

## **Criticism of the present, criticism of education: attempts**

If the times are of authoritarianism and permanent war, even if there are moments of seemingly peace and democratic interregnums, then, to have hope that this world may be another one at some point, it is necessary to continue in critical reflection. This is what is intended, in different ways, by the texts that this dossier gathers together. They come from different countries and with different approaches but are united in the intention of contributing to a nonconformist analysis of the present. Each in its own way, they seek to do justice to that warning of Theodor W. Adorno, according to which criticism, to be effective, can never be that which only apparently disobeys, but which is in fact affirmative and condescending.

The dossier begins with a study by Dennis Johannßen, a German researcher living in the United States of America, who puts at stake a little-studied aspect in Walter Benjamin's work, present in particular in his philosophy of language, which refers to the critique of the domination of nature. Emphasizing the dimensions of experience and expression in the meeting between humans and non-humans, the essay seeks to contribute to the reflection on the ecological crisis today.

The second text, by the Spaniards José Antonio Zamora and Jordi Maiso, brings to discuss some effects of the systemic transformations of capitalism, especially regarding the processes of subjectivities, placing education at the center of this process. They show how the educational processes update the anthropological conditions defined by Adorno when dealing with forms of life under the order of capital. It is a state of affairs that breaks what is perhaps the last frontier of the human, promoting submission, regression, and adaptation to the systemic imperatives of capital.

Helge Kminek, a professor at the University of Frankfurt, Germany, hereafter offers us a reflection that dialogues with the two previous ones. With the first one because it focuses on the contemporary environmental crisis, devoting attention to a program of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and

Cultural Organization (UNESCO) program on the subject; with the second one because it seeks a critical educational response to populist impulses with conservative characteristics, so present in contemporary times. With this, it locates democracy as a topic for educational formation and advocates pedagogy as a mediator to this end.

Emiliano Gambarotta, from the Argentine Republic, completes what could be the first block of texts. Considering the social transformations of these neoliberal times of ours, the author seeks to develop some foundations for a democratic education that can resist the totalitarian threats always lurking. Taking up again Benjamin's critique of information, he finds in the concept of semi-expertise a path that, combined with the meaning that Richard Sennett attributes to "craftsmanship", will make him envision a new experience of time and culture that may correspond to a truly democratic society.

Bruno Pucci, the dean of studies on Critical Theory and Education in Brazil, opens the second part of the dossier, offering us a dense reflection on aesthetics and its formative reasons. He does this by visiting the work of Adorno extensively, but taking a step backward, like the Frankfurtian himself, to reach Schopenhauer and Hegel. Having made this movement, he returns to find what he calls "utopian dissonance" as an expression of the formative experience, evoking commentary and criticism as movements that make it possible.

Following the tracks of the aesthetic experience as formation, Michelle Carreirão Gonçalves, from the State of Rio de Janeiro, proposes the study of sports as an aesthetic artifact, prescribing, then, the concept of sports work. Inspired by contributions from Adorno and Benjamin, the essay highlights one of the indispensable components for the achievement of the work, namely technique. It observes that expressiveness is possible in the tension that the technical movement proposes to the game and to mimesis, conforming, finally (but without end), a form.

Danielle Torri, from the State of Paraná, and Alexandre Fernandez Vaz, from the State of Santa Catarina, continue with the sport, this very contemporary theme, but now analyzing it through its apparent backside, which is its confirmation: the Paralympics. The very idea of a disabled body is put into conflict because sport is premised on the efficiency of bodies that are usually, by definition, above their possibilities, but below the demands required by the Olympic mainstream. The exercise of the text is made from the materiality of the experience of a Paralympic high-performance athlete.

Inspired by The Authoritarian personality, the emblematic and important study led by Adorno, Christian Muleka Mwewa, from the State of Mato Grosso

**Organizers**

Alexandre Fernandez Vaz –  
UFSC

Danielle Torri – UFPR

do Sul, Alex Sander da Silva, from the State of Santa Catarina, and Juliana Silva Rando, also from the Midwestern State, study what would be a racist personality in early childhood education. They use analytical material studies on the subject, as well as a set of pedagogical practices. By placing all this under tension, and considering the National Curriculum Reference for Early Childhood Education (RCNEI) and the National Curriculum Guidelines for Early Childhood Education (DCNEI), the text advocates for the adoption of objective measures to combat social racism.

To think about the present, to put it under tension, to return to the great inspirations of Critical Theory not to repeat them, but eventually, with them, to go beyond them. Here are the attempts, and here are the results. As Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno once wrote, keep going.

Florianópolis, Curitiba, Fall of 2022.



<http://www.perspectiva.ufsc.br>