

POLITICAL AUTONOMY AS A PRACTICE OF CARE: THE GRAMMAR OF ZAPATISTA EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT. This article aims to discuss, based on different records, the grammar present in the discourse of Zapatista Movement official reports, specifically regarding the Zapatista education, especially from the idea of autonomy as a way of organizing this dimension of life in society, understanding this autonomy as resistance to State tutelage in the management of schools, as well as the rupture of the educational process tutelage by the promoters of education in micropolitical terms. We observed, based on the study of the Statements of the Selva Lacandona and Escuelita Zapatista, that these are centered on a criticism of state models of government in education, refuting the intercultural perspective, defending pluridiversity. This way of understanding the educational process, and the way of practicing care, leads us to a broader understanding of psychology, reflecting on possibilities of connection between new psychology inventions at work with children and the psychology of education.

Keywords: Zapatista education; school; childhood.

AUTONOMIA POLÍTICA COMO PRÁTICA DE CUIDADO: A GRAMÁTICA DA EDUCAÇÃO ZAPATISTA

RESUMO. Este artigo tem como objetivo discutir, com bases em diferentes registros, a gramática presente na discursividade de informes oficiais do Movimento Zapatista, no que tange especificamente à educação zapatista, em especial desde a noção de autonomia como modo de organizar esta dimensão da vida em sociedade, entendendo a autonomia como resistência à tutela do Estado na gestão da escola e, micropoliticamente, a ruptura da tutela do processo educativo pelo promotor de educação. Observamos, a partir do estudo das declarações da Selva Lacandona e da Escuelita Zapatista, que estas fundam-se numa crítica aos modelos estatais de governo da educação, refutando a perspectiva intercultural, defendendo a pluridiversidade. Este modo de compreender o processo educativo, e o modo de praticar o cuidado nos leva a uma compreensão mais ampla para a psicologia, refletindo sobre possibilidades de conexão entre novas invenções psi no trabalho junto à infância e à psicologia da educação.

Palavras-chave: Educação zapatista; escola; infância.

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LA AUTONOMÍA POLÍTICA COMO PRÁCTICA DEL CUIDADO: LA GRAMÁTICA DE LA EDUCACIÓN ZAPATISTA

RESUMEN. Este artículo tiene como objetivo discutir, a partir de diferentes registros, la gramática presente en el discurso de los informes oficiales del Movimiento Zapatista, con respecto específicamente a la educación zapatista, especialmente desde la noción de autonomía como una forma de organizar esta dimensión de la vida en sociedad, entendiendo la autonomía como resistencia a la tutela del Estado en la gestión de la escuela y, micropolíticamente, la ruptura de la tutela del proceso educativo por parte del promotor de la educación. Observamos, a partir del estudio de las Declaraciones de la Selva Lacandona y Escuelita Zapatista, que estos se basan en una crítica a los modelos estatales de gobierno en educación, refutando la perspectiva intercultural, defendiendo la pluridiversidad. Esta forma de entender el proceso educativo, y la forma de practicar el cuidado, nos lleva a una comprensión más amplia de la psicología, reflexionando sobre las posibilidades de conexión entre los nuevos inventos psi en el trabajo con los niños y la psicología de la educación.

Palabras clave: Educación zapatista; escuela; niñez.

Introduction

Studies about Zapatista schools have focused on the general study of their educational organization whether from the perspective of the Zapatista philosophy or school daily activities (Narváez, 2006; Baronnet, 2009; Lara, 2011; Montes, 2019), relating both to the organization and the struggle for autonomy related to the Zapatista movement. The fight undertaken by the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (*Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional* [EZLN], in Spanish), albeit recognized by its militarized branch in of Mexico, resorted to armed conflict only once in 1994, and since then, it set political, administrative and cultural autonomy as a priority. According to Alkmin (2017) regarding a field study on the territoriality and autonomy of Chiapas:

The Zapatista fight goes Against the governments and their contemporary forces of governability, which despite acknowledging indigenous people as subjects with a particular culture, obstruct the construction of a differentiated political regime, fact that could finally ensure the maintenance of that alterity and, incidentally, of a truly democratic system (Alkmin, 2017, p. 137).

Since 1994 (Baronnet, 2015; Alkmin, 2017; Morel, 2018), schools in the Zapatista territories of Chiapas have been operating based on the organizing principles of social movements, without following the official Mexican rules and regulations defined by the Ministry of Education of this country. Regarding the construction of rights, education has been at the forefront since the beginning of the EZLN (Brancaleone, 2012), being part of both *Juntas de Buen Gobierno*, which comprise all the Rebel Zapatista Autonomous Municipalities (MAREZ in Spanish), as well as autonomous municipal councils and local governments. In each area, which covers a group of MAREZs, there is some sort of administrative centralism, the '*caracol*' ('snail' in English), which is a space for meetings, assemblies and relationship with the civil society (Brancaleone, 2012). This form of general organization, and specifically the organization of the educational system itself, breaks away from the concept of interculturality, which was the model adopted by the Mexican regime in a re-interpretation of the Mexican Revolution that sought to maintain power and inclusion through human rights.

As stressed by Muñoz (2016), this was observed in the notion of human rights from the Dominican friar Francisco de Vitória, where human rights were benevolently given to 'Indians', who were comparable to women and children based on a Eurocentric perspective. This view was reaffirmed by the colonial genocides/epistemicides carried out since the 13th century by the Iberic colonization (Grossfoguel, 2016). In this paradigm, schools, as a guarantor of rights, would practice tutelage in order to exert colonial power. From a Eurocentric standpoint, childhood is more particularized since the 18th century, being associated to family love and school tutelage.

As indicated by Baronett (2009, 2015) and Narváez (2006), bilingual and multicultural proposals based on the understanding of human rights from an inclusivist perspective (Muñoz, 2016) do not effectively produce community participation in the educational process, since education proposed by a governing state is based on centralizing assumptions that are not flexible in terms of allowing people from plural communities to choose their educational processes. It should be noted that, in the *chiapaneca* region, where the Zapatista movement has developed and established its autonomous processes since 1994, there is at least six indigenous ethnic groups with their own language, cosmology and lifestyle (Tojolabales, Tzeltales, Mames, Tzotziles, Choles and Zoques) (Alkmin, 2017). The division of this region into six zones does not imply a separation by ethnic group but, on the contrary, a relationship between different peoples that always seeks political mediation through dialogue.

Since the signing of the San Andrés Accords in 1996, ethnic plurality starts to take shape in education with criticism against the State; the communities, the EZLN, intellectual and student movements, NGOs and other organizations under Zapatista principles intensify their force of action, leading to a process in which the EZNL withdraws from dialogue in education in 1997, as it understood the fundamental role of education in the continuity of the movement (Narváez, 2006). The Zapatista motto "a world where many worlds fit," present in the Fourth Declaration of Lacandon Jungle (Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional [EZLN], 1996) is a landmark for the understanding of this concept.

Since 1997, the Zapatista movement has developed educational proposals independent from the work of the EZNL itself or participants from the different communities, as well as authors who adhere to the Zapatista approach (Narváez, 2006, Morel, 2018). According to Segundo Morel (2018),

In Zapatista education there are no teachers as professionals specialized in delivering classes and working only through this, but people from the communities who, despite having continuous training in autonomous education in the spaces of the movement, did not lose their relationship with the earth as they continue to be peasants (Morel, 2018, p. 496)

Autonomous schools are experiments very different from state schools as they first are not associated to any extent with the Public Education Office (SEP in Spanish), entity under the federal executive power that is responsible for official education in the country. As a consequence, autonomous schools do not offer official diplomas or certificates (Morel, 2018). Explaining the educational project of Zapatista autonomous schools, Baronnet (2018), states that

Horizontally, each community appropriates in its own way the 'true' education municipal project by using its own strategies. This democratic framework impedes considering Zapatista autonomous education a consequence of certain centralist and verticalized imposition emanated from a guerrilla group leadership that would manipulate the social basis that supports and feeds their ranks. As a lesson obtained from the actions of Zapatista indigenous peasants, intense participation that includes communities into the political-educational sector is a condition for their projects under permanent construction to be effectively

appropriated, self-assessed and enriched based on the legitimate objectives and a struggle they take as their own in their lives (Baronnet, 2018, p. 108, author's emphasis).

Meanwhile, education is more than a school, despite Zapatista autonomous schools being important entities for the convergence of what Zapatismo calls True Education:

In Chiapas the communities supporting the movement recognize and identify themselves as autonomous communities that conduct True Education municipal projects that contribute to make the bearers of Zapatista, Mayan and peasant identities proud and that are reflected in the pedagogies practiced (Baronnet, 2015, p. 711).

Mignolo (2016), in a conceptual analysis of the propositions of Zapatismo, helped us understand how there is a bilateral translation process between revolutionary intellectualism, represented by *Subcomandante Marcos*, and the encounter with 'Old Antonio', a man from Chiapas who spoke Tojolabal language. Human dignity is nothing less than 'a world where other worlds fit', because the Tojolabal language does not even possess the concept of others, and only the decolonizing conclusion of the encounter of worlds could allow for an effective autonomy process in which ruling by obeying would not be an individual but a collective process. Anzaldúa (2015) and her notion of '*mestiza*' ('mixed') from the Chicano perspective, which draws inspiration from the Azteca cosmology and the Nahuatl language, collaborate with the productive dimension of the encounter of worlds: "A view that possesses me: that we Chicanos claim or reveal our true faces, our dignity and self-love. A view that validates us" (Anzaldúa, 2015, p. 147).

At the same time, how does the understanding of the decolonizing realm achieved from the contrast of two universalizing projects for public policies (Guimarães, 2017) prompt us to reflect on the implementation of the autonomist proposal of Zapatismo at school? From the organic relationships with the true education of everyday, does the Zapatista school reflect on how to take care of childhood? Taking care is understood here as taking care of the self (Foucault, 1985), an ethical-aesthetical-political commitment that is not an individual but a collective task as it comprises all the society. The questions that arise are the following: does the Zapatista education proposal, having autonomy and freedom as fundamental pillar, and by breaking away from the tutelage of the colonial state and its contributions on human rights and inclusion, promote another type of production of subjectivity since childhood? If the school is inseparable from the society where it was created, does the defiance inherent in the education proposed in opposition to a taming and homogenizing of school become the cornerstone of education in the Zapatista approach?

Confronted with these questions, this article proposes an analysis of the Zapatista education proposals presented in the documents published by the EZLN, especially the experience of the Escuelita Zapatista (Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional [EZLN], 2013) and the Declarations of Lacandon Jungle, in order to identify their foundations and practices, and discuss analytical references of researchers from this field with a focus on autonomy as form of care. In this way, this analysis will make new contributions for psychological practices in the field of education, marked by criticism of the school in the context of a neoliberalized society, which is even more influenced by actions from State public policies.

Method

This article aims to discuss, based on different records, the grammar present in the discourse of EZNL official reports, specifically in terms of Zapatista education and especially

from the idea of autonomy as a way of organizing life in society, understanding this autonomy as resistance to State tutelage in the management of schools, as well as the rupture of the educational process tutelage by the promoters of education in micropolitical terms. The denomination 'grammar' is employed based on Orlandi (2012), broadening the perspective of language for a discursive approach. The choices on the use of language—writing, authorship, topicalization, contextualization, use of different languages—and form of discourse are pertinent to this analysis. Therefore, this article will focus on reports extracted from the Historical Archive from the Movement's website (1994-2021)³, dialoguing with analyses from research on the topic. This article does not seek to conduct quantitative research on this set of texts available online, instead it centers on highlighting points related to this grammar that has been present in various occasions over the years in order to understand the recurring logic in the dialogues, building a grammar on its own.

We worked as anthropophagous cartographers (Rolnik, 1989) in order to chart these discursive landscapes instead of cataloguing or mapping them. The internal logic of the movement, which is also internationalistic, derives from its constant movement, as its documents and discourses releases are available online. As indicated by Abdel-Moneim (2002), the EZLN or Neozapatista movement, as named by the author, does not adapt to the traditional left-wing movements to occupy traditional and virtual spaces, neither does it assume a leading position as a party, and is also linked to many other world resistance movements in various ways: the notion of a world where many worlds co-exist is assumed by the movement, which presents the rejection of populist leaderships, simplistic grassroots work and forms hierarchization of the political struggle. The same movement comprises all areas and this article, particularly, will focus on its educational proposal.

Therefore, the aim is to chart and produce notes on the process starting from the materiality of the discourses. This will be conducted understanding the process as a production of grammar, a grammar of resistance, especially in relation to the notion of autonomy practiced in the educational proposal: to educate children is one form of care, and the care given in schools is understood starting from this grammar.

Autonomy as a foundational element for education in the territory

As pointed out by Baronnet (2009, 2015), the organization of the Zapatista movement centers on the construction, contribution and organization of formal education based on its own resources. This concept is designated as ethnic resistance by Batalla (2005). According to the author, the notion of western democracy on which the Mexican state is based—as well as the other former Latin-American colonies—created obstacles for the participation of groups that do not share this view. For Zapatismo, a representative democracy, the construction of leaderships focused on political representation policies, is not a democratic organization mode, as this movement is organized differently, from pluriversity as opposed to multiculturalism. Considering the above, there would not be a way of sharing formal schooling conceived from the western democratic mechanism in educational policies, because the two perspectives cannot be reconciled. Participative management from the parameters of State formal education would imply electing representatives, for example. In the Zapatista perspective, education is the basis for undertaking autonomy, which is only possible through the experience of the basic principles of horizontality in school daily life, understanding that it is necessary to work without the intervention of the State to produce

³ Enlace Zapatista (2021).

an autonomous education from the principles of the movement. In a document from Escuelita Zapatista (EZLN, 2013), it may be observed that

Our education promoters work with children by showing them the importance of our fight, so they learn to differentiate between everything that is autonomous education and official education. There are communities where there is official and autonomous education, we cannot give up or leave because we see that there is a school; on the contrary, we should further strengthen ourselves in our zone, in our communities, in our regions and in our municipalities (EZLN, 2013, p. 20).

The idea of teacher itself, which is the central figure of a westernized school, is replaced by the figure of the education promoter. As indicated by the ethnographic studies above (Narváez, 2006; Baronnet, 2015; Morel, 2018), school practice differs from a criticism of westernized school. By confirming that the school space is in fact shared between the education promoter and the students in a pluridiverse way, the horizontality in the educational relationship is clearly expressed in other terms: the education promoter and the students are comrades-in arms, and there is a break from the idea of leadership present in all the other areas of the Zapatista movement which, in practice, unfolds in the everyday life of schools. Childhood care at school occurs in an inherently Zapatista way and the difficulties with a state policy do not stem from producing changes within the educational system but from proposing a different form of organization and action that is centered on autonomy and horizontality.

According to Alkmin (2017), who confirms this analysis, there are two territories in conflict: the autonomous municipalities linked to the organization of the Zapatista movement and the official municipalities linked to the official geographic distribution. Thinking in terms of education in the territory, official schools and Zapatista schools coexist with their two visions in conflict but sharing the same geography. This can be observed, as well as all the confrontations in the ongoing Zapatista fight, in the Sixth Declaration of Lacandon Jungle (Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional [EZLN], 2005), which draws the attention of the left-wing social movements to the constitutional management of power by the State. The bottom-up proposal of the power, fundamental pillar of the movement that has been noted across this article, in a moment when the State undertakes legal strategies to register lands, materializes from within the school: another possible world, also Zapatista, is experienced in everyday life through the care of education and childhood.

The practical proposals of Zapatista autonomous schools do not follow the guidelines from the official documents of the Mexican government. Instead, they are established in each municipality in order to consider the basic pillars of the movement from an epistemological perspective. As indicated by Baronnet (2009, 2015), an autonomous education is regulated by the community assembly of each MAREZ, which gathers education promoters, committees and authorities elected at the municipal and local levels, in order to legitimize the educational paths in each space, departing from the assumptions that they are supported by the entire movement, which can be verified in the documents from the historical archive of the movement from the organizational space (EZLN, 2013), and in several speeches delivered to the Zapatista community. Therefore, from a macropolitical perspective on the organization of education, the radical regularity of autonomy and the effective participation of the Community is very present, being based on community decisions on the type of education to be pursued.

Community decisions and participation are not restricted to the specific *locus* of the school but are radically related to the political decisions that legitimize the school existence and organization form of a specific place, always in a continuous process of exchanges with

the broader movement, as well as with the internationalistic fights of Zapatism which progressively expand. Every entity of a MAREZ is connected with local assemblies and the Zapatista movement as a whole, since decisions are made through these assemblies. This form of organization objects to the idea of indigenous integrationism (Batalla, 2005; Alkmin, 2017) and redefines autonomy (Díaz-Polanco, 1994), because the Zapatista movement reached the sense of self-determination within the Mexican state through support from other organizations, which enabled political decentralization. It should be also noted that, looking into the school education spaces, the logic rewrites itself without moving away from the constitutive elements of the political struggles of the moment, which translates into the notion of territory (Alkmin, 2017). In Zapatismo, this paradigm is extended and re-founded both at the organizational (Baronnet, 2009, 2015) and everyday levels of school practice (Narváez, 2006; Baronnet, 2015; Morel, 2018), intensifying an educational practice that comprises the understanding of childhood (its education and care) in a way underpinned by autonomy, which is very different to what is observed in state policies in representative democracies. Self-care (Foucault, 1985) as an ethical-aesthetical-political commitment permeates Zapatist education at all levels (EZLN, 2013), integrated into assembly decisions not only from the school itself but also from a deeper understanding, redefining the meaning of participation and autonomy. The concept of a promoter already indicates that in a Zapatista school, the syllabus is autonomous (Narváez, 2006; EZLN, 2013; Morel, 2018) and collectively built, as the notion of Community in Zapatism extends assemblies not based on representativeness but on direct participation. In all aspects of life in community, and especially in education, as observed by Barronnet (2009), direct participation becomes a space to fight against racist and exclude practices of the State and of the modern system-world (Quijano, 2005), especially against internal colonialism (Rivera Cusicanqui, 2010) present in the post-colonial states, which replicates practices learned during the colonial process.

In this line, this is another way of understanding the social inclusion, so sought after by an education that claims to be liberating. Any Zapatista school, in its radical pluriversity and understanding autonomy as a fundamental value of the same is inclusive in its nature. It does not aim to integrate differences into pedagogical frames but to integrate it into all spheres. The education promoter is still a peasant from the community and undergoes all the training for such a role within the Zapatista autonomous spaces, i.e., the autonomous territory is a daily practice inside and outside of their educational function and both are integrated in a pluriverse. A child at school is closer to a comrade-in arms; there are no tolerance and respect processes involved but either an ethical, aesthetical and political commitment to the care of each being that partakes in the principles of autonomy in the territory. In the end, to educate is also to defend the autonomous territory; it is undertaking a political fight for rights to this autonomy and a defense of horizontality in relationships. As it may be seen in the experiences recounted in the Escuelita Zapatista (EZLN, 2013) from several Zapatista 'snails', education lies within the fight and experience in autonomous schools, which undertake this fight through the legitimization of an educational policy as an everyday practice. From Mignolo's concept (2016) of the other, as learned from the encounter between the Subcomandante Marcos and Viejo Antonio, in the Zapatista paradigm, there are no others to be included and therefore there are always worlds to be found.

An ethics of care: from true education to a zapatista psychology

The Zapatista proposal is denominated true education, which is intrinsically connected to the communities in a pluridiverse, autonomous and committed ethics of care from communities that are, as mentioned above, very diverse in ethnic terms. The parameters of true education incorporate multiple indigenous, peasant and Mayan identities (Baronnet, 2015). Considering that the Zapatista communities are deeply connected with their ancestral origins, there is no way to think of a true education without this encounter of ancestral worlds. Otherwise, in the post-colonial experience, there is no place to go back in time and the reencounter of these ancestral costumes is part of a deep subjective experience (Anzaldúa, 2015), connecting knowledge that reached everyone as subjects subordinated by the colonial process experienced. Weber (2002) analyzes and proposes a psychological perspective from the Zapatista ideology, with an understanding that challenges psychological approaches based on views that objectify subjectivities. From the analysis of a speech by Subcomandante Marcos (Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional [EZLN], 2001), an interpretation of the subjectivization process without leadership is proposed, challenging the notion itself of the role of psychology, since it "[...] originates from the self-understanding that this science is always speaking about the interests of the people instead of speaking with the individuals themselves" (Weber, 2002, p. 9). When comparing the emancipation ideas of a psychology proposed in the context of strengthening a public policy (Cruz & Guareschi, 2004, Guimarães, 2017), there is already a reflection on how the Zapatista discourse and experience contest the westernized and Eurocentric psychological knowledge and how this reproduces the epistemicide (Pavón-Cuéllar & Arroyo-Ortega, 2015) through an understanding that opposes to how a social phenomenon is addressed from psychological knowledge. In this way, there is an attempt to understand what foundation Zapatism could offer to psychology instead of understanding the movement from the perspective of psychology. According to the authors, the Zapatista discourse essentially condemns three conditions of psychology, namely conformism, despotism and erasing the past.

Regarding conformism, the authors indicated that since the Zapatista ideals center on collective autonomy, they are in a radical fight against individualism, which is related to the power of an individuality that, if expressed, is content with crumbs from the centralizing power of governments. When speaking of despotism, the authors stated that Zapatist criticism is related to the monocratic form that transforms communal dialogue in a power monologue, centering voice and action on a representation, which breaks with the active possibilities of effective dialogue. In the case of the erasing of the past, the power form (and the psychology related to this) of representative governments within the patterns of post-colonial states are built on the oblivion of identity constructions; these governments aim to erase them and attribute them little value in decision making. For the Zapatista ideals, a people without memory of the past also sees its future taken from them.

Considering the topic of this article, an education based on Zapatista ways, that challenges the patterns of official education and conceives a true education that is practical, political, autonomous and of active participation, breaking away from the representative democracy models to which the post-colonial states are subject, thanks to their own colonial history of genocides and epistemicides (Grossfoguel, 2016, Muñoz, 2016), it is worth noting that the observation of the grammar of Zapatista education and its principles based on autonomy, pluridiversity and freedom also lead to think from the perspective of psychology and in the intersection these two areas build for care models.

All the Declarations of Lacandon Jungle (Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional [EZLN], 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1998, 2005) made across different historical moments of the movement, expressed principles that deal with the need for refoundation of the political system. According to Mignolo (2016), the Zapatista perspective, in which pluriversity is part of the ways of thinking and acting, rejects any political ideology that is based on the exercise of centralizing and representative power. As observed in the records from Escuelita Zapatista (EZLN, 2013), the exchange of community knowledge and practices are collectivized in all aspects of daily life. Thinking Zapatista education in this context is to acknowledge the ancestral epistemological power that emanates from this encounter of identities based on the dialogic nature of pluriversity. It could be said that Zapatista education is one of the aspects related to a form of conceiving the world that opposes the centralized and individualist (content) control that has no memory (Pavón-Cuéllar & Arroyo-Ortega, 2015).

Care in Zapatista true education is the care of the self (Foucault, 1985), because it acknowledges the autonomy in the ethical-aesthetical-political commitment of the community, which is pluridiverse. The different layers in the ways of Zapatista education are found in the political declarations and speeches of the movement, in the legitimization of educational policies through community assemblies and in the political participation in all areas, as Zapatistas who understand themselves as part of the territory, and in the daily school life and experience of its education promoters. These layers reflect a care practice beyond political emancipation, within the colonial logic of human rights (Muñoz, 2016), as they understand education in terms of another possible world, in an effective rupture that is perceived as necessary along the history of the movement.

To think about other possible worlds: what the zapatista grammar can prompt in the psychological educational practices in Brazil

Corazza (2002) expresses severe criticism against how institutions have defined childhood and education perspectives in modern times, elaborating on Michel Foucault's reflections on total institutions. The author points to the fact that in the West, disciplinary power is expressed in the tutelage of childhood by official schooling, which has the objective of taming bodies. Guimarães (2017) questions psychology stances oriented to building psychological practices without challenging the relationship with the post-colonial state, with democratic characteristics linked to a heritage that does not take history into account. To whom are these policies directed? When understanding that the emancipation from the current state of affairs is possible within the political parameters of representative democracy, which was inherited from Eurocentric, white, sexist, cis-heteronormative, ableist, and ageist perspectives, wouldn't one be effectively reproducing a conformist, despotic, and memoryless psychology (Pavón-Cuéllar & Arroyo-Ortega, 2015)?

Is it possible that Zapatista criticism, through practice in political organization and true education (Baronnet, 2015), could be an effective inspiration for the construction of an ethical, aesthetical-political education no longer committed to the emancipation category but to collective autonomy (Baronnet, 2009; Narváez, 2006; Morel, 2018)?

This article aimed to reflect on these aspects, considering that the practice of Zapatista education, effectively shared in a political organization that proposes direct democracy, since its entities participate from organizational legitimacy to daily practice, becomes an experiment of another possible world, a Zapatista maxim, in conflict with the Mexican state. On January 1st, 2021, the Zapatista movement, concerned about the current

pandemic, launched online, after 5 preceding texts that gather Zapatista readings on this global political moment, a manifesto called “A declaration... for life” (Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional [EZLN], 2021). This declaration was addressed to the peoples of the world and sought to gather the fights of the five continents in order to positively conduct resistance dialogues. The movement indicates that one of the fight objectives that unites the people, among others, is to prevent the annihilation of childhood, and that we are many and different across the world, but the dialogue is necessary for the exchange of experiences in the multiple territories where anticolonial possibilities are invented. This manifesto, a letter, proposes experiencing what the Zapatista movement aims at in its education: an autonomous, pluridiverse and freedom-centered proposal (Baronnet, 2009, 2015). From the *chiapaneco* territories, and together with other first nations and social movements from Mexico, these peoples are reaching to one another to establish assemblies in and with the world.

This is a proposal quite consistent with the Zapatista education movements witnessed until now. As pointed out by Pavón-Cuéllar & Arroyo-Ortega (2015), this is how we should look at the Zapatista projects in order to create other views on education, care and childhood. If the practice and invention space (Cruz & Guareschi, 2004), recalling the history of psychology in its relationship with childhood, inspired in the Zapatista understanding, could allow for creating possibilities from other worlds, challenging the patterns of the universal systems of public policies, as Guimarães (2017) expressed. A possible world where the word ‘other’ as known today is not even in the grammar, as demonstrated by Mignolo (2016), a world of inventions that does not approach the Zapatista perspective as an object but as an epistemological inspiration.

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