


Popular Education and decoloniality: resistances, reexistences and powers for an inclusive health care and collective projects for the “Living well”

Educação Popular e decolonialidade: resistências, reexistências e potências para um cuidado inclusivo na saúde e projetos coletivos para o “Bem viver”

Educación Popular y descolonialidad: resistencias, reexistencias y poderes para la atención de salud inclusiva y proyectos colectivos para el “Buen vivir”

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In addition to powerful reflections on the constitution of the popular education field in health in Brazil, reading José Ivo Pedrosa’s text triggered questions about collective life in the context of retreating social rights and a scenario of perverse political, economic and cultural globalization.

Santos¹ highlights the vulnerabilizing character of the neo(ultra)liberal offensive led by transnational groups, analyzing inequalities between hemispheres, regions, and territories. From the biopolitics in the control of collective and individual bodies², long strides are taken towards more radical expropriation, the necropolitics, a concept systematized by Mbembe³.



Many new governments' necro-activism promotes death zones, targeting population groups, selected based on racism and denial of existing diversities (ethnicity, gender, and cosmology, among others). Acclaiming speculated public safety, the State determines that not every life is worth. The extremely high mortality of poor and black-skinned young Brazilians is a concrete example of this policy.

In Latin America, governments that promote equitable policies suffer from conservative attacks, in the deconstruction of what has been attained. In Brazil, reflecting on the configuration of more inclusive measures in the favorable moments of the Workers' Party (PT) government and coalition implies visualizing the instituting/instituted dynamics.

Governing requires internal and external mediations, which usually interfere negatively in projects that threaten dominant interests. The occupation of decision-making spaces in the State apparatus is not sufficient to construct a less unequal country. Even though social movements' members have participated in teams in the Ministry of Health in the PT administration, supporting the promulgation of the National Policy for Popular Education and Health (PNEPS-SUS) in 2014, this does not exempt the importance of activism in the territories. Regardless of positions, the capillarity of the struggles is essential, given the *slavecracy* culture that continues to tension the Brazilian social context.

The analysis of the fragile social protection in the face of the Brazilian oligarchic tradition related to its privileges shows how much Marxist references are in place to think about the health, disease, and care process in Brazil, such as the Social Determinism concept. However, coupled with the problematization of class struggles, Akotérine⁴ calls for the concept of intersectionality – which relates race, class, gender, and other social categorizations, which are not binary – in the constitution of political subjects. It is not a matter of segregating people and groups into categories, but of understanding the several meanings in which each subject is constituted, without losing sight of the fight against life commodification and subjection. Merhy *et al.*⁵ indicate that, even in vulnerable territories, there is production of resistance and potential for life (living networks).

More radical macro-structural analyses criticize the conformity by the Ministry of Health of specific population policies, such as those for indigenous people (2002), LGBTT (2013), *quilombolas* (2013), and gypsies (2016), arguing that such a derivation would reinforce identity stigmas and contribute to the fragmentation of the social movements in the dispute for resources. The representativeness crisis in the three Brazilian branches of the most vulnerable groups certainly does not occur due to the promulgation of policies with epidemiological, economic, and cultural specificities. A significant challenge for the Collective Health and Popular Education fields is to operate dialogs between macro- and micro-political analyses since the cleavage between them produces reductions in the understanding of what emerges in the living territories.

It is necessary to problematize themes like social participation and health training. Even if there are positive regulations about it, there is still a long way to effect them in practice. Social participation in the Brazilian National Health System (SUS) needs to go beyond social control. The exercise of both direct participation and representation in the health councils demands a permanent training process.



Whether in technical courses, undergraduate courses, postgraduate courses, and permanent education in services and spaces for participation, health education in Brazil is hardly permeable to incorporating epistemologies distinct from the centered Euro and North American colonial ones. Knowing other cosmologies in understanding health and care, especially in countries like Brazil, where there is rich cultural diversity, enhances more autonomous paths and with less medicalization of life.

In the twentieth century, Paulo Freire⁶ was a pioneer in extolling local cultures, proposing dialogs between academic and popular spaces in the shared construction of knowledge. The appreciation of the daily experience of the differentiated population groups in dealing with adversity and their own wisdom to continue resisting and existing is a significant differential meaning in Freirean pedagogy. The critical reading of the world collectively mediated reveals the political character of his educational conception. In his trips in the country and abroad, the thinker-educator gradually constituted his poetics, collecting from life the conception that the educational act takes place in kindness, welcoming other meanings and expressivities beyond the verbal.

More recently, a movement has gained space among activist researchers and politicians who question the colonization of the subjectivities and ethnocentrism in interpreting others, so present in modern sciences, and persisting in modern times⁷. For Palermo⁸, producing decolonial pedagogies is a task that strengthens and is strengthened by this approach, in the legitimation of narratives other than those of the colonizers, them being from the 16th or 21st century. In the justification of violent colonial processes of intensified extractivism and work exploitation of the indigenous peoples and of the kidnapped/enslaved individuals, mercantile powers stated, even through religion, the inferiority in the civilizing scale (self-referenced) of the non-Europeans. The current major media and the hegemonically training institutions reproduce and update colonial readings of the world, which mask the responsibility of transnational economic groups for the environmental degradation of the planet, species extinction, mistreatments, and genocide. The entire planet is affected by the violence of the capitalist model. However, it is the populations living in territories overwhelmed by the exploratory interests of their biodiversity and natural resources who suffer the most, often being forced to migrate to a miserable life in other lands, deprived from rights and stigmatized.

The phantom of development forges the disregard of ancestral wisdom, putting pressure on the belief of a single way of living: Capital. Religions continue to be useful for such purposes, delegitimizing other world views in which the spiritual practices are consistent with the more holistic views of human beings concerning other beings, such as animals, trees, rivers, and mountains. The defense herein exposed is not a naive return in time and a break with all technologies created, but a questioning of how they have been appropriated, generating abysmal inequalities. In short, it is a criticism to the Anthropocene and (mis)leading paths of Humanity in the overwhelming environmental destruction engendered by the production of inequalities, consumption values, and harmful sovereignty over other beings on the planet.



In Abya Yala (as indigenous peoples refer to Latin America), and in other places, libertarian projects emerge converging stories of resistance, nourished by ancestral wisdom. Experiences of more collaborative economies of Andean and Amazonian peoples signal that the path is not unique. Acosta⁹ emphasizes that distinct from well-being associated with consumption, Living Well designates ways of being in life, in which the Pacha Mama (Mother Earth) is a being of rights. The disobjectification of relations, the rescue of diversities, and the configuration of multinational states, including populations until then marginalized, are subversive characteristics present in the path (which is done by walking) towards the deconstruction of the colonial matrix.

To aim for greater dialog with Latin American movements and elsewhere in the world with decolonial perspectives is not a new issue for Popular Education. There are warps even within the PNEPS-SUS context, but the complexity involved in intercultural communication must be faced¹⁰. The weft of viable novelties is engendered in the constitution of communities of practices and learning, where encounters between popular, academic, and other epistemological hues produce worlds where it is possible to collectively greet life with fullness.

Conflict of interest

The author have no conflict of interest to declare

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