the exchange of discourses outside itself.

In the second article – *A prática de medicalização dos/as "diferentes" no currículo para garantir uma pedagogia direcionada ao grupo* –, authors Rhaissa de Alvarenga Coelho Martins and Marlucy Alves Paraíso analyze the functioning of the medicalizing practice in the curricula of two schools in Belo Horizonte (MG). The authors show that the medicalizing practice works by producing the reasoning that medication is a prerequisite for the learning of students diagnosed with ADHD to be optimized so that

a pedagogy directed to the group may work. There are conflicts in this process, and there is also an urgency to find ways to deal with differences in the curriculum.

In the third article – *Fazer fendas em moradas seguras: desafios curriculares com as diferenças no presente* –, the author, Danilo Araujo de Oliveira, problematizes the challenges to differences, having as a motto the answers to the question of "What should be taught" and how this has become complex due, mainly, to the disputes that "a family model" has waged around the production of knowledge in curricula. For this purpose, a teaching narrative centered on the theme of a change in the curriculum plan is mobilized for fear of family reaction to the way it would address the theme of multiple forms of family constitution. It is discussed how some homes have been constituted as safe dwellings and claimed that the curricula be their extensions, thus preventing public schools from effecting their actions as their adjective characterizes them. Thus, the problematizations are directed in defense of creating cracks as destabilization, opening possibilities, and resistance to sameness.

In the fourth text – *Experimentações curriculares entre vidas e desejos revolucionários, o atrevimento de singularizar* –, professors Janete Magalhães de Carvalho, Sandra Kretli, and Tania Delboni discuss, based on Félix Guattari, that one of the main characteristics of production in capitalist society is the attempt to block processes of singularization and establish processes of individualization from two devices: social subjection and machinic servitude. The authors defend the possibility of creating mutant existential virtuality to engender curricular experimentations that assert themselves between lives and machinic desires, to develop singular modes of subjectivation that procure other sensibilities, relationships, and creative movements. It is an invitation to experience the audacity to singularize in procurements to make other curricula with ways of thinking and inventing cultures, lives, worlds, and policies.

In the fifth article – *Do currículo como máquina de subjetivação contraredundante* –, Sílvia Gallo and Alexandre Filordi Carvalho investigate what comes to be a curriculum as a counter-redundant subjectivation machine. Initially, they analyze the redundant curriculum, showing the dominant conception around the foundation of modern subjects and subjectivities and what counters with them; the place of ideology as



a production of territories of redundant subjectivities, from the thinking of Althusser, and, finally, the possibility of a counter-redundant subjectivation machine, especially from Felix Guattari's thought. To the authors, the curriculum situated as a counter-redundant subjectivation machine becomes a machine of creative power, of affirmation of the differences and singularities of the ways of thinking, acting, and being, of experimentation with lesser knowledge. They bet, therefore, on the possibility of the curriculum being made in a multiplicity of experimentation outside the circuits of subjecting and redundancy-producing machines.

In the sixth article – *Um currículo de contos de fadas da diferença: normas de gênero e produções subversivas por meio de corpos de crianças-meninas* –, researchers Maria Beatriz Vasconcelos and Maria Carolina Caldeira present the results of a research that analyzed six books of contemporary fairy tales that make up a cultural curriculum in which different femininities are built. They show that, in this cultural curriculum, the performative force produces girl-child subject positions that challenge beauty standards. They state that literature, as an expression of art, has the potential to extrapolate the power-knowledge relations engendered, also establishing itself as a space of transgression and proliferation of differences.

In the seventh text of this thematic call – *Mulheres indígenas universitárias: resistir, existindo* –, Karina da Silva Molina and Paula Regina Costa Ribeiro present an excerpt from doctoral research to problematize the presence of Indigenous women in universities from their existences and the difference it produces in educational spaces. From a narrative investigation, experiences of prejudice and discrimination throughout the lives of indigenous university women are evidenced and analyzed.

In the eighth text – *Ensino de ciências e cosmovisões originárias: uma travessia entre as rotas curriculares oficiais e a produção de caminhos outros* –, Camila Valério Ramos da Silva and Allan Moreira Xavier make a critical reading of some official curricula from concepts such as capitalist megamachine, educational machine, and rostrity. In this reading, the authors focus on the teaching of science and argue that teaching the history of sciences may contribute to thinking about possibilities for creating

new pedagogies and a smaller education through curricular decolonization together with indigenous education and original peoples.

The ninth article – *Vida de professora em tempos de Covid-19: rupturas, continuidade e invenções na pesquisa narrativa* –, written by Soymara Emilião and Alexandra Garcia, analyzes the school experiences published on a social network page called "Vida de Professora" (teacher's life) and problematizes the possible ways of living and being a teacher that emerge in teacher narratives. The authors show that the self-fictionalizing narratives bring clues of the invisible power of public schools; that the training processes are continuous and provisional in different contexts; that the defense of what schools and their subjects produce, especially teachers in everyday life, contributes to the understanding of the complexity of the teaching work and the learning-teaching processes experienced by the practitioners of the schools in their daily lives.

Finally, in the last article of this thematic call – *Práticas culturais visuais de escolas de elite pós-coloniais em circunstâncias de globalização* –, Cameron McCarthy problematizes the contemporary management and conservation of histories in the visual domains of three elite postcolonial schools: *Old Cloisters* in Barbados, *Rippon College* in India, and *Straits School* in Singapore. These schools are part of a five-year study in nine countries on postcolonial elite schools in globalizing circumstances. The author shows that these schools – products of societies historically marked by the British colonial and imperial encounters of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and the first half of the twentieth century – are now driven by new energies associated with commodification, neoliberalism, and globalization. They show that these schools are increasingly moving online, locating themselves on photo and video-sharing websites such as YouTube, Facebook, and Flickr, as well as websites that each individual school is creating to anchor the school heritage. The author draws attention to the theoretical meaning and practical dimensions of the work these selected schools are doing on their rich heritages and historical archives in response to the new demands of globalization and transformation of educational markets.

As a whole, therefore, this thematic call presents articles that contribute to the purpose of thinking about the creation of possibilities in education with the composition

of curricula, cultures, and differences. They certainly help to think about curricula to produce counter-culture – in a permanent questioning of what has already been done and given, positioning ourselves against "the" culture, considering it "a battlefield", "theater of operations", "territory of contentions" – and not to transmit a given, authorized culture that exercises power. At last, these articles help us to think about curricula to make a difference in existence and not to reproduce discourses of good causes, whatever they may be. Finally, the articles presented in this thematic call help to connect curricula, culture, and differences and to think of others possible in education. We wish, therefore, good reading to all!

### Referências

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