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Youth In-Scene at School: education in the encounter with the city

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ABSTRACT – Youth In-Scene at School: education in the encounter with the city. The traditional alliance between education and labor has been taking shape in the apparent adherence of educational practices to the machinations of capitalism. Starting from the analysis of the effects of the entry of this discursive configuration into schools, our hypothesis is that we are watching the transition from a cultural qualification, as discussed by Adorno, to a professional qualification. In this article, we intend to present the results of a research through intervention we accomplished in the context of a photography workshop, and which point to the potential of art to subvert the logic of a technical education, creating another scenario for the encounter between education and the city, beyond one that is guided by inserting the young into the labor market.
Keywords: **Education. Psychoanalysis. Cultural Formation. Professional Formation. Photography Workshop.**

RESUMO – A Juventude _En-Cena_ na Escola: a educação no encontro com a cidade. A tradicional aliança entre educação e trabalho vem-se configurando numa aparente adesão das práticas educativas às engrenagens do capitalismo. Partindo da análise dos efeitos da entrada dessa configuração discursiva no espaço escolar, problematiza-se a hipótese da transição de um modelo educativo fundamentado numa formação cultural, tal como discutida por Adorno, em direção ao que entendemos como formação profissional. Segue-se a apresentação de uma pesquisa-intervenção no contexto de uma oficina de fotografias, cujos resultados apontam para o potencial da arte em subverter a lógica do ensino tecnicista, criando outro cenário de encontro da experiência educativa com a cidade, para além do norteado pela inserção no mercado do trabalho.
Palavras-chave: **Educação. Psicanálise. Formação Cultural. Formação Profissional. Oficina de Fotografia.**

Introduction

Ultimately, what does a young person's education consist of? The relevance of the question may be questioned by the very banality that characterizes it, but it is exactly when we try to answer it that we are faced with the imprecision of what it is to educate a young person today, especially if we take into account the growing migration of economic values into the educational field witnessed in the last decades. Thus, we are called upon to overcome the obviousness to which, at first glance, the question may seem to be referring to and confront the problem in a more forceful way.

Due to the complexity that, paradoxically, is attributed to this problem, we propose here a transversal cross section through different fields that return to the problem at a point that will serve as contextualization for our discussion - and that, directly or indirectly, has been approached and analyzed by several authors (Adorno; Becker, 2003a; Adorno; Becker, 2003b; Laval, 2019; Saviani, 1994; 2003; Costa, 2009), that is, the association between the place given to the education of young people in a particularly capitalist society and the preparation of this public for entry into the work market.

In this regard, if we return to the Law of Directives and Bases of National Education (Brazil, 1996), even considering its most recent updates, we realize how clear the discursive difference is in the treatment given to high school when we compare it to the other segments of basic education. While the proposals aimed at early childhood education have been taking the form of a way of inserting children into the cultural sphere, linking them to social and cultural practices in a broader context, the focus of youth education seems to fall on technical training basically focused on professional insertion.

Such findings become even more evident when we analyze the main documents that guide the construction of school curricula aimed at young people: National Curriculum Guidelines for Basic Education (Brazil, 2013); National Curriculum Guidelines for Technical Vocational Education at Middle Level (Brasil, 2012); and Curriculum References for Technical Professional Education (Brasil, 2000). With these, the notions of skill and competence have gained prominence as guides in the construction of pedagogical proposals that "[...] generate efficient and effective performances" (Brasil, 2000, p. 10) – terminologies, as we know, quite dear to the business world. Therefore, students are expected to finish their school career with certain sets of well developed skills and competences, in order to increase their potential of employability.

On the other hand, when we enter the school context itself, we see the complaint commonly made by young people about the lack of an intrinsic meaning in the contents they are taught: teacher, why are we studying this? After all, what is this for? The answers to these questions are often based on weak arguments that can only defend the value of certain knowledge from what it can provide in terms of future achieve-

ments: *to pass the ENEM exam*! (national university entrance exam). Thus, we ask ourselves: is school education becoming an investment, in the economic sense of the term, configuring itself to function as a means to achieve professional success and financial return? In this scenario, what value could we still attribute to knowledge, understanding and culture?

The fact is that, if school had in the past focused its efforts on offering an intellectual and civic education by transmitting the values of culture and the symbolic references of society (Laval, 2019) in an attempt to promote, through knowledge, clarification and the autonomy necessary for emancipation[1], this purpose has undergone profound changes with the advent of capitalism.

Based on this initial problematization, in this article, we propose, firstly, to historically contextualize the relationships established between the education of young people and their preparation for the job market, delimiting the transition from a model of education based on formative experience towards what we understand as professional qualification. Then, we will discuss the results of an intervention research that we developed in the context of a photo workshop offered to students of a state school for professional education, in which we try to subvert the logic of technical teaching through art, constructing, from the singularity of the photographic gesture, other possibilities of encounter with the educational experience.

Education: is it still a formative experience?

Although the alliance between educational practices aimed at youth and the insertion of this public into the *polis* through work has gained more notoriety in contemporary times, it certainly does not constitute a recent phenomenon. Saviani (1994) told us that, in primitive communities, in which the communal mode of production prevailed, "[...] education coincided entirely with the work process itself" (p. 2), this being understood as man's action on nature, in order to adapt it to his needs. In this context, education basically consisted of the transmission to the new generations of production techniques that would guarantee the maintenance of human existence; thus, people educated themselves and educated the youngest through work, and they learned to work by working, since labor activity consisted of the means of producing their own existences.

Take artisans as an example: the art of the craft was transmitted from the master to the apprentice from a know-how built by the subject themselves, and it was precisely this craft that guaranteed them a certain place in the community (Huberman, 1981). Such mode of transmission directly implied the construction not only of a knowledge to be passed on from one generation to another, but of a knowledge whose validity could only be established through experience, which, according to Saviani (2003), would constitute a true process of learning.

However, at a time when the communal production model loses space by dividing society into classes, placing, on the one hand, landowners - who did not need to work directly with the land to ensure its existence - and, on the other, the servants - responsible for guaranteeing, not only their livelihood, but that of their masters (Ribeiro, 1993), the scenario changes greatly.

The school's origin lies precisely in this context; aimed at the ruling class, school education was opposed to general education, which took place in the work processes themselves and was aimed at the majority of the population. It was then up to the school to take care of activities considered noble and intellectual, such as the transmission, to the new generations, of cultural values, the art of the word, knowledge about natural phenomena and the rules of social co-existence (Saviani, 1994).

When the capitalist mode of production gained strength, especially after the Industrial Revolution, we saw the first signs of the appearance of the association between school education and work or, to be more precise, between school education and the labor market. If, before, the artisan was master of their production, when they became a factory employee, their work was broken down into several fragments of small processes over which they no longer had control. Therefore, the mastery over the product is lost, but also over the production process itself. The machine becomes the materialization of intellectual functions in the production process, from which, inevitably, the worker is alienated (Saviani, 2003). With this, know-how loses space, and the automatism of pure doing, combined with the imperative of the reproducibility of the technique, enters the scene. If, before, work consisted of the process by which man, in order to guarantee his existence, adapted nature to his needs, now, it is man who needs to adapt to work in order to guarantee his survival.

The preparation of new generations to adapt and adhere to this new productive logic is urgent. The educational and professional training of young people becomes a strategic element to be invested, as a way to guarantee not only the increase in productivity, but also the productive capacity of individuals (Costa, 2009) and, therefore, the profitability that they represent to the market. Education, thus, comes to be understood as decisive for the economic development of a nation, so that the school, in configuring a formal education space par excellence, is also called upon to respond to economic interests. It is education from a perspective of instrumentalization of the individual, in order to add value to the human capital (Schultz, 1973) that s/he has to offer to the market, the school being subjected to the imperatives of professional success and efficiency - usually translated by the sign of accumulation of capital, since *being successful* directly implies *making a lot of money*.

The problem we recognize here, however, does not relate purely to the fact that schools also take on the task of offering their young students a space to prepare for work, especially if we take into account the worrying unemployment rates that are part of the Brazilian reality.

Our question, in fact, problematizes how much the education of young people, by choosing as its main objective the professional insertion of the students and their adaptation to the dominant logic, has been thought about and organized in an almost servitude relationship with capitalism. In this context, as Bandeira and Oliveira (2012) emphasize, school curricula, trying to respond to the demands of clear market inspiration, end up being organized in a fragmented way, and the syllabus contents are disjointed in such a way that there is no transversal structure that arouses intellectual curiosity, students' interest in knowledge, or their criticality in the face of the problems that affect us as a society. Thus, schools end up focusing on individualist strategies, which seem to exclude the subjective dimension of educational processes and the very collectivizing perspective of knowledge as the characteristic competitiveness of the corporate world invades the school territory, turning colleagues into competitors in the race to conquer the first place in the class, a place in universities or, later on, in the job market.

In this regard, Saviani (2003) warns us about the risks that high school education, focusing on providing students with the practical knowledge necessary for their adaptation to market demands, may end up being reduced to a technization of youth due to its training in productive techniques. In this context, social demands directed at young people, being conveyed in terms of academic success as a unique condition for professional success, as it is necessary to study *to be someone* in life, can lead to, or reactivate, the question of parents' desire, which the young person needs to free themselves of (Freud, 2006a), or to the abyss of being a *nobody*, which leads to the reality of a *Helpless Youth* (Aichhorn, 2006) without references with which they can sustain themselves in their transition to the adult world.

Subjected to the technicality that emerges as a differential feature of contemporary education, some young people, suspecting that, like the Oedipal promise, a degree may not guarantee desired satisfaction, when they conclude that it is useless to learn, they will take the path of more immediate satisfaction. by adhering to consumer objects, others will enter an almost autistic state in the virtual field, i.e., on the internet and in electronic games (Lima; Lima, 2011).

Violence, indiscipline, disinterest, low income and high dropout rates - which quintuple in high school (11.7%) when compared to the early years of elementary school (2.3%) (Brazil, 2017) – appear as examples that come to illustrate this worrying scenario. In even more serious situations, more and more young people are adhering to self-injurious practices, depression, the abusive consumption of alcohol and other drugs, and suicide attempts.

This picture shows the seriousness of the crisis that the educational field faces today, with the contours of its current social function uncertain, hence the complexity that we referred to at the beginning of this article. In the debate entitled "Education - for what?", Adorno and Becker (2003b), take up this issue, and engage in a dialogue that enables

important operators to think about the impediments involved in defining a specific objective or ultimate goal of education today. In this regard, Adorno states that

> [...] something similar occurs with education and training. There were times when these concepts, as Hegel said, were substantial, understandable by themselves from the totality of a culture, and were not problematic in themselves. But today they have become problematic in these terms. The moment we ask: 'Education – for what?', where this 'for what' is no longer understandable in itself, naively present, everything becomes insecure and requires complicated reflections. And above all, once this 'for what' is lost, it cannot simply be restored by an act of will, erecting an educational objective from its exterior (Adorno; Becker, 2003b, p. 139).

The problem pointed out by Adorno is an important starting point: when erecting goals for education from outside, inevitably, the clarity of the purpose that would be intrinsic is lost. The progressive entry of economic values into the educational field, acting as guidelines that guide educational practices towards professional training, seems to distort the very understanding of education as a formative experience.

The notion of qualification, here, which is necessary to clarify, does not consist, merely, as a synonym of education or development. Through it, we must understand the process by which "[...] culture [is]²regarded from its aspect of subjective appropriation" (Adorno, 2010, p. 9). Referring to the German notion of *Bildung*, usually translated as cultural education, the formative experience would imply opening up a way for individuals to ascend, through the light of reason, to enlightenment, thus conquering their autonomy (Kant, 1985 [1874]). Thus, it would consist of a way of promoting emancipation, through which people could, with freedom, choose their own paths, sustain their own convictions and be responsible for them, with the intention of collectively building a more fair society for everyone.

Today, we are heading almost in the opposite direction. Science, which once sustained the revolutionary discoveries that pushed the world forward, has been losing its appeal as an emancipatory knowledge (Voltolini, 2012). Converted into a productive force that turns the gears of capitalist machinery, the knowledge produced and accumulated by humanity throughout history no longer enables an educational structure built on the principles of enlightenment and autonomy, after all, one does not educate for emancipation, but for its opposite: adapting to market demands – it is not for nothing that we are witnessing a progressive replacement of the old science fairs by the *innovative* profession fairs.

It is clear, therefore, that education has been progressively distancing itself from a formative perspective. If the current school prepares just for for work, we cannot fail to take into account that this work is defined by the progressive rationalization of industrial production

processes, eliminating the remnants of old artisanal activities and, with them, the very dimension of learning resulting from experience in the trade (Adorno, 2003). Thus, unlike the training model observed in the old artisanal work, which was based on the construction of a know-how to be transmitted through generations as a means of maintaining human existence itself, professional training addressed to contemporary youth works as an instrument of capital and, in this context, the work ends up assuming an alienated and alienating configuration.

In the name of a productivist rationality, the very ethical sense of formative and educational processes is adrift in economic tidal revolts, without reliable anchoring positions. Thus, the educational system that today forms individuals is only able to reach what Adorno (2010) came to name as semi-qualification (*Halbbildung*). Since social relations are generally governed by mercantilist logic, educational practices start to lead, both in cognitive and affective aspects, to a passive submission to the false idea of happiness obtained through consumer goods (Bandeira; Oliveira, 2012). Semi-qualification, therefore, "[...] is the spirit conquered by the fetishistic character of the merchandise" (Adorno, 2010, p. 25), which weakens the subjective conditions necessary to make the emancipatory character of education effective (Bandeira; Oliveira, 2012).

In this context, a new cultural structure takes shape, where everything becomes an object of consumption, no longer having usage value, but instead having exchange value. In this regard, Voltolini (2012), supported by the formula of the capitalist discourse proposed by Lacan, draws attention to the particular way in which the subject, governed by a mercantilist logic, starts to relate to the object.

> The object, now reified by its series production, empirized by scientific discourse, disconnected from its background of absence, as highlighted by psychoanalysis with the concepts of drive and desire, artificially determines a 'subject in series', oriented for consumption. The hyper-inflation of the object, undertaken by capitalism, aims to establish between the subject and the object a complementarity without edges, the object tailored to the marketing language, the existence of a sexual relationship, in Lacanian terms, paradise in biblical terms (p. 111).

These objects, among which we can situate scientific knowledge itself, circulate in the market, supporting the idea that "[...] our happiness depends only on our personal competence" (Bauman, 2001, p. 87). But what would remain attractive in the search for emancipatory knowledge, if the paradise of objects is offered without limits?

In view of this scenario, we ask ourselves: would it be possible to subvert the teaching logic based on technicality towards an educational proposal based on a formative perspective that leads the young, through the light of reason, towards clarification, autonomy and, therefore, to emancipation, promoting their insertion not only into the labor

market, but into the culture, into the social bond and, therefore, into the *polis*?

From the (Photographic) Image to the Movement (of the City)

It was based on this idea that we conducted an intervention research guided by psychoanalysis, from the construction of a group device in the format of a photography workshop, offered to high school students from a state school of professional education. The idea was to provide, within the school, an educational practice different from traditional teaching modalities, where subjectivity could appear as a driver of the educational process. With this, we aimed to move the epicenter of our proposal from an adaptive perspective of the market logic, towards a more critical positioning of reality, in which we could, through the involvement of the subject, stage a practice inspired by the principles of emancipation.

Methodology of the In-Scene

Warned of the effects of an education based on technicality, which, as we have seen, seems to exclude the subjective dimension of the teaching-learning processes, in our methodological design, we prioritize using a method where students could attend as subjects, but based on conception of subject that derives from the subversion that psychoanalysis operates in relation to the scientific field (Elia, 1999). The explanation of such subversion can be found in Lacan (1998), when he states that psychoanalysis removes the subject from the condition of exclusion in which science has placed them, (re)including them in the field of their own experience. This inclusion, however, is only possible through the unconscious, so that the subject of psychoanalysis can only be included as the subject of the unconscious and, therefore, as the subject of desire.

Thus, it was from the place of subjects of desire that young people were invited to participate in the research, which, as previously mentioned, used intervention. This method, as explained by Pereira (2013), is linked to processes of subjectivation and denaturalization of oneself and of the other with whom one is researching, in order to summon the subject to enter the scene, producing what is not expected: a novelty, a new signifier or even a singular photographic image, something that surprises and is subjective. This was the dimension of the intervention that was embodied in our study: to intervene, in the midst of research, hoping that, from that point, some subjective effect would be produced.

Although we were not inserted into a properly analytical context, we were inspired by the ethical principles that guide the clinic. Thus, we sought to adopt an attitude free of theoretical-conceptual presuppositions, allowing young people a space that is conducive to the expression of the unconscious and to the formulation of a singular knowledge,

processes that, in our proposal, took place through the mediation of the photographs produced.

The choice for this mediating resource was helped, in part, by the seductive character of the image in contemporary culture, especially among young people, and, on the other hand, by the discussion that Benjamin (1994) offers about the cinematographic camera, articulating that it uses the very same dimension of the technique in psychoanalysis. Rouanet (2008) explains that the analyst's gaze and the camera's gaze, in their different ways, are completely fixed on an object, whether it is photographed or the unconscious. Thus, Freud's theory of language lapses would play a similar role to that of the camera insofar as both paralyze a flow, be it language or movement, revealing a lost fragment - a flawed act, a displaced term of meaning or a detail of factual reality - not accessible to the state of consciousness in its normal conditions.

Photography, therefore, fulfills the role of capturing fragments that would go unnoticed, were it not for the sensitive gaze of those who photograph them. Such fragments, immortalized by the photographic gesture of their author, open the possibility of converting the flow of the movement of reality towards the narrative flow of the subject-photographer, linking the image produced to a discursive plane that positions it back in front of itself - since, as Winnicott (1975) warns us, when talking about a created-found object, it is about oneself that one speaks. Thus, in our research, more than the photographic product itself, it was the photographic gesture, understood as the instant in which the subjectivity of the photographer, through their gaze, functions as a mediator between the subject and their production, which interested us.

It is also necessary to clarify that the proposal was positioning itself as sustaining a critical position in the face of the immediate and market logic of image culture (Miranda, 2007), considering that, in general, it excludes the subjective dimension of creation by denying any possibility of mediation between the subject and what they post, like and share. The initial recommendation, therefore, was that young people could distance themselves from the obvious, from *selfies*, seeking to apprehend what represented their paths and travels, from the school space to the social ties that originated in the city.

It was, therefore, the photographer that references the emblematic figure of the *flâneur* (Benjamin, 1989). This character, born in the midst of the urban landscapes of the 19th century, wanders through the city of Paris with the crowd, collecting the details of the path taken in a walk through times eroded by history. Like the scrapbook narrator (Gagnebin, 2006), he does not collect great deeds, but what is left aside as something without meaning, which seems to have no meaning or importance, thus escaping the official history, but can be returned to the present to compose new futures.

It was based on these references that we titled the workshop as *From the image to the movement: remains of a Future*[3], calling attention to a possible displacement to be undertaken by young people from

the photographic image produced by them towards the subjectivating movement of the city, a displacement in which the apparently insignificant remains captured in their travels could be taken up in a discursive plane. With this, therefore, we aimed that they could create their own strategies for insertion in the *polis*, beyond the one delimited by the way of work. Thus, the record of what would strike their eyes in the midst of the travels undertaken and the opening of a space for the construction of singular narratives based on such records would appear as an attempt to promote creative affirmation paths for these student subjects, opening up new possibilities to experience youth, without the usual demands for efficiency, performance and results that mark the transition to the adult world.

Following this work perspective, we presented the proposal to the students of the school where the research was carried out and, among those who showed interest and willingness to participate, we selected 12 young people to form the group. In all, we had 12 meetings, which took place every two weeks and included the participation of the doctoral student who is also the author of this article and three undergraduate students, two from the Psychology course and one from the Advertising and Marketing course.

Authorization for participation in the research was granted by means of a Free and Informed Consent Form (FICF), signed by the legal guardians of the youths, and an Informed Consent Form (ICF), signed by the participants themselves. We adopted the inclusion / exclusion criteria: being aged between 14 and 18 years old, being regularly enrolled in the school in question during 2019, in addition to wanting to participate in the research.

With regard to the activities developed, we initially included preparatory moments, where, from a more theoretical perspective, we worked on the history of photography and its potentially subversive character, and, in a more practical component, with the participation of a photography teacher with wide experience with young audiences, also we had more technical guidance on photography with cell phones - a device chosen to be used in the workshop, due to the ease of access, since everyone had their own devices.

Even before we started the moment of the photographic act itself, we organized a guided visit to the Museum of Photography in Fortaleza so as to create an awareness of other possible modalities of photography, not necessarily linked to what is usually conveyed in social networks and advertising campaigns.

After this visit, we created an instagram account[4], which served as a space for sharing the images produced, but also as a source of inspiration, since the profile created followed the profiles of photographers from different places around the world.

As the meetings took place every two weeks, the participants were instructed to photograph, during the intervening two weeks, moments of their daily lives that, for some reason, caught their attention. Later,

they were invited to talk about their productions. Thus, a space was opened where discussion could circulate, building a kind of narrative-testimony of this experience shared *by* and *among* the participants.

At the end, we organized an exhibition at the school with photographs selected by the young people themselves, where they were able to present the result of this work to the school community, making public the *remnants* captured in their journeys inside and outside the school.

The material worked on in the research came from two main sources: 1) transcripts of the meetings and 2) photographic records produced. For the analysis of the transcriptions, we were inspired by the method that Coutinho and Poli (2019), making reference to the particular way of listening to be adopted by the analyst in the clinical context – free-floating attention (Freud, 2006b) –, define as floating reading. We then carried out a floating reading of the field material, be it the transcripts of the meetings or the photographs themselves created during the workshop, in a constant attempt to determine something that, in an unusual and surprising way, such as a slip of the tongue, could appear as an indicator of what the research was able to produce and / or apprehend.

Thus, the statements on which we will shed light, correspond to what could be determined from this work of reading the narratives constructed from the collective, working as an inspiration so that we could think with their help. During this process, some questions took shape and form. From Lacan (1988), we have learned that in psychoanalysis we do not seek, but we find, and "[...] this means that, in Freud's field, we just need to bend down to reap what is there to find" (Lacan, 1988, p. 211). Let us now move on to a discussion of some of our findings.

'Findings' collected on the path

If contemporary education, assuming the role of offering professional training appropriate to the economic demands put upon it, imprints, onto its practices, the indelible mark of market logic, it is not surprising that the entire school community ends up ensnared in a plot that calls for its actors to embody the capitalist discourse. From this declaration students are not exempt and seem to believe the strongly widespread idea that they need to take advantage of school time to prepare for a successful professional life.

Such a finding was evidenced in the first meetings of the photo workshop. It was clear how young people had incorporated the instrumental perspective of the knowledge transmitted and the experiences lived in the school space, triggering a very effective dissemination of the idea that the value of what is learned is embedded in what it can provide in terms of increasing the level of employability potential for the learner; that is, if it adds value to the human capital that the subject will have to offer to the market, it is worth being learned / experienced.

> I signed up for this opportunity to be able to put it on my CV, because I want to have a career in communication. So, I got really excited.[5]
> I became interested in the course, because there was an opportunity to work as a receptionist at events, and they look at the girls' instagram accounts a lot. So I wanted to learn [about photography] to make my feed[6] more organized, more beautiful, you know?

The significant opportunity was a constant in our conversations. Public school students, in a country where the promotion of quality public education is clearly not a priority for government officials, saw their chances of succeeding in life as more restricted. Thus, any new proposal offered by the school seemed likely to be interpreted as a new opportunity to expand their possibilities of entry / support in the labor market, where competition, as we know, is, in fact, unfair. That, by itself, would not be a problem, after all, what promotes the engagement and involvement of young people in the activities proposed at school - making it possible, hopefully, to reduce the high dropout rates that we observe in high school – , ensures its validity. The point is that this conception testifies to the alienation of the market logic to which our young people are led, since, for them, educational practices end up being related to professionalizing criteria in detriment to what they could offer in terms of a formative experience.

At the photography workshop, when asked what they thought the role of the school was, it was not surprising that the dimension of professional training proved to be unanimous. In this way, the students' utterances seemed to be based on ready-made statements, internalized, perhaps, based on what is disseminated in the social fabric.

> Education is basically one of the things that makes a country. What makes a country move forward is education, because it is with it that we graduate. Every professional had to study at school at one time to get where they were, right? Education is the nation's future.
> It's that thing, right? We have to study if we want to be someone in life.
> The school is more useful for us to guarantee a future in relation to employment, college, these things. I think that's what it's for.

However, as the meetings went on, we noticed a certain unexpected change in how they operated. The course meaning, for example, began to leave the scene, as young people began to understand that the photo workshop would not function as a classroom and did not have the same purposes as one. The physical space in which we found ourselves served as a marker of that very difference. Sometimes our place of work was the library; at other times, the schoolyard; in others, the computer lab. In all of them, however, there was a common feature: the circled chairs, so that we could look at each other and discussion could freely circulate, thus demarcating the de-hierarchization of each of our places – researchers and research participants. In this sense, assuming a different posture and being called upon to speak from another place, the very conception of the role that the school has could be problematized and re-signified among the collective. When they concluded that the school should offer training focused on citizenship, they approached

the concept of education that, according to Laval (2019), one day, the school should maintain.

> I think the school is very focused on this [professional] part, but it should go beyond that; our training as a person has to go beyond that, what you see at school.
> The school should educate for life, for citizenship.
> Many people think that schools should teach what it means to be a good citizen. But, what is this citizen? He's a guy who finished high school, graduated from medical school, has a doctorate, a skinny wife, two kids, a dog and a house. But a citizen, literally, is one who was born in the city, right? It has nothing to do with it. What I mean is that we don't need, exactly, to have all this to be educated. Are people who do not follow or do not want this uneducated? Don't they have the conscience they should have? Don't they have the ability to cope with mistakes and to improve?

Therein, we perceive a modification, as subtle as it is decisive, in the discursive position assumed by these young people. We know that the discourse theory proposed by Lacan (1992) designates particular modalities of the constitutive structure of social ties, modalities that are founded on and by language. The statements, acting as agents of social relations, establish positions for the subject regarding the impossibility of bonds, thus enabling the analysis of the collectivity and the relationship between the subjects as effects of their inscription in the symbolic (Coutinho; Poli, 2019).

Taking the theory of discourses as a guide for our reading, at first, starting from the evoked statements, we have a discursive position of young people supported by the university discourse, in which knowledge is generic and universal. Propagated in the absence of someone who enunciates it, knowledge is configured as a statement without enunciation, relegating the subject to the place of uncritical reproducer of certain constructions taken as absolute truths. The assumption of knowledge on the part of the subject who is invited to take the floor, however, could produce a discursive turn towards a *hystericization* of the discourse. Characterized by the questioning of the universalisms propagated in the social, the discourse of the hysteric gives the subject new dimensions, leading them to the position of agent of knowledge.

When problematizing the uncritically widespread conceptions about education, questioning, in this context, who, after all, is this well-educated citizen that the school must prepare, young people could find gaps in the discourse that governs contemporary education. Even though they did not exactly point out a tangible answer to the question posed - a task that, as we have seen, is neither simple nor banal - they were able to be concerned, construct new questions, denaturalize totalized truths and, with that, prepare the construction of another possible relationship with the educational space, marked by the uniqueness of each person's experience in the encounter with knowledge and its transmission.

Submersing ourselves fully into the discussions resulting from the sharing of the created photographs, we perceived, in the midst of

the narrative plots woven from these images, a critical position taking shape towards the culture of the image to which we are all submitted. They worried about the way advertising campaigns and digital influencers preach a certain fetishistic image of happiness, which is often incompatible with reality, but is presented as another commodity that must be acquired and consumed so that it can achieve its condition of recognized subject (Maar, 2003). The contradiction is that, in fact, it is precisely this dynamic that impels us to unrestrained consumption that also ends up transforming us into objects to be consumed (Pereira, 2013). In this context, some young people, failing to build shields to the voluptuousness of the Other, and who enjoy them immeasurably, were absent from the virtual spaces in which such images that propagated ideal models had a captive place.

> People end up looking for a lot of perfection on Instagram, because that's what appears there. For example, someone who makes a trip, posts a photo and that's it. So, usually, when someone sees the Instagram of this person, they think that is her life. So this ends up negatively influencing many people. Even I've had problems with this. I started to get sick of what I saw, then I was kind of discouraged and closed my Instagram account.
> I stopped posting photos on Instagram because I think it has two extremes. It has a very positive side, because it is nice to see everyone there, what everyone is doing, sending random publications to the crew; But it has a very bad side, which is judgment. So that's it, I stopped posting so as not to get worried.

Also with regard to the theme of virtual social networks, another issue was outlined with the holding of meetings. What was problematized was how much the use of the word has been replaced by the use of unceasingly shared images in the digital world, often consisting of mere reproductions of each other, without a differential trait that characterizes and singularizes them. This becomes especially evident when we compare the blogs of old, which worked as true online diaries, to the instagram posts of today, which limit the amount of characters allowed in the texts of the posts. The age old saying that "an image is worth more than a thousand words" may never have made as much sense as it does today, in which we witness countless memes and images reproduced on the internet which almost fully dispense with the use of the word.

Our proposal, swimming against this direction, and functioning as a listening device in the collective, invited young people to resume the use of the word in the creation of a narrative around which the meanings and senses could circulate, forcing the limits of language to realize the real intangibility of the image.

In this space, although there was an activity that involved a technical component related to the act of photography, we created it precisely in an attempt to subvert the technical logic that characterizes contemporary educational practices. Therefore, we were not looking for young people to reach perfection, the certain aesthetics of the image, or to take the workshop as a potential space for professional preparation.

We actually intended that the technical knowledge transmitted by the teacher-photographer in the workshop would offer some tools so that, from the uniqueness in each photographic gesture, they could create something new to say about their paths and travels.

This experience, finding its culmination in the construction of narratives from the created images, could produce significant effects on subjects who, engendered by culture, were directed towards their own desire. Thus, supported by the infinite possibilities that come from authentic and unique creation, some of the young people ended up returning to virtual social networks - which configure a particular modality of social connection in the contemporary, especially for the young public, so that being outside it would implicate, in a way, to be excluded from the social bonds - but with a new posture and with another style of photography, a movement that translates a new mode of relation to the creations themselves.

> When I started to take pictures here in the group, I wanted to post again. Only, at first, I kept waiting for someone to like it and such, but I stopped worrying. I was free of it.
> I realized that I like to take photos of landscapes, nature, buildings. I do not know exactly why, but I like to invent something different from the things we see out there. Before, I didn't want to post, but I'll post [on social networks] because they are things that interest me a lot, portraying the world like that. And I started to see the photos I see on Instagram, by the way, any kind of image, with other eyes.

From this process, the images of the city began to gain space. Photos of the neighborhood, from the travels inside the bus, from the beach, from the tourist and cultural spots of the city, but also from those which, unknown, hidden, represented places of refuge against the velocity of the city, and these became a constant in our meetings. The students also photographed the non-obvious: in front of the metropolitan cathedral of Fortaleza, for example, there was a corridor that opened into a passageway that stole the show.

> I photographed the whole church during a field class. It's very cultural, right? Only when I saw this landscape of the city center, there in the hallway that I went to take the photo, the portrait, the sky, the streets, the buildings, several factors that I found very beautiful at the time, and I decided to take this photo. That's the result. Photography has never had such a big meaning for me ... until now.

At the edge of the sea, there were not just the waters and the leafy coconut trees that called attention, but a critical attitude of reality, all the waste dumped into the environment, which triggered a whole discussion about the responsibility of society for the spaces of the city.

> You realize, here in this image, there is one thing that there shouldn't be: the garbage. There is a little house here and there's the sea in the background. And the sea looked like it was clean. So it's a critical picture, let's just say. Because you shouldn't have the trash that there was. And as we can see, there are people who rely on the beach to live, they live there. If

we dirty the beach, it ends up messing up the front garden of these peo-
ple, who have nowhere to live. But, like, I'm seeing that I have a very big
connection with the photographs I take, I can't explain, but it has a very
important meaning for me.

Some of the photographs were more representative of the sur-
rounding reality, in which it was more noticeable what the author of
the image wanted to portray. However, there were also others, with a
more enigmatic character, in which it was not very clear to the specta-
tor of what it was or the place in which it had been taken. These pho-
tos, according to the authors, opened up more space to the imagination
and, we could add, to the construction of possible new significations of
the meeting with the city: a river of sewage could turn into a beautiful
stream, a house of machinery became a beautiful country house and
the beach was portrayed in a format that was similar to the image of a
website.

Therefore, the particular cartography of the neighborhood, con-
structed through various eyes and hands, but with this facet of reality,
is perhaps impossible to fully apprehend, after all, "[...] you must never
confuse a city with the discourse that describes it" (Calvino, 1972, p. 2).
The mapped city seemed to go beyond the geographic outlines record-
ed in image. In the reports of young people about the search for places
and perfect illuminations to photograph, they seemed to walk without
a final destination; the walk was the destination itself. The crystallized,
naturalized paths thus earned new contours. The city traveled was
invisible to the eyes of others, although it was a space in which other
people also circulated daily. What would there be that is so different?
Experience, no doubt. Shared experience between their peers and with
us, who gave testimony of the youth's incursions in a space that, once so
familiar, suddenly seemed strange and new.

Insertion into culture, in the social loop and therefore in the *po-
lis* is not a simple task; it requires a delicate and equally creative route,
which implies intense psychic work to be undertaken by the young. In
our research, we used this act of leaving the physical space of the school
and entering the city to photograph it – not as someone who simply
passes by, but as someone who strolls and collects fragments from this
path, which can gain new meanings in the *après-coup* – as a metaphor of
the teenage operation itself to move from the family binds towards the
social (rassial, 1999). Displacing this which could function as a means
by which the youth can build and appropriate a place for themselves,
not necessarily in the labor market, electing new references that sup-
port them in life, in an attempt to achieve creative affirmation of the
subject in their transition process into adulthood.

To conclude

We see, today, the structuring of a new discursiveness in the edu-
cational fields. The alliance between education and work is configured
as a true submission of educational practices, in particular, those aimed

at the young public, to the demands from the economic sector, so that the symbolic productions of culture, including science itself, become converted into merchandise in a process that fully turns the gears of the capitalist system.

In this context, the school loses its significance as a temple of knowledge, distancing itself, increasingly, from a formative perspective and leading its students towards a vague and superficial semi-qualification. Acting now as a service providing organization, it will offer, as a product, professional training that will model the students for the market in the most efficient way possible. Thus, technicism begins to take on a strategic role in the design of more modern and innovative educational practices, since the methodologies adopted continue to train young people for the appropriate application of the technical knowledge acquired.

Faced with this scenario, technicism has been imprinting irreversible changes into the subject's relationship with the field of knowledge. Students, no longer educated from a liberating and emancipatory perspective, become easy targets of alienating advertising marketing strategies that are present today. With the advancement of information and communication technologies, which culminate, from the marketplace, on social networks and virtual purchasing applications - the new shopping malls of the present day - we have seen a new modality of the relationship of young people with the image taking shape.

> Today, we are bombarded by such a large number of images that we can't distinguish direct experience from what we have seen a few seconds ago on television. In our memory there are deposited, by successive traits, a thousand shards of images, similar to a waste deposit, where it is increasingly unlikely that one of them will acquire relief (Calvino, 1990, p. 107).

These shards of prefabricated images widely disseminated by contemporary culture, exclude the dimension of the creative act through technical reproducibility that gives them origin, thus the effect is the loss of human capacity to imagine, to tell stories worthy of being narrated (Miranda, 2007). There is no mediation between the subject and the images that we visualize with the screens of electronic devices that we carry in our pockets that act as an extension of the body itself.

Thus, the process itself through which the young person can be inserted into the plan of culture from the transmission of society's symbolic references, is harmed. The use of photographic image as creation, not as technical reproduction, and the construction of narratives that took into account the dimension of alterity - since the meaning of the image can only be constructed "[...] mediated by the dialogue with the other subjects who also experience the avalanche of stimuli that surround us daily" (Miranda, 2007, p. 36) –, functioned as a creative affirmation for the subject's connection to the city space.

Based on the findings of our research, we believe that the fight against the bondage of education to market logic must be fought by

strategies that lead to the singularization of the educational experience so that, from there, some subjective effect is produced. Thus, we conclude that if the school does not offer an educational proposal that confronts the organization in terms of capital, it ends up being unable to fulfill its role as a educational space, making it difficult for students to build some discernible meaning from the experience of encountering how to know. Therein resides the urgency of a constant critical positioning. Holes must be made in an educational model aimed at the appropriation of technical instrumentation and prescription for efficiency, after all the school must do more than prepare for work, it must (re)assume its position as a potential space for emancipation and thus educate for life, for the *polis*.

Notes

1 Clarification, emancipation and autonomy are concepts that come together in the conception of education defended by Adorno. Through clarification we must understand the process through which man, by the light of reason, is released from the tutelage of others, in order to act with autonomy and without the guidance of others (Kant, 1985 [1784]). This autonomy, in turn, is not in the absence of external conditions, but in the ability to base actions on moral principles - only possible in a cultural context - to make one's own decisions and take responsibility for them (Zambillo, 2015). Finally, emancipation, following the tradition of enlightenment, would be in the act of man, by the way of knowing, becoming an agent to transform their own history, breaking from the social determinations that alienate them from a logic for which they did not even perceive as regulated

2 Our inclusion.

3 The term *future* present in the title of the workshop references the temporality set out in the text, but also in the neighborhood in which the school is located: *Praia do Futuro* (beach of the future), this the spelling in capital letters.

4 The name assigned to the profile created for the workshop was chosen by the youths themselves: @restosdeumfuturo.

5 We chose not to identify students, even with fictitious names, because we want to create the understanding that the statements evoked here are narratives built *by* and *among* many. Thus, they were used to show the effect of the very circulation of the word that, by being delivered, returned differently, reverberating, in each one, something that concerned the collective.

6 The *feed* is the instagram space that brings together all the permanent publications of the user and serves as a summary of the content that has already been produced. Because the social network is increasingly configured as a space of professional promotion, it is usually used as a means of presenting the concept and the visual that is intended to be transmitted to the followers of the profile.

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