



## **If This Street Were Mine... Between Images and Childhoods: maps, tracks and traces of the body-child**

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**ABSTRACT – If This Street Were Mine... Between Images and Childhoods: maps, tracks and traces of the body-child** – Drawing on the imagetic productions of children playing in the street, this paper discusses the meanings of childhood and the issues surrounding the myths of quietness and immobility of the body to learn, an idea quite present in education. By creating some connections between the images produced by children and the education of care and control, this work proposes a look at the body as power to think other ways of life and to make education with children.

Keywords: **Childhood. Children. Images. Body. Education.**

**RÉSUMÉ – Si Cette Rue Était À Moi... Entre Les Images et Les Enfants: cartes, traces et sentiers du corps-enfant** – À partir de productions imaginaires (photographies et tournages) d'enfants dans la rue, le texte traite des significations de l'enfance et des problèmes entourant les mythes de l'immobilité et de l'immobilité du corps à apprendre, une idée très présente dans l'éducation. En créant des liens entre les images produites par les enfants et l'éducation des soins et du contrôle, il propose un regard sur le corps comme un pouvoir de penser d'autres modes de vie et de faire de l'éducation avec les enfants.

Mots-clés: **Enfance. Enfant. Photos. Corps. Éducation.**

**RESUMO – Se Essa Rua Fosse Minha... Entre Imagens e Infâncias: mapas, rastros e traços do corpo-criança** – Valendo-se de produções imagéticas de crianças em brincadeiras na rua, o texto discute os significados de infância e as questões em torno dos mitos da quietude e imobilidade do corpo para aprender, ideia muito presente na educação. Criando algumas conexões entre as imagens produzidas por crianças e a educação do cuidado e do controle, propõe um olhar voltado ao corpo como potência para se pensar outros modos de vida e de fazer a educação com crianças.

Palavras-chave: **Infância. Criança. Imagens. Corpo. Educação.**

## Initial Words

This text is an essay aimed to provoke the education of care and control that we have nowadays in school spaces. It starts from a research with images<sup>1</sup> produced by children in situations of playing in the street, placing them in movement, displacing our looks, our certainties and attention to how we deal with childhood in the society in general, over all in the school. Observing the childhood by means of distorted images/videos, as an experience without preestablished perspective, without form or functions, is to be exposed to various meanings.

According to semiotics, the world is in the meanings and we are responsible for signifying them, as, for Bártolo (2007, p. 37), the “signification tends to the meanings”. Signifying an image, a voice or both together is having what to say, to explain, to produce a way in which it is understood. However, the interpretation that emanates from this meaning imprisons our look and makes us, passively, to reproduce discourses, narratives, practices, without the exercise of thinking something new, different, in another way.

In education, for instance, the meanings were already interpreted, and are found in the teaching practices, in the planning; in the order established in the spaces that we constitute for the children; in the relations inside and outside the classroom; in the behavior profiles that we long for and in the profiles that we strengthen. These meanings originate from the look that psychologists, anthropologists, pedagogues assign, by means of studies, to the children – in different times and spaces and, quite often, by means of tests in elaborated environments –, in order to understand their stages of development, the maturation of their bodies, the strategies of problems solving in situations previously programmed, among other conditions.

Distant from meanings and signified already fixed, we are consistently led to think the formative spaces of teachers by means of a look mobilized by childhood. In it, the experiences with children, either in the sphere of education, either in research, provide a more sensitive and refined positioning on education in general.

In this manner, to establish the beginning of the discussion, it is necessary to say a little of the childhood based on perspectives of Kohan (2007), Agamben (2005), Larrosa (2004) and Leite (2011), among others. Although the childhood thought by these authors is not submitted to chronological time and, therefore, sequential, it is over all Kohan (2007, p. 101) who will address conceptual issues, like childhood, a word that leads us to a thought that is closer to the “[...] non-skilled, incapable, handicapped, that is, to a whole series of categories that, encased in the perspective of what they 'do not have', are excluded from the social order”. First, we associate the term to a phase that is replaced by adolescence and, therefore, does not have full importance, only for scholars of the development. Second, as a moment of absences, in which the adults become the referential used to say what is missing in the children. In accordance with Kastrup (2000), the finish line – the final stretch – for the child’s cognitive development is the adult.

In the education field, these conceptual poles of childhood unveil the ways how we deal with children and their bodies. It is no different than what is operated in other scopes of the society: instrumentalizing, control, directionality, technologies. Anyhow, everything that is available to modulate, to shape, to conform the children’s bodies, serving to the guarantee that they will become better adults.

In this perspective, within the education scope, Kohan (2007, p. 82) proposes the teacher “[...] to avoid legitimizing what is known and the place that is occupied to lose oneself in what one does not think, in what one does not know, playing a different game of truth than the one of which one is participating”. Perhaps this makes it possible for schools not becoming a space where children, childhood and experiences are lost anymore.

### **Child and Childhood: what we can say of them?**



Picture 1 – Child playing with a camera, Rolim de Moura, 2017. Source: The child.

The verb to play or, perhaps, the noun play leads us to projections, inquiries and wills that direct us to a path guided by the childhood, a time of unprecedented experiences, voiceless, like the concept of *(in)fantia* [in Latin] – absence of voice (Kohan, 2005). This absence makes it possible to observe the children playing without the duty or need to find something predefined, that is, a look that projects a fixed, unitarian image on them and their practices. Perhaps the search is in their sayings, gestures, manners or, who knows, in their bodies, movements and rhythms that potentialize the thought aimed to education-related topics.

Thus, in this study, thinking about the act, the word, the condition of playing only makes sense if we look to the childhood as a powerful existential expression, a power that finds in the children its bigger source, that nurtures the experiences of living in this temporality. This requires the deconstruction of the quite often concepts that make the games colorless, dull, dissolved from new features and, therefore, circumscribed in steps, rules, ordering and guidance. In view of this, it becomes necessary to discuss how the concept of childhood was originated or, possibly, how it was invented for, next, think about playing as *locus* of knowledge and doings for the constitution of an education close to the child.

In this way, among various sources of a historiography that contextualizes the concept of childhood and, consequently, the representations created by the adults who impose a social role to the children, we have selected Plato's dialogues, analyzed by Kohan (2005), related to a political moment when there was great tension in Athens.

In the attempt to form the children to guarantee a future for the society, as “[...] the quality of the *polis* is directly related to the quality of the individuals who compose it” (Kohan, 2005, p. 27), in face of the risk of city degradation of the city, Plato finds in the care and the education of the children an outlet to solve the conflicts of social and political nature. According to the philosopher, the education aimed to the children must take over political intentions in order to capture childhood and, in this way, to guarantee a good citizen quality.

In this sense, childhood is not thought in its specificities, but it becomes an object of analysis because it is linked to the need “to understand, face and revert the Athenian degradation” (Kohan, 2005, p.

13). Therefore, Plato situates the childhood in four remarkable attributes: inferiority; pure possibility; rejected minor; and political matter. Implicitly, they are present in the attitudes and discourses on the children in that period, as well as nowadays.

With modernity, in the condition of a space-time of discursive formation and absolute truths, the conception of childhood acquires a new look. Ariès (1981), by means of an iconographic work, constructs a panorama on the childhood, from the 15<sup>th</sup> century on, and the feelings involved in the relations with the children, both in the family scope (private) and in the various spaces of the society. In this sense, Ariès (1981) emphasizes that, in that distant past, there was no feeling concerning the childhood, not even the idea of child, as a phase usually affirmed by psychology in more recent times. This was so because the lack of distinction between the adult and the child prevailed, refusing the childhood for the unawareness of this temporality in life; according to Kohan (2005, p. 64), “[...] in those times, there was no specific idea or perception of the nature of the childhood differing from the adult age”. In this view, childhood was not thought as in the quality of concept, much less as time of experience, opposed to the chronological time that, at that time, was more present due to its relation with the linear age (childhood, youth and old age), as it is known now.

Children were demanded ways of being in and of the world similar to the adults. There was no special care aimed at them because the world was not conceived for them; the lack of a recognition caused the capture of their bodies by the universe of the other. Due to this incomprehension, children were considered adults in miniature.

From Plato, childhood is marginalized in face of the constant needs of the adult in claiming his presence in the world, by means of reaching goals for the construction of a better future. However, a secular interval disassembles all this logic that denies and belittles the childhood by political intentionalities. It was from the 18<sup>th</sup> century on that, according to Ariès (1981), a new way of looking at the children begins. The new landmarks were given in the family institutions, in which the feeling on childhood emerges, placing the children in the center of all attention and affectivities. In this way, the life of family members is constructed and deconstructed around the child.

The child becomes a source of distraction and relax for the adult, who begins to express such feelings and make them increasingly more ostensive. Art also offers this reflex with the new pictures of single children and others in which the child becomes the center of the composition. The State shows increasingly more interest in forming the character of the children. A series of institutions thus emerge, with the goal of separating and isolating the child from the adult world, among them, the school. The child acquires a new space inside and outside of the family institution (Kohan, 2005, p. 2).

The *separation* of the adult world from the children's world figures the constitution of an attentive look, although marked by the discipline that is imposed by the care, for the condition of *children in the world*. Due to this, according to Kohan (2005), the State begins to worry about the care of the child, creating institutions that address the specificities of this “phase of life”.

On the one hand, the school would be assigned the role of transforming itself in another space for the development of the children, keeping the same ideals of care and formation present in the family. On the other, still with the winds of modernity, the rationality and the scientific thought reach the children concerning the care of these institutions (school and family), in the guarantee of conduct and form their character. However, they ignore the childhood as experience. Children were seen as beings who did not have anything to say or not capable of thinking. They were considered from the existence of someone who generates a voice, who speaks, who utters words, sensations and emotions. The complete experience of what they are as beings was silenced and, therefore, the childhood recoiled in its own ontological constitution, literally as lack of voice.

The conception of experience in the modernity, that reaches our days, is exterior to the person, “[...] a method of knowledge acquisition, needing to be cultivated until a certain age, in the process of formation of the subject, so that at the moment of blossoming their intellectual faculties, they begin to manage them in an intelligent way” (Pagni, 2010, p. 15). In this view, we are dealing with the experience as acquisition of knowledge supplied by a lower stage of life, with forms of knowing and feeling the smaller world, of the child's size. The objectiveness that imposes knowing the world through scientific lenses establishes borders between knowing by

experience – as a child – and knowing guided by the philosophical truths from a certain age.

According to Pagni (2010, p. 25), the experience, for moving away from the rationality present in the processes of learning and educational praxis, “[...] would escape from the regularity, the stability and the determination, assumed by the planning, as well as from the discursive logic and the previous regulation of school knowledge and practices on which its organization is supported”. In face of this, learning by experience would put schooling at risk and, consequently, the formation of the child’s character to the molds of an idealized society.

By other ways, according to a view that legitimizes the childhood as absence of language, we have the experience as something not theorized, that was not preconceived, in which one can “only make and never have” (Agamben, 2005, p. 33). Moreover, especially like the essence proper of the childhood that makes it possible to the language to create discourses, to give voice to the experiences, to the ways of affecting and being affected by what happens in the contact with the other, with the world.

The condition of childhood itself is one of not having a language, but to create it from the events, as the “subject of the language is the child, the one who creates the saying” (Souza, 2015, p. 4). In this dynamics, the childhood time becomes a new place for experiences, making it possible that formative and (de)formative relations on the children can be dissolved. For Agamben (2005, p. 62-63), “[...] from the moment when there is an experience, that there is a childhood of the man, whose expropriation is the subject of the language, the language places itself as the place for the experience to become truth”.

The experience, as a path that crosses the bodies of the children and leaves marks, is not established by a linear time of events, when the present is between the past and the future, but as a constant flow of unprecedented events, a becoming-child, in Nietzsche’s meaning. Thus, on one hand, there is the experience unaccompanied of the word childhood, that is captured by the past, as an ownership, something that is acquired with time and, therefore, assumes the importance of the adult in guiding the children, for the simple fact of “having more experience”. On the other, the “[...] becoming-child of Nietzsche is the refusal of what was, of what is and of

what will be. It is merely the affirmation of the coming-to-be; that is, of being another one that is not known yet and that can only be known in the experimentation itself” (Silva, 2010, p. 6). The experience in the becoming-child is not fixed, captured or accumulated, as it is in constant movement, as a flow that is not tied to the corporeal materiality, but that crosses, comes and goes and does not cease.

As a space of becoming, children disassemble the restraints of the institutions, the established governments, the objectivity, making themselves in rebellious, libertarian, timeless bodies, mobilizing experiences to those who are attentive to their games, voices, knowledge and doing. They are impelled by freedom, “a freedom without guarantees, of a freedom that is not supported anymore on anything, of a tragic freedom”, as Larrosa points (2002, p. 117).

In the daily order, the body is being adjusted to an anticipatory idea. However, the body-child misfits the reproduction idea, resisting to it. This is what we have observed in our research: the imagetic productions of the children present to us vibrational, vibrative, active and sensitive bodies. Bodies that are sensitive to other bodies, other movements, open bodies, waked up bodies, bodies filled with sensations, quite different from the bodies subtracted by the school education. They are the movements of the bodies, they are the encounters of bodies that singularize the chance, singularize the paths, singularize the possibilities and perpetuate the human existence.

The child, the body-child, the displacement, the movement of the body presents resistance to be docile, repressed, disciplined, colonized. It is in a chair, under the demand of corporeal straightness, of upright, straight and lined up bodies that the school tries to subtract the body, to immobilize, to frame, to put a cast on, to crystallize, to dominate the body and, therefore, the thinking, the thought. It seems that the mind is enrolled in the school, and the body that carries it, headquarters of cognition, bothers. Consequently, it is dominated, regulated, expelled. “The control of the society on the individuals is not operated merely by the conscience or the ideology, but it starts in the body, with the body. [...] The body is a biopolitical reality”, says Foucault (1985, p. 80), that is, it is with the body, through the body, in the body, that the regulating agents (school, family,

hospitals, church, prison etc.) control, regulate, mold ways of being in and of the world, the very existence of the being, with the purpose of adjusting the misfit life, to make the future more appropriate, more sufficient, who knows, more effective.

The secular mismatch made possible by the children is present in the playing, as one of its attributes in the becoming. Playing in a time that escapes, runs from the rules, to the edges of foreseen models. Becoming is freedom. As freed beings, playing makes it possible to the children to create worlds, to invent ways, to play the game of life, without a founded action, “but of a freedom that happens in the proper action and that is, therefore, the very absence of foundation” (Silva, 2010, p. 5).

Let’s now bring inherent concepts to the playing, in the attempt of situating the childhood and the constructed and deconstructed experiences in the game, in the tricks, in the repetitions, litany-like songs. The goal is to think on a new education, a new way of looking to the children, perhaps a not looking, accepting the children truths, the novelties of being undisciplined in the world, without a behavior that entrenches bodies, ideas, creativities. In this walking, the teachers must be guided by sensitivity and competence. As Alberto Caeiro presented to us in *The keeper of sheep* (1914, p. 9):

[...] the Perpetual Child always follows me. The direction of my look is its finger pointing. I gladly pay attention with my ear to all sounds. Is is the tickles that it makes to me, playing, in the ears.

### **And the Children Were There... with Their Bodies, Sayings, Gestures, in Images**

The initial days were for observing the spaces. The selection criterion was directed by the children. Thus, it would be chosen those streets where they were to play. For the purpose of recording, besides the written scribbles, the audiovisual resource with a video camera was used to capture conversations, narratives, plots, movements with the body in the intimacy with the street.

In the project’s initial proposal, the filming would be produced by the researcher. Along the investigation, however, it was observed that the production of images by the children would be more powerful, so not to

intervene totally in the plays. For this reason, it was chosen to deliver the tools (camera, video camera and cell phone) to the children, so that that they would be the ones producing the images.

The choice for the audiovisual language is justified for what Meirelles (2015, p. 31) considers: “[...] to allow a complex individual, quite often mysterious 'trip' that may, or not, be shared with the others”. Travelling in the images of the children makes it possible, therefore, to expand our horizons on childhood and makes it possible for us to deal with the children using their looks on the world. For Leite (2011), there are three perspectives in these productions of images and gestures: from the one who films (the children), the one who is filmed (the world) and the spectator (researcher).

The *Espaço Ecológico e Recreativo Gaia Amiga* (E.E.R.G.A.), located in one of the neighborhoods of Rolim de Moura, Rondônia, was the point of departure of the experience, where we had the chance of enter or interfere with the child world. It was chosen by being closer to the children's play in informal spaces and because there, often, children of different ages and social classes meet to play, accompanied by an adult or not.

In this movement, the children, without any fear, come closer, curious, to the researcher, to his work material, they initiate conversations, they cause laughs. They also have indicated the best time to observe and talk with other children. We received the information that “[...] in the weekends (Saturday and Sunday), it was the best days and adds that, in a street close to *Gaia*, children play often” (Field Note, March 20, 2017). From this, we understand that the children still play in the street, certainly with a distinct frequency of what had prevailed in other historical moments.

With the first impressions formed on the experienced reality, we continue to observe the children playing. As this search would be guided by the presence of the children in these spaces, in another neighborhood, far from downtown, there was another opportunity to do the research and report the experiences.

The children play of *Bets*<sup>2</sup> in the space between the street and the house because of the asphalt. There were neighbors, parents and grandparents close to them; they were chatting and, at the same time, taking care of the children. The initial conversation to produce the filming is with these

people. This way, even before being trusted by the children, as this process also is complex because it is an invasion and demands of the one who is going to observe a request of authorization to the children in order to enter this space experience of childhood (Meirelles, 2015), there is a conversation with the parents so that, with the authorization in hands, the work could be initiated.

Initially, we did not choose to deliver video cameras to the children. This way, the first audiovisual record was made by the researcher with 4- and 5-year-old children. This choice was due to the closeness, as they were the smallest and were close to the parents. The play involved counting, an order less counting, as it was another element that completed the play. The space also became play. In the excerpt above, of the produced filming, the children repeatedly jump from the cover of the septic tank to the ground. It is a repetition that does not tire, does not cease, but that extends and keeps smiles, dialogues and expressions of joy.

No matter how hard the research tries to escape a formal logic, the periods of development, even so we think and deal with the children under influences of rationality that circumscribe behaviors by phases, without considering the child herself. In this view, the chronological time reaches and imprisons them in theories related to the cognitive development, in order to assign to them lacks, having the adult as a model. For Kastrup (2000, p. 373), such theories have “as a characteristic to take the adult man, the adult's cognition, as the finish line”, that is, since the cognitive structure of the child does not operate as the adult's, it is haunted by the idea of lack, incapacity, deficit.

Distant from these conceptions, the research happened without the image of an adult who leads because the children, in the ownership of the cameras and video cameras, exerted their freedom in the world, in the games. When we observe the images produced by the children in the research context, reality moves. This movement desecrates the order established by the adult in the encounter with the children, in which we can perceive a relation of curtailment, suggesting possibilities to think the very movement in the becoming, alongside resistance devices, molecular forces – the images introduce to us children displacing themselves between places, from fixed positions, introducing to us bodies in movement.

The movements of their bodies present bodies that think or, as Leite says (2013), children who think through the body. To think *through and with the body* is to mobilize all the extensions, muscles, joints, glands, members, organs, systems, bones, molecules, particles, sensations, senses. It is also to make circulate the thought in all the ends, in all interiority, in all exteriority, it is to affect and to allow being affected. It is to breach with a predominantly cognitive way, model, form quite present in education, in the school education.

Although the relation of the adult with the child is of control, both of language and of bodies, during the games the children are able to call the attention, over all, of the elderly. It is an event in which there is an encounter of childhoods. In the search for children playing, mainly in the streets, with a bigger group, between 4 and 6 children (difficult to find), it was often to find an elderly to their side. And, without any fear, even when there was no kinship, the children were close to them. It was a situation that leads us to the education of care, the relation of the subjects, that is, of the adult and of the child, that begins when one can affect the other, to provoke, to call the attention, “a becoming-child in the otherness”, as Ceccim and Palombini claim (2009). Different from this, what is left is control and not-control, modulation and not freedom.

The monitoring of the child's learning steps is quite common in the school culture, as the teachers, the management and the parents need to have control of *what, when and how one learns*. The education of care, in the perspective of an education that provokes sensations, suggests giving up the molar forces in the intentions of the system, that “resonate in the bodies, in the social machines, in the desiring subjectivities” (Molin, 2011, p. 308). These routines and demands represent a life that has not arrived for the children, the adult life.

The care to which we refer regards the lines that cut the school stiffness, so to allow that the learning happens close to a inventiveness plan, just like it happens in a game. On one hand, we have the control aimed to the bodies and to the limits of childhood, in relation to the inventiveness and to the freedom to create other worlds. On the other, the care is a distant look that follows the steps of the children, allowing to act, to make a mistake, to stumble, to get up. It is an interaction form, it does not present

borders, as the fear for the new, the adoption of a programmatic content, school time, evaluation system, results, among others factors.

Thus, the deviant ways<sup>3</sup> of the child bothers the adult who knows to order, bothers the system that seizes the bodies, bothers the discipline of the schooling. The way of thinking and speaking of these children makes no sense to the adult. As it does not make any sense, there is a need of conduction, of control, *of what* and *how* the child says and thinks. Therefore, according to Kohan (2007, p. 41), “the conditions of communication are not given, there is not a language in common”. The breaching of this conception happens from the moment when, in the role of adults, we come closer to the children's universe distanced from the restraints of the rationalization.

Resuming the field research, we will address other aspects that we could evaluate after the filming made by the children. Choosing the sun, the ground or another object as the object of the lens is, for the adult, meaningless, purposeless or unnecessary. Also, the video camera, an instrument seen by the adult as having a social function, is desecrated by the children when the images and sounds produced do not fit in the model that is aesthetically and socially appreciated. Therefore, when we look at the distorted, frameless images of the children, the first exercise that we make is to assign a sense, without which the image would not be useful.

When we distance ourselves from the children, we lose a dialogue like this, in an informal situation, in which a child, encircled by others, asks: *what weighs more, one kilo of sand or one kilo of stones?* In a certain way, the immediate thought, considering the apparent proportionality of the two objects, would be to say that the stone weighs more. However, as part of the trick, which at that moment was *What is it, what is it?*, the given reply is that “*both weigh one kilo*”, that is, mathematically the thought is correct. Therefore, it is evident that, during the tricks, the children produce a knowledge necessarily valid out of the school.



Picture 2 – Children playing, Rolim de Moura, 2017. Source: Gabriel Tenório.

Sometimes it was not easy finding children playing in the street. Mostly, the group that played was formed by up to 3 children. Even with a reduced number, the difficulty in arriving and initiating a dialogue with them, in order to deliver the instruments, remained. The hindrance was not imposed by the children, but related to the social tensions related to violence against children that influenced this purpose. This way, the adults were the doors of entrance to the children's universe of playing. With the authorization and followed by their looks, the curiosity of the children in filming and photographing the world, as they say, made the research to happen naturally. Playing happened, specifically, from 5:30 p.m. to 6:20 p.m. (when the sun sets). By sundown, the parents from afar announced the ending of the tricks.

At the same time that the research happened in the dynamics of the games of the children in the street, with the engagement of the adults or not, the methodological steps were being outlined by different ways, countering, in part, the initial proposal of the research, that kept the approach on *to verify how mathematics happens in this dynamics*. It became evident, then, that choosing the children as authors and actors of the research process does not provide a path that is organized, systemized or reliable to the rules, but rather different from the control that the adult tries to impose on the children. They are courses that generate conflicts, contradictions and many possibilities of producing “meanings and subjectivities”, as Leite points (2011, p. 28).

In some situations, reaching the children who were playing in the street became the hardest part of the work. From our part, there was always delight with the scenes of trick in the street and, simultaneously, we were afraid of the reception and of how they would accept the research proposal. In this sense, Meirelles (2015) claims that there must be a balance in the approach of the adult so that he does not become a *ghost* or a *hero*.

[...] to be able to observe and listen to the children, it is necessary that the observer-researcher-educator strips of prejudices and absolute truths and opens himself to the different, for all that causes strangeness, so that he learns new languages and enter other cultures (Meirelles, 2015, p. 42)

The research walked towards other neighborhoods. In a Sunday afternoon, specifically, the place chosen was closer the exit of the city. Besides being considered a poor neighborhood, even called *favela*, it also discloses a range of possibilities of “spaces and times of tricks, hiding places, solitudes, spontaneities” (Friedman, 2015) in different cultural and social contexts beyond the barriers imposed by social standards and roles.

When transiting along the streets, we find six children who were playing with painting, bicycle and, at another moment, running in the street with bags. Again, there was a delight between the scene and the desire to deliver the video cameras to those children to record dialogues, looks, movements, gestures, songs. The research instruments (camera and cell phone) were delivered, first, to the 4-year-old children.

The looks of the parents aimed to the children who were playing with the camera. This look is not one of those admiring, but of care that controls and sets limits. The mother, the father, the grandmother, the oldest child (13 years old) and even the neighbor said what to film, how to film, where to go. In this sense, the indications (Ginzburg, 1990) derived from the relation of the children who carry a camera with the adult who, constantly, directs them to a way, present traces of the regularly spread education in the present time: education to train diligent citizens, people conformed with the productive system, perpetuating a control on the creativity, on the freedom of choice.

It is, also, from these indications that we understand what the conception of childhood that we have based on the relations that we establish with the children is. Likewise, education itself provides us a

panorama of its conceptions and positionings when, by means of teaching practices, it selects and classifies profiles of knowledge, students and behaviors. Respectively, when the teacher evaluates, it is foreseen to reach certain knowledge, that is, as Altmann claims (2002), the students are trained to reach grades that justify the educational policies.

The students' profiles are directly related with their behavior. The good students are the quiet ones, the well-behaved, those who remain in a corporeal, gesture and linguistic quietness, who make the work of the teacher supposedly less tiring. On the other hand, those students considered undisciplined are considered as sick or *lost causes*. In this way, Leite (2011, p. 29) claims:

[...] from our look towards childhood, conceptions of how the child 'thinks', how she 'feels' or how "her development" is imposed. These conceptions, in turn, either inspire or explain our practices with the children.

While we try to imprison the body-child, immobilizing it, it dances even when still: the eyes blink, the veins pulse, the heart beats rhythmically, the organs dance, the melody often is not heard because we are immersed in its symphony. The images produced by the children in not controlled situations, not predetermined by the adult, take us to think that they – through their bodies, organs, systems in movement – change the meaning of things, of their functionality. At the same time that, by means of the images, they invert us (adults in the position of observers) and, thus, invent other and new meanings. When analyzing their imagetic productions, it seems that the children do not use the body only from an established, fixed, measured idea, by means of the rigidity that establishes ways of meaning: the eyes are for seeing, the mouth is for speaking (or eating through the mouth), the feet are for walking, the hands are for catching, the ears are for listening, the body, the skin are not to be touched.

They, the children and the images, other possibilities of meanings and non-meanings of the body – they release the body from having only one function, one use, one meaning, of being only an organism taken over by biology. The children save the body from the poverty of being only body. It seems that children do not accept that the door can only be opened with the hands, that the things only can be held with the hands, that the eyes only serve to see the hours and the task in the blackboard, that with the feet

it is only possible to walk. There are other possibilities in the universe they inhabit. The children speak through the feet, they walk with the butt, they see with the ears, they listen with the hands, they feel with the eyes, they touch with the mouth, the feet, the legs, the ears, the eyes, the hands and they are touched by them. The body-child does not limit itself to constitute an organism or a form. A child – a body in childhood – creates worlds, environments. In this phase, they, by means of the imagination, assign other ways to the world, or, perhaps, this is a strategy that they adopt as lines of flight, to misfit the adjusted and univocal way of life.

When the children had ownership of the camera in the street, they used to produce non-conventional ways of recording and filming the world, without perspective, framings or coordinates. Evidently, new gestures, perceptions and meanings could produce indications of a displacement: of a body instrumentalized by the educational system, by the family and by religious beliefs, by a powerful body that can provoke ways of thinking the education and the relations with children in the society.

The children not only see, observe, they see bodies of a different nature, but they also establish a close relation with them. How do they do it? By means of touching, caresses, they explore its forms as true discoverers, and reciprocally they are touched by them. But, after all, let's remember Spinoza (Deleuze; Parnet, 1998, p. 73), who inquires us: "What a body can? Of what affection is it capable?". Likewise, Deleuze and Parnet (1998, p. 74) emphasize:

The bodies are not defined by their gender or their species, by their organs and their functions, but by what they can, by the affection of which they are capable, both in passion and in action.



Picture 3 – Children observing what was recorded, Rolim de Moura, 2017. Source: Gabriel Tenório.

Then, we would ask: what can a group of girls with a camera in the hands? Here is the power. The body-camera, attracts, magnetizes the body-girls. When doing so, they become an extensive reality, it is like a body, when attracting, when magnetizing, made of its objects, extensions of itself. In this relation there is an empathy, an attraction of the bodies, a thirst of friendship and coexistence, as Manoel de Barros claims (2013, p. 359) “I would like to propose the liaison of a fish with a can”. When being attracted, they act as if there was anything else in the world, and this takes them to perpetuate in what attracts them. There is here almost a suspension of the chronological time, and it is in this subversion of the time, in this instant of *eternity*, that the children are provoked to think. We could say that this encounter of bodies, this communion of bodies functions as provoking of the thought, and we remember Zeppini (2010, p. 71):

[...] thinking it is not the voluntary act of a conscious subject, but of a violence, of a breaching with the passivity of the conscience, of a throwing everything out of the axles, and this movement is caused by the body itself and the intensities that take us.

A body that experiments, not one that interprets; that feels, not that explains, that takes numerous possibilities at each lived experience. Experimentations that make of the body, as Kasper claims (2009, p. 204), “[...] a power that does not reduce to the organism – a set of functions – and to the thought a power that does not reduce itself to conscience”.

In this perspective, the school is presented as a construction space, of forming the action, of modelling, of silencing, but also of life, childhood and experiences, as, in this space, the children teach with their gestures, smiles, cuddles, shouts, with the supposed *indisciplines* that are quite close to the games in the street. Their teachings tread ways that shake what is assumed as correct, standard, conventional. The teacher, in her work, has the daily chance of coming close to the children, of their sayings, provocations and cultural knowledge, being enough only to allow oneself to listen and see their plots. Adopting this practice, their daily work can become less indoctrinator, less maker of conformed, submissive to absolute truths, subjects.

### Consideration... Despite Tentative

I do not know how to draw the boy. I know that it is impossible to draw him with coal, as even pen sketches stains the paper beyond the very thin line of the extreme topicality in which he lives (Lispector, 2014, p. 102).

By means of the field research, in which we analyzed imagetic and audiovisual productions from children playing in the street, we could perceive a cultural dimension that discloses the presence of the unusual behavior. They were instants of desecration, of deconstruction of the shapes in which the spaces normally are occupied or used. One example of this happened in the patio of the church, that became a stage for dances and songs, the children having sung in unison: “*The saint will fight... which saint? The saint... I'm not afraid of her*” (audiovisual record, 05/28/2017). Others happened when they (de)formed, through the images, objects and toys (cars, pieces of wood, benches), as much as when, in their own way, they recreated specific school contents and of other fields of knowledge.

All of this amidst the freedom of expression, being it what also in the street provides to the children the possibility to think new strategies to solve problems, either in the organization and division of the groups to play, or in the delimitation and even in the constitution of a space for the tricks. It is relevant to notice, also, that, in the dynamics of the games, the decisions were always taken by the children and, consequently, this leads us to education as a political act, according to Freire and Shor's concepts (2011). Thus, the counting of even numbers (2, 4, 6, 8...), in games like *Bets*, is a condition to play and not only an element of math, a course formally taught in the school. In this sense, the number becomes more an identitarian element of the trick, just like the can, the little ball, the racket.

Levy (2011, p. 56) proposes, then, a displacement towards outside of what is ready, from an experience of the outside in Blanchot, Foucault and Deleuze, according to whom the encounters between these authors converge by “[...] being always outside of the traditional models of literature, philosophy and history; to be always sliding through the truths already established, in order to shake everything that is already presented as ready”. What became the most evident, as an output of the research, was the ground of what we consider truths and certainties, a field that was shaken. This is so because the children lead us to think other ways for

education, towards outside, who knows, from the traditional way of teaching. At the same time, we understand that this does not mean teaching allowing oneself to be taken by spontaneism, but to develop pedagogical practices that intensify the appreciation of the child and childhood.

So that this study does not get lost in the dusty bookshelves and in time, we launch the provocation: when we observe children's games, to which perspective of education do we associate them? An education that imprisons the thought, that denies the error, that excludes, that belittles the childhood, that intervenes in the way of being a child? That subtracts their bodies, their thoughts, their language? An adult education, of the exactness, the absolute truths?

In the plays, a certain education is imprisoned, linked to the contingencies of the act of playing, without a starting or finish line, just like the childhood, a life experience that is not held to the chronological, sequential, modular time. In this way, it is possible to think about many other ways to make and think education. A dancer education? Inaugurating the shapes by deforming them incessantly? A passer-by, sliding education of fast, light movements, an education that is experienced and allows to be experienced, that is always creating, inventing and modifying itself. An education that invokes to increase the power to act, to make life to vibrate and invent itself, to set in motion the difference, the creation, to put into motion encounters and compositions, to cross the bodies of children and adults as lightnings, in a speed of deterritorialization of regimes of ownership, the legitimacy and the delimitation enrooted in guiding axles, on the educational topics and courses, that education suggested by Kohan (2007, p. 98), moved by “[...] unfolding powers unthought in childhood”.

The image constructed by Clarice Lispector in *O tempo* (2014), previously quoted, stimulates us to claim that we also do not know how to draw the children, their bodies, gestures, knowledge, flavors, childhood, the learning. We do not intend to do so. What we do not wish is to circumscribe life, the way of being, how it must be or how it will be, in a role, under the risk of resulting mistakenly in a practice or theory that claims to be true and single. What we know is that our education still is walking far from the children. We believe that it must come close to them. Not to satisfy their wills, but to be

able to embrace their needs, real needs – thus we will construct a different education, a playing, tasty, perhaps child education.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> We declare that we are the owners of the rights for exhibition of the images produced in the research context.
- <sup>2</sup> *Bets* is a street game played with bats and a ball, similar to cricket but with much simpler equipment.
- <sup>3</sup> They are cultural groups with the capacity of constitute logics of appropriation, use of the space, forms of socialization and sociabilities that deviate from the logics of production and consumption perpetuated by the capitalist way of production (Santos Silva, 2014).

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