

## **Social Movements: clichés and educational networks in the movie *Burn!***

**Joana Ribeiro dos Santos<sup>1</sup>**  
**Rebeca Silva Brandão Rosa<sup>1</sup>**  
**Nilda Alves<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro (UERJ), Rio de Janeiro/RJ – Brazil

**ABSTRACT – Social Movements: clichés and educational networks in the movie *Burn!*.** Through images and sounds, establishing a dialogue with the struggles for political independence in nineteenth-century America, the movie *Burn!* (directed by Gillo Pontecorvo, Italy, 1969) helps us understand the importance of educational networks in building social movements throughout history. The idea of a creative repetition between the nineteenth-century and current movements helps us discuss how the clichés appear in the film and are present in our networks, and how to perceive such movements. Overcoming such clichés seems to be a good tactic for recreating, in the present, so many ways of understanding history and building social movements nowadays. We draw on the ideas of theorists such as Certeau (1994), Deleuze (2005), Castells (2013) etc.

**Keywords: Social Movements. Clichés. Cinema. Educational Networks. Everyday Life.**

**RESUMO – Movimentos Sociais: clichês e redes educativas no filme *Queimada!*.** Através das imagens e sons, tecendo diálogo com as lutas por independência política na América do século XIX, *Queimada!* (dirigido por Gillo Pontecorvo, Itália, 1969), nos ajuda a compreender a importância das redes educativas na tessitura dos movimentos sociais ao longo da história. A ideia de uma repetição criadora, entre os movimentos do século XIX e entre os atuais, nos auxilia a discutir como os clichês aparecem no filme e estão presentes nas nossas redes, e em formas de perceber esses movimentos. Superar esses clichês parece ser uma boa tática para recriar, no presente, tantas formas de compreender a história e tecer os movimentos sociais atualmente. Buscamos teóricos como Certeau (1994), Deleuze (2005), Castells (2013), etc.

**Palavras-chave: Movimentos Sociais. Clichês. Cinema. Redes Educativas. Cotidianos.**

## The Welcome

General Shelton (GS): So there are no more plantations. They're all burnt to the ground!

Sir William Walker (WW): They'll rise again.

GS: In 10 years, Sir William.

WW: Well, you have another 89 years to exploit them. Renewable. Doesn't your contract specify that?

GS: Your contract specifies that you are to defend our interests. Instead, you're destroying them.

WW: We'll, that's the logic of profit, isn't it, my dear Shelton? One builds to make money. And to go on making it, or to make more, sometimes it's necessary to destroy.

GS: Yes, I think perhaps it's inevitable.

Then why didn't you say so before?

WW: Why didn't I say what?

GS: Where is it going to end?

WW: As I told you...with the end of José Dolores.

GS: At this price it's no longer profitable.

WW: It isn't you who pays, or even Royal Sugar. [...]

Do you know why this island is called 'Queimada'?

Because it was already burnt once, and do you know why? Because even then, it was the only way to conquer the resistance of the people. And after that, the Portuguese exploited the island in peace for nearly 300 years. [...] You know that fire can't cross the sea because it goes out. But certain news, certain ideas travel by ships' crews. Have you any idea how many islands there are on which Royal Sugar has concessions? You should know. And do you have the vaguest idea of what would happen to our employers if the example of José Dolores reached those islands? (Burn!, 1969)

The movie *Burn!*, directed by Gillo Pontecorvo and released in 1969, tells the story of the movement for independence on a fictional island in the Caribbean under Portuguese colonial rule and the unfolding of that movement over ten years. Filmed within the setting of the Cold War (1945-1991) and during the period of the Brazilian civil-military dictatorship, the film evokes the struggles of the European colonies for their political independence in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It makes interesting contributions to reflect on historically constructed impressions regarding social movements, as well as the ways in which this theme is addressed today and how it is incorporated into the daily routine of curricular movements.

Thus, our proposal in this study is to engage the abovementioned film in a *conversation*<sup>1</sup>, enabling it to dialogue with our networks, and to reflect, based on what its images, sounds and narratives stir within us, on a few aspects related to social movements, both from a historical viewpoint and concerning our own daily experiences of the most recent social movements occurring in Brazil, of which we take part in some way, in what Castells calls the "network society" (Castells, 2013, p. 12), with the ways in which they interact with curricular processes.

Regarding our theoretical-methodological option, which involves the use of movies to reflect on current educational issues, we believe that cinema, inasmuch as it is composed of images, sounds and narratives, is one of the most accessible forms of art for the general public, although not all movies enjoy equal *spacetimes*<sup>2</sup> in the film market. However, the taste of most of the population for cinema, and the current ease of watching movies on television, the internet and other media, enable the insertion of this audiovisual medium in the daily life of most students, educators – with whom we establish the *conversations* in this study and in previous research – and of the population in general. We also observe that the *use* (Certeau, 2012) of audiovisual media has been recurrent in diverse social *spacetimes* and, therefore, in curricular processes, gaining importance in the cultural setting of schools.

This relevance was recently expressed through the enactment of Law 13006/14 (Brasil, 2014), which aims, on the one hand, to democratize access to such cultural goods through schools, and, on the other, to expand the audiences of films produced in Brazil. The aforementioned Law – added to Law no. 9394/96 (National Education Bases and Guidelines Law), Article 26, Paragraph 8 – provides that “[...] the screening of nationally produced films will constitute a complementary curricular component integrated to the pedagogical proposal of the school, with at least two (2) hours of mandatory screening per month” (Brasil, 2014, Article 26, § 8).

Martín-Barbero (2000) discusses a relevant issue to us concerning the way people have been appropriating socially produced *knowledge-actions*, which he calls *cultural decentralizations*:

[...] as scandalous as it may sound to us, it is a fact that the majorities in Latin America are being incorporated into modernity not through the domain of the book, but through the discourses and narratives, the knowledge and the languages of audiovisual industry and experience. [...] the complicity and interpenetration between cultural orality and audiovisual languages are not related to – as advocated by many of our intellectuals and our anachronistic educational systems – ignorance or the exoticism of illiteracy, but to the cultural decentralizations that in our societies are producing the new regimes of feeling and knowing, via the image catalyzed by television and the computer (Martín-Barbero, 2000, p. 83-84).

In this sense, we understand that cinema – and also its use (Certeau, 1994), as well as the increasingly frequent production of audiovisual material – has been influential in schools and other educational *spacetimes*, interacting with more common modes of expression.

Among other things, it is important to emphasize that the film experience affords an oneiric experience capable of bringing viewers closer to a reality distant from their own and a historical period different from their own (whether past, present or future). Cinema proposes an extremely rich experience of alterity for the diverse human relations,

since we are currently experiencing conflicts regarding differences that pose strong challenges in the field of education.

However, before we move on to our *conversation* with the movie *Burn!*, it is worth mentioning a few points that we intend to address – even before we start – and that will help us in our exchange. In research *in/on/with* daily life, we defend the idea that *knowledgemeanings*<sup>3</sup> are constructed in networks that form us and that we help to form in our relations with others. Many are our educational networks, for example: schools, universities, our families, our neighborhoods, our circles of friendships, our working environments, cultural and leisure *spacetimes* we frequent, religious environments etc. People, books, music, movies and so many other cultural artifacts form us, and everything that we think, say, believe and do comes from our networks of *knowledgemeanings*. Understanding that we are formed *in* and *through* networks helps us break with the hegemonic thinking constructed in modernity and expand our discussions to other horizons. We will address this topic in greater detail throughout the text.

### The Movie *Burn!*

The captain of the ship, on approaching the island of his destination, offers a field glass to his passenger, Sir William Walker, saying:

Captain of the ship (CS): That's your island. Queimada. One of the hundreds of islands of the Lesser Antilles. Here, have a look.  
Sir William Walker: Thank you (*Burn!*, 1969).

While Sir Walker observes every detail of the island through the field glass, the captain narrates part of its history, which the man on board visualizes (Image 1).

CS: You know, most of what you see here on the windward side is the wild part. The sugar plantations and the main port are to leeward. There are only about 5,000 whites here. The population is mostly black or mulatto. The blacks, of course, are slaves except for a handful, whose owners freed them for one reason or another. [...] In fact, the Portuguese had to burn the island to put down the resistance of the Indians when they took it. And since the natives were all killed, they brought in slaves from Africa to work the cane fields. That large, flat, white rock you see offshore is called "Cemitério Branco dos Negros" (White Graveyard of the Blacks) because the bodies of slaves who died during the trip over were thrown there. They say they lost nearly half of the poor beggars. That exceptional whiteness there seems, in fact, to derive from the dust of their bones, which have penetrated into and merged with the rocks (*Burn!*, 1969).

**Image 1 – The Captain of the Ship Gives a Brief Account of the History of Queimada Island, for which Sir William Walker is Destined**



Source: Burn! (1969).

On landing, Sir William Walker is ill received by the military of the port for being British. The scene continues with takes of black people living in misery and working in the port area, one of the tasks being carrying the luggage of passengers disembarking from the ships. That is how José Dolores and Sir William Walker meet (Image 2).

**Image 2 – José Dolores Offers to Carry Sir William Walker's Luggage**



Source: Burn! (1969).

The film is set in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Sir William Walker (played by Marlon Brando) is a British agent sent to a Caribbean island under Portuguese rule to encourage an uprising to further the interests of the British crown. The island is mostly populated by black people from the African continent working for the Portuguese crown in sugarcane plantations, the island's main economic activity and a lucrative source of income for Portugal. Slave work is portrayed with sensitivity by the director Gillo Pontecorvo. At the beginning of the narrative, Sir William Walker seeks out Santiago, of whom he had heard while still in Europe as someone who could lead an uprising on Queimada Island. However,

his efforts are in vain, since when he arrives on the island, Santiago and his men have already been arrested. Sir Walker witnesses his execution. He then tries to persuade the widow to seek information about a possible new leader, a friend of Santiago's, but his wife, in mourning, does not respond.

Disappointed with Santiago's death, Sir Walker sees no further purpose in remaining on the island, until he observes José Dolores (played by Evaristo Márquez) approach and feed some acquaintances of his who were being forcibly led away, chained to other slaves by the military. José Dolores's breaking of rules in that situation draws the attention of Sir Walker, who sees in that man enough courage to qualify him as a leader. Using rhetoric as a tactic to convince him, Sir Walker provokes José Dolores:

Sir William Walker (WW): Stinking, lying, black ape! You filthy thief, you did steal my bags, didn't you?

José Dolores (JD): Yes.

WW: Well, where are they now?

JD: I don't know. I don't know anymore.

WW: But you did steal them, didn't you?

JD: Yes.

WW: It is true, isn't it?

JD: Yes.

WW: No, it's not true. You did not steal them. You gave them to my friend, that's all. Nobody stole them. Do you understand?

JD: Yes.

WW: So, you did not steal them? Then why did you say you did? Because I said you did?

JD: Yes, sir.

WW: Because anything a white man says is right, isn't it?

JD: Yes, sir.

WW: If I were to say that your mother was a whore, would that be true? Is it true?

JD: My mother is dead.

WW: But you knew her, didn't you?

JD: Yes.

WW: What was she? Say what she was! Go on! What was she? Go on, say what she was! Say it!

JD: A whore, sir.

WW: Well, I was mistaken. I thought you were someone else. What's your name?

JD: José Dolores.

WW: Here you are, José. Forget about it. It was just a bad joke (Burn!, 1969).

José Dolores is enraged with the bad taste and advances on Sir Walker wielding a stick to assault him. William Walker continues: "*Come on, let's go then!*" And strikes him. José Dolores falls to the ground. Sir Walker concludes "[...] well, now I believe we have something to talk about" (Burn!, 1969).

Sir William Walker convinces José Dolores to seek more allies among his peers and help rob the *Espírito Santo* bank, which would attract the military force of the Portuguese empire. Dolores and Walker go to the village where José lives carrying the stolen goods, and when

they are trapped, seek as a last alternative to persuade people to raise up in arms against the Portuguese crown. But the fight would not only be for the stolen gold, but for the freedom of the village's population, who for the first time see José Dolores as a leader, encouraging his people to fight. Sir Walker teaches them to use the weapons, and then the scene cuts to people celebrating the death of the military who had previously oppressed them.

However, Sir Walker does not only organize those who are close to José Dolores. Having access to members of the court, he also promotes the economic notion that slavery is not interesting to the progress of the world market and of the island itself, citing examples from everyday life. In a way, his aim is to deprive the Portuguese crown of support, so that the uprising is not opposed.

Little by little the Portuguese crown loses military force and, in a procession inside the empire's fort, the governor is shot down by a bullet from the gun of Teddy Sanchez, who commanded the rebellion in the capital. Even though the latter lacks the courage to pull the trigger, Sir Walker holds his hand and does it for him, thereby effectively integrating him in the movement. He induces him to address the people with words of encouragement, announcing that the island has been taken from the Portuguese and that slavery has been abolished.

José Dolores takes power, but does not know how to run the island. He is outraged by its production methods and the other logics of exploitation of the crown. Thus, José Dolores refuses to govern, handing over the island's management to the white elite and going back to being a harbor porter. Sir William Walker leaves the island towards Indochina, where he has another assignment. José Dolores carries his luggage to the ship and they say goodbye.

Ten years later William Walker is invited to return to Queimada Island to neutralize José Dolores. The British crown requested his services, believing Sir William Walker to be the only person who could convince José Dolores, even after ten years, to surrender and break up an ongoing armed uprising that had escaped from the control of the elite. However, José Dolores does not welcome his old friend, believing him to be in the service of his enemies. Without a truce, which William Walker believed to be the only alternative, the Englishman declares war on José Dolores and pursues him relentlessly to catch him alive. However, he and his followers plunge into a very hostile mountain range, which the British troops do not know and have difficult access to.

Given the situation, Sir Walker's tactic is to drive out of the mountains the families who aided the guerrillas and surround them with fire. With the forest in flames, they would forcibly surrender. The then President Teddy Sanchez is dissatisfied with the unpopular measure and gives the general full powers to command the war. However, the general allies himself to Sir William Walker, arrests the president and executes him.

Soon afterwards the same general, dissatisfied with Sir William Walker due to the many plantations that were burned and men that

were killed, question the strategies of the British adventurer, who responds harshly. This dialogue, which is the epigraph of our work, shows a visionary character who looks beyond the centuries to the existing economic logic, which he helps to organize.

When José Dolores is captured alive to be executed, Sir Walker does not believe that he will give up. At the same time, he realizes that the discursive logic that he created to encourage José to become a leader of his people has escaped his own expectations. Sir Walker is loath to admit that José will not resist his execution, and even offers him help to escape. The end of José Dolores with his execution also means the end of Sir William Walker, who is stabbed in the port area when he leaves the island, by an alleged porter, but this time it was not José Dolores, who had been for many years his greatest hope.

### **A History in Several Histories... After all, We Are All Networked!**

After watching the movie<sup>4</sup> and realizing how many issues it had raised among us, we started debating and commenting on what had impacted us the most. Then we did some online research about it, such as the credit list, comments on film websites and blogs, or even the most varied reviews on *Burn!* Something caught our attention immediately, since it coincided with much of what we had pointed out in our *conversations*.

In some of the summaries or reviews, viewers and critics assert that the film partially portrays the history of Haiti, with some adaptations regarding the colonizers, peculiarities of the island and so on. Some of the texts we read claim that the use of Spanish names, leaving partially aside the French colonization of Haiti, the setting on an island, the association with the extermination of the natives at the outset of occupation, the choice of African slave labor, and the direct references to events of the independence struggles in Haiti, including the mention of Toussaint L'Ouverture (one of the leaders of the Haitian Revolution, known as a slave who knew how to read and speak standard French) support the idea that the screenwriters – Franco Solinas and Giorgio Arlorio – sought to establish connections with the history of Haiti.

Other viewers and critics, however, compare the story of *Burn!* to the history of the island of Cuba. The main connection is the reference to the existence of a guerrilla group and its refuge in Sierra Madre, a direct allusion to Sierra Maestra, where the Cuban guerrillas led by Fidel Castro hid and organized the guerrilla war against the dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista.

It is not in our purpose here to try to prove such relations or find out whether they were intentional, since they are established according to our networks. What we would like to discuss is the innumerable threads a film can afford us in the interaction with the networks that previously formed us. It is likely that many of the film's viewers identified, on seeing and hearing it, similarities with accounts they learned in



school, especially in history or geography classes. Or else, even if they could not remember where they heard certain names or terms, or because they felt familiarity with, for example, the name Sierra Madre, the image of indigenous extermination or African slavery, the knowledge of the existence of sugarcane production over centuries of colonial exploration etc., these images, impressions, feelings, revolts are in our networks, are part of us and the film helped to set them in motion. They are part of what Deleuze (2005) calls *sensory-motor schema*, that is, they are optical and sound elements systematized in a way already assimilated by us, or *clichés*, which we will analyze in more detail later. In any case, we could affirm that this brings out processes of *learningteaching* that we see circulating in curricular development in schools and that need to be studied and understood in the context of teacher training.

In addition to the comparisons between fiction and the history of colonial America and its struggles for political independence, there are other interesting aspects to be considered. The film, although an Italian production, was recorded in English. It is believed that this was due to the participation of Marlon Brando as Sir William Walker. The dubbed version was launched in Portuguese, but many words were translated and spoken in Spanish.

The film critic Rubens Ewald Filho (online, n.d.) affirms that Portuguese was chosen because it would cause less controversy, since Spain had threatened to ban all films by Alberto Grimaldi (producer) if the movie were released in Spanish. According to the film critic, such political confusion causes misconceptions, like the idea that Portugal had a colony in the Antilles and the existence of rivalry between England and Portugal, while we know that both nations had close relations. Another *curiosity* was the film being censored in Brazil. In the context of the civil-military dictatorship, a film in which most the population rebels against a dictatorial government, whether of a metropolis or forged by a minority elite, can be quite dangerous.

Once again, it is not our intent to discuss such issues in depth, but to use them to jointly reflect on how a 1969 film, which deals with a theme purportedly restricted to the previous century, can have current interest inasmuch as it will always dialogue with our experiences in the present and always connect with our networks, allowing us to discuss and think about so many other themes in our collective history or even our private experience, and the curricular processes that may hence develop.

### **Educational Networks in *Burn!***

Starting out from the idea that the building of *knowledgemeanings* occurs in multiple educational networks, it is time to think how the latter feature in the movie *Burn!* All characters reveal through their speech, actions and behavior the networks that form them, and the relationships between those characters expand those networks and cause many others to emerge. José Dolores, played by Evaristo Márquez, for

example, forms and is formed by contact with other porters who, like him, welcome those who arrive at the island, interact with the cane cutters, rally a group to rob the bank at Queimada etc. When encountering the foreigner, or even being found/created by him, as the film may seem to suggest, José Dolores merges his initial networks with others previously unknown and, in this movement, transforms himself, since, when we expand our networks, we are no longer the same. We must not, however, indulge in the idea that some educational networks are superior to others. The temptation to imagine the networks that form Sir William Walker as being more complex than those of José Dolores can dull our senses. Sir William Walker thinks, speaks, acts on behalf of his networks, just as the networks of which he participates think, speak, act through him. An Englishman, employee of a sugar trading company sent to several American colonies, knowledgeable of various languages and places, the foreigner arrives full of preconceived ideas of that place, its population, the social groups that live there and their interests. He presents a project defined for those people, a project that is not his, but of those who hired him. And even in the face of the difficulties encountered, such as the death of the potential leader of the slaves and freedmen, he creates tactics to pursue his assignment.

As much as he may seem to be in command of the situation, manipulating both José Dolores and the island's white elites, at certain moments Sir William Walker reveals some of his other networks that are implied in the film. When he becomes irritated with José Dolores, for example, he calls him an ape, alluding directly to the European networks that form him as prejudiced or racist, if we can so interpret it, knowing that this may stir up attitudes of revolt in the other.

The white elite, who wish to break away from the metropolis, are also inserted in educational networks, whether their families, trade negotiations, contact with other sugar producers and their actual relationship with Europe and the ideas that circulated there, as is evident in the reception they gave the Englishman, since the latter was recognized as opposed to Portuguese colonization.

The contact and relationships developed between the three characters, José Dolores, Sir William Walker and Teddy Sanchez (played by Renato Salvatori), who will be named provisional governor following the proclamation of Queimada's independence, and the social groups they represent in the film help us reflect on how their networks start dialoguing and creating new threads. Although they establish somewhat uneven relationships at first, one notices throughout the film that the characters progressively build each other, are taken unawares and transform themselves.

Such networks, over and above political networks, are always educational networks that allow different types of *knowledgemeanings* to be formed in relationships with other human beings. Understanding this in education is especially important, since these various ways of *learningteaching enterexit* schools every day and decisively influence ongoing curricular processes.

Thus, from initially being Sir William Walker's *creation*, José Dolores becomes the leader of the new country, even if he later relinquishes his position to lead a revolt a few years later. Initially a *puppeteer*, Sir William Walker becomes a negotiator and has difficulty performing that task. He even becomes the hunter of the hero he believed to have created. Teddy Sanchez, initially the fearful murderer of the governor, becomes the leader of the provisional government and, years later, is overthrown and executed by those who helped him come to power.

Beyond the networks that form each one of the characters and contribute to their relationships, there are other networks present in the film that we should discuss. These are the networks that link places, ideas, values, revolts etc. *Burn!* is an excellent film to help us realize that, although separated by an ocean, the American island and western Europe were interconnected.

Arriving at Queimada, Sir William Walker had a sure destination, someone was waiting for him. A recognition code, a seemingly innocent conversation about dolphins that accompanied the vessel on the voyage, reveals that the Englishman and the native had long since corresponded and outlined a plan for the island's independence. The foreigner's bond with the sugar company and the fact that this was not the first time he was travelling on a similar assignment also show us that the distances between the continents had long since been reduced.

Letters, books, pamphlets, narratives about what happened in other parts of America, such as the slave revolt in Haiti, dreaded by all colonial rulers and elites in America, are evidence that even in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, communication networks had been around for a long time, surmounting difficulties, empowering revolutionary movements, which had their specificities in different parts of the continent. Sir William Walker might embody these communication networks, which, as identified above, are also educational networks.

### **Potential Relationships of Current Social Movements and Those in the Movie with Curricular Issues**

In order to understand current social networks<sup>5</sup>, Castells (2013) affirms that social movements arise from crises which are both political and institutional, but that these movements tend to have something that triggers them. The author writes that

[...] the combination of a degradation of the material conditions of life and of a crisis of legitimacy of the rulers in charge of public affairs induces people to take matters into their own hands, engaging in collective action outside the prescribed institutional channels to defend their demands and, eventually, to change the rulers, and even the rules shaping their lives. However, this is risky behavior, since the maintenance of social order and the stability of political institutions express power relationships that are enforced, if necessary, by intimidation and, ultimate-

ly, by the use of force. Thus, in the historical experience, and in the observation of the movements analyzed in this book, social movements are often triggered by emotions stemming from some meaningful event that helps the protestors to overcome fear and challenge the powers that be in spite of the danger inherent to their action (Castells, 2013, p. 157-158).

In *Burn!*, José Dolores, who was already defying colonial violence by giving food to prisoners, takes on a greater political role when, albeit not fully comprehending the consequences of his choice, he decides to remain in the villages rather than flee with the British foreigner. In addition to not abandoning the people he puts at risk by taking refuge in their village after the heist of the island's bank, José Dolores asks the people to face the Portuguese troops; his speech encourages those men to fight to defend themselves and, later, for freedom.

At this moment, the freedmen and some of the slaves establish a different relationship with the *spacetimes* they live in and start to defend them – as well as themselves – from the colonizers. If before they would *hide* in the villages, trying to remain invisible to a certain degree, because they feared the presence of the Portuguese, after Dolores's appeal they assume a confrontational stance. Over time, the former defensive attitude gives way to the desire, inhibited at other times, to fight for freedom. Castells (2013) explains that movements begin when indignation turns fear into courage, a courage that, although individual, is manifested in a collective way.

A few considerations on the word freedom are due here. If, for the slaves, freedom meant mastery over their own lives, for the local white elite it tasted of free trade. Likewise, for the British the freedom of Queimada meant profit from the exploitation of sugar cane. We see that the struggle for freedom and political independence in the European colonies in America had different meanings and was pursued in diverse ways according to the social groups engaged in it. We can thus affirm that the struggle and involvement in social movements of any nature are related to the educational networks of each one of the *practicers-thinkers*<sup>6</sup>.

Still discussing the movements of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Castells (2013) tells us that these are both local and global, since the internet enables the movements to be linked, to be networked. Thus, the movements would have specific agendas, but also support the demands of others or join up with them. The author teaches us that the movements

[...] start in specific contexts, for their own reasons, build their own networks and create their public space by occupying urban space and connecting to the internet networks. Yet they are also global, because they are connected throughout the world, they learn from other experiences and are actually often inspired by these experiences to engage in their own mobilization. Moreover, they keep an ongoing, global debate on the internet, and some-

times call for joint, global and simultaneous demonstrations in a network of local spaces (Castells, 2013, p. 161).

This is a topic that is also worth considering. Despite not living in the internet age, the characters of the film and of so many other non-fiction social movements of the 19<sup>th</sup> century were *connected* to what was happening in the world. Not with the same speed and intensity of today, obviously; however, several bridges and multiple threads connected their networks to other movements. This is evident in some scenes in the movie. Sir William Walker refers to the slave movement in Haiti in one of his encounters with the white elites of Queimada, who are appalled by the possibility of something similar occurring on the island, showing that they were aware of reports of happenings in another colony.

The correspondence between Sir William Walker and one of the settlers and their scheming to organize a movement on the island are also evidence of intense communication between different parts of the globe. The circulation of people, letters, products, pamphlets, books etc. contributed to the expansion of individual networks of *knowledgemeanings*, even of those without direct access to those cultural artifacts.

We believe people to be the best conduits of *knowledgemeanings*. How did the slaves learn about what was happening elsewhere if they did not read letters, pamphlets, etc.? At the beginning of the film, the foreigners are welcomed at the Queimada port and the Englishman is approached by several slaves or freedmen offering him goods and services. This contact at the port, the comments of the trip with those who were waiting for their friends and family while the slave or freedman carried their luggage, the travelers' narratives when they stopped to rest or eat, all those situations set the networks in motion, bringing with them knowledge.

One aspect, however, seems to differentiate the movements of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, called by Castells (2013) networked movements – although it is argued herein that all movements are networked, since every society has always been built and experienced in networks in its multiple daily activities – from the movements of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, which the fictional story of *Burn!* aims to portray (which does not mean portraying the truth), is the creation or *building* of a leader. While Castells (2013) points out that current movements are not characterized by centralization, by continuous leaderships, but, on the contrary, are based on the non-existence of leaderships or the emergence of momentary, fluid leaderships, we notice in the film the movement's need for a hero, albeit one forged by the foreigner. If, for the author, the strength of 21<sup>st</sup> century movements lies in the difficulty of dismantling them with the arrest or death of their leaders and a more autonomous engagement of their participants, in *Burn!* the concern is with creating two heroes, two leaders, one to rally the black and mulatto population, considered essential for the success of the movement, and another to unite the free trade interests of the sugar exporting group. One leads in the city, the other in the villages.

And when they become too inefficient or dangerous, they are ousted, killed and replaced. The very hunt for José Dolores, ten years after the political liberation of Queimada, when he returns to organize the freed slaves (slavery had been abolished in Queimada during the first movement) for better life conditions, for the freedom won and not surrendered by the whites, makes us realize how dangerous he had become to the interests of those who once seemed to be on his side. However, after the arrest of José Dolores, the white elite realize the impasse. Killing José Dolores would turn him into a myth and his memory would be equally dangerous. They believed they had created a hero and were now on the verge of creating a martyr.

These similarities and differences between the movements of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and those we have observed or engaged in over the 21<sup>st</sup> century, between what is portrayed in the movie *Burn!* and what Castells (2013) points out, help us understand the wealth of the networks of *knowledgemeanings* present in each one of the movements of the past and present, and to what extent they are unpredictable, uncontrollable, for they elude those who wish to dominate them.

In this sense, the *conversations* about the film within the research group enabled us to understand the many educational networks that mobilize school curricula in the understanding we have developed with their daily practice in so many different schools. If, as *practicersthinkers* of multiple educational networks – which we form and which form us – we implement curricula, as teachers or students, the different *knowledgemeanings* created in those networks, marked in us by the many relationships we keep with their other *practicersthinkers*, *enterexit* the schools and their curricular processes with us.

### **Clichés in the Social Movements Present in the Movie and Clichés in Schools**

The image constantly attempts to break through the cliché, to get out of the cliché. There is no knowing how far a real image may lead: the importance of becoming visionary or seer (Deleuze, 2005, p. 32).

The movie *Burn!* contains a series of clichés typical of cinema, such as the scene in which the heroes, José Dolores and Sir William Walker, are on the beach sitting astride their horses, in a moment of peace between them. However, what called our attention in the *conversations* about the film in the research group was the scene in which Sir Walker aims Teddy Sanchez's gun at the governor, as well as the scene in which Dolores approaches Sir Walker in the harbor to carry his luggage.

Thus, through contact with such images and sounds, we notice the *clichés* in this film narrative. We therefore propose to point out some possibilities to go beyond the situations portrayed, because we realize that the images that create the belief in the *leader-hero* as the sole possibility to start an uprising movement have the power to make us re-

flect, to create doubts, to enable divergences, within what we believe social networked movements to be. For this cliché is not enough. It does not have the power to trigger the networked movements we have been discussing up to now. Thus, we return to what we have learned from Deleuze (2005, p. 31), who points to these processes saying that:

[...] we do not perceive the thing or the image in its entirety, we always perceive less of it, we perceive only what we are interested in perceiving, or rather what it is in our interest to perceive, based on our economic interests, ideological beliefs and psychological demands. Therefore, we normally only perceive the clichés.

In his analysis of neorealist films, Deleuze questions filmmakers who resort to fixed frames and still life to counter clichés, saying that they are fighting in the same terrain and thus creating other clichés. Thus, Deleuze poses a challenge:

[...] it is not enough, for victory, to parody cliché, or make holes in it or empty it. It is not enough to disturb the sensory-motor connections. It is necessary to combine the optical-sound image with the enormous forces that are not those of a simply intellectual consciousness, nor of the social one, but of a profound, vital intuition (Deleuze, 2005, p. 33).

Deleuze's dedication to cliché is highly relevant because it allows us, in reflecting on it, to go beyond a supposed precariousness of images. Deleuze recognizes cliché as a process through which we relate to the most varied situations we experience with film images. Such situations are so well known to *practicers/thinkers* that we have a broad repertoire of sensory-motor schema – clichés.

For Deleuze, it is not enough to create other clichés to counter an original one. What to do, then, given that this is the *society of clichés*, according to that author? That means that amid so many clichés we need drives that lead us to something different, exposing the weaknesses of clichés and the ways in which they are embodied in us. Therefore, in pursuit of what that philosopher suggests, we believe that the *vital intuition* he talks about is to understand everyday *practicestheories*, in the *conversations* we develop in the many educational networks we build.

A special aspect that stood out in the conversation we developed about *Burn!* was that the plot is centered on the main character, played by Marlon Brando, an extremely imposing and well known actor. This character (William Walker), an agent of the British crown, arrives to weave ideas and values considered or presented in the plot as hegemonic. We therefore noted that both the way the revolt on the island is narrated, and the fact that William Walker himself believes he created a hero or martyr, as a necessary condition to spark the uprising, imply that, in agreement with Santos (2010) in his studies called *southern epistemologies*, the peripheries, or those who are at the margin, are deprived of knowledge, values and understanding. In the words of Santos (2010,

32), “[...] the main characteristic of abyssal thinking is the impossibility of coexistence on both sides of the line.” The author goes on to say that:

[...] the invisible distinctions are established through radical lines that divide social reality into two distinct universes: the universe ‘on this side of the line’ and the universe ‘on the other side of the line’. The division is such that ‘the other side of the line’ disappears as reality, it becomes non-existent and even produced as non-existent. Non-existence means not existing in any relevant or understandable way of being (Santos, 2010, p. 32).

Our aim here is to emphasize that the film’s plot treats the revolt as being solely and exclusively organized by the British, instilling in this process the values of that group to the detriment of those who inhabit *the other side of the line*. Thus, we consider the moral aspect that the characters conveyed impregnated in their *practicestheories*.

From Guerón (2011) we learn the connections that exist between the concepts of *cliché* and *moral*, based on the authors Bergson and Nietzsche, respectively, viewing them as Deleuze’s intermediaries. It is from the latter’s work that Guerón develops his ideas on cinema and clichés. Thus, Guéron (2011) claims:

[...] we have become [...] a strange animal that had to create a regime for the body, had to discipline the instincts in a physiological system: sensory-motor as Bergson would say. It is there [...] that morality is founded – since it is created – as that which lies at the origin of reason and, we insist: of language, culture and civilization (Guerón, 2011, p. 132).

In his words, we tend to create schemas, logics, laws, forms, order etc. to tame the vital human instincts, founded on moral values. Thus,

[...] cliché, as an expression of moral in film, works exactly as Nietzsche describes the latter: a schema of affections that acts and is installed in bodies, rendering them partially paralyzed and impotent. That is why we call cliché here moral-image, or even law-image, that is, an image that functions as a sort of standardizing and value-determining index (Guerón, 2011, p. 138).

Memory, in this context, coordinates our actions/instincts. It is through memory that we control the past, the present and project the future, in a kind of “[...] economy of affections” (Guerón, 2011, p. 132). For Guerón (2011, p. 132), therefore, “[...] memory is – as we suggest cliché is – a sensory-motor system”.

In the film plot analyzed so far, we have recalled a few clichés, but we return to the passage in which Sir Walker states that he created José Dolores as a leader, reinforcing the idea that such action was essential to bring about a popular movement. On the other hand, the passage in which José Dolores denies the need for civilization as understood by the British/Portuguese means a transgression of the values imposed on the



colony even after the abolition of slavery. In other words, José Dolores did not possess the same values and, therefore, the same morality as the settlers and rulers.

Proposing a rupture in his discourse, José Dolores does not cater to the interests of the British crown and is eliminated. This is so because we believe, as Deleuze suggests in the epigraph of this item, that through the educational networks we build, we create possibilities of finding images that elude the cliché, since for that author, the image is able to *break through the cliché, get out of the cliché*. Such breaking through and escaping is unpredictable, because it is only possible through the building of networks by *practicersthinkers*.

Curricular processes are similarly replete with clichés, whose main function for Deleuze (2005) is to help us face daily life situations of extreme difficulty, extreme beauty, extreme horror. Thus, in order to face our daily school crises, we have created clichés, the greatest invention of which for schools and their curricular processes is the statement: *Schools were better in the past*. Without considering specific contexts, moments of official reform or the identification of previous problems in memory, this statement/cliché is recurrent. Yet it takes no more than one question – *What moment exactly are we talking about? Or Schools were better for whom?* – to challenge the idea/cliché, because everyone will remember a moment when schools were not better or excluded many people.

### **Clichés in Daily School Life: Building memory and *knowledgemeanings***

The issues presented so far about clichés, morality and memory refer us to a discussion deemed as fundamental in building the curricular *knowledgemeanings* of components related to the teaching of history, particularly in schools. If we consider history textbooks only, we will be restricted to the cliché of criticizing them and their biased views of the intense cultural, scientific, economic and artistic expression of black populations in Brazil and the Americas, for example. For this intense expression present in Brazilian cultures does not feature or is reduced and even distorted in many of those textbooks. Histories narrated through official correspondence, daily newspapers etc. tend to enhance hegemonic voices. This issue has to do with the denial of the possibility of the existence of counter-hegemonic voices in certain *spacetimes*.

Understanding that schools are also *spacetimes* for the building of memories – including those distant from the historical moment experienced by the *practicersthinkers* of this particular school routine – helps us understand that the cultural and curricular artifacts existing in them must be problematized in order to break up clichés that propose the oppressive *colonizer x colonized* relationship. Such relationships traverse a variety of areas and not only the one addressed by the movie discussed in this study. Human relationships are riddled with conflicts present

in the educational networks we form and that form us. Therefore, their presence in the school curriculum is a reality whether we perceive them or not, which obliges us, as teachers, to reflect on how to address them in those *spacetimes*.

If this is so, if these curricular movements are necessary to form an understanding of the world in which we live, we can perceive the role that different cultural artifacts might play in the *conversations* about our *spacetimes* in the present and past for the emergence of new *knowledgemeanings* by new generations of students and their teachers.

### Final Remarks

Going back to the film, more specifically to the beginning, when the captain gives Sir Walker a brief history of the island, he points to a rock known as the *White Graveyard of the Blacks* lying offshore the island. In his explanation of the rock's appearance, the captain says that the whiteness of the rock is probably due to the dust of the bones of the slaves who died on board during the crossing between the African and American continents. With this passage, the director and the screenwriters evoke the biblical passage: "[...] By the sweat of your brow will you have food to eat until you return to the ground from which you were made. For you were made from dust, and to dust you will return". (Bible Hub, n.d.). Or yet the idea that, like all bones, the bones of blacks are white and able to penetrate even rocks with this color/non-color.

In many passages, Sir William Walker mentions how in several parts of the world stories of uprisings were recurrent. For him, the news and the ideas of characters like José Dolores crossed the oceans to reach the continents. However, he himself points out that in those processes, both the Portuguese and the British repeated the strategy of burning the island to persecute those who resisted forced labor and the subhuman conditions to which they were exposed. And he stresses: "Do you know why this island is called 'Queimada'? Because it was already burnt once, and do you know why? Because even then, it was the only way to conquer the resistance of the people. And after that, the Portuguese exploited the island in peace for nearly 300 years." (Burn!, 1969). The story told by Gilroy (2001) in his classic book is no other.

Such processes, repetitive or cyclical, have been baffling and instigating us to reflect on them, for they are present in the many routines we experience. In order to better understand the significance of these processes, we learn from Tadeu (2004) that Deleuze is the philosopher of multiplicity. For him, multiplicity is powerful for creation, and this process relates to difference. In the words of Tadeu (2004), who dedicates himself to Deleuze's work to reflect on curricula:

[...] without differentiation there is no creation. But for it to stand without the aid of external intervention, without any transcendental element [...], for differentiation to exist without an external 'differentiated', we must conceive something that 'commands' this process, as it were, from

'within', immanently. That is precisely what Deleuze calls 'difference'. (In addition to other accuracies, it should be said that difference acts in two ways: within multiplicity and towards its exterior, in what Deleuze sums up in *Difference and repetition*[...]). On the other hand, the process of differentiation at the heart of the process of creation must be constantly renewed, always starting over. The *process* (and not the 'thing' created, not its result, not its product) must be incessantly repeated. One must go back, return (Nietzsche), always to the beginning of the process, the difference must continue, in a renewed way, its producing and productive action. The cycle of difference must ceaselessly, relentlessly resume its work, its movement. In other words, it must be repeated without any pause, there must be repetition. Without return, the repetition of spring (considered as a process), there is no new flowering (differentiation), there is no triggering of what (the 'difference') causes this new flowering. Without repetition, there is no difference. What sounds like a paradox is, in fact, an indissoluble bond. That is because repetition here is not the repetition of the same 'thing', the repetition of the already-made, of the already-formed. Repetition here is not copy, duplication, reproduction of the same. It is not death, cessation of movement. Repetition, in this indissoluble bond with difference, is, on the contrary, at the very 'origin' of renewal, flow, life. Repetition and difference: it is the pair that, together with the notion of multiplicity, characterizes in a unique way the thought of Deleuze in the context of contemporary philosophical thought (Tadeu, 2004, p. 20-21).

If, for Sir William Walker, the mechanisms of sugar exploitation and the need to burn the resistance of the population together with their villages to renew that exploitation were repeated; if for him also the independence movements in the Iberian colonies in America arose in a repetitive pattern, for us the repetition takes on a new meaning. This is the necessary curricular discussion, since repetition never occurs in the same way, it does not create the same things, it does not affect *practicersthinkers* in the same way. It is repetition in the manner advocated by Deleuze, according to Tadeu (2004): creative repetition.

Overcoming the clichés of the film and of teaching materials is, in our view, linked to contexts in which differentiation is at the core of the creation of other things, other possibilities of being/existing/seeing/experiencing the world. And to this end we must repeat, move towards the beginning, incessantly. And it is amazing to see that one of the most frequent criticisms of school processes is that *school is repetitive* or *all teachers do is repeat*, ignoring that such repetition is essential to human processes as well as to nature – as suggested by Deleuze and developed by Tadeu in the quotation above. They are also present in curricular processes, but never in the same way – whoever works or has worked in *schooling* knows it – since the *spacetimes* of action are different, as are the teachers and students or the curricular artifacts used each year.

If, as the film denounces, characters resembled each other, British contributions were decisive, common interests were present in several movements for political independence in nineteenth-century America, and for the same reason the fictional story of Queimada Island seems to relate to the history of more than just one colony, such repetition helps us to imagine a context in which the networks intersected, but built very particular, specific movements.

Revisiting, repeating, reviewing only enriches our look, our listening, our senses in general to overcome clichés and to perceive, even in the current movements in which our networks have entangled us, the creativity and power of the tactics of *practicers/thinkers* and their unpredictability at various times and historical contexts.

Translated by Pedro Barros and Proofread by Ananyr Porto Fajardo

Received on 27 April 2016  
Approved on 16 January 2017

## Notes

- 1 In our research practice, *conversations* are understood as the main *locus* for their development. In the current research – *Educational networks, cultural flows and teaching – the case of cinema, its images and sounds*, from 2012 to 2017, funded by CNPq, FAPERJ and UERJ, we developed film clubs with practicing teachers and teachers in training (students taking teaching degrees in five municipalities in the state of Rio de Janeiro) with face-to-face meetings every fifteen days and online meetings with the same frequency, developing “conversations” that enabled discussions on the curricular possibilities of images, sounds and narratives of the films used.
- 2 In the line of research with which we work – research in/on/with daily life – we gradually perceived that the dichotomies, necessary for the construction of sciences in modernity, limited the research processes we needed to develop. Therefore, we started writing the terms of such dichotomies in the following way: together and in italics; in most cases in the plural and inverted in relation to the traditional way in which they are used: theory-practice becomes *practicestheories*, for example.
- 3 In the development of research on daily life, we gradually perceived that in both the sciences and the multiple educational networks that we form and in which we are formed, as we create knowledge, we also create meanings that explain it, that justify its existence and duration.
- 4 Before bringing a movie to the municipal film clubs, we would watch it in the research group and *converse* about it as a way to prepare for the *conversations* with the groups of participants of the research.
- 5 We reinforce the idea that we have worked with these networks as educational networks, *spacetimes* of multiple educational processes that appear in curricular processes, necessarily. At present, we identify them as networks of *practicestheories* and we list them as follows: academic training *practicestheories*; daily teaching *practicestheories*; government policy *practicestheories*; social movement collective *practicestheories*; educational research *practicestheories*; media production and *usepracticestheories*; urban, countryside and roadside life experience *practicestheories*.

6 A term introduced by Oliveira (2012) which goes beyond the idea of Certeau, who calls them only *practicers*, but coherent with the thought of that author when he says that they create *knowledgemeanings*, permanently, in the development of their daily life actions.

## References

- BIBLE. English. Bible Hub. Available from: <<http://biblehub.com/genesis/3-19.htm>>. Accessed on: 17 March 2017.
- BÍBLIA. Português. **Bíblia Sagrada**. Tradução: Padre Matos Soares. São Paulo: Edições Paulinas, 1975.
- BRASIL. Lei n. 9.394 de 20 de dezembro de 1996. Estabelece as diretrizes e bases da educação nacional. **Diário Oficial da União**, Brasília, 23 dez. 1996. P. 27833.
- BRASIL. Ministério da Educação; Ministério da Cultura. Lei n. 13.006 de 26 de junho de 2014. Acrescenta § 8o ao art. 26 da Lei no 9.394, de 20 de dezembro de 1996, que estabelece as diretrizes e bases da educação nacional, para obrigar a exibição de filmes de produção nacional nas escolas de educação básica. **Diário Oficial da União**, Brasília, 27 jun. 2014. P. 1.
- CASTELLS, Manuel. **Redes de Indignação e Esperança: movimentos sociais na era da internet**. 1. ed. Rio de Janeiro: Zahar, 2013.
- CERTEAU, Michel de. **A Invenção do Cotidiano: 1. artes de fazer**. 19. ed. Petrópolis: Vozes, 1994.
- DELEUZE, Gilles. **A Imagem-Tempo**. 2. ed. São Paulo: Brasiliense, 2005.
- EWALD FILHO, Rubens. **Uol Entretenimento Cinema: Queimada!** (1968). Online, s.d. Disponível em: <<http://cinema.uol.com.br/resenha/queimada-1968.jhtm>>. Acesso em: 08 ago. 2015.
- GILROY, Paul. **O Atlântico Negro: modernidade e dupla consciência**. São Paulo: Ed 34, 2001.
- GUERÓN, Rodrigo. **Da Imagem ao Clichê, do Clichê à Imagem: Deleuze, cinema e pensamento**. Rio de Janeiro: NAU editora, 2011.
- MARTÍN-BARBERO, Jesús. Novos Regimes de Visualidade e Descentramentos Culturais. In: FILÉ, Valter (Org.). **Batuques, Fragmentações e Fluxos: zapeando pela linguagem audiovisual no cotidiano escolar**. Rio de Janeiro: DP&A, 2000. P. 83-112.
- OLIVEIRA, Inês Barbosa de. Currículos e Pesquisas com os Cotidianos: o caráter emancipatório dos currículos *pensadospraticados* pelos *praticantespensantes* dos cotidianos das escolas. In: FERRAÇO, Carlos Eduardo; CARVALHO, Janete Magalhães (Org.). **Currículos, Pesquisas, Conhecimentos e Produção de Subjetividades**. 1. ed. Petrópolis: DP et Alli, 2012. P. 47-70.
- QUEIMADA! Direção: Gillo Pontecorvo. Produção: Alberto Grimaldi. Intérpretes: Marlon Brando; Evaristo Márquez; Norman Hill; Renato Salvatori; Dana Ghia e outros. Roteiro: Franco Solinas e Giorgio Arlorio. Itália, 1969. 1 DVD (112 min.). Disponível em: <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tQBHr8pjGXI>>. Acesso em: 9 ago. 2015.
- SANTOS, Boaventura de Souza. Para Além do Pensamento Abissal: das linhas globais a uma ecologia dos saberes. In: SANTOS, Boaventura de Souza; MENESES, Maria Paula (Org.). **Epistemologias do Sul**. São Paulo: Editora Cortez, 2010. P. 31-83.
- TADEU, Tomaz. **A Filosofia de Deleuze e o Currículo**. Goiânia: Faculdade de Artes Visuais, 2004.

**Joana Ribeiro dos Santos** is a doctoral student at ProPed/UERJ, researching on the theme *Social movements and the educational networks that form them and form us: movies, narratives and other conceptual characters that challenge us in the curricula*; linked to the GRPesq *Educational networks, curricula and image* coordinated by Nilda Alves. History teacher in the Rio de Janeiro municipal and state education systems.  
E-mail: joribeiro87@gmail.com

**Rebeca Silva Brandão Rosa** is a doctoral student at ProPed/UERJ, researching on the theme *Building of networks of knowledgemeanings in social movements in cinema*; linked to the GRPesq *Educational networks, curricula and image* coordinated by Nilda Alves. Preschool teacher in the Rio de Janeiro municipal education system.  
E-mail: rebecasbr@gmail.com

**Nilda Alves** is a full professor at UERJ and UFF (retired); senior researcher at ProPed/UERJ; researcher 1 A/CNPq; leader of GRPesq/CNPq *Educational networks, curricula and images*. Coordinator of the research project *Curricular processes and migratory movements: How social issues become curricular issues in schools* (funding: CNPq; FAPERJ; UERJ).  
E-mail: nildag.alves@gmail.com