The suspension of suspensions: the "school form" and the "*skholé*" in times of pandemic

Luiz Antonio Callegari Coppi[1]
ORCID: 0000-0001-7613-1355

Abstract

Due to the moment's urgency, the Covid-19 pandemic promoted the transposition of school activities originally planned for the face-to-face context to digital platforms. However, replacing the arena in which classes take place is not irrelevant, and this article intends to show how the technological characteristics of the applications used strain what, in recent centuries, has been understood as the school. To this end, we propose, firstly, a visit to the moment of the resurgence of the school during the Renaissance and the relationship of this event with a specific technology, Gutenberg's movable type press – bookish knowledge, then establishes the school as a space different from family and social environments, giving rise to what is conventionally called "School Form." From there, the article advances in the argument articulating this concept to that of *skholé*, which conceives the school as a space of suspension of the logic that binds children and young people to a fixed and unavoidable identity. This suspension allows them to disidentify from predetermined destinations and experience equality and self-experimentation. Finally, these concepts of "School Form" and *skholé* are contrasted with the conditions for performing remote teaching during the pandemic. Some questions are raised about what is expected of the school as a collective project.

Keywords

Remote teaching – COVID-19 Pandemic – School form – *Skholé* – Technology.

1- Luiz Antonio Callegari Coppi, Faculdade de Educação da Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo/SP, Brazil. He holds a bachelor's degree in Letters from the School of Philosophy, Letters, and Human Sciences of the Universidade de São Paulo and a Master's and Doctorate in Education from the School of Education of the same University. E-mail: luiz.coppi@usp.br

https://doi.org/10.1590/S1678-4634202349265127eng

Introduction

Neil Postman (1993, p. 18) defends an instigating thesis regarding technological changes. He writes that the relationship established between a given environment and a technology is neither additive nor suppressive. If this technology is significant, says the author, there is a change that he categorizes as "ecological." To explain this idea, he resorts to the example of what happens when a caterpillar is inserted into a given habitat or is removed from it: these changes do not produce the same habitat plus the caterpillar, in the case of insertion, or minus the caterpillar, in the case of withdrawal – the result is, in fact, a total alteration in the conditions of reproduction, in the logic of the food chains. In short, a whole new environment is created. For Postman, something similar happens concerning technologies. He exemplifies that Europe with Gutenberg's movable type press is not the same as Europe plus the press – we have a completely new Europe, with new conditions for the circulation of information and unprecedented possibilities for scientific development. The arrival of television in the United States does not generate the same country *plus* television either: profound transformation occurs " to every political campaign, to every home, to every school, to every church, to every industry" (POSTMAN, 1993, p. 18). This "ecological" perception aligns with what Pierre Lévy (2014) defends, also interested in the transformations operated from technologies – in particular, in his case, from the virtual world – although from a very different point of view than the virtual world adopted by Postman. Lévy argues that it is inappropriate to think of the "impacts" of a given technology as if it came from somewhere outside the society in which it develops. It is, after all, an intrinsic element of the contexts in which it appears and capable of altering them and being altered by them.

In this regard, by the way, Postman writes that "new things require new words. But new things also modify old words" (POSTMAN, 1993, p. 9). "The computer," writes the author, "changes "information" once again. Writing changed what we once meant by "truth" and "law"; printing changed them again, and now television and the computer change them once more" (POSTMAN, 1993, p. 9). And concludes:

> The old words still look the same, are still used in the same kinds of sentences. But they do not have the same meanings; in some cases, they have opposite meanings. [...] It redefines 'freedom,' 'truth,' 'intelligence,' 'fact,' 'wisdom,' 'memory,' 'history'– all the words we live by. And it does not pause to tell us. And we do not pause to ask. (POSTMAN, 1993, p. 9).

In this article, we intend to consider the alteration of another word that escapes Postman's list: the term "school." However, unlike what motivates the American theorist's complaints, we will try to pause for a moment, despite the speed of changes and the urgency of the moment, and pose some questions about such alteration. Let us start, therefore, with a little more wandering. After all, dealing with the possible transformations in the sense of "school" requires prior contextualization of some of the elements that motivate them.

The Covid-19 pandemic, which began at the end of 2019 and became larger in early 2020, forced countries, more or less effectively, more or less drastically, to suspend the accelerated pace of their economies. Social distancing, one of the few safety measures to prevent the spread of the virus, has caused a disruption and a slowdown in various services. It was no different with schools. In the state of São Paulo, for example, Decree 64,864, published on March 16, 2020, started the suspension of face-to-face classes, and, after a few days, on the 23rd of the same month, 100% of them were interrupted. Almost a month later, through the Seduc Resolution, the resumption of work remotely was authorized through the Centro de Mídias application and TV Educação[2]. In private schools, activities were transferred to the online model, using platforms such as Google Meet and Zoom to maintain the calendars. The urgency caused by the pandemic transposed to the virtual environment a school planning made for face-to-face activities, i.e., it is not about Distance Learning itself, as regulated by Decree 9,057/17, but rather an improvised solution and, in a way, unavoidable, given the seriousness of the moment. However, if we take seriously the point defended by Postman regarding the ecological transformations derived from the insertion of a given technology in a given context, perhaps it is worth reflecting more carefully on the modifications brought about by such a transposition.

Concerning it, Loureiro and Veiga-Neto (2022), for example, criticize, in a certain sense, precisely the lack of substantial changes in the school routine amid this exceptional situation. The authors' target is to maintain a productivist calendar that ignored the specificity of the moment experienced globally, and that served more economic than pedagogical interests. Carvalho (2020), in turn, also disbelieving in the attempt to maintain a routine as if nothing was different, suggests, based on Hannah Arendt's thinking, that one recognizes the potency of what the crisis indicates. For Arendt, moments like this bring back questions about what we are used to taking as nature, as given. In this sense, the author claims that the interruption should not be ignored in the name of a quick overcoming filled by usual activities as if nothing was new. Perhaps, he suggests, it would be possible to bet on the search for formative meanings in human works. Following a posture similar to that proposed by these authors, we also try to give space to what the crisis tells us. Aligned with the philosophy of education (REBOUL, 2017), we are not interested in establishing a program or solutions. Nor is it our intention to criticize the didactic procedures adopted by the teachers during the suspension of face-to-face classes or suggest ways forward as to what could have been done and what could still be done in the event of new interruptions. What we intend, in fact, is to take advantage of the potential gap opened by the moment to raise some questions: what becomes what is meant by "school" when other technologies support it? What are the consequences of these changes? Are these consequences wanted? Here, we intend to venture answers to the first two of these questions. The last one, we believe, seems to involve all of us, individually and collectively, in a decision about the school we want as a project.

This text is organized as follows: at first, seeking to justify that changing the context in which education technologically takes place is not something minor, we will develop

2- Information available at https://www.educacao.sp.gov.br. Accessed on June 13, 2022.

a brief presentation of the relationship between the reappearance of the idea of "school" after the Renaissance and the emergence of a specific technology: the movable type press developed by Johannes Gutenberg. In this sense, we will carry out a brief bibliographic review of the works of Ariès (1978) and Postman (1999) to outline how this invention is relevant to what Vincent, Lahire, and Thin (2001) will call "school form." One of the traits of this concept is that the school is an institution separated from the domestic environment, which, in times of remote teaching, ends up canceling itself out. This annulment, however, does not only change the "school form": it calls into question the necessary conditions for the school to be *skholé*, as Masschelein and Simons (2014) understand such an idea. To explain this statement, first, we will expose this notion from two movements operated by it — "suspension" and "disidentification." Next, through a brief description of aspects of the technologies that supported the school during the pandemic, we will address the tensions that this reconfiguration introduces in the conditions of *skholé*.

In general terms, therefore, what we intend to defend through these bibliographical reviews, the explanation of the concept of *skholé*, and the characteristics of digital platforms describe that, at least potentially, these characteristics put at risk a specific understanding of the educational process that, in our view, must be defended.

The school form and the technology of the press

Based on Harold Innis, Neil Postman (1999, p. 37) states that communication technologies are not neutral, as they invariably alter what is thought, the symbols used to think, and the arena, or community, in which one thinks. That, stresses the author, is not always planned. In another work, for example, addressing the mechanical clock, Postman (1993) recalls that this object, perfected in the fourteenth century by monks who wanted to adjust the times for their prayers, made possible the idea of regular production and subsequent standardization of hours of work and what is produced. In other words, it made the very notion of Capitalism possible. Gutenberg's movable type press, in this sense, is not a tool that simply, without significant consequences, increases the number of books produced and put into circulation: it certainly does so, and with that, it multiplies ideas and spreads the thought, something that, by itself, is already quite transformative, but this is not precisely the point of interest. The books that begin circulating do not just modify what is known; they change, above all, how it is known. There, argues Postman, lies a fundamental transformation in human mentality and subjectivity that makes possible the creation of a sine qua non condition for the development of schools: the appearance of "childhood."

Let us look more closely at the argument.

Ariès (1978) says that "infant" is a term that comes from Latin and is composed of two parts. The prefix in- is a negation particle; -fans, in turn, refers to the voice. "Infancy," in this sense, indicates the person who still does not speak and has not mastered all the communication codes of his group. Around the age of seven, when the subject already has relative mastery over these codes, they are already considered ready to integrate society in practically all its environments and activities. In a world organized mainly orally, "the medieval child would have had access to almost all of the forms of behavior common

to the culture," writes Postman (1999, p. 30) before also stating that "the seven-year-old male was a man in every respect except for his capacity to make love and war." Quoting J. H. Plumb, the author also recalls that "there was no separate world of childhood. Children shared the same games with adults, the same toys, the same fairy stories. They lived their lives together, never apart" (POSTMAN, 1999, p. 30). Childhood, then, as we understand it today, needed to be created, invented, and, for Postman, the artifact developed by Gutenberg acts in this process from two fronts, even if probably, without the intention of doing so: on the one hand, creates a sense of individual identity; on the other hand, it produces a "knowledge gap" that, to be filled, demands the separation and extension of what comes to be understood as the world of children.

As for the first of these aspects, Postman links it to the movable type press based on a gesture inaugurated by reading. With the printed book, he states, "Orality became muted, and the reader and his response became separated from a social context" (POSTMAN, 1999, p. 41). From the sixteenth century to the present, the author continues, "what most readers have required of others is their absence, or, if not that, their silence" (POSTMAN, 1999, p. 41), and, a little further on, he concludes that reading is an antisocial act. This does not mean, argues the author, that the printing press created individualism but that it made it something acceptable. "We may say, then," he writes, "that the printing press gave us our selves, as unique individuals, to think and talk about" (POSTMAN, 1999, p. 42).

However, before continuing, some caveats are necessary concerning Postman's statements and other contemporary conducts regarding this inaugural gesture of individuality. In the first place, Roger Chartier, for example – although he also points to this phenomenon, stating that "silent reading opened new horizons" (CHARTIER, 2009, p. 129) for those who can practice it since it "paved the way for previously unthinkable audacities" and "liberated the individual from the old mediators, freed him or her from the control of the group, and made it possible to cultivate an inner life" (CHARTIER, 2009, p. 119) –, highlights the importance of the concomitance between these new reading practices with collective practices, which not only maintained themselves but also transformed over time. In this sense, points out the author, "Between 1500 and 1800 reading aloud, whether among friends or chance companions, was an essential ingredient of social life" (CHARTIER, 2009, p. 148). Silent reading, on the one hand, Chartier indicates, encourages personal study; on the other hand, a new kind of social bond is also beginning to spread with the proliferation of books: "reading aloud, combined with interpretation and discussion of what was read, fostered friendship," which, the author continues, "could attract a wider audience, which benefited by hearing the texts read and discussed" (CHARTIER, 2009, p. 150). In addition, it should also be mentioned, as Chartier does, that the expansion of reading does not precisely match that of writing: according to the author, it is more difficult to measure the number of people who were able to write because, usually, this estimate is made from signatures, which "constitute a kind of rough, composite index, which does not precisely measure the diffusion of either writing skills (which the percentages exaggerate) or reading skills (which they underestimate)" (CHARTIER, 2009, p. 114).

Another caveat is that the construction process of this "I," evidently, is not limited to what one begins to experience from the press. Alain Corbin (2009), for example, points out how, throughout the 19th century, the diffusion of some objects, such as the full-length mirror and the personal portrait, and the proliferation of new architectural traits, such as the private rooms inside the houses, also act in the genesis of this feeling of individual identity, "metamorphosis became impossible" (CORBIN, 2009, p. 403) and "living space had begun to grow less crowded" (CORBIN, 2009, p. 410).

Anyway, returning now to Postman's argument, "the idea that each individual is important in himself, that a human mind and life in some fundamental sense transcend community" (POSTMAN, 1999, p. 42) will also be extended to young people and children.

Added to this is what the author calls the "knowledge gap," which opens with typography. "A sharp division developed between those who could read and those who could not, the latter being restricted to a medieval sensibility and level of interest, the former being propelled into a world of new facts and perceptions" (POSTMAN, 1999, p. 42). Being an adult, in this sense, no longer means mastering only the oral codes of communication but also, above all, the written codes of a society that, by leaps and bounds, is moving towards a literary culture. In summary, Postman writes the following:

> During the century, an entirely new symbolic environment was created. That environment filled the world with further information and abstract experience. It required new skills, attitudes, and, especially, a new kind of consciousness. Individuality, an enriched capacity for conceptual thought, intellectual vigor, a belief in the authority of the printed word, a passion for clarity, sequence, and reason—all of this moved into the forefront as the medieval oral environment receded.
>
> What had happened, simply, was that Literate Man had been created. And in his coming, he left behind the children. As, in the medieval world, neither the young nor the old could read, and their business was in the here and now, in "the immediate and local," as Mumford put it. That is why there had been no need for the idea of childhood, for every one shared the same information environment and therefore lived in the same social and intellectual world. But as the printing press played out its hand, it became evident that a new kind of adulthood had been invented. From print onward, adulthood had to be earned. It became a symbolic, not a biological, achievement. From print on, the young would have to become adults, and they would have to do it by learning to read by entering the world of typography. And to accomplish that, they would require education. Therefore, European civilization reinvented schools. (POSTMAN, 1999, p. 50).

Henceforth, the learning necessary for social and cultural insertion is curiously separated from this social and cultural context. "For centuries," writes Ariès, "education was guaranteed by the coexistence of the child or young person with adults" (ARIÈS, 1978, p. 11); with typography, this changes. "The child stopped being mixed with adults and learning life directly," points out the author before stating that "the child was separated from adults and kept at a distance in a kind of quarantine before being released into the world; this quarantine was the school, the college" (ARIÈS, 1978, p. 13). And this distance is fundamental for developing what Vincent, Lahire, and Thin (2001) will define as "school form." According to these authors:

> What appears at a particular time in European societies is an unprecedented form of social relationship between a "master" (in a new sense of the term) and a "student," a relationship that we call pedagogical. First, It is unprecedented in the sense that it is distinct and autonomous concerning other social relations: the master is no longer a craftsman "transmitting" know-how to a young person [...]. This autonomization regarding other relationships dispossesses social groups of their competencies and prerogatives. Everywhere, concerning what, from now on, will be considered as the ancient society, "learning" was done "by seeing-doing and hearing-saying": whether among peasants, craftsmen, or nobles, the one who learned – that is it is, in the first place, the child –, acquired knowledge by participating in the activities of a family, of a house. In other words, learning was not different from doing. This withdrawal of power will give rise to resistance to schooling, even by groups such as the nobility, concerning schools designed especially for it. (VINCENT, LAHIRE; THIN, 2001, p. 13).

This "pedagogical relationship," like any other social relationship, "establishes a specific place different from the places where social activities take place: the school" (VINCENT; LAHIRE; THIN, 2001, p. 13). In addition, it implements a specific time, which is school time. "In a closed and totally organized space for each person to carry out their duties" (VINCENT; LAHIRE; THIN, 2001, p. 15), the authors continue a little further ahead, "in a time so carefully regulated that no can leave no room for an unforeseen movement, each one submits his activity to the principles or rules that govern it" (VINCENT; LAHIRE; THIN, 2001, p. 15). The pedagogical relationship, therefore, is organized less based on the will of the master or the student and more through impersonal rules: this is, in essence, the school form, according to the authors' conclusion.

That said, two points seem to result from what has been developed so far. The first is that the "school," at least in the way it has been instituted up to the present day, is linked to communication technologies: its establishment is indebted, to some extent, to Gutenberg's typography and, therefore, its hasty transfer is not a minor issue, given the urgency of the pandemic, to another technological support. The second relevant aspect is that some important points of what characterizes the school form are also transformed with this transposition. On the one hand, during remote classes, there is no longer a specification of a time/space that is distinct from the times and spaces of the rest of social life: the monitoring of classes is done in the home environment and does not always follow the same times and rhythms as it can occur in face-to-face meetings (the quality of the internet connection, for example, which prevents people from participating in classes synchronously and transforms the student into a "spectator" of a recorded class, illustrates this point). On the other hand, almost as a consequence of the previous topic, perhaps it becomes even more challenging to maintain submission to "impersonal rules" when the boundaries between school and home blur.

In this sense, it is essential to note that remote classes are not a mere mirroring of the school on the screen of a digital device. Fundamental aspects of what, until now, was understood by "school form" are suspended, and this suspension is not irrelevant. It does not, after all, call into question only the "school form": as we intend to argue

below, suspending the school form suspends, consequently, what allows the school to be, fundamentally, *skholé*.

The suspension of the suspension

Also, from a historical perspective, but above all a philosophical one, Jan Masschelein and Maarten Simons, in "In defense of the school: a public question," recover the etymology of "school" to define the bases of what they intend to claim. "School," they write, comes from the Greek *skholé*, a term that means "free time, rest, postponement, study, discussion, class, school, place of teaching" (MASSCHELEIN and SIMONS, 2014, p. 30). According to them:

> [...] the school is a specific (political) invention of the Greek *polis* and arose as a usurpation of the privilege of the aristocratic and military elites in ancient Greece. In the Greek school, no longer one's origin, race, or "nature" justified one's belonging to the class of the good and the wise. Goodness and wisdom were disconnected from people's origin, race, and nature. [...] In other words, the school provided free *time*, that is, non-productive time, for those who, by their birth and their place in society (their "position"), had no legitimate claim to it. Or, to put it another way, the school established a time and space that was, in a sense, separate from the time and space of society (Greek: *polis*) and family (Greek: *oikos*). It was also an egalitarian time, and, therefore, the invention of the school can be described as the democratization of *free time*. (MASSCHELEIN; SIMONS, 2014, p. 26, emphasis added)

Masschelein and Simons, based on a different analysis key than that adopted by Vincent, Lahire, and Thin (2021) to define the "school form," also arrive at the fundamental separation between what is school space/time and what are the times and spaces that govern domestic life and social life. From then on, however, they will direct their interest to what the school, when it manages to do justice to *skholé*, has as potent concerning "disidentification." However, achieving this requires better observing the distance between these different spheres.

In the authors' arguments, such distance between the school, the family, and social environments allows the former to operate a kind of suspension. This suspension, as they understand it, "means (temporarily) making something inoperative, or, in other words, taking it out of production, releasing it, removing it from its normal context" (MASSCHELEIN; SIMONS, p. 32). "Compound interest," for example, when they enter school when they become the matter of a school subject, is not used to close a loan contract; an engine, transformed into pedagogical content, is no longer used to move a car; the English language, in turn, does not find its justification either, after being inserted in the school curriculum, in communication in a globalized world. Each of these objects, at school, becomes an object of study, has its functions, its usual places deactivated, rendered useless concerning the logics that define them from the outside, and offered to contemplation, to attention inside the classroom.

In this sense, the authors continue their reflection by extending it to subjects who are part of the school scene. They write that this suspension is necessary "to allow students to separate from the past (which oppresses them and defines them in terms of [lack of] skills/talents) and the future (which is, at the same time, non-existent or predestined) and, therefore, temporarily dissociate themselves from their "effects" (MASSCHELEIN; SIMONS, 2014, p. 34). "It is the time and space," they continue a little further on, "where students can let go of all kinds of sociological, economic, and culturally related rules and expectations" (MASSCHELEIN; SIMONS, 2014, p. 35). Through this suspension, they emphasize "that children can appear as students" (MASSCHELEIN; SIMONS, 2014, p. 36).

From here, some aspects emerge that it is essential to look into with little more attention. Firstly, the suspension operated by the school causes, when effective, a possibility of "disidentification": the subject, within that institution, is neither what fits him in the domestic space nor what is socially expected of him. A girl, for example, at home, can be understood as the "natural" helper in the housework, as the one who should be required to be "beautiful, demure, and at home"; in society, she is the one who will be questioned about the length of her clothes when suffering violence or who will be asked to take care of her appearance that is unthinkable for a boy. The school, however, when it functions, in fact, as a *skholé*, deactivates these marks of tradition and expectations, making them inoperative, and, for a while, allows this girl to be a "student." In another article, "Making School: the Voice and Way of the Teacher," Jan Masschelein, in a more poetic way, writes that when the school "operates as a school," "everyone is given the possibility of bifurcating, of finding their own destiny (of not being enclosed in a destiny, in a nature, or a natural or pre-defined identity, [...])" (MASSCHELEIN, 2021, p. 31). "It is precisely a question of refusing any pre-defined connections between bodies and the 'own' characteristics or properties attributed to them" (MASSCHELEIN, 2021, p. 38); he continues a little further on before concluding by stating that "the pragmatics of the school" has to do precisely with this: "offering the experience of being without a destination but at the same time of being able to find your own destiny" (MASSCHELEIN, 2021, p. 38).

Advancing a little further along the paths indicated by the text by Masschelein and Simons (2014), it is possible to think that this disidentification is, at the limit, a disidentification between the student and a certain "I" with which he is accustomed, between the student and a specific notion of identity. In other words, being able not to be what one is in the domestic or social context detaches the subject from pre-arranged destinies, but, perhaps, even before that, it reveals the very character of construction of the "I" regardless of who responds for this first-person pronoun. In this sense, suspension brings with it the power to provoke an attitude of stalking, of distrust concerning an "I" that feels very sure of itself, the owner of its wills and desires. School, therefore, When is *skholé*, in the authors' argument, it is the place where one can be a student before being poor, before being rich, before being the son of a worker or industrialist, before being a woman, a man, white, black, Christian, Candomblecist, etc. However, we can go even deeper into this experience of disidentification: in the school that manages to assert itself as *skholé*, one is a student before, above all, being an "I."

That is why, according to the authors, the school has been attacked since its inception. The suspensions it operates reveal an unavoidable commitment to equality. More than that: they affirm equality as a starting point, a condition for their own possibility of existence. In this sense, this invention called *skholé*, when, in fact, it is free time/space, is profoundly political in the sense in which Jacques Rancière understands the term. This philosopher opposes the usual definitions that reserve the word "politics" for "the set of processes by which the aggregation and consent of collectivities operate, the organization of powers and the management of populations, the distribution of places and functions, and the legitimation systems of this distribution" (RANCIÈRE, 1996, p. 372); for Rancière, this ordering that seeks to be fixed and immutable is not political, but "police." "Politics," for the author, is "the set of activities that come to disturb the order of the police by inscribing a presupposition that is entirely heterogeneous to it": the "equality of any speaking being with any other speaking being," and this equality manifests itself "by the dissent," i.e., by "a disturbance in the sensible, a singular modification of what is visible, sayable, countable" (RANCIÈRE, 1996, p. 372). The interruption of the line that would supposedly connect the original bonds and the expected futures, on the one hand, and, on the other, the suspension of attachment to a well-defined and supposedly finished "I," in this sense, provoke dissent, create possibilities for an experiment with new configurations of oneself amid relationships that, outside the school, might be prohibited. The school is political in these terms; otherwise, it is not even *skholé*.

And here, finally, it is necessary to analyze whether the conditions under which the transposition of face-to-face activities to digital media took place allowed that, in fact, there was a school, there was *skholé*. Therefore, observing some aspects of implementing the technologies and their effects is necessary.

The first of these aspects deals with the very possibilities of connecting to the virtual world. Macedo (2021), in this regard, working on the data collected by TIC Domicílios in 2019, states that almost 30% of Brazilian households did not have access to the Internet. This number, however, is not constant when crossed with social classes: while in classes A and B, access is close to 100%, in D and E, this number drops to half. In addition, continues the author, among the most favored, it is common to use computers; for those with less, the relationship with the Internet is mediated almost exclusively by cell phone. During the pandemic, as it should be, this abyss also manifested itself in the educational field. First, having or not having a connection affects the viability of following the classes. Then, there is also how this access can occur: having various electronic devices allows for an organization and visualization of classes that are different from following them only through the screen of a cell phone. This perhaps explains the information brought by Macedo (2021, p. 267) about a survey by the Solidary Research Network, according to which, between March and July 2020, "more than eight million children aged 6 to 14 years did not perform any school activities at home" (MACEDO, 2021, p. 267). This scenario allows us to ask whether, at least the way it happened, the transposition of the school to remote teaching allowed a significant portion of children and young people of school age to be, in fact, male and female students. In other words, was it possible to be a student or, before that, did these children and adolescents remain "poor"? According

to the data, perhaps this disidentification, this suspension, was itself suspended in times of remote teaching: these different experiences throughout the classes made these space-times differentiating and not a common experience.

Secondly, when the school was transferred to a virtual environment, the separation of spaces could not be guaranteed either. Following classes from their homes, not all students could actually be students. Given the economic implications arising from the Brazilian government's disregard for the measures to restrict circulation during the pandemic, it is possible to speculate that there were those students who needed to help their parents to compose the family's income, having to while viewing the school contents, to be divided between helpers, workers, and students; it is possible to imagine that there were those who, as students, also needed to be older brothers or sisters taking care of the younger ones; that others, in turn, required to divide their engagement in the student role with that of the caregiver of an elderly relative. Anyway, under the conditions in which it took place, we argue that remote teaching may have been unable to guarantee for many the possibility of being just a student for a few hours. Could one be a student, in this sense, before being a relative or a worker? If so, who could it be? The answers to these questions are fundamental for weighing how much *skholé* was possible during remote teaching.

Finally, we believe that disidentification concerning an "I," the master of all wills, is also potentially impaired in remote education. Some of the platforms used for teaching, such as Google Meet or Zoom, allow one to follow synchronous classes without necessarily being under the shared vision of others, colleagues, or teachers. With the cameras and audio turned off, one can, in some way, escape this shared presence that would require negotiations with other people's wills and behaviors. In the asynchronous modalities most students use due to the connection quality; time is no longer shared: class time is less critical and more on how to fit it into a routine that belongs to the "I." More than that, classes recorded on these platforms can be accelerated by students; one can edit what one sees by cutting the participation of colleagues, for example. Once again, the desire for an "I" prevails; the experimentation as a "student" among other students dwindles. Masschelein and Simons, although not addressing the transposition to remote teaching in times of a pandemic, when characterizing the school, recall that it is a place where "students are not individuals with specific needs who choose where they want to invest their time and energy; they are exposed to the world and invited to be interested in it" (MASSCHELEIN; SIMONS, 2014, p. 52). In our turn, we believe that, at least potentially, these characteristics of digital platforms directly affect the conditions of *skholé*. And, again, we could ask: was it possible to be a "student" before an "I" during remote teaching?

Evidently, the answers to these questions are not appropriate in a work as we propose here – perhaps any solution that intends to be absolute and definitive is not even viable or productive. Our questions result from speculation from observing the possibilities from the objective characteristics of the technologies used in remote teaching and the conceptual bet that these technologies have ecological effects (Postman, 1993). This, however, does not seem to detract from the questions raised. As Carvalho (2020, p. 3) teaches us, remembering Hannah Arendt, a crisis is what forces us to go back to the questions themselves, and, as Arendt herself warns, the crisis "only becomes a disaster

when we respond to it with preformed judgments" (ARENDT, 2016, p. 223). In this sense, we do not intend the questions raised to suggest an idealization of what school would be like before the pandemic or the illusion that we believe that it, in fact, was *skholé*. What they seem to put on the scene is, precisely, an opportunity to deal with the school we want and to take responsibility for it, for what makes it possible. Masschelein and Simons, in the introduction of their book, already alerted one to the fact that the school is a historical invention that, therefore, can disappear. However, they add, "this also means that it can be reinvented" (MASSCHELEIN; SIMONS, 2014, p. 11), which demands attention, care, and sensitivity to perceive and to create. "Reinventing school," they further state, "is all about finding concrete ways in today's world to provide 'free time' and to bring young people together around a common 'thing'" (MASSCHELEIN; SIMONS, 2014, p. 11).

Our bet, after all, is that the *skholé* is worth the effort: it is, after all, a bet on equality, on politics, on the public, on emancipation among equals. The suspension that, reluctantly, was imposed with the pandemic shows that the essential suspension of *skholé* was possibly suspended during distance classes: from here on, it is a choice, it is a bet, and it is arduous to claim it seriously.

Final considerations

Throughout this article, we have sought to reflect on some tensions between the emergency transposition of teaching to digital platforms and the concepts of "School Form" by Vincent, Lahire, and Thin (2001) and of *skholé*, as proposed by Masschelein and Simons (2014). Our central questions revolved around what changed with the change in the school's technological support to the virtual environment and the effects of such a change.

Para tanto, num primeiro momento, buscamos mostrar como a relação dos fazeres escolares com as tecnologias não é uma relação menor. Based on Postman (1993, 1999) and Ariès (1978), we investigate how Gutenberg's typography created some of the conditions for the reappearance of schools, at the time of the Renaissance, by reinventing a specific notion of "childhood." Entry into adulthood in a society little by little more literate starts to depend on the mastery of written codes and, therefore, the need for the school environment. This environment is configured in such a way as to establish its own space and time, apart from social and family life. With this, the "School Form" begins to be configured.

In a second moment, we advanced in unfolding this "School Form," articulating it to another concept, the *skholé*. This Greek invention was based on the suspension of the logic that prevailed in the domestic space, the *oikos*, and the space of the *polis*. In doing so, it provided free time and space for a kind of "disidentification" to take place: at school, it would be possible to give up, for a certain period, ties with traditions and pre-defined futures and, with that, to experience, among other peers, "being a student."

This experience, it seems to us, tends to be interdicted with the transposition to remote teaching. The platform technologies used to maintain school calendars favor less the disidentification characteristic of *skholé*, and more a reinforcement of identifications, a closure in itself. Given this, the question is no longer precisely what to do in these

exceptional conditions: they are contingent, after all. What seems really imperative is the question that stems from what, under these conditions, one can see: which school is socially desired as a project?

The answer to it, as we anticipate, is a decision, a choice that, when taken, implies a fundamental engagement in what makes it possible. And this, it seems to us, is no small matter.

References

ARENDT, Hannah. **Entre o passado e o futuro**. São Paulo: Perspectiva, 2016.

ARIÈS, Philippe. **História social da criança e da família**. Rio de Janeiro: LTC, 1978.

CARVALHO, José Sérgio Fonseca de. Um sentido para a experiência escolar em tempos de pandemia. **Educação & Realidade**, Porto Alegre, v. 45, n. 4, e109144, 2020. http://dx.doi.org/10.1590/2175-6236109144

CHARTIER, Roger. As práticas da escrita. *In*: CHARTIER, Roger (org.). **História da vida privada 3**: da Renascença ao Século das Luzes. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2009. p. 113-162.

CORBIN, Alain. O segredo do indivíduo. *In*: PERROT, Michelle. **História da vida privada IV**: da Revolução Francesa à Primeira Guerra. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2009. p. 392-465.

LOUREIRO, Carine Bueira; VEIGA-NETO, Alfredo. Viver no mundo conectado: formação para além do "conteudismo produtivista". **Pro-Posições**, Campinas, v. 33, e20200079, 2022

MACEDO, Renata Mourão. Direito ou privilégio? Desigualdades digitais, pandemia, e os desafios de uma escola pública. *In*: **Estudos Históricos**, Rio de Janeiro, v. 34, n. 73, p. 262-280, maio/ago. 2021.

MASSCHELEIN, Jan. Fazer escola: a voz e a via do professor. *In*: LARROSA, Jorge; RECHIA, Karen Christine; CUBAS, Caroline Jaques (org.). **Elogio do professor**. Belo Horizonte: Autêntica, 2021. p. 25-46.

MASSCHELEIN, Jan; SIMONS, Maarten. **Em defesa da escola**: uma questão pública. Belo Horizonte: Autêntica, 2014.

POSTMAN, Neil. **O desaparecimento da infância**. Rio de Janeiro: Graphia, 1999.

POSTMAN, Neil. **Technopoly**. New York: Vintage, 1993.

RANCIÈRE, Jacques. O dissenso. *In*: NOVAES, Adauto (org.). **A crise da razão**. Rio de Janeiro: Fundação Nacional de Arte, 1996. p. 367 - 382.

REBOUL, Olivier. **Filosofia da educação**. Lisboa: Edições 70, 2017.

VINCENT, Guy; LAHIRE, Bernard; THIN, Daniel. Sobre a história e a teoria da forma escolar. **Educação em Revista**, Belo Horizonte, n. 33, 2001. p. 7-47.

Received on: September 13, 2022
Approved on: October 10, 2022

Editor: Profa. Dra. Lia Machado Fiuza Fialho

Luiz Antonio Callegari Coppi holds a bachelor's degree in Letters from the School of Philosophy, Letters, and Human Sciences at the University of São Paulo; a master's degree and doctorate in education from the School of Education of the same University. He was a temporary professor of Didactics at the Department of Teaching Methodology and Comparative Education at the School of Education at USP between 2021 and 2022 and is currently a teacher in basic education.