



SHARDS: ON (IM)POSSIBLE WAYS OF THINKING ABOUT QUEER POLITICS

ESTILHAÇOS: SOBRE MODOS (IM)POSSÍVEIS DE PENSAR POLÍTICAS QUEER

FRAGMENTOS: SOBRE (IM)POSIBLES FORMAS DE PENSAR LA POLÍTICA QUEER



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ABSTRACT: From the composition of short scenes that recall recent episodes that portray disputes around issues of gender and sexuality in public policies in Brazil, I try to reflect on the (im)possibilities of talking about queer policies. Wouldn't it be utopian to talk about queer policies in a society anchored in a cisgender-straight-patriarchal and colonial culture? If, on the one hand, the scenes show us that there was an intensification and strengthening of anti-gender groups and organizations, which have been acting inside and outside institutions in order to prevent advances related to gender policies, they also expose the level of commitment of left-wing governments to these same agendas. Like broken mirrors, these scenes help us understand this scenario and imagine, as suggested by researcher Jota Mombaça, other possible worlds from the breaking, the politicization of wounds.

KEYWORDS: Queer politics. Anti-gender policies. Educational policies.

RESUMO: *A partir da composição de pequenas cenas que rememoram episódios recentes que retratam as disputas em torno das questões de gêneros e sexualidades no campo das políticas públicas no Brasil, procuro refletir sobre as (im)possibilidades de falarmos em políticas queer. Não seria utópico falarmos em políticas queer em uma sociedade ancorada em uma cultura cisheteropatriarcal e colonial? Se, por um lado, as cenas nos mostram que houve uma intensificação e fortalecimento de grupos e organizações antigênero, que vêm atuando dentro e fora das instituições no intuito de impedir avanços relacionados às políticas de gênero, elas também expõem o nível de (des)comprometimento de governos de esquerda com essas mesmas pautas. Como espelhos quebrados, essas cenas no ajudam a compreender esse cenário e imaginar, como nos sugere a pensadora Jota Mombaça, outros mundos possíveis a partir da quebra, da politização das feridas.*

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *Políticas queer. Políticas antigênero. Políticas educacionais.*

RESUMEN: *A partir de la composición de pequeñas escenas que recuerdan episodios recientes que retratan las disputas en torno a cuestiones de género y sexualidad en el ámbito de las políticas públicas en Brasil, intento reflexionar sobre las (im)posibilidades de hablar de políticas queer. ¿No sería utópico hablar de políticas queer en una sociedad anclada en una cultura cisheteropatriarcal y colonial? Si, por un lado, las escenas nos muestran que se ha producido una intensificación y fortalecimiento de los grupos y organizaciones anti-género, que vienen actuando dentro y fuera de las instituciones para impedir avances relacionados con las políticas de género, también exponen el nivel de (des)compromiso de los gobiernos de izquierda con estas mismas agendas. Como espejos rotos, estas escenas nos ayudan a entender este escenario y imaginar, como sugiere la pensadora Jota Mombaça, otros mundos posibles a partir de la ruptura, desde la politización de las heridas.*

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Política queer. Políticas antigénero. Políticas educativas.*

Shards

Five small scenes guide us in the design of this essay. A dialogue about public policies and education policies, but, above all, a reflection that invites us to imagine other possible scenarios for our lives and daily practices. A provocative reflection on the (im) possibilities of *queer* policies and (micro)politics (POCAHY, 2016) in Education. Crooked drawings, outside the lines, erased, blurred. Undisciplined. From 'vetoing gay kit' to fighting 'gender ideology'. The scenes present themselves before us as shatter-events (MOMBAÇA, 2021). Broken mirrors, pieces that spread through the air until they are reassembled in a kind of dystopian social reality. Mixture of fiction and reality. The shards mirror bonfires/flames, monsters, witches, bottles of “dick”, pink and blue clothes, *queer children*, sex-reveal events, families, girl-dolls, boy-carts, mermaid “girls”. The scenes also show a brief summary of episodes that recall recent disputes fought by movements contrary to the debate on gender and sexualities in education. Burn the Witch. Salute torturers. Vetoing 'gay kit'. Producing fake news. Inventing monsters. “Protect little children”. Fight the invented monsters. Fictions. Realities. Shards.

Burn witches, veto gay kit, invent monsters and protect little children

Scene I. “My government does not advertise sexual options”

“No government agency will be allowed to advertise sexual options; under no circumstances will we be able to interfere in people's private lives” said President Dilma Rousseff when asked by the press about the veto of the School Kit without Homophobia in 2011. Asked about possible future approaches, she said goodbye smiling saying: - *“The future? To God it belongs.”*

Scene II - “For the memory of Colonel Carlos Brilhante Ustra, the terror of Dilma Rousseff” (Jair Bolsonaro, August 31, 2016).

Brasilia. 2016. August 31st. It's Coup! Is it Coup? No! It's Impeachment. But it's a coup d'état. Democratic process in progress? Misogyny? Male chauvinism? Vote. In the country of soccer, the score was 61 to 20. But make no mistake, it wasn't a soccer match, a soccer match, a championship. Deputy Jair Bolsonaro, also called Messias in his last name, begins his speech: - *“They lost in 64, they lost in 2016. For the family and for the innocence of children in the classroom (...) against communism, for our freedom, against Foro de São Paulo, for the*

memory of Colonel Carlos Alberto Brilhante Ustra, the fear of Dilma Rousseff (...) my vote is yes". And we continue like this. 'Brazil above all'. 'God above all'. 'Is it okay?'

Scene III. Elections 2018

Brazil. 2018. Election year. Fake news. Fuel for elections. Gay kit. "Dick bottles" fake news. Jesus is a transvestite. Gender ideology. Moral Panic. The 2018 electoral process discussed gender. It brought gender as something to be fought. A threat. WhatsApp. Memes. Family groups. Family quarrels. End of friendships. 'Anything, except the PT (Workers' Party)'. Anything. ANYTHING.

Events. Or, we might dare say, the achievements of a white-colonial - cisgender - heteropatriarchal policy². Or, as Mombaça (2021, p. 18, our translation) suggests, "[...] the white and cisgender use³ of social justice categories to continue replicating the conditions of reproduction of systemic injustice". The expression 'gender ideology' entered the Brazilian scene, it was the year 2007 and, initially, it circulated among institutions linked to the Catholic Church. In the same period, in 2008, the book 'Agenda de Gênero' by Dale O'Leary was translated in Brazil by the Catholic publisher of Canção Nova and also marked an investment in the field of specialized literature and the dissemination of ideas. Shortly after, we also had the translation of the book by Argentine Jorge Scala 'Gender Ideology, neo-totalitarianism and death of the family'. Scala's book became important material for the foundation of those people who were at the forefront of the dissemination of anti-gender policies and discourses. This bibliographic material began to be disseminated and shared by digital means, it started to be discussed and popularized by *YouTubers* who contributed to inflate a movement in favor of an anti-gender agenda in Brazil.

I demarcated the year 2007, but if we look back, we will see that all this is not new. Since the end of the Estado Novo, Catholic ecclesiastics questioned articles on abortion in the penal code of 1940. In the 1960s, the Catholic Church acted to prohibit women's access to contraceptives. Discomfort with homosexuality occupies the scene more from the 1980s, after the advent of HIV-Aids. In the context of the 1990s, the anti-abortion agenda brought together a diverse group of conservatives (Catholics, Protestants, secularists, Kardecists, etc.). Attempts to contain women's reproductive autonomy and the freedom to exercise their sexualities and

² Cisgender-heteropatriarchy is the sociopolitical system in which the cisgender, heterosexual and male subject holds hegemony and decision-making power over all other people.

³The term cisgender is used to describe people who identify with the gender assigned to them at birth.

different gender performances form the basis for what some researchers have called the 'anti-gender crusade'⁴. Thus, gender, sexualities and abortion become elements of disputes within the scope of public policies on education, health and human rights (JUNQUEIRA, 2018; CORRÊA; KALIL, 2020).

Corrêa and Kalil (2020, p. 10, my translation), when analyzing the anti-gender offensives in the Brazilian context, understand them as “devices for the accumulation of political power that feed on resistance to the transformations of gender orders and sexualities”. The authors also present us with the conferences of the United Nations - UN, in particular the Conferences in Cairo (1994) and Beijing (1995) as scenarios in which the first attacks on gender by the Vatican and other conservative allies took place. They recall some of Brazil's positions in the scenario of international conferences, highlighting that, in Durban (2000-2001), the country presented an agenda in relation to human rights that was quite unprecedented and suggested advances. Between 2003 and 2016, a moment that includes the management of left-wing governments, it is worth highlighting the great participation of social movements in the social control of public policies. It was in the context of these measures that we also had the occurrence of the 1st National LGBT Conference⁵(2008), Conference of Policies for Women (2004), creation of the Secretariat for Continuing Education, Literacy and Diversity - SECAD⁶(2004), launch of the Brazil without Homophobia (BRASIL, 2004) and approval of the Maria da Penha Law (BRASIL, 2006).

At the same time, from 1998 to 2014, we saw an increase in the Evangelical group in power – from 44 to 90 members – and an advance in the parliamentary front for life and against abortion. Currently, the Evangelical Group has 132 deputies and 14 senators elected in the last election of 2022. The veto of Escola sem Homofobia Kit (2011) and that almost prophetic speech by the president: 'the future belongs to God', reverberate like never before in the present day. The veto to it always walks through my memories. This scene helps me to think about the conflicting relationship between gender politics, sexualities and education, or we could summarize: about gender and public policies. On that occasion, the then president of the republic Dilma Rousseff, when questioned by the media at a time of great tension and disputes

⁴Throughout the text, I use some other vowels, such as e/u/i, in order to problematize the hegemony of the official binary language. However, 'o/a' binary language will be used in some situations, in general when referring to cisgender-heteronormativity.

⁵Here I kept the acronym as it was used at the time – LGBT – lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgenders.

⁶SECADI – Secretariat for Continuing Education, Literacy, Diversity and Inclusion was created in 2004, it was from 2011 that the Inclusion axis became part of the Secretariat's competences. In 2019, the Ministry of Education - MEC, under the management of Ricardo Vélez Rodrigues, extinguished the Secretariat. In January 2023, with the election of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, the secretariat has just been reactivated.

surrounding the launch and veto of the Kit, tried to justify herself, amidst the discomforts generated by all the political alliances that involved her government, about the reason for the veto: 'my government does not advertise sexual options'.

The backstage of the 2010 elections were marked by the growth of a “conservative activism” reactive to some advances in feminist and LGBTI+ agendas ⁷and, taking a closer look at this moment helps us to understand the president’s position in relation to Kit. After two cycles of a more progressive government, there was, on the part of these religious actors, a commitment to recover a kind of Christian-based institutional policy and winning the religious vote became something decisive for those who wanted to win the 2010 elections (MACHADO, 2012, p. 26). Still in the first round of elections, Dilma visited temples, met with religious leaders and wove alliances. The candidate published two important documents in the campaign periods that preceded the first and second rounds of the presidential elections: the *Open Letter to the People of God*, in which she recognized the social role of the evangelical churches in the country and, shortly before the second round, published *The Dilma's message*, in which she presented a sequence of her government's commitments, mainly with regard to the issue of abortion, family and other central points in this dispute:

2. I am personally against abortion and defend the maintenance of the current legislation on the subject; 3. Elected President of the Republic, I will not take the initiative to propose amendments to points dealing with abortion legislation and other issues concerning the family and the free expression of any religion in the country; 4. The PNDH is a broad letter of intent, which incorporated items from the previous program. It is being reviewed and, if elected, I do not intend to promote any initiative that affronts the family (ROUSSEFF, 2010, n.p., our translation).

The understanding of the political movements and alliances established by Rousseff's administration, although important, is not able to justify alone the impasses that involve the formulation of LGBTI+ public policies in Brazil. In general, it is possible to say, in dialogue with researcher Bruna Irineu (2021), that the legislative power of the first two administrations of Lula and Dilma (2003-2016) did not absorb LGBTI+ guidelines, nor issues such as the decriminalization of abortion. Some guarantees of access to rights by this population, such as stable union and civil marriage, for example, came through decisions by the Judiciary. In the researcher's analysis of LGBTI+ public policies in this period, she points out that a kind of paternalism, typical of Lula's management mode, could be responsible for this low

⁷Lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transvestites, transsexuals, intersex and other dissidence.

institutionalization of policies. The idea of 'paternalism' appears in the author's analysis of the relationship between Lula's administrations (2003-2010) and the LGBT social movement. Intensifying the criticism on the subject, Irineu (2021) characterizes the way in which LGBTI+ policies were guided by these governments as part of a “consolation citizenship” package, something that, in her conception, would be based on a “cordial homophobia”. (IRINEU, 2021, p. 581, our translation). This idea of cordial homophobia can be better understood when we observe that, although Brazil appears on the international scene as an advanced country in terms of LGBTI+ rights, in practice, the portfolio did not have a specific budget and the policies did not continue after the transitions from one government for the other; the Kit veto is a great example of this.

With this veto, the outlines of an idea of a 'child under threat', of childhood in danger, are being outlined and strengthened. For conservative groups, asserting themselves against LGBTI+ rights and in favor of violence seemed complicated; easier and more strategic was to present themselves as defenders of children (BALIEIRO, 2018). Therefore, a common enemy is created, which would be threatening the integrity of innocent children, exposing them to the dangers of an enterprise for the 'death of the family', as the translated title of Jorge Scala's work brings. From there, a great public appeal intensifies in society; fathers, mothers, guardians of children, primary school teachers and churches are called upon to take a stand in the face of this threat and the consequence has been a series of attacks in the sense of barring public policies and/or vetoing and editing policies that promote respect for diversity /difference and/or gender equality.

There were political conditions that made the design of this anti-gender offensive possible. In 2013, combating “gender ideology” was already a consolidated agenda of the most conservative movements and was spreading across the country. For Miskolci (2018) it was amid discussions about education plans that this moral crusade spread even further. A policy of fear was established in school spaces to watch teachers and students. Education becomes the central character of the conflicts and within the scope of the debates on the National Education Plan - PNE, the meeting unfolds and an ecumenical partnership is sealed between Catholic, evangelical forces and secular movements such as the Escola sem Partido (School without party) - ESP movement.

When we look at the scene that makes the Coup against President Dilma Rousseff official, the moment of the *impeachment vote*, the narratives of the parliamentarians during their votes call a lot of attention. In the fragment I brought to this text, I highlight Jair Bolsonaro's

salute and reverence to a torturer, salute and annunciation of his way of thinking and doing politics, based on authoritarianism and the instigation of a military coup. Gaudêncio Frigotto (2017) reminds us well that, during the vote to initiate the *impeachment process*, which the author calls a “legal, parliamentary, police and media coup”, more than 90% of the parliamentarians present there used it as justification for their votes. the defense of the triad God, Homeland, Family. The author also takes us to a *flashback* and reminds us that, back in 1964, when we suffered a civil-military coup, this was the basis of the thought that anchored it: God, Fatherland, Family *versus* Communism.

The scene of the 2018 presidential election previews showed the outcome of this coup. He announced what was to come: 'anything but the PT' is an expression that translates this onslaught promoted by the ESP in which leftist parties are renamed communists, “gayzists”, abortionists, threatening families and children. There is a reduction in spaces for dissonant dialogues and the opening of an arena for accepting violence: mothers breastfeeding in public, black people, effeminate gays, trans people, non-binary people – bodies under daily threats. As Bolsonaro said at the time: 'they lost in 1964, they lost in 2016', 'God above all'.

I mentioned the *Escola sem Partido* movement, but it is important to contextualize that the movement had been acting since 2004 from the agenda of a neutral education or, as they themselves presented themselves, against the advance of a possible communist indoctrination. In more recent years, they have embraced the moral agenda of combating gender ideology and started to encourage complaints against teachers who would address gender issues in the classroom. Models of extrajudicial notifications were made available, as well as models of bills to prohibit the approach of genders and sexualities in schools. For researcher Elisabeth Macedo (2017, p. 519, our translation) “[...] the ESP came to make explicit, through intolerance of the other, the inadequacy of politics in school”, the movement became an important moral entrepreneur in this anti-gender crusade and one of the main agents responsible for associating leftist governments with the idea of encouraging moral deviations (PENNA, 2017; BALIEIRO, 2018; MOURA; SALLES, 2018).

Corrêa and Kalil (2020, p. 70) believe that it is at this moment that “an ecumenical consensus germinates” that will characterize these offensives in the Brazilian context. As Almeida analyzes (2019, p. 209, our translation):

[...] religious conservatism oscillates between resisting change (there are only heterosexual families, for example), provoking regressive changes (abortion is criminalized in any situation, which retroacts to the 1943 legislation) and

adhering to certain values of this world (entrepreneurial ethics and the rise of state violence).

Based on these partnerships, the groups share the mission of removing the gender agenda from education plans – national, state and municipal. A hunt for the genre begins. More than 40 projects presented in city councils, which even though unconstitutional and not approved, affected the school culture and society. Also, as highlighted by Corrêa and Kalil (2020, p. 70, our translation) “The anti-gender crusades have been attacking the pedagogical guidelines on gender and sexualities in basic, higher-middle and higher education in Brazil, Latin America and Europe”. We are talking, therefore, about a transnational movement that has been acting strategically in defense of the maintenance of the cisgender-heteropatriarchal model of society.

Scene IV. “Burn the Witch!”

São Paulo. 2017. November. Protesters gather in front of one of the units of the Social Service of Commerce - SESC. Crosses. Bibles. Flags of Brazil. These are the main banners used by demonstrators. Other than that: FIRE! “No pedophilia”. “No to zoophilia”. “School without a Party now!”. “Less Butler, more family”. “No to gender ideology in schools”. “Do not teach perversion to our children”. “Gender freaks – go home!”. “A man is a man, a woman is a woman, here in Brazil, you don't do what you want”. “Less witches, more princes and princesses”. “Live to the princesses of Brazil”. BURN THE WITCH! And fire! [In the background it is possible to hear a soft chorus: 'our father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name...']. BURN THE WITCH! AND FIRE! Yes, they set fire. The Butler-witch doll was burned right there in the street. And this is not the presentation of any medieval movie script. I swear.

In the years 2014 and 2015, the expression gender ideology was already on people's lips. There was already a moral crusade against the word gender. And after that, in 2017, that the demonstrations against the philosopher Judith Butler, narrated in the scene above, take place. We have a new element, gender and gender ideology become related, by anti-gender movements, to Butler's image and theoretical production (LUNA, 2017; MISKOLCI, 2018; CYFER, 2018). Such an ideology would, therefore, be threatening children and young people and exposing them to the dangers of inducing dissident gender expressions and gender identities, pedophilia, zoophilia, experiencing sex at an early age, adherence to communism, among others things and everything together and mixed.

Scene V. “Boys wear blue and girls wear pink”: a sacrosanct truth?

Brazil. Beginning of 2019. Behind the scenes of the inauguration of the new minister of the Ministry of Women, Family and Human Rights, Damares Alves, we heard her festive cry: “*Attention, attention! It is a new era in Brazil: boys wear blue and girls wear pink*”. Supporters salute and vibrate around the minister. Her performance in the ministry shares space with the actions she performs as an evangelical pastor. He defends, in his speeches on the internet, that it is time for the Church to govern the country: “*The State is secular, but this minister is terribly Christian*”.

If there's one thing that seems impossible to me, it's leaving sexualities and genders at home and going to school or mass, or worship, or the terreiro, without them. The most you can do is try to lock them in a closet or another, but we know that this is complex. Thus, perhaps we could start from an almost consensual point that genders and sexualities are here, together with us, wherever we walk. When I think about school, specifically, I always remember that I spent many years of my childhood and youth there, it was there that I experienced many of my affective experiences, it was there that I started to become aware of how I saw/felt as a girl/woman, also crossed by other axes of power such as race, class, sexualities, generation, etc. Yeah, it's too long in a space to think that we occupy it being only half or part of what we are. We are there in one piece, with our fears, anxieties, expectations, contradictions and mutations.

Thinking about the field of education which, as I have already mentioned, is at the center of disputes involving campaigns against discussions about gender and sexuality in schools, it is possible to say, provoked by the dialogue with Chiaradia and Cassal (2019, p. 238, our translation) that we had a kind of “conservative turn in public education policies”. We migrated from the inclusion of a certain perspective of gender and sexuality as cross-cutting themes in the National Curricular Parameters - PCN (BRASIL, 1998), which was dated 1997, to the total suppression in the National Education Plan - PNE in 2014 (BRASIL, 2014) and also in the National Common Curricular Base – BNCC approved in 2017 (BRASIL, 2018). The approved version of the PNE excluded mentions of the word *gender* and presented, in its final version, only the generic term 'fighting educational inequalities' (VIANNA; BORTOLINI, 2020) and the approved version of the BNCC swept the mentions of gender from its text and sexual orientation.

Going back a bit to Butler's episode, in that same year of his passage through the country, the National Common Curricular Base – BNCC (BRASIL, 2018) had its third and final version approved without mentions of gender and sexual orientation, censored from the

document. The theme of sexuality appears only in the guidelines for teaching science and is indicated only for content in the eighth year of elementary school. The approach to sexuality is also centered on a biological perspective, that is, related to content such as sexually transmitted infections - STIs, pregnancy and reproduction (SILVA; BRANCALEONI; OLIVEIRA, 2019). To contextualize the importance of this document a little, I briefly return to the end of the 1990s, a very important moment for education policies, mainly in terms of the expansion of debates on human rights and respect for differences. The National Education Guidelines and Bases Law – LDB (BRASIL, 1996) was enacted from this moment, which would establish autonomy in the organization and management of education by the states of the federation. Next, we had the institution, in 1997, of the PCN (BRASIL, 1997), which has already been extensively analyzed by many researchers who recognize its importance for the field of gender equality policies, since it was the document that made official the sex education as something important in curricula and schools. I remember that the PCN indicated that teachers should work, in a transversal way, with the theme 'sexual orientation' (MACEDO, 2017; CARDOSO *et al.*, 2019; ROCHA, 2012; SILVA; BRANCALEONI; OLIVEIRA, 2019).

The impacts of this conservative turn in policies also resonate in school curricula. Paraíso (2016) understands the curriculum as a territory, a space of government and resistance, which involves multiple forces, crossed by normalizing attacks and also creators of inventive possibilities. Above all, she presents us with the curriculum as an uncontrollable scenario, according to the author “[...] precisely because it is uncontrollable, the curriculum is chosen by reactionary groups to carry out the restraint, impediment, prohibition and control of gender and sexuality’s themes” (PARAÍSO, 2016, p. 390, our translation). According to the author, “translation, multiplication, distortion and frightening” strategies are used (PARAÍSO, 2016, p. 390, our translation) as curriculum control resources. This game of inclusion and exclusion of terms in official documents is translated by the author as a *ciranda* between curriculum, gender, power and resistance.

Talking about public policies and education policies in this text is important because the results of the conflicts presented reverberate precisely in policies, in curricula, in the daily life of educational spaces. It is in the context of everyday scenes and spaces that we observe the impacts of the existence or not of these policies. Each historical and political moment is permeated by different relationships and power disputes and this also translates into the materialization of policies. Issues such as access to and permanence in education are fundamental in this everyday scene and are one of the main points of this debate. Understanding

a little better the paths and intersections of regulations, parameters, guidelines that underlie the day-to-day actions of educational spaces allows us to rethink our practices and understand the setbacks and possible advances that we could expect.

In addition to the points already presented, it is important to point out that the transformations in the field of public education policies, and not only, are inserted in a larger political, social and economic context. Biroli, Vaggione and Machado (2020) emphasize in their study on the relationship between gender, democracy and neoconservatism in Latin America that, in order to better understand this phenomenon, we need to identify the relationship between religions, current democracies and neoliberalism. The so-called moral factors must be considered together with the economic ones, since one of the new aspects of this wave is precisely the alliance formed between conservative Catholics, conservative evangelical segments and neoliberalism around the sense of family. For the authors, the main point of this alliance between neoconservatism and neoliberalism is that they “[...] converge by placing the family at the center of their broader conception of society”, especially “from the perspective of making families responsible in the midst of processes commodification and privatization” (BIROLI; VAGGIONE; MACHADO, 2020, n.p., our translation). The so-called moral questions, therefore, occupy a central place in the logic and dynamics of capitalist and neoliberal societies, since the responsibility for 'individual' success or failure would fall precisely on the family (FASSIN, 2021).

In general, these first reflections presented make me suggest that we have not yet come close to an approach to gender and sexualities that goes beyond the binary cisgender-heteropatriarchal model, with roots in biologizing conceptions of the body, sexualities and desires. Following the reflective balance made by Cardoso *et al.* (2019) it is possible to say that we moved from a set of policies that pointed to the idea of tolerance and respect for diversity as strategies to expand access and permanence in education, to policies that had the proposal to minimize inequalities considering axes of power such as gender, sexual orientation and race. In the scenario of education policies, thinking about the deconstruction of ways of loving, desiring, performing our sexualities and gender expressions still presents itself as a proposal to come.

The 'new era' of Damares, as well as all the actions of the Jair Bolsonaro government, left quite deep marks on Brazilian democratic institutions. Within the scope of education policies, we have a scenario of narrowing policies focused on issues of gender and sexuality, human rights, sexual and reproductive rights. The growth of Evangelical Group and other groups of conservative parliamentarians represent some of the challenges we face and will have

to face in the coming years. The 'new era' in which we had the President of the Republic vetoing the distribution of sanitary napkins to elementary and high school students and to people in situations of social vulnerability, defending military intervention and saluting torturers, had a profound impact on our democracy.

Threat to children's subjectivities. Politics of fear and threat to freedom directed at educators and artists (MISKOLCI, 2018; BALIEIRO, 2018; CHIARADIA; CASSAL, 2019); association of homosexuality with pedophilia presented as an argument to justify censorship movements against human rights activists, and in particular sexual and reproductive rights; censorship of literature books, performances and works of art in general (LIONÇO *et al.*, 2018). These were some of the core elements of this 'era' I intended to talk about in this topic.

On the (im)possibilities of *queer* policies in Education

The promise of a new modern world that would promote equality, freedom and fraternity seems not to have materialized, at least in what modern science has been calling *universal*. This ideal looks more like a ruined monument. Or, a dilapidated colonial cisgender-heteropatriarchal monument. Even if many refuse to understand the reasons for this collapse, there is no way we can ignore the blood, the bodies, the wounds, the screams, the sound of the shots that some insist on saying, *lost*. As far away as they seem to be, these 'others', these strange, bizarre, dissidents, are us, we are right here. We are mutants. If, for the white, cisgender, heterosexual and colonial political elite that arbitrates over our existences in Congress, in the Chambers, in universities, in schools, in churches, in companies, we are not the representation of what is understood to be human and, therefore, we are subjects who inspire a model of a possible world, how can we give vent to any political mobilization force that moves us in different directions than those presented in the previous topic? How can we stop imagining the power game of public policies as a tug of war with disproportionately organized teams pulling the strings? Within the scope of institutional public policy, the outcome of the game is often us with our faces in the dust; they pull the rope really hard and off we go, straight to the ground.

Jota Mombaça tells us about the politicization of the wound, about the creation of possible worlds from the break, that is, from everything that weakens us, that shatters us. In an attempt to define what this 'being together in the breaking' would be like, the author suggests that “the breaking is not the shrapnel, but the abrupt, erratic and disorderly movement of the shattering” (MOMBAÇA, 2021, p. 24, our translation). Maybe it's that exact moment when the

rope is pulled and we feel the momentum that precedes the fall. So, I keep asking myself: what policies are born from shattering? Dialoguing with PocaHY 's (2016) reflections on how to think and produce *queer (micro)politics* in academia and research, I wondered which policies or micropolitics we have been producing. For this author, queer (micro)politics,

With their profane, restless, abused, radically promiscuous, fat and overflowing impatience epistemologies of the world in the face of the colonels of the new national political order (whether this new order is in the academy, in the church, in the legislatures and other places-practices of social police), multitudes of Fleeing bodies make life pulsate, establishing other forms of organization and collectivity passionate about fluidity and pleasure as an ethical-aesthetic-political invention of life (POCAHY, 2016, p. 226-227, our emphasis, our translation).

Let's stick with the phrase '*bodies on the run that make life pulsate*'. And let's think about the countless daily manifestations of questioning or escaping from the norm. Those that we witness or experience in the streets, in schools, in museums, universities, in artistic manifestations, or even in the homes of some relatives. Those we experience with our dissident bodies entering spaces without asking for permission. The ones that remind us that desiring and guiding desire is raw material for the constitution of lives. And even those that revive our memory through pain – the pain of being pointed out on the street, of physical aggression, of denial of affection, of abandonment, of the cutting-violent comment whispered softly as we pass by: '*Sapatão, freaks ...*'.

Living despite Brazil and “[...] living despite everything. In the radicalism of the impossible” is what Jota Mombaça cries out to us (MOMBAÇA, 2021, p. 14, our translation). Let's stay with her. According to the author, “Brazil, this colonized and (re)colonial fiction, submissive to imperialism and imperialism, dominated and dominant, never actually served the purpose of the continuous struggles for the liberation of the territory and subjugated bodies in its construction” (MOMBAÇA, 2021, p. 16, our translation). It would therefore remain for us to invest in the fleeing body mentioned in the previous paragraph. Body, gesture, word on the run. I am very much crossed by questions about the materiality of *queer policies*, and when I say materiality, I mean those so-called institutional policies and those so-called subjective ones, if it is important for someone to separate them. I prefer to work with the perspective of saying politics of bodies or politics of lives. Conversing with the artistic-philosophical thinking of artist Lina da Quebrada⁸, she provokes us: “let's take our bodies as weapons” and Mombaça

⁸Lina Pereira dos Santos, also known as Lina da Quebrada, is a Brazilian multi-artist and thinker.

(2016, p. 344, our translation) interacts: let us be “monstrous in space in the norm, undisciplined in the place of discipline”. Tips number one and two for thinking about queer politics.

Going back a little to the pieces of shards that have accompanied us at this meeting, Linn da Quebrada composes her name from that same idea, from those shards of a mirror that, according to her, previously reflected a man made in the image and likeness of God⁹. It is also born in/from the break. We are together. For the creation of *queer* politics, we would need, then, some kind of destruction of what is established, we would need to abdicate the 'essence self', the 'fixed self', the right way to teach, write, think, eat, love, and until we are alone. PocaHy (2016), in his provocation to normative academic production arising from cisgenders, points to training in education and health as possible spaces for the inter-invention of democratic tools. Body as a weapon. Body bomb that explodes the fixed meanings of existence and science. Rumble from within. We're in the same scenario and we can't get out. Remember: we are alive "despite...". *Queer* politics are like improvised and danced steps without coordination, without form, that mess with the aesthetic, with the norm. In the improvisational movement, life becomes uncontrollable, because it changes all the time, because we abdicate what would be right, beautiful, normal, expected.

Halberstam (2020, p. 133, our translation), in his theoretical elaborations on the *queer art* of failure, suggests that “Queer studies offer us a method to imagine, not some kind of fantasy of another place, but existing alternatives to hegemonic systems”. I repeat: collapse from within. We need to prevent them from burning the witches or, as Linn da Quebrada poetizes: “Don’t burn the witches / But let them love the faggots / But let them love / Let them love / Cry out / Let them love / Let them love the locks too”¹⁰. In the midst of institutional policy movements that move and legislate based on rosaries, bibles and Brazilian flags, *queer politics* happen in political bodies that insist on not dying. For Halberstam:

While liberal histories build triumphant political narratives with progressive histories of development and success, radical histories must deal with a less organized past, one that conveys legacies of failure and loneliness as consequences of homophobia, racism and xenophobia (HALBERSTAM, 2020, p. 146- 147, our translation).

⁹ *Bixa Travesty* (2018), an autobiographical documentary that tells a bit of the story of artist Linn da Quebrada. Available at: <https://globoplay.globo.com/bixa-travesty/t/c5LxGg2M7f/>. Access: 10 June 2023

¹⁰ Music 'Prayer' by Linn da Quebrada. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y5rY2N1XuLI>. Access: 10 June 2023

Linn da Quebrada tells us: “I will be the inconvenience for your theses, because I am and will continue to be in the works”¹¹. *Queer* politics are bodies in the works, who live and dance despite Brazil. Far from clinging to the triumphant narratives of the promises of a progressive institutional policy, we are alert looking for radical stories, anxious that, if we have a future, it will present us with problems different from those we address in this writing, that we will have other problems and, therefore, other new solutions for us to create.

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¹¹ *Bixa Travesty* (2018), an autobiographical documentary that tells a bit of the story of artist Linn da Quebrada. Available at: <https://globoplay.globo.com/bixa-travesty/t/c5LxGg2M7f/>. Access: 10 June 2023

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