

Dream and Utopia: the school between accusations, dangers and freedoms

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ABSTRACT – Dream and Utopia: the school between accusations, dangers and freedoms. Young professionals from different fields, particularly those focused on Education, advocate for the dream as something that can change education itself. In fact, in Brazilian society, advocacy for dreams has gained increased importance, as evidenced by the insights of experts on this subject. Based on theoretical references about Utopia and Dreams and informed by a documentary, a film and a teachers' movement, this article draws two inferences: first, schools can hardly deny people's dreams, which forces them to make space for them; The second concerns the fact that the proponents of this discussion need to improve their analytical instruments, otherwise they risk jeopardizing the educational process.

Keywords: Dream. Education. Utopia.

RESUMO – Sonho e Utopia: a escola entre acusações, perigos e liberdades. Jovens profissionais de diversas áreas interessados em educação defendem os sonhos como aquilo que pode transformar a educação. De fato, na sociedade brasileira, a defesa do sonho tem ganhado certa importância, basta conferir o que dizem os especialistas do tema. Fundamentado em referências teóricas diversas sobre utopia e sonho e animado por um documentário, um filme e um movimento de professores/as, este artigo faz duas inferências: a primeira é que dificilmente os sonhos das pessoas poderão ser negados no âmbito da escola, o que a obriga a abrir espaço para eles; a segunda diz respeito ao fato de que os propositores dessa discussão precisam melhorar seus instrumentos analíticos, sob o risco de colocar a escola em perigo. **Palavras-chave: Sonho. Educação. Utopia.**

In Education, the Dream Has Barely Begun

Since the 2000s, the theme of dreams has appeared more frequently in discussions about education. Activists, progressives, neoliberals, and holistic educators, among others, each in their own way, have all advocated for the power of people's dreams as a means to transform society and educational institutions. Since then, manifestos, letters, documentaries, films, etc. were produced to shape this advocacy. Beyond education, the theme of dreams has emerged in a renewed form in other fields.

In Psychoanalysis, for example, Tales Ab'Saber (2005; 2016) proposes a revision of the exclusively psychoanalytic interpretation that seeks to understand dreams based on primitive foundations, remnants of daily life, and childhood desires. He argues that dreams can also be influenced by power relations and, therefore, can serve as a form of critique of the present. According to the author, through dreams, we write and rewrite history with our bodies, and the dream does not need to be just a return to a fixed original object.

Among neuroscientists, Sidarta Ribeiro (2019) explores a sort of genealogy of dreaming, showing that dreams have a history in the sense that their interpretation and use have varied widely. These interpretations span from mysticism and psychobiology to psychoanalysis and neuroscience. Ribeiro addresses a range of topics including divine authorization, omens, oracles, death, future and past time, and the use of psychedelics. Furthermore, he discusses how the theme of dreams, or more precisely, the impossibility of dreaming, intersects with issues such as warfare and capitalism in the field of neuroscience. In fact, about this, Crary (2016) states that, today, we are having serious difficulties dreaming, because our sleep is commercially compromised¹. In other words, our sleep, the last recess of our soul that resists colonization, has been constantly attacked by the current capitalist logic, which turns all our social relationships and our thoughts into imagined or forged necessities, that is, into consumable products.

In anthropology, Hanna Limulja (2022) shows that the way the Yanomami practice dreaming is radically different from that of white people. According to the author, the Yanomami don't just dream; More than that, they travel to other places, fly over the forest, access the invisible world. They don't dream about themselves; they dream about others. There is learning when dreaming; everyone dreams, but you have to learn to dream. Hence why, among other attributes, shamans are wise people in learning about dreams².

In education, Sandra Corazza (2021) left an important legacy in the debate on dreaming from a teaching perspective, arguing, above all, that teaching is a continuous translation of the world. This translation involves not only conveying content to students but also reflects the teachers' insatiable desire to offer, at every moment—or even every instant of life at school—a way of dreaming the world.

Without caring about the distinction between daytime and nighttime dreams, but without disregarding it, Corazza (2021) proposes thinking about dreams as a form of transcendental empiricism, as they both realize and surrealize the world. In the case of teaching, dreaming is going to the archives to create fiction and not simply to scientificize discourses. The author seems to merge dreams, fantasy and imagination, advocating for a form of teaching that creates worlds. They believe in a poetic or dreamlike class that inspires people to dream, produces dreamers, and guides both students and teachers to create new classes and discover other worlds, even in their sleep. In another text, Corazza (2019, p. 08) says that the dream in teaching would not just be a neural and/or psychological orientation, but rather the “concreteness of a happier teaching life, which begins with incorporation of fantasy.” Ultimately, she defends poetic teaching.

In this article, as we will not deal with dreams dreamed while sleeping (nighttime dreams), rather than focusing on the theoretical discussions coming from the aforementioned authors - which greatly encouraged us, to a certain extent, to escape our purpose -, we will instead explore what we consider to be the three most important empirical milestones in the theme of dreams in current education:³ 1) *Movimento Entusiasmo*. 2) the Documentary *Not Even in a Wildest Dream*; 3) the film *Mars One*.

Movimento Entusiasmo, started in 2014, in São Paulo, has as one of its leaders the young journalist, writer and poet André Gravatá and generated, among other works, *Coletivo Educação* - responsible for publishing the book *Volta ao mundo em 13 escolas - sinais do futuro no presente*; creating the national event *Encontro Nacional de Inovação na Educação - Educação Fora da caixa*; and a project called *Virada Educação*, which is already in its tenth edition. The movement argues that it is necessary to give children and youngsters their dreams back. By this they mean that school cannot just be a place of passage for students' dreams; on the contrary, it can (and perhaps, it should) be the place and time for students to not only dream, but also realize their desires.

The second milestone, documentary *Not Even in a Wildest Dream*, by Cacau Rhoden, released in 2017, argues that schools should lead students to dream of a better future, doing so through a critique of the Brazilian Education system. In the film, a boy emphatically says: “I was never dreamed as a psychologist, a doctor, [...], they [his parents] don't dream and they didn't teach me to dream, I learned to dream on my own and I'm learning to live basically out of dreams.”

The third milestone in this discussion, a film by young filmmaker Gabriel Martins from Minas Gerais, titled *Mars One*, from 2022, discusses the dream of two young black people. The boy wants to go to Mars (instead of being a soccer player, his father's dream) and the girl wants to pursue higher education, accept her sexuality (which is not

heteronormative) and reject a predetermined role of a woman, a role that her mother accepts without hesitation.

Our contention is that these milestones reveal three contemporary manifestations of dreams: a) dreaming is a way of practicing social criticism and envisioning new utopias, including in education; b) dreams should not be confined to educational institutions, but should also belong to individuals (beyond formal schooling); c) dreams are not dissociated from politics, especially from the politics of the body (school as a body).

However, in making this assertion, it is worth checking whether the advocacy for dreaming in and for education, along with its manifestations, truly possesses the power to revitalize the act of teaching, of inventing other ways of educating or whether, on the contrary, it resigns schools, teachers and students to the different dystopias that currently confront us. As we will see, the line between these two things is very thin.

Before proceeding, it is worth emphasizing that daydreaming will be dealt with here, therefore, we will not deal with nighttime dreams or those dreamed during sleep. In essence, these are, at best, utopias aimed at creating a new reality for Brazilian education. However, curiously, none of the milestones mentioned here speak of utopia, but rather of a dream. Thus, we will maintain the focus on the concept of dreaming in our writing, while also engaging with the notion of utopia, understood in this context as the reconstruction of both society and the school. Therefore, in this text, the concept of dreaming will be analyzed in continuous relation to each referenced reality, with the aim of arguing that, ultimately, the empirical milestones cited represent a possible problematization of dreaming today, which is not always easy to practice. Specifically: how to sustain the dream while maintaining a critical and accurate diagnosis of the present.

To move this discussion forward, we will describe, separately, each of the milestones of the dream stated here (Movimento Entusiasmo, the documentary *Not Even in a Wildest Dream* and the film *Mars One*) and, afterwards, we will examine the three questions arising from them, namely: the relationship between criticism, dream and utopia; the relationship between people's dreams and the school's dream; and finally, the relationship between dreams, body and politics.

Description of Milestones

1st Milestone: Movimento Entusiasmo

Just to better situate the reader, Movimento Entusiasmo is a group of young professionals (some are teachers and others are not) who claim their passion for education and who decided, based on their educational experiences - which were not very good, by the way - , to experiment (or check) whether it was possible to find other ways

to educate or create new educational institutions. To check out other ways of providing education, some of these young people traveled across five continents, in nine countries, visiting thirteen schools or learning spaces (as they prefer to call them). The visited locations included: a school in Indonesia, in Bali, designed to “understand sustainability with the five senses” (Gravatá, 2013, p. 15), and maintained through monthly fees and donations (p. 220); *Riverside School*, a private institution in Gujarat, India, aimed at “children and young people becoming the change they want to see in the world” (p. 15), in which “around 20% of students receive scholarships through a program of the government” (p. 201); an “independent school [that became] a public institution” (p. 86), in the Province of Tierra del Fuego, in Argentina, designed to experiment the art of sharing and silence with children; the *Team Academy Mongragón*, in Spain, Basque Country, a school of Finnish origin, operating in several other countries, which aims to demonstrate, in practice, the training of entrepreneurs; the *Schumacher College*, in Devon, England, financed in part by a local institution; two institutions in the United States: the *North Star Learning Center*, in Massachusetts, which, although its legal nature is not clear, is a space designed to welcome young people undergoing “unschooling” (p. 15) (homeschooling) and the *Quest to learn* Public School, in New York, designed to encourage students to “seek learning” (p. 101); finally, four Brazilian institutions: 1) the *Centro Popular de Cultura e Aprendizagem* (CPCD), a learning organization, is an NGO from Minas Gerais, with several projects spread across several Brazilian states and countries, aimed at empowering young people and their communities; 2) the public school *Amorim Lima*, in São Paulo, aimed at educating young people and adults, which values students' ability to make choices; 3) *Escola Politeia*, a private institution, aimed at allowing children to “[investigate topics of their interest] and practice democracy” (p. 15); 4) *Centro Integrado de Educação Para jovens e Adultos* (CIEJA) of Campo Limpo, in Capão Redondo, in São Paulo, aimed at “teaching young people and adults to relearn how to dream” (p. 15).

All indications suggest that these experiences were viewed very positively by these young people. Moreover, they reaffirmed their perception that not only is an alternative approach to education possible, but also that the school has neglected the students' aspirations. Because of this, they intensified their accusation that schools have stifled the dreams of children and young people, diminishing their creative power. Therefore, they question the low imagination capacity of teachers, stating that they are paralyzed in their acts of creation, that they know little about what is happening on the streets of cities and even the problems of contemporary life.

On the other hand, in their own words, the movement defends education outside the box, that is, an education that opens up to the street, to the people, to the city, to the arts and to different aesthetics. The concern of this Collective is how to take the school and its subjects out of the immobility of pedagogical thinking. Although it does

not want a capitalist education, it does not disregard public-private partnerships. It affirms a humanistic, spiritual and experimental education. It doesn't want war, it prefers connections, meetings and affection. It does not advocate for a specific pedagogy but rather for an overflowing education, one that extends into life, the streets, and beyond. It argues that the school should be a place where people can be themselves, where they are not driven by ideologies, but by desires and purposes. The young professionals and teachers who make up this movement do not have a nationally organized network, although they demonstrate important participation in social networks. They have good connections in the State of São Paulo, where they are already inspiring other cities to do the same. They want a school with a more aesthetic, artistic and philosophical imagination.

Building on these references to the aforementioned group (from now on referred to as the Enthusiasts), we shall explore how the concept of dreaming is positioned within their discussions.

How is dreaming represented in the Enthusiasts?

The dream is described by them in different ways⁴, for example: a desire for something to happen; individual or collective destiny or purpose; promise of constituting a community (like the Brazilian dream); hope for a better future; something that brings happiness; idea or object that is constructed collectively, based on a common will; something very intimate that, when shared with others, becomes collective; creating an empty space so that other people's dreams can have a place; something that needs to be recovered, since people have stopped dreaming; something that has been destroyed, sabotaged, disregarded, or ignored; a need that gives people hope again; accomplishing something impossible for simple people, such as obtaining a higher education degree; an effort to awaken something dormant, to regain courage; something that germinates and sprouts among people; spiritual fulfillment, as a kind of divine calling; an ideal or imagined place; something that can radically alter the way we live (for example, abolishing authoritarian institutions).

It is noted that these are dreams that are constructed collectively when awake and not nighttime dreams, dreamed while sleeping. They are, therefore, political imaginations, utopias that aim to produce another education. It is worth saying that the collectively imagined dream requires public construction and/or public policies to give it shape, while the dream that is dreamed while sleeping requires the analyst, psychotherapist or other professional or qualified person to help the dreamer to decipher and/or elaborate it. In this article, we will not distinguish between these two understandings of dreams, but it is worth saying that a poorly designed dream, either individually or collectively, can turn into a tragedy. By this, we mean that dreams, whatever their nature, must be thoroughly examined: their symbols and consequences assessed, their proposals and effects measured, and their potential valued. In essence, they require careful listening to

what is desired in order to make informed decisions. Therefore, we will be paying attention to possible contradictions that the dreams of these groups involve.

We dare to say that the manifestations of the dream in Enthusiasts are divided into two versions: the stifled dream (sabotaged or destroyed) and the recovered dream. By the way, both versions will be discussed here interchangeably, as one results from the other. First, it is important to clarify the contexts in which the stifled dream and the recovered dream appear.

The context of the stifled dream concerns the supposed contempt that the school, the educational system and its professionals have for the students' aspirations. Such contempt is perceived by the Enthusiasts in the old educational principle known as "training of critical-thinking students" (Gravatá, 2013, p. 12) about which they bring the well-known anecdote that says that a teacher guarantees having seen the "'critical-thinking citizen' [almost always] in the principal's office, being reprimanded for their capacity for criticism and subversion" (Gravatá, 2013, p. 12, authors' quotation marks). It is obvious that they suspect that this principle is false or that the teachers do not believe in it. There is no doubt: due to this distrust, Enthusiasts question, in particular, the activists of Brazilian education, who are the real defenders of the principle of critical training of students.

As for the context of the recovered dream, it is understood as a response to the stifled dream. According to Enthusiasts, restoring the dream is only possible by reconnecting what we think with what we do (Gravatá, 2013). This reconnection is the certainty that an alternative formative principle is possible, or that this reconnection is the educational principle par excellence of education. They say: "[our principle is] like the air we breathe" (Gravatá, 2013, p. 12), that is, "we only practice what we believe". In a broad and enigmatic way, with this position, they empty that or any other educational principle of content, giving it only form. For them, it is the form that matters and, in this case, the reconnection of "saying and doing" is the way to be advocated in education. Thus, they do not destroy the statement "training of critical-thinking students", but they want it to be implemented by those who defend it. Because of this, they imply that: either it is assumed that criticism at school, for some teachers, has an ideological bias and that not everyone complies with it or that the place of criticism in the training and performance of teachers is reviewed. In other words, they infer that the criticism defended by some teachers is limited to a predetermined ideological position and is, therefore, not open to events in the world. Later on, we will try to better understand the relationships between criticism, dreams and openness to the world (utopia).

2nd Milestone: Documentary Not Even in a Wildest Dream

The documentary *Not Even in a Wildest Dream*, by Cacau Rhoden, from 2017, is a collection of speeches from students, teach-

ers, managers and various experts, who discuss the school, its reality and its challenges. These are not speeches exclusively from young people, but from people of different ages and the documentary's plot focuses on juxtaposing the speeches of the students with those of education specialists. What is most evident in the documentary is a kind of confirmation, by experts, of the students' anxieties.

Since its release, the documentary has sparked countless discussions about schools and what they can do for young people's education. However, among all the debates that we were able to follow and/or attend, we saw that the attention was mostly focused on the notion of a school than of the dream itself. This does not appear, a priori, as a problem, but it shows how the school and its teachers perceive the place of the dream in our current society. From our perspective, we do not want to prioritize just the dream, but rather the relationship between the dream and the school. We also do not want to deny the segregations, the social inequalities and all the political neglect that are present in school that the documentary emphasizes. We emphasize, however, that the documentary strongly suggests the potential for a school to, on one hand, engage in its own dreaming and, on the other hand, serve as a space and time for its students and staff to articulate their dreams, enabling everyone to dream together. The analytical focus of the dream is so important in the documentary that it became its title, taken from one of the most emblematic lines, already mentioned by us: that of a boy who precisely analyzed the situation of the school dream, when he said: "I never dreamed of being a psychologist, a doctor, [...], they [his parents] don't dream and didn't teach me to dream, I learned to dream on my own and I'm learning to live basically out of dreams". In fact, this fragment is very powerful, because it clarifies the absence of the dream in the lives of people and institutions.

For us, the statements of those interviewed in the documentary reveal that the school needs to recognize that, before students or numbers, it is made up of people who live, suffer, dream and desire. So, we ask: can a school dream? Can people at school tell and share their dreams with the school? We will try to discuss these issues later.

3rd Milestone: Movie Mars One

As mentioned, it is a recent film, from 2021, by a young filmmaker from Minas Gerais, filmed immediately after the election of Jair Bolsonaro as president, in 2017. Notably, the film begins with two interesting background audios: the first shows the fireworks on New Year's Eve (December 31, 2018) and the second, the broadcast of Bolsonaro's inauguration (January 1, 2018). Although the director, according to him, only wants to mark the historical time in which the film was made,⁵ we can translate these two audios into, respectively, a dream and a nightmare.

The film portrays a low social class black family, who lives on the outskirts of Contagem/MG, showing how this population lives

their lives, not being, in any way, separated from the broader political, historical and cultural contexts. It is for this reason that the filmmaker treats all the characters in the film beyond the representation of their social roles, also giving them specific subjectivities. Hence why the mother of the family is not only seen as a housekeeper, but also as a person who has a life, a dream; the same can be said about the father, who also has his dreams, a history, a subjectivity and so on.

For us, all of this is important, but for the interest of this article, we want to highlight that the film also shows how politics can make or destroy dreams. In the plot, educational policy is considered very important in realizing the dreams of Eunice, a lesbian daughter who studies law at a federal university, and Deivinho, an eleven-year-old boy who dreams of going to Mars.

During the film, two scenes that refer to school are shown. The first portrays a university professor telling her students that “the Brazilian prison population is among the highest in the world and that this should be a cause for concern for all of us, especially given the political project elected in 2018”. The second scene is that of a basic education teacher demonstrating the almost magical effect of magma being expelled from the interior of the earth. In the artificial demonstration made by the teacher, the students reveal a bright and curious look. Although the film does not focus on the school, it does not go unnoticed in the director's script, which suggests that it is essential for the dreams of Eunice and Deivinho – and that of an entire poor population – to reach maximum projection.

The political dimension of the dream is also present in the dreams of the mother and father of the two young people. While young people pursue their own dreams, as the political climate allows, their parents, on the other hand, both long for the dreams of others and impose on their children the aspirations they themselves were unable to achieve, due to the political conditions that thwarted their own dreams. The politics of the young people's time included, in the list of possibilities, the dream of poor and black people, although, in the year portrayed by the film (2018), it was threatened once again. Now, this cut of the film will allow us to discuss, later, the relationship between dreams and politics; more precisely, between dreams, body and politics, since what is new is the presence of the body, of certain bodies in politics.

Next, we will try to evaluate these three issues that we highlighted during the description of the empirical milestones presented: the relationship between criticism, dream and utopia; the relationship between people's dreams and the school's dream; and the relationship between dreams, body and politics.

Criticism, Dream and Utopia

In the three empirical milestones of the dream discussed, it is evident that one of its manifestations is the use of dreaming and/or utopia as a method of performing criticism. The Enthusiasts, for ex-

ample, when dreaming of a school freer from official guidelines, criticize the educational system; the documentary *Not Even in a Wildest Dream* criticizes the current school, dreaming of a more dignified school for the poorest; The film *Mars One*, in turn, dreams of good politics (Ribeiro, 2017), so that it continues to allow poor and black people to dream their lives. We imagine that, through these utopia-dreams, a criticism is sustained against the way in which schools and society are treating the future of new generations. So, from the diagnosis made about the situation of Brazilian schools, two interconnected vectors emerge: that of criticism and that of utopia. Criticism is seen as what feeds or gives birth to utopia.

Adauto Novaes (2016, p. 12), citing Thomas Morus⁶, states that “utopia has a destiny: the ‘severe and lucid critique of reality’“ [...] “the foundation of utopia is, therefore, the critique of present.” By this, the author means that criticism of reality and/or the present seems to be the indispensable source for everything that we consider problematic today and for which a solution or resolution is expected.

Thus, criticism and utopia are inseparable; when one is lost, the other cannot resist. This is the reason why Gros (2016, p. 265) states that utopia is a way of opposing reality, of criticizing it. One can, however, do this by escaping the shortcomings of a society, wishing to escape the imperfections of life and problems, and is therefore pure illusion. Or it could be exactly the opposite, that is, denouncing the injustices of the present; “by opposing it with another possibility of life or society, it denounces it, criticizes it”.

Note that Gros sees two sides of utopia (illusion and denunciation). On the one hand, he considers the idea born from the 16th century, with Tomas Morus' social critique of his time, according to which utopia would be the creation of a perfect society elsewhere, on a perfect island or city. On the other hand, he identifies the denunciation that emerges in the 19th century, when utopian socialists also wanted a harmonious society, but exposed the current problem of that time, which was that of private property - something that Morus also insinuated.

Although there is a distance between the notions of utopia, whether conceived as a perfect city or as confronting power relations in the present time, both ways of understanding utopia start from the same philosophical problem, that is, how to “eliminate among individuals all factors of discord” (Gros, 2016, p. 270). As a response to this problem, notes Gros, Tomas Morus and the utopian socialists, each in their own way, in the end, value the same way out: the defense of community life, whether the community is understood as life in communion, a humanist life, or political communism, strictly speaking.

Now, we ask ourselves: does the education dreamed of by these people who produced and participated in the film, the documentary and Enthusiasts aim at some kind of communism? As far as can be seen, all three manifestations of the dreams highlighted here make it

clear that the transformation of education is only possible in and by the collective. They all defend another education, in which vertical relationships between people are abolished; where choices can be made; where school buildings be remade based on another conception of space⁷ and commonality;⁸ where education is not an exclusive place for teaching, but rather the space where everyone can share what they know and can; where schools do not have walls that separate students from the city; where school times are not chronological; where the contents are not teaching programs; where there are no exams; where students and teachers are busy creating new things and sharing knowledge.

Therefore, yes, they defend a collective, communal and fraternal life. But what critique do these individuals, who claim to be passionate about education, base their proposals for utopia on? We found that their criticism of education has different reasons.

While Movimento Entusiasmo criticizes the school for stifling students' dreams, labeling it as conservative and/or traditional and too resistant to contemporary experiments, the participants and creators of the documentary and film—though they agree with the criticism that the school is traditional and indifferent to students—go further by denouncing that in Brazil, we don't even have true public schools. Instead, what we have are low-quality institutions aimed at the poor, who make up the vast majority of Brazilian students. While the Enthusiasts are stuck with an agenda focused on interpersonal relationships between educators and students, desiring a more daring school, the film and documentary focus on the social, political and economic conditions that produce a school that is indifferent to the dreams of young people. It is worth noting, however, that, in all these groups, a type of resentment and grudge against the school seems to persist. They love education, but have reservations about school; They believe it could be nicer and friendlier and yet it isn't.

However, there is a blind spot in their criticisms, including the criticisms contained in the documentary and film. At no point did they examine the type of human being born today. At no point did they ask themselves what role the school played in the formation of this new humanity that appears today. According to Novaes (2016), a criticism that is not concerned with the new type of humanity that exists makes a glaring error, especially, we add, for the educational field, which has at its core the political and philosophical task of human formation.

These groups want the formation of a critical, creative, participatory student, capable of thinking and executing projects, without, however, establishing the opposition that would serve as a reference for them. Now, the new human that we want to build today is, in fact, the post-human and/or trans-human, this being marked by robotics, biotechnology and nanotechnology. A new human who, despite their remarkable skills and intelligent abilities, “disregards thought and imagination” (Novaes, 2016, p. 13). Therefore, these new humans desire

neither criticism nor utopia; on the contrary, in general, they desire blind adherence to behavioral patterns and dystopia.

We ask, then: does the utopia of these people who advocate for education take account of this problem that falls centrally on the educational task of the school, that is, the tension between the post-human and human formation? In their utopias, this situation is not clear and this can be worrying, since this new human seems to have no sympathy for school utopias. On the contrary, everything indicates that, for these new beings, school is something to be extinguished.

To assess the dangers of this post-human, Duarte (2016) uses a reflection that Norbert Elias (1982) makes in *¿Cómo pueden las utopías científicas y literarias influir sobre el futuro?*, in which he says there are two moments in utopias. Elias (1982) says that the first utopias expressed desires for happiness, dreams that valued “a vigorous faith in the posibilidad of a better society, in the benefits that men enjoy from science, technological advancement and education” (Elias, 1982, p. 19). However, the latest utopias, especially those post-War, are born from fear. Thus, “the utopias have increasingly assumed the character of dark dreams and, at times, the character of nightmares (Elias, 1982, p. 18). The author then sees, with perplexity, a mysterious change that, in his words, is the passage from “the predominance of dream-utopias to nightmare-utopias” (Elias, 1982, p. 18).

Dreams arising from fear are dreams alienated in cyborg powers, who believe that our salvation lies in virtuality, in superhuman power in the face of the problems we experience. In the words of Gros (2016), these solutions would be trans-humanist dreams or utopias, those that want to eliminate all its imperfections and limitations from the body, running nanotechnology through our veins, which would correct, in the form of a download, all disturbances. biological and cerebral. Dreams that are born from fear are, therefore, nightmares, as they impose on all of humanity a completely new way of human constitution that, in the end, is frightening.

In the criticism of young education defenders, we saw signs that this discussion is being presented, albeit in a limping manner. In *Mars One*, for example, without making it clear whether it would be a criticism or not, Deivinho's dream of participating in the Mars colonization project is a clear reference to Elon Musk's ambitious project. In the documentary *Not Even in a Wildest Dream*, one of the experts argues that the school would be indifferent to the society of knowledge, information, communication and virtuality, not clarifying, however, what the school's participation in this cyber world would be like. Enthusiasts make, in relation to some of the schools they visited, a clear defense of the educational innovation practiced by them. Innovation that, from what we know from some of these schools, has suffered from a frantic adherence to the discourse of artificial intelligence sciences.

We thus perceive, if not a failure, at least an indecision in the face of this post-human debate. This shows that the criticism made

against the school aims to build utopias and collective and humanitarian dreams, but its proponents are not always properly concerned with the criticism regarding the new humanity that now presents itself. If utopias are born from good criticism, then it seems that criticism made against schools, which is too focused on the accusation that schools are traditional or stifle dreams, leaves room for dreams or utopias to turn into nightmares; at the limit, anti-utopias.

If we wish to recover the utopian strength of education and school, we can never abstain from examining the dystopias that affect them in our proposals.

School Institution and the Dreams: dreamed by a school? Do People's Dreams Have Space in the School's Dream?

From a pedagogical perspective, it has historically been asserted that the type of criticism to be practiced by the school, as an institution, is one that enables students to reflect on their realities based on the knowledge and educational experiences encountered at school, with the aim of developing their intellectual autonomy. It is expected that this learning will enable students to understand social inequalities and foster a feeling of justice in them.

In the reflection that Enthusiasts make on this, they imagine a sincere and collective public education, which is productive and fulfills dreams, always in opposition – according to them – to the dubious and fallacious character of critical education and the training of critical-thinking students. Their criticism seems to dream of an educational institution that leads students to an act, a doing, a practical and effective action based on the knowledge learned. With this, they dream of a school where things happen effectively, they dream of an organization where things are truly consolidated.

In the documentary *Not Even in a Wildest Dream*, the dream also goes in this direction, that is, that the school institution needs to be “interventionist”. It argues that students only transform and dream again when the school works with them; when the school is concerned with their problems, their anxieties and their dreams; when it goes to their homes to understand and help with certain problems; when it acknowledges that they are also people; when it admits that school is boring, uninteresting, traditional. However, the documentary does not advocate for an entrepreneurial school, which Enthusiasts sometimes imply they want. On the contrary, in the documentary, they dream of building a pleasant, attractive, humane public school, focused on Art and culture, that is interested in others, poverty, etc. In *Not Even in a Wildest Dream*, the aim is to return to the school a little of its own etymology, that is, the *skolē*², the school's own time, the time of leisure, in the sense of the time of encounter, of affections, of interactions, of learning and experiences. However, the documentary still has this need or urgency for the school to be a place where things

are consolidated and not just a place of pure teaching and/or philosophical or scientific speculation about knowledge.

In the film *Mars One*, although the school is not central to its plot, when mentioned, it is always filmed in a pleasant, friendly environment, with a good standard of infrastructure, containing attentive and motivated students and teachers commanding the floor for the purpose of teaching. In its utopia, somewhat contradicting what was said above, the film defends a traditional school, in the sense that it cannot lose the function of teaching well and critically. In this case, the school would be a responsible and important institution, which values teaching, knowledge, its teachers and students, and at the same time being good, happy and light-hearted.

However, if the predominant vision is of a school where meaningful changes can occur, extending beyond the mere educational experience to effectively address students' real-life issues, we raise two questions: a) What does the educational institution aspire to achieve? b) Can it, in the present moment (rather than in the future), become a place where individuals can genuinely realize their dreams?

Regarding the aspirations of the educational institution, it appears that, imaginatively, it is the product of a collective vision that invested in knowledge, education, and science as means of progress and human emancipation. This dream was, however, open and indeterminate, that is, the school was just the framework through which students prepared to achieve their own dreams or ideals. The school did not determine the dream, nor the content of people's dreams, it was not concerned with each person's specific dreams, nor was it the place for dreams to come true. It was just a passing space, where dreams would be nurtured, but not necessarily fulfilled.

This model of educational institution, thus described, corresponded to the times of desire-utopias or hope-utopias, therefore collective utopias. The basis that supported this model of institution was that of the human community (in general) and not that of the community of specific subjects (diversity); humanity in general and not singular subjectivities. When we say that the institution did not prescribe anyone's dream, it is because it was understood that its dream aimed to magnify the dreams of many and not just a few. It turns out that utopia can also be a dream imposed on others. Despite everything, it is worth saying that the school's dream was very clear in its purpose: it sought to build the nation, the State, employment, family, economy, politics, technique, science, technology, etc.. Regardless of its impact on the educational institution, it appears that this overarching vision may have prevented singular dreams from coming to light, allowing only the institution's own dream to appear.

It is because of this imposition of dreams that, for those passionate about education, seen in the film, in the documentary and among Enthusiasts, the school needs to transgress its purpose. These passionate people want the dreams of people and students to become a living discourse within the school. Just as the topic of technology

was talked about and practiced frequently among teachers and students, dreams should follow the same path. It is this absence of people's dreams in institutions that supports the almost unanimous speech of these young professionals that school has until today been a destroyer of dreams. Those who are a little older and had a good public school are perplexed by this position, since all their dreams were only possible because public school helped them dream collective dreams.

Thus, the second question posed in the title of this section is justified: Can the school itself be a place where individuals actually realize their dreams in the present moment (rather than in the future)? In this case, two things are at stake. The first is what we have just stated, that is, the dream is not or should not be only that of the school institution, but also that of the students, of people and their singularities. The second, a consequence of the first, is that the school, from now on, would be closer to an incubator of ideas and projects¹⁰, not just a teaching space. In other words, the institution can continue to dream, as long as it allows students to realize their dreams in the present time. Among the Enthusiasts, for example, this becomes evident when they are amazed by the Mondragón school, which encourages students to open a real company and manage it formally while studying. A surprising change of position of the dream-school! The school stops being a space strategically separated from the actual world of things and starts to live and, perhaps, solve the world's problems.

If we look at the film *Mars One*, Deivinho and Eunice dream individual and/or singular dreams; everyone wants something that only belongs to themselves or to small groups. The documentary *Not Even in a Wildest Dream* denounces that the students' individual dreams, their desires and specific problems were ignored by the school, because it only dreams its own dreams. Among Enthusiasts, it is stated that – since they are so stifled – students' dreams need to be recovered, so that they can fully realize their life projects within school.

As in the previous topic, a contradiction also arises here. Where previously the contradiction lay between collective dreams without examining the type of humanity emerging today, the current issue is that dreams are not as collective as they once appeared to be. In other words, although people's dreams are advocated for, they are, let's say, bubble dreams¹¹, that is, they are dreams of specific segments, singular dreams and impatient for their realization.

However, it seems that the voices in defense of dreams, these voices coming from organized groups, films and documentaries, say that we will have to find a way to intertwine the educational dream (dreaming collectively/institutionally) with specific dreams (individuals/diversity). It seems that the school institution will have to give up part of its dream territory to the dreaming subjects.

But how to do this? Apparently, people's dreams will only have space in the school's dream due to the presence of a school as a body

(and not a school body). And that is why we should not understand anything other than the fact that the school is not separated from the bodies that inhabit it. And what would it be like? In his text *The Utopian Body*, Michel Foucault (2013) states, paradoxically, that it is against the body that utopias fight. They want to get rid of the body, hence why, in them, the body is always light and floating, it feels no pain and lives happily in a place without danger. Since the body is muddy, in the words of the philosopher, utopias promise a clear, transparent and pure body. However, continues Foucault (2013), the body is also *topia*, that is, it is real, concrete; without it nothing is possible. The only thing that no utopia will be able to get rid of is the body. But anyone who thinks that the philosopher will give the body pure visibility and tangibility is mistaken; On the contrary, he says that the body also has its lost areas, those that we cannot see or touch. Only the other, perhaps, will be able to see for us. In short, our eyes and hands do not reach our entire body. In this sense, the body itself is or contains its own (u)topia, a nowhere, a non-place or an invisible, inaccessible place. So, says the philosopher, the body is itself a utopia. Or, if one prefers, utopias are born from it, it is the source and materialization of utopias, which perhaps one day will turn against it, against that other body. The fight is permanent. Utopias are born from the body, but it destroys itself. Therefore, utopias and bodies are renewed. On the one hand, the body is a “great utopian actor” (Foucault, 2013, p. 12), because it can create different masks, ornaments and simulate multiple lives (as in carnivals); on the other hand, it is terribly cruel and liberating, because it can turn against itself, opening up a totally different world, without a mask, of pure fury and wounds, but also of freedom (the destitute, the drug addict, the dissolute, etc.). In the second case, without utopia, it is taken by a type of force performed by itself, without a mask, or with a mask whose material is the body itself. The body was given unreal places (masks and/or moralities), but it has its own masks, that is, masks of flesh and blood that change with each encounter with the other.

This clearly explains why the voices that denounce the death of students’ singular dreams are taken by this double movement of the body. Given the desire to fight against the body, against the weakened or lifeless school body (teachers and students), an attempt is made to produce another type of body, which studies and learns, but in a light-hearted and happy way: the school as a body. The complaint is, therefore, against a *prison-body*, a heavy body, a disciplined body, a gagged body, a trapped body, a limited body, a time-based body, a cage-body, a fence-body, a factory-body, a body without a head, a body without a heart, an emotionless body. They seek a *dream-body* (the school as a body), light body, wing-body, floating body, free body, city-body, art-body, sea-body, air-body, mutant body, body without organs, fluid body, in short, a dreamer body.

But, if utopias cannot dispense the body – therefore, in them, the body will never be light enough to fly –, what would a free school as a body, without rules, be like? In this case, we are, in fact, in the field of de-

struction of the old rules and not exactly in the absence of rules or bodies. However, we ask: would these new rules be able to definitively overcome the prison system? Would this new body have a chance of freeing itself from the capitalist, neoliberal and entrepreneurial attacks that so desire to imprison it? Of course, we enter the field of dream-politics, in this case, body politics. This is what we will see next.

Dream, Body and Politics

We saw that, deep down, another school is being designed. Utopically, it would be a totally different place. It would be a pleasant, clean, colorful, spacious, green, technological, ecological, social, inclusive place, without walls, public-private, open, without hierarchies, without imposition, democratic, etc.; a place where people would accomplish or consolidate effective things. It would not be a place restricted to the act of teaching and learning; it would be a place for the effective production of projects, actions, objects, technologies, etc. But this would only be possible if the school got rid of, once and for all, the will of the *prison body*, strongly assuming the defense of the *school as a body*, the dreaming body, the fluid body. The community of students (everyone who would inhabit the school) would live in this other place and in this other body, in which things would be effectively carried out and not surreptitiously spoken about. In defense of this type of school and body, in the documentary, a teacher says something like: “a generation of teachers will come with more sensitivity”; another says that “a revolution is underway, something is going to happen”; and another says that he will defend this other education, even though he knows that it is like “the date seed, it takes a hundred years to bear fruit”.

These new school bodies, one imagines, already exist, but they would be wary of the old educational policy that still persists in imprisoning bodies. In a way, they perceive that this policy has erased or eliminated the dreaming body. They therefore call for a different type of politics, politics of the body.

By body politics, we understand, in this case, the possibility of talking about the lives and pains of people who resist. In other words, when we talk about the body here, we are actually talking about life or existences. Politics of the body is, so to speak, politics of life. It is observed that this is not necessarily the politics of the State, but politics of existence, politics of life, which counts on the State, obviously, but counts first on the determination of the people who suffer, to forge and live a new body: the dream body.

The dream of this new body (school as a body) does not dispense with State politics; it wants its presence as long as it is in favor of the freedom of bodies. Politics that are capable of releasing the school as a body to experience, and with some responsibility, overcoming the prison body.

In this sense, we note that, in the film *Mars One*, the director shows that the life of the lesbian girl Eunice outside of school is not separate from the life that manifests itself at school. The same Eunice who

lives her life and her sexuality lives at school and she will only be fully happy if her body is equally accepted in all social spaces. In the documentary *Not Even in a Wildest Dream*, the fact that the school establishes a rule that separates the lives of people and students from the life of the school stands out. At school, young people are just students (prison body, school body), however they have a whole life outside (dream body). For the documentary, it is this division between the bodies and lives of students that kills people's dreams. This separation is what, from the point of view of the students interviewed for the documentary, makes the school cruel. The politics of life also appear among the Enthusiasts, when they resent how insensitive the school is to the students' dreams; instead of helping them, the school blames them!

In favor of the politics of life, those passionate about education – represented here by a documentary, a film and a youth movement –, despite the aforementioned contradictions, in fact raise something that is difficult to deny: another possibility of constituting an educational body: the school as a body. A body that doesn't separate life and school. Such a body cannot just be an “incorporation”¹² of the social and political demands of a certain society, at a given moment; it is also social confrontation (Ferreira, 2007) and the construction of other forms of life. It seems to us that the students are determined to face the prison body, it remains to be seen whether they will have enough wisdom to escape the neoliberal traps that await them. On our part, a vote of confidence is given, because, as Linn da Quebrada says: “*nem tudo que vende, vende mim ou vem de nós*”¹³ (translators' note: the sentence plays with the homophony of the words “vende” and “vem de” to create a double meaning that reflects the distinction between what is commercially available and what personally or collectively represents the speaker's identity or origin). However, we should not remain cautious of the effects of this movement.

In short, we can argue the following: there is a crusade by students, young teachers and other professionals against the old school. The criticisms are numerous, and accusations that the school is a stifler of dreams are growing. However, as we can see, these criticisms require greater care; at least two: the first is to check whether our current school is really traditional and conservative or whether, in fact, it is the victim of a dismantling that does not allow it to incorporate, with due precautions, the educational innovations that are so requested in current affairs. The second concern is to check whether these new developments – some call them innovation – would not be very slightly altering the school *ethos*. In the name of a certain technological revolution, there is a dizzying change (or attempt to change) to the notions of time, space and school knowledge, in order to impose a terribly fast curricular flexibility on teachers. Now, wouldn't this introduce elements foreign to it into the school, elements typical of other social fields, which are not strictly educational? We know well that the fields of marketing, media, markets, technologies and health are not inherent to education; on the contrary, to be part of it, they must first go through the sieve of educational criticism, which is not happening satisfactorily.

With these considerations, we do not argue that school practice is free from problems; Certainly, there are countless adjustments and accountability measures to be made.

For all intents and purposes, in fact, something is changing the structures of the school and the most substantive change, in our view, is the fact that there is a, let's say, heliocentric movement of the school institution. The school would no longer be the center of learning, but just one of its stars. A movement that tends to remove the school from a mere place of teaching and learning, making it an effective space for productions, whether academic, artistic, technological, media-centric etc. School is forced to stop being a place where people go to learn and become a place where they have to develop different projects. Just like companies' makerspaces, just like startups, just like startup accelerators, which are spaces designed to simulate products and technologies in order to respond to today's needs, schools would be spaces in which, based on people's dreams, life projects for students and teachers would be produced. For us, this is the basis on which the remains of the school try to resist and survive or even give in to the temptation of this type of transformation.

Finally, it is worth warning that daydreamed educational dreams (i.e., utopias) are valuable, but, without closer examination, they can be disastrous. It is commendable for those passionate about education to want to free themselves from a prison body or from being hostage to principles that are not fulfilled, to aim for a free, light, happy and dreamy school as a body. However, without realizing the dangers surrounding this discussion, they can naively sentence the school to death.

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Notes

- ¹ For this topic, in particular, see Crary (2016).
- ² This discussion can be found in detail in Kopenawa and Albert (2015).
- ³ Obviously, there are other important milestones. In fact, it is worth mentioning at least two more for those who wish to research them: NGO Gerando Falcões, founded in 2013, and NGO CPCD (Centro Popular de Cultura e Desenvolvimento), founded in 1984.
- ⁴ Data taken from the book *Volta ao mundo em 13 escolas – sinais do futuro no presente*; from *Encontro Nacional de inovação na Educação – Educação fora da Caixa*; and from *Projeto Virada Educação*.
- ⁵ See details at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h_d-OUFa78s. Accessed on: April 12, 2023.
- ⁶ Among literary utopias, Francis Wolff (2016) considers Plato's Republic and Thomas Morus's Utopia to be the most emblematic works of this genre.
- ⁷ See about the notion of space in Biesta (2013).
- ⁸ It is worth consulting the common discussion in Dardot and Laval (2017).

- ⁹ Check the discussion in: Masschelein and Simons (2013).
- ¹⁰ It doesn't just have to be only that, something so market-oriented; it can be, as Corazza (2019, p. 12) says, a space for poetic action, instead of just translation, "plays, poems, drawings, sculptures, scores, dances, mimes, juggling, clowning, sonatas, arias".
- ¹¹ Teles (2018). The author refers to identity bubbles and others produced by algorithms.
- ¹² Check the discussion between Pierre Bourdieu and Antony Giddens, carried out by Ferreira (2007).
- ¹³ Check: Judith Butler debates gender problems with Linn da Quebrada and Jup do Bairro. Available at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DMge3Uc9sUs&t=1300s, 21':25](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DMge3Uc9sUs&t=1300s,21':25)". Accessed on: May 12, 2023.

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Availability of research data: the dataset supporting the results of this study is published in this article..

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