

THEMATIC SECTION:
RESISTANCES AND REEXISTENCES
IN EDUCATIONAL SOCIAL SPACES IN
TIMES OF NEO-CONSERVATISM

Educação
& realidade

Conservative Tsunami and Resistance: CONAPE in defense of public education

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ABSTRACT – Conservative Tsunami and Resistance: CONAPE in defense of public education. The current scenario of attack on democracy and rupture with policies developed by popular governments (2003-2016) in Brazil has been producing reverberations in educational policies not without resistance. This article proposes to address the specific form of resistance that CONAPE (National Conference on Popular Education) held in May 2018. In the development of our argument, we first situate the coup and its consequences in the context of what we call a transnational conservative tsunami that operates in different dimensions and aspects of social life, in which we will deal with resistances in general, and CONAPE in particular, pointing that the struggle for a fair and solidarity world that does not allow itself to be paralyzed.

Keywords: Curriculum Policies. CONAPE. Conservative Tsunami. Resistance. Public Education.

RESUMO – Tsunami Conservador e Resistência: a CONAPE em defesa da educação pública. O momento de ataques à democracia e ruptura com políticas desenvolvidas pelos governos populares (2003-2016), no Brasil hoje, vem produzindo reverberações na política educacional e tem encontrado diversas resistências. Propomos neste texto, tratar das especificidades dessa forma de resistência que foi a realização da CONAPE, em maio de 2018, em Belo Horizonte. No desenvolvimento de nossa argumentação, primeiramente situamos o golpe e suas consequências no contexto do que chamamos de tsunami conservador transnacional que opera em diferentes dimensões e aspectos da vida social, em que vamos tratar das resistências em geral, e da CONAPE, em particular, apontando que a luta por um mundo justo e solidário não se deixa paralisar.

Palavras-chave: Políticas de Currículo. CONAPE. Tsunami Conservador. Resistência. Educação Pública.

Introduction

The political moment that we are now experiencing in Brazil with democracy under attack, ruptures on guidelines, proposals and policies developed by the popular governments (2003-2016), has produced reverberations in the educational policy and implementation of the National Plan of Education (PNE - *Plano Nacional de Educação*, in Portuguese). The National Education Forum (*Fórum Nacional de Educação*, in Portuguese), once composed by legitimate education entities among its peers, was disfigured both by the withdrawal of some of those and the opening to participation of different representatives from the private initiative, as an example of the rupture to which we refer. A form of resistance was then created with an important group of some thirty-five entities, organized around the creation of the National Forum of Popular Education (*Fórum Nacional Popular de Educação*, in Portuguese), which immediately stood up against the dismantling of the country's public education implemented by the governmental coup.

In order to address the theme here, we propose to deal specifically with the resistance movement which CONAPE represented, held from May 24 to 26, 2018 in Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais State. We understand that CONAPE's organization – instead of CONAE, which was also disfigured in the evaluation of the entities – was an important element in the resistance process already present in many events, documents and publications. One of its goals was to evaluate the PNE 2014-2024 of implementation processes, which have been at risk since the 2016 coup. The Conference aimed as well on bringing up debates on what has been done by local governments, social movements and educators around the country as resistance and proposition of PNE introduction processes, also proposing questions regarding some targets and its implementations.

In the development of our argumentation, we will first situate the coup in Brazil and its consequences for the context of what we have called a *conservative tsunami* (and some term variations will appear along the text), which is transnational, also operating in different dimensions and aspects of social life. In this context we are going to deal with resistances movements in general and CONAPE's in particular, seeking to demonstrate that the struggle for a fair and supportive world, with plenty of opportunities for all, that does not allow itself neither be paralyzed nor controlled. The struggles exist and resist allowing all who do not give them up, to resist as well.

The Conservative Tsunami and its Tentacles

The *conservative tsunami* notion has been identified by ourselves, and others, in multiple ways, depending on which direction the argument might lead us. Its plurality of dimensions, tentacles that allow it to scatter around becoming present in different aspects of social, political and cultural life simultaneously seems to pursue those who stands against it in any instances which penetrates. In a recent article

(Sússekind, 2014c) one of us named it a *positivist tsunami*, identifying it as a *locus* scattered all over the world, on curricular reforms with homogenizing market trends in which they would navigate, inspired by technicians arguments and above all, constructed in accordance with standardized tests such as *PISA*, *ANA* or *ENEM*¹, always formulated according to criteria and standards whose technicality makes invisible the social, political and cultural variables, interfering in the schooling and learning processes they produce. The results of such tests would be the ones substantiating an education whose planning and administration are “[...] based on data or evidence” (Pinar, 2012; Sússekind, 2014c, p. 199), which reflected in this *mirror* (Santos, 2001) every educational system capable of guiding and defining policies, such as those for teacher’s education and curricula proposition for students from every country in all circumstances. At the time, we sought to denounce how those *mirrors* (Santos, 2001; Sússekind; Prestes, 2017), based on expert diagnoses, produce more powerful images of reality than those lived (Santos, 2001), offering levels of solution such as the educational reforms that since the 2000s, following the trend initiated by the American *common core* policy (of curricular unification) already under scrutiny, strongly criticized by its own mentors, that have yet devastated public education systems in countries such as South Africa, Australia and Sweden.

Since 2014, in the debates we participated (WG12 Curriculum/ ANPEd, ABdC, AAACS, school networks, unions, Education Secretaries²) on curriculum policies, the National Curricular Common Core (*BNCC*, in Portuguese) has been under discussion as a policy of curriculum unification and standardization. From our perspective, this meant to define the curriculum as a *scriptural document* (Certeau, 1994), capable of controlling, predicting, planning the student’s learning, possibly unfolding the dissemination of didactic materials and the need of external standardized tests whose inevitable failure feeds the cycle once again, expanding the control on other instances and policies, such as teacher education, thus accompanied by the production of its devaluation, dehumanization, social and academic discredit in a process of *demonization*, as defined by Pinar (2008).

Our resistance to this potentially devastating and bleak picture has been woven through many *reflections-actions*, which have included earlier political and epistemological productions, since we understood it was time to publicly defend, in its political and epistemological dimensions, the notion of *curriculum as an everyday life creation* (Oliveira, 2012) promoting teachers, students, school communities, ultimately the school itself, to a prominence in a process of intertwining pedagogical practices that involves negotiations of meaning, local limits and possibilities as different world understandings, in what Pinar (2012) called *complicated conversation*³. It was time to consolidate the education-democracy link.

It was important to question the role of private institutes and foundations experts constructing diagnoses about education, *mirrors*, always pointing towards their absences and failures while offering

packages-solution. Following the arguments about scientists' dynamics and practices from Hobsbawn, Bourdieu, Paraskeva and Villaça scientific approaches (Süssekind, 2014a), it became necessary to question the relationship between *experts, their knowledge* and market interests. We cannot put aside that the capitalism clinical analysis not only suggests that crisis is an opportunity, because capitalists suffer from a "[...] insatiable desire to [...] treasure" (Marx, 1980, p. 172) – which makes more effective the interest in the amendment to Art. 205 of the Brazilian Federal Constitution/1988 (Brasil, 1988) removing from state the duty to provide education. We can also understand such features clash, resorting to another relevant Marxist notion, "[...] disinterested researchers were replaced by mercenary swordsmen" (Marx, 1980, p. 147), even though we must also consider it was always about interests and, the very notion of disinterested science has been serving the positivists who have formulated, legitimized and remain seeking to validate *neutral and objective* readings and interpretations from the evidence of social reality. The transfiguration of educational debates on technical issues, with the *neutral and objective* analysis of the problems it faces, strongly influences the production of the diagnoses that so compromise the struggle for public, democratic, secular, free education and social equality for all.

Our attention was already kept by the contradictions present in some practices and discourses, always seeking to reflect on them, avoiding the *pitfalls* of *simple* statements and the seemingly unquestionable data of *reality* (Süssekind; Prestes, 2017). We realized for instance that, contradictorily, the democracy construction in our society and the improvement of access at all levels of schooling, arrived *hand in hand* with a positivist wave (Süssekind, 2014c). Tsunami that, "[...] despite all the achievements that scholars have made in the form of critical and post-critical studies in education, smashes teachers' work, blaming them" (Süssekind, 2014a, p. 203) for the terrifying results their students have achieved in standardized hierarchical tests such as PISA.

The multiplicity of standardized tests is not only part of this positivist tsunami that (re)puts teachers' work and knowledge into an uncomfortable place of mistrust and subalternity, but also throws into the abyss all efforts to recognize autobiographies, worries and valorization of the relations in which the knowledge and powers are constructed and entangled (Süssekind, 2014c, p. 202).

The association between the market interests of economic groups such as Natura company and the *No Party School* movement in the defense of the BNCC, would be contradictory and yet difficult to understand in an aprioristic capitalist logic; or, even the agribusiness and its slavery characteristic, contradictory as well with the *free* market. That is, we have identified that rentier neoliberalism presents itself with new seams in which conservatism would burst suddenly or, perhaps, have never left the scene leaving clues so the apparent contradictions could be understood if locally situated or questioned in a broader way.

Santos (2013) teaches us that globalization – which sustains the four great oppression systems under which we live by and die: capitalism, hetero-patriarchy, fundamentalism and colonialism – is allied with unlikely *partners*, since it has always been the empire of a place over another, a *glocalization*, in which a globalization, movement of local hegemonic productions therefore, capable of imposing itself globally – combines its corollary with another localized globalism showing that different places feel differently the globalization effects. It always agrees with a hierarchy that disenfranchise and weakens the weak and their possibilities, in order to remain what they are, at the same time allows the strengthening of the strong ones, their rules, logics and products. These multiple ways of globalization, which nevertheless faces different resistances leads to the conception and *mise-en-scène* of alternatives, showing that it should not be seen as

[...] a monolithic phenomenon and that transnational relations are a web of two opposing globalizations that sometimes follow parallels, another time intersects. On one hand, neoliberal hegemonic globalization: the new phase of global capitalism and its accompanying political, legal and cultural norms (the rule of law, liberalization of the economy, privatization of public goods, minimization of state power, liberal democracy, human rights). On the other hand, globalization counter hegemonic or globalization from below, which encompasses social movements and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), which, through local, national and transnational articulations, struggle against capitalism and colonialist oppression, social inequality and discrimination, environmental destruction, and ways of life stemming from the greediness of natural resources extraction, imposition of Western cultural norms and destruction of non-Western ones caused by hegemonic globalization (Santos, 2013, p. 29-30).

The hegemonic globalization, according to Santos (2013), is based on the predominance of law and science fields as producers of *whatever is true or not* in the economy liberalization, public goods privatization and state reduction associated to low-intensity democracy. There is a legacy of human rights in the mentioned context that leaves the task of being the object of discourses of these rights, not their subject to a large part of the population. The subjects entitled to such rights are usually men, white, European and middle class and not Marielle Franco⁴, for sure. There are transnational and conservative fundamentalist movements, for example, that cannot be considered non-modern, but it is not cosmopolitan either. The *other side*, obviously counter hegemonic, is also not monolithic and for its counter hegemonic feature suffers with depreciation and the unveiling of many of its practices, knowledge and networks, although it remains present and active in *spacetimes* of social struggle.

A tsunami is an unpredictable natural phenomenon formed by immense waves that cause huge displacement of water with devastat-

ing effects caused, in general, by tectonic plates movement. On earth, it makes victims all over and in multiple ways. The *conservative neoliberal tsunami*, as we understand, has nothing natural about it and, as we have been naming it nowadays, is a paradigmatic shift from a modernity that transfigures equality in increasing inequality, freedom in oppression, fraternity in competition and meritocracy. A modernity that has *glocalized* its westernized narcissistic and abysmal project, not caring for its dire consequences over millions of people worldwide. Unlike a common, predictable and regular wave, a tsunami is sudden, has a gigantic range and amplitude provoking immeasurable damages, originated from some relief displacement. That is how we have in been living in Brazil from moments prior to 2016's coup, with impacts of the *conservative tsunami* on Federal Constitution (Brasil, 1988) and the production of devastating laws on citizenship, work and retirement rights; on education laws (Brasil, 1996) disfigured and prevented from following its own principles, with the state budget diverted to the most spurious interests and priorities, in public health, especially women's; and, about Petrobrás (oil national company) functions. Even thou we were surprised by something we did not expect to live or suffer, today we believe that such tsunami was already at formation in some rift of an ancient relief: a colonial-enslaved-hetero-patriarchal Brazil.

Between the years 2014 and 2016 we were surfing the tsunami in order to define whether it was a “[...] tsunami of globalizing policies and an economicism” of sorts (Süssekind; Pellegrini, 2016, p. 54), and then came to realize it was a *global neoliberal tsunami with strong conservative dispositions*, which devastates and reverses the democratizing tendencies and local differences, present in a significant part of the legislation and policies directed at basic and public education in previous years – and, therefore, have expanded possibilities and experiences with/in/out of schools that we have identified as emancipating (Oliveira, 2012), such as: the recent universal access to basic education for all, the network of middle and higher education federal institutions expanding e going further to the country's interior, with more and better teaching offers in the undergraduate and postgraduate, as well as in vocational education, at both the middle and higher levels; affirmative action and support policies to schools in the countryside for the minorities. In this huge *tsunami* displacement we reached the de/characterization of the National Forum of Education (*FNE*, in Portuguese) and Conae 2018⁵ – we will later discuss it – with Ordinance 577/17 (Brasil, 2017b), of High School Reform, the new National Plan for Didactic Book (PNLD, in Portuguese) aimed to teacher control and BNCC, interventions still unfinished on teacher formation's policies and the recent intervention in the National Education Council CNE). This set of interventions over the educational system, its structure and functioning, seeks to ensure the unification, homogenization controlling and de-ideologization of schooling processes. The control over school, being a total impossibility as it is, ends up being exerted through its production as a space of absences, as a bad institution, inadequate, insufficient and, therefore, unable to moor our ship to a proper port. By destabilizing it, the *conser-*

vative tsunami hopes to wreck and replacing it with a kind of Noah's Ark on reverse, allowing only the equals to embark, while drowning in the tsunami flood everyone that does not fit the commands of its capitalist, hetero-patriarchal, colonialist ideology and neoconservative creator.

The tsunami idea looks even better when many ways and directions are considered, not prioritizing or starting on either the economy, politics or culture only, but in overall. Doing so, we witness how the judicial/political/media 2016's Coup (Souza, 2016), increasingly military as well, exposes the abyssality of permanent colonialism of a *backwardness elite*, which defends only its privileges in a plurality of barbaric events that reside in the most exquisite civilization and highlights what *tsunamis* devastating character is capable of within their destructive power. Episodes of racism in college halls and hatred published on social networks, targeting those admitted by quotas to college entrance exams, adhesives of Dilma Roussef with open legs stuck in car's fuel tanks, the clumsy comments about Marielle Franco and, also the relentless pursuit of gay and transgender activists, all sail in the hegemony of this tsunami.

In such context we are witnessing the devastating wave of reformists directives' publications, that make us to see the increasing space conquest in the administration of public education systems and networks, in Brazil, by the big capital representatives' interests which we understand as part of a *neoliberal global tsunami of strong conservative tendencies* that inspires setbacks (even legal ones) in every society level. Amongst them a kind of reformism in education that has contributed to the dualism and cruel processes of social exclusion, promoted by an educational system that discriminates and expels immense portions of the population from its networks and against which we fight, gaining more and more space. An immense impact on an educational system that still consolidated recent achievements. From schools that buy standardized instructional packages to militarized colleges in the country's municipalities and states, to the resources of those responsible for prosecuting the Public Ministry against teachers who are doing their job, we are talking about a huge shift from *the idea of what is public* to something that has not yet a precise name, that has been tuned accordingly to this process, also dangerous, of everyday life judicialization.

In the context of this reformism inspired by technicality, we perceive how inscribed they are in the current curriculum and evaluation policies such BNCC (Brasil, 2017a) and others. They operate with the belief in a knowledge and its dissemination and legitimization that does not see its multiple ways of being present on the school floor (ANPED, 2015), paving the way for modeling education at all levels, in favor of the privatization of public systems and in an hierarchical division between administrators and educational executors, devaluing the teachers' work trying to frame and control it, as already happened in the municipal, state and others networks in Rio de Janeiro (Sússekind; Pellegrini, 2016) through the development of conservative and privatizing *policiespractices* (Oliveira, 2013).

Also, in these waves navigate the movements of hygienist inspiration that preach what they call curricula and schools practices of de-ideologization, such as the No Party School. With senses and ways of erasing difference, which we do know favor hegemonic values, beliefs and *modus vivendi*, they understand democracy as the absence (or elimination) of conflict or difference. Therefore, reformism is based on a discourse that denies the right and freedom to teach and learn (Brasil, 1996, art. 3º) by objectifying it, prescribing what has every right, therefore none in particular that is, in the limit, the curriculum becoming a scriptural document but this time on nothingness (Süssekind; Pellegrini, 2016). Thus the architects of this curricular proposals, dividing society, schools, curricula, teaching work and the abyssal knowledge practices, throw to the deep abyss all knowledge considered non-valid, turning invisible the curricular alternatives already in course or in the making, as well as their creators. With the “[...] producers’ pretension to inform a population, to shape social practices” (Certeau, 1994, p. 260), BNCC’s advocates, of the control and de-ideologization, *are not* surprised by the resistances, wiles, (re)existences and coexistences (Santos, 2008), exemplified in the tests failure, in daily creations that contribute to the accomplishment of another possible school education or even in the occupations of the state middle schools in different Brazilian states. Through these occupations, educators and students do tell administrators of public education systems, that there are more in schools than prescribed curricula and preparation for standardized tests, demanding their rights to a republican school.

We have been trying to breathe and survive in such tsunami and we have, also, witnessed the progressive government militarization, without a real military coup. We see the increasing criminalization of social movements and their leaders, with no crime. The “[...] conservative neoliberal tsunami is increasingly reactive” and its magnitude “[...] adjusted as the excluded ones are able to occupy new spaces making use of their rights in society” (Süssekind; Porto; Reis, 2018, p. 3). The acceptance of the fascist ideology is a sad evidence that there are no limits to amorality in the hegemonic forms of navigation in this tsunami, to the defense of any iniquity, as long as it fits into the private interests of those who defend them. As we have seen, the *tsunami* authorizes old class, gender and even racism hatreds, practices and discourses based on the most bisexual misogyny. The list of anti-social practices and policies present in our society is endless, which requires us to be *attentive and strong, with no time to fear, death*⁶. We are facing a kind of elusive, nostalgic conservatism that claims the return of dictatorship, torture, the *live-in-domestic*, slavery, places reserved in the universities according to traditional family names and, the so called *Brazilian way* to solve all problems, that we fight against it as well; also, against those almost 25% of the population who look up to the “[...] superior foreigner” (Souza, 2016, p. 36), while questioning the use of red as being an unpatriotic color. This contradiction is not, however, an obstacle to the *tsunami*, as it helps to drown empathy, belonging, solidarity and difference.

Evaluating the period, we realize that we have been victims of a probable inattention of those who believe in security, who also disregarding the other signs of the world and social life rather than evidences, not being able to capture the noises of previous *tectonic movements*, thus the formation of the destructive *tsunami*. When we mercilessly believed the Western modernity bankruptcy and its volatile hetero-patriarchy, colonialism and capitalism combination, the rift we sought to overpass formed the reactionary tsunami already. It is now up to us to find the possible course of the struggles against all that has been ravaged by it, to rebuild whatever possible and to recreate new possible ones, from the rubble in the ruins, necessarily, but also from what we could keep safe on protected ground, as we have sailed in it.

The Struggle for Democratic, Public Education of Social Quality, PNE and CONAPE: resistance and (re) existence in times of tsunami

The Letter from Belo Horizonte produced at CONAPE/2018 is entitled *Education as a space of resistance* not by chance and, at the final plenary with more than three thousand people, the conference was called *Free Lula*. It is a document created at an event where more than three thousand educators, students, social movements representatives and other political actors from all Brazilian states presented papers, proposed and carried out self-managed activities, discussed the themes proposed by the thirty-five entities responsible for the organization of the event or by the participants themselves, always organized around the thematic structuring axes of the event. The scope of this event, built over a year and a half at local conferences, can be represented by the fact that it was carried out without any public funding. CONAPE, fully self-funded, demonstrates the personal and political commitment of thousands; and, the institutional from dozens of entities, associations and movements with resistance to the tsunami that aims to drown whatever is public in public education.

All of this in order to keep the CONAEs flame on, a democratic space for discussing the directions of Brazilian education, held in 2010 and 2014, In this sense, the National Popular Education Forum (FNPE) led CONAPE structuring, understood as

[...] a fundamental strategy to strengthen democratic dialogues and promote broad participation in the definition of educational policy in the country. It has a mobilizing and proactive nature, articulates expectations of Brazilian society towards the right to education and, through democratic interaction between civil society and politics, promotes the debate and the construction of proposals for the definition and implementation of public policies for education (FNPE, 2018a, p. 1).

Such proposal was later organized in a more detailed way, but already in that initial document the discussion axes were established,

to be followed at local and all Brazilian state, in order to subsidize the discussions and the production of the final document on national level. The general theme and the debate axes were defined as:

Implementing the Education Plans is to defend a public free education of social quality, secular and emancipating, which will be discussed from the following thematic axes:

I - Decennial plans and SNE: institution, democratization, federative cooperation, collaboration, education evaluation and regulation;

II - Decennial plans and SNE: quality, evaluation and regulation of educational policies;

III - Decennial plans, SNE and democratic management: popular participation and social control;

IV - Decennial plans, SNE and democratization of education: access, permanence and management;

V - Decennial plans, SNE, Education and diversity: democratization, human rights, cognitive and social justice and inclusion;

VI - Decennial plans, SNE and inter-sector policies for development and education: culture, science, labor, environment, health, technology and innovation;

VII - Decennial plans, SNE and valuation of education professionals: education, career, remuneration and working and health conditions; and

VIII - Decennial plans, SNE and education financing: management, transparency and social control (FNPE, 2018b, p. 9).

Based on this organizational proposal and the Reference Document, both from 2017 (FNPE, 2018a; 2018b; 2018c), made available to the municipalities, states and participating entities in the FNPE, responsible for the local and national stages of CONAPE, the resistance to the FNE dismantling and to the consequent de-characterization of CONAE was organized. Culminating in CONAPE, such political strategy to strengthen democratic and legalist dialogues, around our educational policy and possibilities of assuming a more democratic and appropriate design to the social segments yearnings and demands, whose fight for the full exercise of the right to education by our population, also developed based on a *Plan of Struggles*, was already defined on the contributions sent by those responsible for the local stages to the Initial Reference Document.

With no intentions to make some texts exegesis or an extensive and exhaustive narrative about CONAPE, we believe it is important to bring some of its elements – events and texts – to sustain what this text, historically, claims for itself: to be a testimony of the resistance and (re)existence made possible in times of *conservative Tsunami*. The CONAPE's choice as theme of this article is not only due to its internal potential contribution to the struggle for education itself, but also shows us how much movement centered on institutions of civil society without sponsorship or promiscuous relations with the State, self-organized

by citizens, can function as a political mechanism to unveil what the muddy waters of the tsunami hide and inhabit on the *other side* of the abyssal line, but still exists and resists. That is, talking about CONAPE, writing, publishing, reading and debating about it, is for us the everyday invention, as we bring Certeau's (1994), as art of resistance.

CONAPE was characterized, therefore, by its *old* organizational form. Old because collective, with no mega structures behind it. Instead of old, we could, using Santos (2004), identify it as produced in the context of another sociability, in relation to the *modern* sociability that disregards solidarity as an operational way, always favoring hierarchy and hierarchical normalization. In this form of organization, organic meals provided by the MST (Homeless Workers Movement) coexisted with a fair of cooperatively produced products and *militant* stands where products were sold, from books to t-shirts, rag dolls and posters, designed to subsidize the social movements continuity and, at the same time empowering them and broadening the dissemination of their ideas, slogans while producing images of other possible worlds. Simultaneously, different working groups discussed relevant issues to our education and weakened democracy, the preferred victim of this tsunami, which continues to try to submerge it under the commercialization mire of life, also the beliefs and values that govern society, the sale national sovereignty and political persecution and corruption.

On its first day CONAPE took a high risk: a march through downtown Belo Horizonte, culminating with an opening in one of the city squares, challenging the current police taste for aggression against social movements, risk of emptying by general fear, displacement difficulties amid the truckers' strike, two nights lodging for those less favored and in addition, an unbearable temperature on the street events! Still, the march and its culmination were a success. Challenging not only the conservative tsunami but rather unfavorable circumstances, and adopting an unconventional model, our first plenary session *took place on the street*, approving the regiment by public acclaim regiment led us to leave the place with smiles and *we did*, easily identifiable in every lips and eyes' glare.

The following morning, divided between self-organized activities at Expominas (a place for huge events) and papers oral presentation at Minas Gerais Federal University (*UFMG*, in Portuguese) was rich and productive. Rooms and spaces filled with teachers and education workers, undergraduate, post graduate, high school students, anonymous participants and important names of the educational field shared their voices in different discussions. Our experiences divided and multiplied. While one of us was at Expominas in the BNCC debate, the other coordinated at MGFU a session and presentation of papers. We both attested the richness of what we lived and learnt, that was possible through the dialogue established with the people present.

At MGFU university, *spacetimes* rarely occupied by social movements, between eight axes and a multiplicity of themes, we talked about the public's defense as plural, which we consider inevitable for the in-

tensification of democratic experiences. Bringing in the different *places* in speeches, plurality and dissent, we entangled knowledge under other logics, based on solidarity, collaboration and justice. Understanding, also with Santos (2013, p. 8), that in these anti-hegemonic networks we can identify and create solidarity networks within the “[...] fragility of the grammar of human dignity” and the various forms of violence today in a world where “[...] about 1% of the global elite rules the 99% of the world’s impoverished population” (Santos, 2013, p. 8). A movement of recognition, empathy and solidarity in defense of human dignity in the face of many forms of oppression – in curricula, assessments, gender relations in schools, fundamentalist attacks and the private attack on public education – we talked not only about the importance on decolonizing the university as a place of knowledge, but even more so, how we must admit that “[...] global social injustice is thus closely linked to global cognitive injustice. The struggle for global social justice must therefore be a struggle also for global cognitive justice” (Santos, 2007, p. 9).

A moment that deserves attention in the conversation that one of us coordinated at MGFU, was the presentation of a research work coordinated by biology professor Pedro Luiz Teixeira de Camargo with high school students (Amanda Luiza Souto dos Santos, Bruna Joice Gregório e Weder Vicente Silva), discussing the research on the socioeconomic characteristics of young mothers at Amarantina a small district, at Ouro Preto village in Minas Gerais (Camargo, 2018), that gave vigorous feminism lessons to those present, showing that creating curricula and knowledge in the everyday school life (re) exist, and that to resist in public school is possible, happens and it is necessary to be shared and valued, as we did there.

The activity at Expominas, a talk group proposed by ABdC/ANPEd for the BNCC discussion, was proposed in this format to assure the right of speech to all who were willingly enter the debate. Encouraged by interlocutors who started the debate, presenting relevant aspects of this ruling curriculum policy representing both entities and had a menu in which we stated:

We understand that our role is to reject conservative neoliberal reforms under way in education. These, based on the triad of curricular unification, standardized external evaluation and massification of didactic material, under the promise of equal opportunities to learn, control and abolish the autonomy of the teaching work, depriving the difference and contributing to the increasing inequality in the systems education. They treat the human being as *object of rights and not subjects* (Santos, 2013) entitled to the right of learning. Thus, they demonize the teaching work, *abyssalize* the student, and devalue *the lesson* by abducting from the curricula its main characteristic, which is to be a *daily creation* (Oliveira, 2007) made as a *complicated conversation* (Pinar, 2012), and threatens the teachers’ formation and their teaching as intellectual workers. Therefore, by believing that curricular practices

are inevitably creative, moving in networks of resistances, subversions, *disobedient obediences* escapes, always and in various forms, even without permanent intentionality to normativity and curricular control, that is understanding *the class* as a conversation and the curriculum as daily creations on the *school floor* where even contents are negotiated between teachers, students, communities, historicities, and society itself, we need to remain mobilizing, involving different subjects in conversations that allow us to deepen the discussions (FNPE, 2018c, p. 3).

Against this policy and searching for the socialization of lived experiences in the process of the BNCC making and, of our readings, we began the discussion hoping that its continuity would bring to light other experiences, readings and ways of resistance (s) already in march in the country. We did not disappoint! After exposing our experiences and perceptions⁷, we had important contributions and we were able to clarify many of the aspects that we addressed in our initial speeches, which expressed our disbelief in the Curriculum conception that animates the BNCC, as well as in the modern, positivist epistemology that supports it; our distrust regarding official goals, perceiving a broad privatist movement contrary to schools and teachers' autonomy subliminal to the Core; our conviction that it and its spurious interests are articulated with other educational policies also produced by the coup government; our uncompromising defense of the curriculum as a creation in/of the school, which led us to reaffirm the slogan of the ANPEd/ ABdC campaign: *Here already has a curriculum*.

We learned in the discussion that the State Forum of education (*FEE*, in Portuguese) of Mato Grosso is in a campaign to go to schools in different municipalities, to clarify and contribute to a critical reading of the BNCC to be pluralized, diffused and can subsidize secretariats and schools in the definition of their actions in the *implantation* of the Core. We have also learned, sadly, that in many places teachers have been subjected to the *consummate facts* policy with no right to problematize anything. Still on the *unfortunately* list, we hear colleagues accuse schools and teachers' education of the *failures* in curriculum policies or argue that the curriculum would be just *system and routine*, challenging our reflections to show their scientificity from the perspective of *exact science*, apparently understood by an interlocutor as capable of validating curriculum conceptions in line with the de-ideologization, to which we have already referred here. But working on dissent and exercising against hegemony was the purpose and commitment and other testimonies, questions and reflections have led to networks weaving of *other* understandings for all, around many issues they involve, for academics in the field, researchers, university teachers from other areas and those working in Basic Education, the rights to public education, democratic, secular, free and of social quality for all.

The respectful dialogue with the dissonant voices, defenders of what we criticize, is of particular importance if we are to consider the CONAPE experience to be successful. It was not, and should not be treat-

ed as a merely re-affirmative conference of monolithic points of view. Its legitimacy rests also on its ability to listen, respect and dialogue with the other, in an argumentative process in which all have possibilities to formulate and refute arguments (Habermas, 1981). Respecting the other as a legitimate one in the coexistence (Maturana, 1998) is a *sine qua non* condition of democratic experience, a democracy perceived as a *daily political work of art*. Particularly important at this moment of navigation in the murky waters of democracy of very low intensity (Santos, 2003) in force in the tides of this *Tsunami* in which we sail.

On a sunny Saturday morning, May 26, 2018, the corporate media were terrified by the truck drivers mobilization and the power void between the coup government and society, without reporting that more than three thousand people would lift their 2018 CONAPE delegates badges, to name it *Free Lula*. Frontal attitude of resistance to the overpowering course that the withdrawal of working class' rights and attacks on public education mimic the figure of the imprisoned president *persona* presented as a *question of order* right at the beginning of the plenary that would conclude the work of CONAPE acclaiming another conference for 2022. More of 70 speeches brought up violence, persecution and complaints, which united themselves in the struggle for democracy in defense of the many *Brazils* that we wanted during the more than five hours of debates and consensus building to approve the manifesto text.

At the end of the plenary, after the events narrated here and many more that we could not contemplate, the letter from Belo Horizonte was approved and we bring it reproduced in full below. We emphasize that this inclusion serves in our understanding, also search to bring with the reflection presented in this article, possibilities of resisting and (re) existing sailing in the murky waters of the *conservative Tsunami*. It is a piece of resistance, but also a reaffirmation of the creative possibilities that this resistance includes, in the *spacetimes* we occupy – in all the senses that the term occupation currently assumes – transfiguring one into new existences. Here is the letter:

CONAPE/2018: Education as a space of resistance. MANIFESTO: Letter from Belo Horizonte

Brazil, the fruit of centuries of exclusion, is still today a country of extremely concentrated wealth, with enormous regional and social disparities.

The struggle for a public education of quality, universal, secular, inclusive, free, socially referenced, from early childhood to post-graduation, is fundamental for the construction of another reality, cooperative and less unfair. It is for this purpose that civil society entities have been working for decades to discuss the paths that can allow this essential transformation. Thus, CONEDs were organized from the 1990s onwards, and later CONAEs in 2010 and 2014, in the latter case with government support.

In 2018 a new CONAE was planned, coordinated by the National Education Forum (FNE). However, with the dismantling of the FNE promoted by the current government and, therefore, with the de-characterization of CO-

NAE-2018 as a democratic space for debate.

Those entities, gathered in a National Committee for Education, decided to promote the National Conference on Education, CONAPE-2018, which will continue previous initiatives, with the goal of ensuring the improvement and implementation of the National Education Plan (PNE), the implementation of a National Education System that allows the strengthening of public education and regulation of private education. It will be fundamental to collectively map, in addition, the directions of resistance, with unrestricted combat to the heavy setbacks that the federal government tries to impose on education and social areas in Brazil.

The struggle for universal education and quality: challenges to be faced

The social mobilization around the democratization of rights, regarding education, has an important agenda of struggles, which today gains centrality due to the worsening of the conjuncture of direct attack on public services, favoring privatization at all levels and sectors:

The end of public investments freeze for social areas, as imposed in 2016 by Constitutional Amendment 95 (EC 95/16), with its immediate repeal and the allocation of 10% of GDP to public education;

The end of public funding for private investments in education, to the detriment of strengthening public education;

The regulation of private education, under the same legal requirements applied to the public school, with the implementation of the National Education System;

The demand for quality both in long distance education and in short-term courses, preventing attempts to treat education, in this scope as a mere commodity;

The guarantee of the implementation of career plans for public and private sector teachers, with the promotion of the necessary enhancement of the respective professionals, overcoming the recent proposals to 'flexibility' the selection criteria in the area, as well as the sharp setbacks that are happening today, especially in the private sector;

The unrestricted struggle against the '*No Party School*' movement and the '*Gags*' Law';

The fight against the '*National Curricular Common Core*' proposed by the current government, which excludes sensitive social issues and plasters the curriculum;

The fight against the ongoing '*Reform of Secondary Education*', which hampers students' access and permanence, turns technical the public education, devalues teachers and emphasizes the privatization of basic education, besides attempting against national sovereignty by subjecting strategic issues, such as teacher education and curricula to the intervention of the World Bank and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD).

The fight against Social Security Reform, Labor Reform, Outsourcing and all attacks on labor rights;

The struggle for an end to the interference of the Ministry of Education in the National Education Forum, with the reconstitution of its original composition.

Resist and advance for a public, secular, free, inclusive and of quality education: this is the commitment of all entities that organize CONAPE! (FNPE, 2018, p. 2-3).

Navigating in Murky Waters, without ever Losing Tenderness

The objectives of this text were twofold: to situate, in a political-epistemological discussion, our perception of the coup under which we are living, identifying it with a movement that transcends it, but in which it subscribes, which we understand as a conservative tsunami that, while throwing us into the uncertainties and dangers of the murky waters and the many reflux/pull/ thrust movements that the first wave brings with it, demands from us cunning, liveliness, and expanded adaptability in the creation of resistances to the damages caused by it, and to the weaving of possible existences in the scenario of devastation that it produces. We affirm, therefore, that all resistance must be rekindled, that no opportunity to resist can be disregarded and that in the struggle to resist the tsunami “[...] no experience of indignation” can be wasted (Santos, 2013, p. 8).

Throughout our argumentation we have been able to demonstrate the familiarity of Brazilian educational policies since 2106 with the neo-conservative and even ultraconservative ideology while at the same time, arguing about the permanence and creation of some forms of resistance to its apparent power to occupy spacetimes. It may have failed to epistemologically reaffirm our conviction that, no matter how much worse the perceived perspectives in the analysis of the model of world and society that this Tsunami brings, we know and bet on the idea that there is no possible *application* of models, nor *obedient* protocols in the weaving of social life or education. The notion of *everyday life rebellion* (Oliveira, 2018) helps us to know that life is uncontrollable – in fact, what tsunamis also teach us! In real life, under tsunamis or in lull time, there is neither predictability, nor possible controllability! The (actual) social existence of schools cannot be overridden by rules or tsunamis! If norms are imposed, transgressions are practiced as resistance and as (re)existence. As stated in previous paper/text.

But our world is not just problems, and the democratic hope of solidarity in a more just world insists on making itself present! Rebellious and engaged social movements grow and spread, despite the desolate scenario. Processes of resistance and construction of social, economic and political alternatives follow multiple paths, plural and proper in the four corners of the planet. As we have learned from Galeano (1993), they are ‘grasshoppers’ with their claims, their joy, their bets on a better world, invading supposedly surrounded territories, despite everything (Oliveira, 2018, p. 245).

And so, we know how to count on this daily rebellion, which does not allow itself to be dominated or imprisoned by the dictates of the powerful or by the fact that the waters of this or other tsunamis have clouded. We believe, and here we try to demonstrate that we have a good argument, that, astutely, practitioners of everyday life create alternatives, (re) invent norms, cheat and escape from them in their own way, in different ways. It is a rebellion that spreads (in a somewhat disordered way) through social life, around the world in what it has of uncontrollable, mutant, dynamic, fluid and unstable, subverting the norm, in a non-framing or controllable way. Disobediently, it modifies what is planned, ordered, structured. It resists control by opposing the norm's authority by exercising its own, uses the circumstance in the way it is possible and desirable, without being imprisoned by the *status quo* (Oliveira, 2018).

Inspired by this rebellion, which does not give up tenderness, as we learned from El Che, we seek to unveil social practices that transcend the predicted and authorized, that modify norms and break with hegemonic values. Thus, enabling us to conceive of a new subversion in the ways in which they manifest themselves, through these rebellions against the conservative tsunami, recovering meanings and possibilities of equality, freedom and fraternity, in addition/beyond to simulacrum, returning to equality its dimension of search for a society that promotes it, to freedom its character as a fabric of social and political autonomy and to fraternity, its dimension of solidarity. These operations also allow us, yet, to broaden our world perception beyond what the instituted power recognizes, values, perceives and conceives plural alternatives of intervention in the world and, above all, the promotion of these other marginal values, disregarded by hegemonic narratives that only dialogue with *rationalized, expansionary, centralized, spectacular and noisy production* of power instituted by *noisy machines* that try to deafen us to practitioners whispers and their creations. According to Certeau (1994), the social machinery makes so much noise that deafens us to the creations of the practitioners, leading us to take them for *idiots*.

In our political struggle for overcoming social fascism that accompanies current, low-level intensity political democracies (Santos, 2003; 2006; 2010), we engage our indignation feelings seeking, once again with Che, to keep that fundamental emancipating *makingthinking* flame alive. We understand that it is necessary to “[...] feel in the deepest of you (us) any injustice committed against anyone in any part of the world” (Guevara, s.d.), and against them to rebel. We defend the idea that this is also done by recognizing and unveiling the *rebel* movements and actions present in daily life, useful and necessary weapons to confront the growing social inequities produced and promoted by *the conservative tsunami*.

Resolution and tenderness, solidarity and indignation go together in this navigation in the murky and violent waters of *the conservative tsunami*, inhabited by complex processes in which rules and rebellions are articulated, learning and unlearning, and other dimensions of a

world full of events and possibilities, beyond of what the visual image of the tsunami allows us to perceive, enlarge and displace our perception of what exists, finding trenches where so many are already, rebelliously⁸.

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Notes

- 1 International Student Assessment Program, National Literacy Assessment, National High School Exam, among international, national, state and municipal.
- 2 ANPED – National Association of Postgraduate and Research in Education. ABdC – Brazilian Association of Curriculum. AAACS – American Association for Advanced Curriculum Studies.
- 3 As Pinar said in an interview, the conversations are “[...] complicated because people are talking about each other. And because teachers talk not only to their students, but to their own mentors, about their own experiences and their content, because the contents themselves are conversations ... this conversation is also complicated by being informed, of course, by what happens and happened outside the classroom, as in the students’ families. The conversation is complicated because it happens among all in society” (Süssekind, 2014b, p. 27).
- 4 Marielle Franco, PSOL councilor, a black woman, lesbian, who lived in one of the major slums in Rio de Janeiro, defender and activist of the human rights cause, was murdered in Rio de Janeiro in April 2018. 2018. There are still no results of the investigations at the time we wrote this text (June 2018).
- 5 Available at: <<http://www.anped.org.br/news/repudiation-note-under-ordinance/577--April,27th,2017-MinistryofEducation>>. Accessed on: Jun. 10, 2019.
- 6 The song *Divino Maravilhoso*, popularized in the voice of Gal Costa, said: *Attention, everything is dangerous, everything is wonderful divine. Attention to the refrain: We must be attentive and strong, we do not have time to FEAR* the death.* The above adaptation updates our fears and needs’. NT. (*FEAR, in Portuguese equals to the verb *Temer* (to be afraid of someone or something) also a double meaning with the former president’s name Michel Temer, in part responsible for some of the tsunami effects.)
- 7 To avoid repetitions and redundancies, we refer interested readers to the associations’ websites to access the documents produced that depict our positions.
- 8 This article is part of the Thematic Section, *Resistances and Reexistences in Educational Social Spaces in Times of Neo-Conservatism*, organized by Inês Barbosa de Oliveira (Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro) and Rafael Marques Gonçalves (Universidade Federal do Acre).

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