Fragments of a Life before Death’s Eyes

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ABSTRACT – Fragments of a Life before Death’s Eyes. In order to present the dossier Sandra Mara Corazza; a life..., this text initially assembles a set of biographical excerpts about her. Next, two thematic blocks that constitute the dossier are contextualized: the first one concerns the empirical instances in which Sandra engaged: teaching, research, and academic advising; the second one refers to the key theoretical topics addressed in her intellectual trajectory. An interview focusing on her final movements of thought is also included. Together, the texts compose a mosaic of the multiple reverberations of Sandra’s remarkable presence-absence.

Keywords: Sandra Mara Corazza. Biography. Life-Work.

RESUMO – Fragmentos de uma Vida ante os Olhos da Morte. Com vistas a apresentar o dossiê Sandra Mara Corazza: uma vida..., este texto opera, inicialmente, a montagem de um conjunto de excertos biográficos da homenageada. Em seguida, são contextualizados os dois blocos temáticos que compõem o dossiê: o primeiro voltado às instâncias empíricas das quais Sandra se ocupou: a docência, a pesquisa e a orientação acadêmica; o segundo referente às principais tópicas teóricas abordadas em sua trajetória intelectual. Soma-se uma entrevista focalizando seus movimentos de pensamento derradeiros. Reunidos, os textos compõem um mosaico das múltiplas reverberações da marcante presença-ausência de Sandra.

Here are some biographical excerpts. Taken from Sandra Mara Corazza’s writing and from those who shared something of a living-together with her, this extraction works both as a gateway – for new readers – and as shuffled pieces of the memory of a life. The tasks must be ordered: for us to appropriate a thought, we must first evoke its origins and the meanings of its strength. The assembled excerpts are therefore the mise en scène of theoretical knowledge, when the reality of writing establishes itself and the life that justifies it varies in its ways of existing (such is the intention of this dossier). From this point on, Sandra Mara Corazza is the mark of an imagined and meaningful present to each of the hands writing here.

Memento

Sandra Corazza knew how to beautifully honor the meaning of her own name: competent, intelligent, creative, and cheerful [...] With great erudition and restless spirit, she challenged conformism and common sense and inspired a generation of professors and researchers with an exemplary life of more than 40 years dedicated to teaching and research, going from a teacher in basic education to teaching in higher education (Note of condolences from the National Association of Graduate Studies and Research in Education – GT 12/Curriculum).

Sandra lived to teach and was always teaching: from how to write a summary to have an article published to which clothing was best suited for a qualification session. Nothing escaped her green, wicked, and loving gaze. With an impressive arsenal of references and predecessors, a voracious reader of novels and short stories, Sandra’s name features on theses, dissertations, organized books, a myriad of productions (Memorário signed by the Faculty of Education and Graduate Program of UFRGS, by the research line Writereadings, Artistings, Variations, and by the Research Network Writereadings of Difference in Philosophy-Education).

Chronology

Our author is clearly Sandra Corazza, as the book cover advertises. What is less clear is who she would have liked to have been. And let me tell you something. It is often more important to know who we would like to have been than who we are. It is perfectly obvious to anyone with eyes that our dear author would have liked to be, first and foremost, Friedrich Nietzsche (Tadeu, 2006, p. 7).
To speak of Her

She is Horde. She is multiplicity itself. She shrugs off the alarm bell signaling that the period is over, and the class has bureaucratically ended. For Her, education is endless, and learning is always an adventure. Boarding the _Raft of the Medusa_, she abandoned flags and ideologies in favor of the fine quill pen of the cannibal manifestoes. Anthropophagic, the longer she lives, the more authors she devours. In fact, she is also known as the Sphinx, as she frightens everyone she questions. And by god, does She QUESTIONS [...] And anyone who’s ever attended one of Her classes know: no one leaves the same they came in. Let alone the curriculum (Text written by Paola Zordan, Nilton Pereira, and Samuel Bello; and read by Cesar Lopes on behalf of the Department of Teaching and Curriculum, in the Tribute Session to Professors, in celebration of the 40th anniversary of the Faculty of Education of UFRGS, held on December 10, 2010, at FACED/UFRGS).

Ancestry

She was the first of three siblings, both brothers. Class: middle wage earner. From the state of Rio Grande do Sul. Mother: primary school teacher. Father: dairy technician. Paternal grandparents: Italian immigrants, small farmers, on the border with Uruguay. Maternal grandparents: grandmother descending from Arabs, without complete primary education; grandfather: hard-haired, as he used to say, he taught himself to read, using sheets of newspapers, while delivering milk gallons; later, grandfather, owner of many dictionaries. For crossword puzzles. (She is their heir.) Raised in a rural area, in a place, perhaps not by chance, called Passo da Cria, inland of Montenegro. Zootechnical Experimental Station of the Colonies from the State Department of Agriculture. Father and mother were both teachers: she, at a rural, multi-grade school; he, at the Dairy Factory, in courses and internships. Father: frequent reader, with a vast library and some forbidden books (‘they were too strong’): ‘Lolita’ by Vladiimir Nabokov; ‘Another country’ by James Baldwin; ‘Kama-Sutra’ by Vatsayayana Kamasutram. She looks for and finds the key to the book cabinet. During siestas or parental absences. But also, Monteiro Lobato, _Wonderful Fairy Stories, The Children’s Encyclopedia, Reino Infantil, Andersen’s Fairy Tales, Revista Cacique_, poems by Castro Alves, Gregório de Matos, _The Maias_ by Eça de Queiroz (at 9 years old), _On the suffering of the world_ by Schopenhauer, Jorge Amado, Érico Veríssimo, Jean-Paul Sartre, all the Russians! (Corazza, 2014, p. 10).
Formation


On the school bench

I went through the portal between worlds and opened the first door, leading to a Classroom. I then came across teachers, students, lockers, books, paintings, lamps, doormats, and windows with screens facing the playground. There a motionless, neglected lawn, with its back to me, faced a large apple tree, partially dried, whose fruit was rotting on the ground, while others were being pecked by wasps and birds, impregnating the air with strong aromas.
In the early afternoon, the light was gray and clear, the air was humid after the recent rain. There was a small path paved with mottled stones, which looked like they came from York. Was there a river nearby, beyond the ravine? I could not tell, but there was a shed. To reach it, one had to go through clumps of nettles and blooming rosehips gooseberry and cassis plants were smothered by weeds. Near a dilapidated greenhouse, originally made of bricks and cast iron, all covered with moss, was a water barrel and a stone well. From a distance, I finally saw the three willow trees leaning over the river. Along a wall of crumbling orange bricks was a stone bench facing the School. That is where the Devil was sitting, waiting for me. It was there that, letting out an excruciating laugh, he gathered up the story of my entire life as a teacher and crumpled it into a haggard bundle. I shook his hands and, in this gesture, ended up giving him all my dreams. We toasted to the paltry negotiation with blood-tinted water. And I was never happy again... (Corazza, 2020, p. 26).

**Fabulation**


**Writing**

To the readers already accustomed to the safety of Sandra Mara Corazza's writings, we present this intriguing, challenging, and uncomfortable essay that rattles our certainties, beliefs, and revolutionary enthusiasms. If it were no longer a fashionable word, I would call it subversive writing, for it disrupts our minds, and does so radically, dismantling them from their long history (Marques, 1995, p. 7).

In the arts of writing, she is a sorcerer. She knows, like few others, how to bring language to life in an arid territory, such as that of educational writing, in which words are born dead (Tadeu, 2003, s.p.).

I finished reading.
I feel exhausted, scattered between do not knows and cannots

maybe I read it too fast.
I gorged myself.

the reader must be warned of this danger of becoming a boa constrictor.
it sure is a bunch of bows shooting arrows of fire and disquiet

(Fonseca, 2008, p. 9).
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Teaching activities
1972-1993 – State Basic Education.
1987-1989 – PUCRS.

Oeuvre
1992 – *Tema gerador: concepções e práticas* [Generating theme: conceptions and practices] (UNIJUÍ);
1995 – *Poder-saber e ética da escola* [Power-knowledge and school ethics] (UNIJUÍ);
2000 – *História da infância sem fim* [History of the neverending childhood] (UNIJUÍ);
2001 – *O que quer um currículo? Pesquisas pós-criticas em Educação* [What does a curriculum wants? Post-critical research in Education] (Vozes);
2002 – *Para uma filosofia do inferno na Educação: Nietzsche, Deleuze e outros malditos afins* [Towards a Philosophy from hell in Education: Nietzsche, Deleuze and other accursed thinkers] (Autêntica);
2002 – *Infância e Educação. Era uma vez... Quer que conte outra vez?* [Childhood and Education. Once upon a time... Shall I tell it again?] (Vozes);
2003 – *Composições* [Compositions], with Tomaz Tadeu (Autêntica);
2004 – *Linhas de escrita* [Writing lines], with Tomaz Tadeu and Paola Zordan (Autêntica);
2005 – *Uma vida de professora* [A teacher's life] (UNIJUÍ);
2006 – *Artistagens: filosofias da diferença e educação* [Artistigns: philosophies of difference and education] (Autêntica);
2008 – *Os cantos de Fouror: escriteitura em filosofia-educação* [Fouror’s songs: writereading in philosophy-education] (Sulina; UFRGS);
2012 – *Didaticário de criação: aula cheia* [Creation didacticary: rich class] (UFRGS);
2013 – *O que se transcria em educação?* [What is transcreated in education?] (UFRGS; Doisa).

Organized works
2009 – *Abecedário: educação da diferença* [Alphabet: education of difference], with Julio Groppa Aquino (Papirus);
2010 – *Fantasias de escritura: filosofia, educação, literatura* [Fantasies of writings: philosophy, education, literature] (Sulina);
2014 – Experimentações de escrita, leitura e imagem na escola [Writing, reading and image experimentations in school], with Betina Schuler and Sonia Regina da Luz Matos (UFRGS; Doisa);

2014 – Dicionário das ideias feitas em educação (lugares-comuns, chavões, clichês, jargões, máximas, bordões, estereótipos, palavras de ordem, fórmulas, besteiros, ideias herdadas, convencionais, medíocres, estúpidas e afins) [Dictionary of made-up ideas in education (common places, platitudes, clichés, jargons, maxims, catchphrases, stereotypes, slogans, formulas, nonsense, inherited, conventional, mediocre, stupid ideas and the like)], with Julio Groppa Aquino (Autêntica);

2015 – Biografemática na educação: Vidarbos [Biographematics in education: Lifeoeuvres], with Marcos da Rocha Oliveira and Máximo Daniel Lamela Adó (UFRGS; Doisa);

2016 – Panorama de Pesquisa em Escrileituras: Observatório da Educação [Panorama of Research on Writereadings: Education Observatory], with Máximo Daniel Lamela Adó and Polyana Olini (UFRGS; Doisa);

2017 – Docência-pesquisa da diferença: poética de arquivo-mar [Teaching-research of difference: poetics of archive-sea] (Doisa; UFRGS);

2018 – Aula com... em vias de uma didática da invenção [Class with... towards didactics of invention], with Ester Maria Dreher Heuser and Julio Groppa Aquino (UNIOESTE);

2019 – Breviário dos sonhos em educação [Breviary of dreams in education] (Oikos);

2020 – Métodos de transcriação: pesquisa em educação da diferença [Transcreation methods: research on education of difference] (Oikos);

2020 – Notas de tradutores [N.T.]: Escrileituras de um Projeto de Pesquisa do CNPq [Translators' Notes [T.N.]: Writereadings from a CNPq Research Project], with Claudia Regina Rodrigues de Carvalho, Karen Elisabete Rosa Nodari e Silas Borges Monteiro (Oikos).

Presence

She is with me all the time. Indoors, on the streets, in other places, she is with me always. I miss her a lot, physically. I am content with her constant presence, which is often not enough. I also feel like she is by my side. Let alone at home, for every corner, every place, every crack carries her presence (Testimony of Hugo Corazza, Sandra's husband, in the book Sandramaracorazza: obra, vidas etc., organized by Julio Groppa Aquino, Claudia Regina Rodrigues de Carvalho and Paola Zordan. Available in: https://www.ufrgs.br/escrileiturasrede/smc/).
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Answer

By gifting myself to others, through this discursive seriality, I gave myself up as a form of resistance to the technologies that manufacture my subjectivity and, by regrouping what I am and what I intend to be, I experienced a practice of freedom – that of writing. This missive, which now ends, was thus an exercise in ‘etho-poetic’ writing. I look forward to hearing from her (Corazza, 2014, p. 20).

Enough said

We stop here, in the hope that our linguistic practice – an adventurer of theories – invites other subjects to engage in conversations. Because then everything will become remarkably interesting! (Corazza, 1992, p. 56).

That-has-been

**Figure 1 – Sandra and philosophy**

Once, when asked to discuss her relationship with philosophy, Sandra took the *Poem in a Straight Line* by Fernando Pessoa’s heteronym as a translating zone for the untimely forces that struck her thinking, her way of inhabiting the world. *I and philosophy* [*Transluminations* by Álvaro de Campos] is a brief writing in which not only an unrepeatable style shines through, but also the voracity contained in an existence obsessed with making and, at once, remaking itself, indefinitely. Here it is:
But I, in whose spirit the forces of philosophy, art, science are translucent and bending,
whose translation ideas inflect anomaly, infidelity, and unreason,
delirium by delirium, emotion by emotion, minute by minute,
Paradoxes, absurdities, and rats follow the swallowing –
I, a sad ghost born on a slave ship,
I, a shredded screen and longing for all realities,
I, a vibrant and abstract woman from the Kaleidocosmos,
I suffer from being the real me through it all,
I suffer from being myself through it all, like feeling thirsty without wanting water (Corazza, 2016, p. 244).

It is on the events of this exuberant one life that the members of this dossier – linked to her by different intellectual and affective ties – have focused. A complex task and, to a great extent, doomed to insufficiency, honoring Sandra’s legacy has proven to be a rare experience, since we are confronted with an innocuous material, impossible to exhaust in terms of its density and intensity.

Given the degree of difficulty of the task, the strategy used was to operate through distinct but complementary excerpts. Thus, the authors gathered here had the task of putting Sandra’s life-oeuvre into perspective according to two thematic blocks. The first concerns three empirical instances in which Sandra engaged: teaching, research, and academic advising. The second block refers to key theoretical topics focused on her intellectual trajectory: childhood, didactics, curriculum, writing and translation. The dossier ends with an interview with Paola Zordan (UFRGS), about, among other themes, the last issue addressed by Sandra: dreams.

A way of existing in teaching, by Angelica Vier Munhoz (UNI-VATES), opens the first thematic block. Understanding teaching as a way of existence, the author pinpoints three constituent and distinctive traits in Corazza’s life-oeuvre: the constant creation of concepts/notions, gestures, and movements within the classroom, as well as the mark left by her thought on her students. Woven in archival tones, the text recovers subjects and seminars, fragments of memory, concepts, and propositions, to show what it understands to be an indisputable disposition to shuffle the canons and give teaching a creative, translating, and transcreating way of existing; Sandra’s legacy to education and to the world would, after all, reside in this ethical-operating triad.

Beyond bringing to light a struggle that Sandra has ceaselessly waged – the insurgency against the national consensus that research is only done at graduate studies, a myth responsible for dividing education into castes – the article argues, shows, and exemplifies that the research-teaching invented and practiced by Sandra stemmed from a specific relationship with the pedagogical language: to make it stutter by incorporating the schizo-writing procedure, which allows to expand the limits of educational saying-doing.
This initial block closes with the *Academic advising as a space for surplus life*, a text signed by Julio Groppe Aquino (USP). Prospecting Sandra’s legacy regarding her performance as a graduate studies advisor, the article articulates hers and her students’ manifestations regarding the topic, based on the archival research of theses and dissertations. This beautiful testimony shines a light at the captain of the Band of Advising and Research (BOP), whose actions took place in an operative soil seeking not only to realize expansive movements of thinking/doing educational research, but to invent compositional and distributive modes of existence between the parties in relation.

*The academic gesture and the intercessory thinking; childishness and knowledge about childhood*, text signed by Dora Lilía Marín-Díaz (Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas, Colombia), shows how Sandra’s thought on childhood remains an important intermediary for different fields of reflection and ethical, political, and aesthetic actions in academia. Mobilizing the notions of infancy, childishness, and childhood, the author, by means of an extensive document review, sheds light on an operative hypothesis that has always been present in Sandra’s work, namely: childhood, with its historical contingencies, its strength, and its relations with didactics and the curriculum, as a reading key for understanding and tensioning what we are and do as educators.

In *Didactics from hell: theater, pandemonium, translation*, Silas Borges Monteiro (UFMT) examines the word *didactics* starting from its vernacular use towards its genesis in Greek culture. By investigating the usage values attached to the term and identifying the choice of a meaning derived from Christian texts to the detriment of a first use inscribed in the archaic Greek theater, the text argues that didactics remains inscribed in a metaphysics of presence that establishes an ideal human being. Hence the *hellish philosophy*, with its correlated *didactics from hell*, as outlined by Sandra’s productions, constitutes a critical and poetic alternative capable of considering the fractures of a *diabolical thought*, assuming it as a condition for re-signifying didactics as *dídasksis*, that is, a practice committed to the renewal of contemporary educational and cultural systems.

*Marlucy Alves Paraíso (UFMG), in Curriculum and its sayings, doings and wants: a teacher’s will to power?* outlines a beautiful map of the curriculum as conceived, written, conceptualized, and disseminated by Sandra in her text presented at the GT Currículo at the annual meetings of ANPEd – National Association of Graduate Studies and Research in Education. A living document, since it is an account of someone who *was there* – and who therefore writes with the sensations aroused by the encounter with the body, the gesture, the speech – the text attests to Sandra’s combative ethics-politics towards all that has already been thought, said, and done in the curricular field. Among the tremendous number of lessons bequeathed to us by Sandra, Marlucy chooses for herself the most basic and, perhaps for this reason, the most beautiful: the need and meeting of what is to come lies in the power of a teacher who creates.
Assuming an investigative style in studies on the creation acts in pedagogy, *Pedagogical Poetics (For a teaching in writereading)*, by Marcos da Rocha Oliveira (UFPR), takes writereading – a key concept offered by Sandra – to profess a teaching developed in the work of the poetic word, thus moving away from the law of meaning and establishing itself, via class readings, within a space-time of continuous variation of tradition. By referring to the dual Barthes-Corazza, in whose vicinity operate Anton Makarenko, Haroldo de Campos, Maurice Blanchot, among others, Marcos defends writereading teaching as a choice of non-negotiable rigor before words, insofar as it is through them, through their strength and their blows, that texts reach us, that we adjust our body and ideas, and that, above all, we ensure our right to the didactic dream and curricular poetry.

A similar idea is at the basis of *Playing the future on this side: translation according to Sandra Mara Corazza*, Cristiano Bedin da Costa (UFRGS). Viewing translation as a critical unfolding of writereading, the text rediscovers the transcreative way through which Sandra read and rewrote original scientific, philosophical, and artistic elements within curricular language and didactics. Emphasizing the procedures of allegory and appropriation, the text interprets the didactic-artistic translation proposed by Sandra as a peculiar know-how, continuously reimagined by the present of creation (the moment of *interweaving* different times and uses of the sign when mobilizing the text and in class). For the author, to translate is to assimilate the subject matter in a poetic and transcreative manner, so that research and teaching become occasions for displacing meaning and reimagining tradition.

The texts as a whole highlight the unfailing vitality of Sandra's thought. While the articles focus on her concrete movements and theoretical constructions, the final interview allows us to read the articulations between her work and life in a separate way.

This is how Paola Zordan, Sandra's former student and colleague, follows Sandra's movements since the mid-1990s, showing the turning points she has experienced. Once again, we are shown Sandra's restless gaze on the issues that were dear to her: the curriculum, childhood, artisting, *biographmatics*, writereading, translation, among others. The interview culminates on the topic of dreams. For the interviewee, this is not only a new (and ultimate) concept, but a plane of thought in which Sandra articulates several topics that have led her through life, inviting us to a lingering dialogue with the spectrum of her thought.

The final arrangement of this dossier, we believe, finds its grounds as “an organized network of obsessions” (Barthes, 1991, p. 9). Since network is both *mode of existence* and *unfinished gesture* and *non-fixity* (Corazza, 2018), we have done nothing more than safeguard the *bricoleur* and inexhaustible coherence of a *teacher’s life*. This life, for what follows, makes itself known as a being of memory, of study, and of writereading. *She and the paper*, or rather, fragments collected from the *lifeoeuvre* of a teacher-researcher, unfolded and inscribed “in the skin of the paper-self” (Corazza, 2014, p. 9).
Besides, authorizing in us that passion for disturbance and motility with which Sandra interrogated herself and every object of study, we suggest a forced solitude and painful commitment to the work of letters, phrases, syllables, and ideas never before experienced, through thinking between texts. The desire for new “black scribbles unfolding into long ink threads” (Corazza, 2021, p. 23), finally. The search for some meaning, the cool and cunning thinking, a crack at least.

Where death does not see us.

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Note

1 Created by Haroldo de Campos, the term describes the modus operandi of his poetics, based on the rereading/rewriting of other authors.

References


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