

**SYMPTOMS OF CONTEMPORARY BRAZIL: DISCURSIVE TENSIONS AND  
EDUCATION FOR THE DIFFERENCE**

***SINTOMAS DO BRASIL CONTEMPORÂNEO: TENSÕES DISCURSIVAS E A  
EDUCAÇÃO PARA A DIFERENÇA***

***SÍNTOMAS DEL BRASIL CONTEMPORÂNEO: TENSIONES DISCURSIVAS Y  
EDUCACIÓN PARA LA DIFERENCIA***

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**ABSTRACT:** It is intended to reflect on the moment experienced in Brazil, understanding it as a symptom of Contemporaneity, thinking about social practices and discourses that strain and re-articulate all the time. The deconstruction of historical facts and the refutation of scientific events are some of the examples that we pursue in this reflection, questioning ourselves about the educational models and the ways of seeing History, which establish direct relations with the aspects of social exclusion and with subjective formations. In this sense, the truth seems to lose its privileged position and occupy with a certain fragility a place based on the belief in the figure of the modern subject. We propose new perspectives on the fields of knowledge, calling us to think about education for diversity as an indispensable perspective to face the rise of social barbarism.

**KEYWORDS:** Education. History. Discursive practices. Subjectivation processes. Truths.

**RESUMO:** Pretende-se refletir acerca do momento vivenciado no Brasil, entendendo-o como sintoma da Contemporaneidade, pensando práticas e discursos sociais que tensionam-se e rearticulam-se a todo instante. A desconstrução de fatos históricos e a refutação de eventos científicos são alguns dos exemplos que perseguimos nesta reflexão, indagando-nos acerca dos modelos educativos e os modos de ver a História, que estabelecem relações diretas com os aspectos de exclusão social e com as formações subjetivas. Nesse sentido, a verdade parece perder sua posição privilegiada e ocupar, com certa fragilidade, um lugar baseado na crença na figura do sujeito moderno. Nos coube propor novos olhares aos campos do saber, convocando-nos a pensar a educação para diversidade como perspectiva indispensável ao enfrentamento da ascensão da barbárie social.

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**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** Educação. História. Práticas discursivas. Processos de subjetivação. Verdades.

**RESUMEN:** Tiene la intención de reflexionar sobre el momento experimentado en Brasil, entendiéndolos como síntomas de Contemporaneidad, pensando en prácticas sociales y discursos que se tensan y rearticulan en todo momento. La deconstrucción de hechos históricos y la refutación de eventos científicos son algunos de los ejemplos que buscamos en esta reflexión, preguntándonos acerca de los modelos educativos y las formas de ver la Historia, que establecen relaciones directas con los aspectos de exclusión social y con formaciones subjetivas. En este sentido, la verdad parece perder su posición privilegiada y ocupar con cierta fragilidad un lugar basado en la creencia en la figura del sujeto moderno. Depende de nosotros proponer nuevas perspectivas en los campos del conocimiento, llamándonos a pensar en la educación para la diversidad como una perspectiva indispensable para enfrentar el aumento de la barbarie social.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** Educación. Historia. Prácticas discursivas. Procesos de subjetivación. Las verdades.

## Introduction

This article will seek to reflect on discursive trends that are present in contemporary Brazil, thinking them as effects of practices constituted in Western thought, based on a specific educational model and on a cultural plot crossed by moral perspectives. We are currently faced with a series of propositions and statements that position historical facts in Brazil, registered and extensively researched, under distorted or biased senses; issues that are legitimized and driven by the logic of the formation of a common average thought, which tends to ignore or be absent from the problematization of facts and scientific theories. This tensioning of the truth and its position of fragility would not be a problematic issue, were it not based on: the claim of a personality and in the absolute belief in the ideals of the modern subject, in addition to a reinvigoration of the moral facet, which gave foundations to the thought metaphysical-transcendental to which we refer.

It is necessary, initially, that we understand what would discourses and discursive practices be, as understood by Michel Foucault (1926-1984), in addition to accessing his concept of device and his influence in the formation of subjectivities. Understanding what we call Contemporaneity here also seems fundamental to us, following the perspective of Giorgio Agamben (2009), assuming the ethical attitude that evokes the construction of an understanding of the now in this time and outside it. The paths of Education and the looks at History are essential aspects in this reflection, as their practices are still surrounded by formalisms and

naturalizations, little problematized in their relations with the past, ratifying a semi-formative process supported by cultural conventionalisms, as mentioned by Theodor Adorno (1903-1969).

We will use Marc Bloch (1886-1944) in his reflection on the need for dynamism in history, denying it as a neutral and linear object, evoking a history of the event; We will then access some discourses in vogue in contemporary Brazil, using Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) and his critique of moral values, as well as his critique of science as creator of fixed narratives, which do not displace previous ascetic perspectives, which fail to transmit its real functioning, and that end up allowing the invigoration of retrograde and harmful ideals for humanity.

In this sense, it seems essential to look closely at the educational models and cultural aspects that justify the consequences of the paths traveled by Brazil, which unfold in contemporary times in a series of moral discourses, in addition to the option made in the areas called “scientific” Through a totalizing bias and the creation of new hegemonies, which aim to rule private and alien life through knowledge, as well as the transmission of discourses of control and domination. Thinking of possible ways to transform the contemporary barbarism scenario, education for difference and diversity would seek to be supported by singular movements and differentiation with the collective, constituting new possibilities to produce subjectively and transpose universalizing representations.

### **Discursive practices and the fraying of truths: Education, History and contemporary subjectivities**

As an initial proposal, it is necessary to problematize what we will understand in this text by discourse, following the perspective of Michel Foucault (1979), as well as the concept of contemporaneity, explained by Giorgio Agamben (2009). Both refer to the basis of this discussion, with the intention of locating us in the midst of this certain lived moment, understanding it as a symptom of the production and the constant reformulation of the technologies of power.

The discourse, for Foucault (1996), is carried out as a set of statements defined by conditions of existence, which are subjectivators and producers. With this, Foucault unveils universal and essentialist presuppositions of the social imaginary about the discourse and articulates to them institutional and social modalities of appearance, circulation and selection. Discursive practices are historically situated sets of rules, many of them anonymously

naturalized and constantly modified. The word is, therefore, a materiality, which creates new materialities; symptom of a long process of beliefs; representation that emerges with new power regimes and notions of the subject. The discourse, then, makes it work, reproduces, reinforces new power/knowledge relations, produces individualities.

In this way, there is nothing "behind" the discourse, as the statements and their relations are characteristic of their functioning, understanding language as constituting concrete practices, forming the object of which they speak. One of the premises of this interpretation of the discourse is not to believe in the existence of permanent structures, because although the discursive formation is characterized by practical regularity, it is always in relation with the fields of knowledge, with the matrices of meaning, with the regimes of truth: the word only becomes discourse when it is endowed with these forces. Primarily, the laws and properties of discourses are effects of the discursive field, as well as social subjects and subjectivities. Therefore, it is not necessary to analyze the content of these speeches, but to understand why they are related to events (FISHER, 2001).

The devices are instruments that are established in the conditions of possibility of events, being able to guide, control, regulate the practices and conduct of the subjects, who are immersed in processes of subjectification, obstructing the possibilities of constitution of singular modes of existence. These governability devices originate in the process of hominization, of separating the living from themselves and their environment, exercising a strategic function of manipulating the power relations, guiding or blocking them, configuring themselves as linguistic networks or not (FOUCAULT, 1996).

As Arenas and Trujillo (2020) point out, in the analysis of international documents and reports, since the mid-1940s, educational discourses have supported the concepts of Human Capital Theory<sup>4</sup>, where knowledge is seen as a path of progress and economic development, making education for competitiveness a method of State social policy, focused on employment and citizenship as factors of innovation and productivity. Scientific discourse belongs to this homogenizing bias of culture, aimed at institutionalizing and rationalizing social life, inferring about essential themes such as the environment, human rights, democracy, etc. These

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<sup>4</sup> The Human Capital Theory emerged in the mid-1950s in the USA, formulated by Theodore Schultz, in some of his works (*The economic value of education* - 1963; *Investment in Human Capital: The Role of Education and of Research* - 1971), winning the Prize Nobel Prize in Economics in 1968. This conception formulates the understanding that education and professional qualification are essential assumptions for economic productivity. In addition to strengthening the technicist conception of education, this theory serves as a basis for the displacement of the individual scope in relation to social problems, placing the "self" in direct connection with capital.

globalizing logics and unilateral recommendations end up being reflected in the daily fields of social and political action.

Contemporaneity, therefore, is a unique relationship with time itself, which adheres to it and, at the same time, takes distances from it; more precisely, this is *the relationship with time that it adheres to through dissociation and anachronism*. Those who coincide very much with the era, who adhere perfectly to it in all aspects, are not contemporary because, precisely for this reason, they cannot see it, cannot keep their eyes fixed on it (AGAMBEN, 2009, p. 59, authors' highlights, our translation).

Contrasting the traditional ideas that position Contemporaneity as a mere historical periodization, Agamben (2009) is concerned with its conceptualization and the possibility of delimitation. The contemporary is a return that does not tire of repeating itself, it is a temporality of the present; it is a lamp that dazzles, but allows to see; only it exists, because each time it is “the now” that presents itself, it is the object and element of the now. For the author, those who dedicate themselves to thinking the contemporary need to start from an ethical attitude of refusal and strangeness of their time, of recognizing the points of split and rupture, in order to place their gaze under the archaic and under the current. This ethical stance is, then, a stance towards time, which aims to understand the present day, seeking to overcome its subjection devices. Countless exhaustions are being produced, in view of the double effect that is reflected in culture: on the one hand, the troubled political movement of the Modern State, the claim of minority groups and the emergence of a new aesthetic of fascism; on the other, the practical and supposedly peaceful daily life, in which the subjects fulfill their social determinations. These exhaustions occur in the inertia of political capacities, in the field of work, in the maintenance of exclusionary State policies, in the established moral norm, among other aspects. It is essential, then, to understand time as this event of the now, as we are the result of these events and how “fractures” can serve us as commitments to look in the dark of our time.

### **Why are we surprised?**

It is debated today nationally and also at a global level on the upsurge of certain authoritarian forces (as is the case with fascism), as well as the strengthening of the discussion on topics that at least in our imagination seemed to be pacified. In this sense, it is very common to see speeches claiming science, education, knowledge, history as tools capable of remedying the delusion of some and combating the obscurantist practices that have become so common today. We understand the claim, but it is necessary to pay attention to the pitfalls that can be

produced in this field of struggle, after all, the field of knowledge, its institutions and its production cannot be placed in another way, as if they did not have responsibilities, as if they were not permeated by power relations and disputes. Thus, more specifically with regard to History and Education, it is necessary to reflect on how these practices in some way also collaborate to reinvigorate these backward ideals.

In education, Theodor Adorno (2006) will be a great representative of thinkers who will be concerned with understanding in the post-war the paths that led to barbarism and how to prevent these events from recurring in the present. For Adorno (2006), education has an indispensable and fundamental role in the world: avoiding a return to the state of barbarism through contestation and resistance. For that, it needs to think not only about the individual or the formation, but also about the relationship between the individual and the social environment in which he is inserted, always through critical thinking. In this sense, an education without the development of critical thinking capable of exposing the contradictions of any and every relationship in social life, the weakening and reduction of rationality to a merely reified and instrumental condition are some clues that Adorno (2006) raises as factors that contributed to the state of barbarization to which the world was swallowed up in the first half of the twentieth century and that serve as symptoms, keeping the proper proportions, in view of what is happening in the present.

In order to think about how to develop this critical thinking, Adorno (2006), in a text entitled "*The Meaning of Working Through the Past*", proposes to think about the need to face the causes and contradictions that were part of the constitution of any society, instead of producing amenities, or distortions that try to reduce violence and barbarism to a point outside the curve, to a mere excess. The lack of frank and critical confrontation of these issues is what keeps alive and pulsating in our present authoritarian ideas and conceptions, such as, for example, fascism or Nazism.

Nazism survives, and we still do not know whether it does so only as a ghost of what was so monstrous as to not succumb to death itself, or if the disposition for the unspeakable remains present in men as well as in the conditions that surround them (ADORNO, 2006, p. 29, our translation).

His words sound prophetic today, given that tyrannical ideals are gaining strength in various parts of the world. For example, we have followed the growth of ultranationalist groups and parties based on neo-Nazi and neo-fascist ideas in Europe. In Brazil, on the other hand, we also see a growing ultraconservative wave added to a religious fundamentalism that testifies against the free society that we aim for, showing us that we have not resolved ourselves with



our colonial, aristocratic and slave-making past. All these ghosts that hover in the present only show what the author already warned in his reflections.

But even if this happens, the danger remains. The past will only be fully elaborated the moment the causes of what happened are eliminated. The enchantment of the past has been able to remain until today only because its causes continue to exist (ADORNO, 2006, p. 49, our translation).

In this debate around the continuity and renewed strength within this relationship between the present and the past, history has been widely claimed as the field of knowledge capable of helping us to understand the dimension of the paradigm we are facing. But it is necessary to know which History, which historiographic work we are talking about, because within their practices there are also intentionalities, power struggles, indulgences and conformities in the face of their exercise. History is not neutral, although some still seek to support this myth; thus, a History that can help to address these contemporary issues needs to be a critical action.

Marc Bloch (2002), French historian, when he writes "*The Historian's Craft*", proposes to answer a question in a simple thesis: "what is history for?". In this endeavor, he promoted a series of subversions that went against the positivist values of the traditional conceptions of historiographic making. Bloch (2002) breaks with the idea of History as a field of knowledge dedicated to the past or even with the idea that it is the object that moves the problematizations. For the historian, the relationship with the past is always based on the dynamics of the present, of questions, of problems that arise in the present, so history is a dynamic field of knowledge and not immobile within a linearity - past/present/future.

Since history is dynamic, problematizations and views of the object are also dynamic, so History cannot be a practice of immovable and irrefutable truths, it cannot also be the object, what makes problems move, but the opposite, it is the problematizations in each present that move objects in search of their causes, and as Bloch (2002) says: "*In short, causes, in history as in other domains, are not postulated, they are sought*" (p. 159, our translation). Discussing a little more deeply about our metaphysical way of thinking, we understand the constitution of Western thought and historical science surrounded by the search for truth, essentialist views, specific dates, the search for origin. For this, the differences and inconsistencies of events are neglected to the detriment of the whole, seeking a logic, something that is established as a historical fact.

Time is so complex that it does and undoes, it not only gives life and dissipates it, but also mark it irrevocably. Therefore, when analyzing the time of a certain

time, we perceive the density of thought, we understand the optimistic and defeatist radiations, the euphoria and neurosis, the soft and burning themes. In the field of education, we find times of darkness and enlightenment, ignorance and enlightened times, more canonical and more prone to rebellion, more obedient and independent. Time and space definitively condense the conception of society. If we travel through history, many eras are coming from different social conceptions, from different educational models, from different development structures, from different ways of organizing life! (VAZQUEZ; DUQUE, 2020, p. 29, our translation).

As Vazquez and Duque (2000) point out, the present time is made up of discontinuities, from the crossing of processes. Not only has history been deconstructing modern ideals, which considers science and the rational as an absolute instance of thought, seeking to understand the event as just a symptom based on a constant and multiple struggle; theories strongly legitimized in the collective imagination, such as the medical and physical sciences, have also been deconstructed and questioned. The negativity or positivity of this fact is not judged here, only the questions are understood as part of the signs that inhabit contemporary times. In schools and classrooms, however, practices related to the teaching of history are still permeated by a strong tradition of historical linearity, formalisms and narratives of major events. Brazilian educational policies always seem to be focused on localized perspectives, prioritizing immediate resolution, based on goals of the educational system, under a kind of “*myopia of the urgent*” (VAZQUEZ; DUQUE, 2020).

Insofar as History behaves like a sequencing of facts or a depository of anthropocentric narratives, the capacity to critically problematize issues that are local and current is lost. In addition, an excessively fast and low-profile perspective of history, of looking in time for its possible causes in favor of a merely informative construction, serves purely technical and productivist interests. History as an informative practice produces a break between the past and the present and creates a gap where it is impossible to understand the developments, the refinements, the jerks that are in it.

Adorno (2006) makes an important reflection on the formative process and how it suffered a distortion or even a deformation insofar as it became submissive to certain aspects of social formation, where culture in turn also became subject to objective criteria of established economic production. In other words, the formation process has become weakened or conditioned to an objective, economic, sustained and supported by a cultural conventionalism determined within the structures of social formation. The reduction of formation to a state of semi-formation created prisons for critical thinking, as it engenders conciliatory processes, obscures and hides the contradictions inherent in the formation process of any society,



naturalizing and essentializing what is social construction. Thus, in a society where contradictions are softened and hidden, there is no possibility for anything other than conformation and adaptation. Because culture, thought and formative processes become mere replicators (ADORNO, 2006). Education and the historical field itself, in this context, instead of assuming a critical role, are reduced, without offering any resistance, to the reproductive and adaptive logic of the subjects to the established status. It seems clear that a reflection on the upsurge of authoritarian forces, the upsurge also in the field of ideas today, cannot be done by understanding these forces as something external, that takes people's minds and hearts by storm. Reflecting on these issues requires understanding them as the fruits of social production itself. In this sense, knowledge, science, education, and history cannot be treated as purified constructions, free from responsibilities and intentions. It is necessary to make this recognition because, only then, it will be possible to exert resistance against prejudice, violence, tyranny, the reification of thought, the diffusion, and the naturalization of barbarism in society.

### **Circulating discourses and the struggle of narratives: morality, divisions with science and the trembling of truths**

Some discourses circulating in the current Brazilian moment illustrate the issues that we seek to discuss in this text. In them we perceive clear questions of science and historical facts supposedly established since previous centuries, as well as shaken perspectives of truth, which tension the places of administration and authorship of what is said. Under another layer, very visible moral aspects emerge, which link us to a recent or not so recent past, and which show where humanity tends to cling when rigid identity constructs are threatened.

As a first example of this type of movement, we illustrate the growing demands for the re-establishment of the monarchical empire in Brazil. Heirs of the two emperors of Brazil (Pedro I and Pedro II), the Orleans and Bragança, justify the ethical deviations that occurred with Brazilian politicians and the corruption scandals as foundations for the movement. In social networks, the group has more than 13 thousand followers, in addition to forming groups in various states of the country.

Just as a reminder, the Monarchy in Brazil took place between 1822 and 1889, going through several historical phases, giving direct continuity to the Portuguese royal lineage of D. João VI. The primary political characteristic of this period is the centralization of power, with the emperor's subjects as European immigrants, native Indians, Africans and Afro-descendants, that is, popular classes and workers. The regional revolts of this period were diverse, such as

Cabanagem (1835-1840) in Pará, Sabinada (1837-1838) in Bahia, Balaiada (1838-1840) in Maranhão, Farrapos War (1835-1845) in Rio Grande do Sul, all demonstrating the population's resistance to the monarchical system and resulting in thousands of civilian deaths. This period was also marked by the structuring of the Brazilian Armed Forces, markedly used to defend the interests of the State (VIANA, 1996). The absence of public/ private distinction and traces of clientelism structured the colonization model in Brazil, which makes us expand our understanding of current times, understanding them not as isolated and new facts, which started a few years ago for a local party or political agent. Furthermore, the legacy of a slave country already presupposes a huge social debt. The monarchical period legitimized the privileges and the maintenance of the country's economic elite in power, as well as making social control broader, as it was involved in religious and moral issues (VIANA, 1996).

Another discourse that has been gaining ground, including within Brazilian schools, is the refutation of the historical period that comprises the Military Dictatorship (1964-1985) and the request of a portion of the population for a new military intervention in the country. For 20 years Brazil has lived through the elimination of opponents, journalists, artists, or anyone called “subversive”, as a State policy; the environment created by the dictatorship was one of repression, surveillance, systematic torture, illegal arrests and disappearances. With the false endorsement of "laws", the State was used to corrupt institutions and feed the military's own interests in power (REIS, 1988). Several aspects contrary to workers can be highlighted during the period of the Dictatorship: lack of basic sanitation, poor health and only for formal workers, the lack of supervision of the works or fiscal councils of the applied public money, and above all, the possibility of suspension political rights of any citizen, for any reason found by the regime. Free thinking was not an option and there was a strict control of information and individual freedoms, with the transmission of the dominant ideology as a priority in education. For those who evoke the country's development in this period as a justification for the belief in a new military period, we recall the increase in foreign debt that proved to be beyond payment capacities in the first decade of redemocratization (REIS, 2000).

What makes this situation relevant today is the performance of anti-democratic acts, as we have seen in open precedents in recent history. The historical knowledge produced during the 20-year period of the Dictatorship does not seem to have been placed critically in the teaching of History in Brazil, visualizing the political conscience of Brazilians, the recognition of the military and the Armed Forces and of many institutions that supported the dictatorial regime, as executioners and financers of the deaths of thousands of civilians. Salutations to torturers and rapists in National Congress, elections based on fake news and manipulation of

information and the media, rescue of moral values and domination of the body and thought, weakening of workers' rights, censorship of art and journalism and use of laws for the benefit of themselves and others, are some examples of the tone of contemporary Brazilian politics.

Another discourse that emerged in the form of political practice is about the so-called “Gender Ideology”<sup>5</sup>: statements of religious bias that aims to rescue the already faced biological thinking about gender. With the emergence of new paradigms about the construction of the self and the proposition of more flexible sexual roles, in addition to the reflection on violence against the growing LGBTQIA+ community in the country, the response was the dangerous junction between conservative religious thinking and educational policies. The interference and the target in the deconstruction of human rights materialized in the discourse of gender ideology, in an attempt to disqualify the movement, its needs for recognition and defense. What is understood in this discourse is an attempt to maintain the two traditional horizons: heteronormativity and patriarchy. The maintenance attempt would already be expected, considering the weight occupied by these hegemonic forms of existence. The expansion of the gender perspective, however, does not symbolize the possibility of destroying families, but the possibility of deconstructing them, expanding their models, including their matrix, which are not patriarchal and traditional in practical reality. The belief in gender ideology is yet another framework of statements, of distortion of historical facts and attempts to empty and universalize the common average thought, among many disseminated in contemporary Brazil.

The moral bias that Western thought acquires after the advent of Judeo-Christian doctrine seems to emerge in contemporary times, reminding us of its association with the metaphysical-transcendental dynamics and its prevalence in the universalizing enterprise of a rationality, always dependent on dissociated external idols and crutches dissociated from the materiality plan. From Christianity to modern ideas, the same ethics unfolds, under a morality of detachment from instincts, separation between man and nature, surpassing and inferiorizing it, intending to control and train bodies to improve their usefulness and productivity, and same sources of values. This model of weak man, lover of reason, is immersed in conformism and apathy and has the greatest fear in the chaos of life and the maintenance of universal collectivity its greatest objective (NIETZSCHE, 2009). We recognize then, the successive plateaus that are engendered in paralysis of thought, linked to the traps of knowledge and in the illusion of

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<sup>5</sup> EGGERT, E.; REIS, T. Ideologia de Gênero: uma falácia construída sobre os planos de educação brasileiros. *Educ. Soc.*, Campinas, v. 38, n. 138, p.9-26, jan./mar. 2017. Available: <https://www.scielo.br/pdf/es/v38n138/1678-4626-es-38-138-00009.pdf>. Access: 5 July 2020.

control over objects, that endorse an association between truth and myth, even if science tries to deny it.

Science, since its first initiative, was rejected for political-ideological and religious reasons, as it directly challenged hegemonic groups in power. At the same time, in its legitimizing process, it creates new hegemonies, new discourses and statements in the format of established truths. These poles of strength in constant struggle result in the dilemmas that we live in Contemporaneity. Misunderstandings and distortions are shown to result from the failure to transmit scientific thought in educational environments, which do not explore their processes of investigating reality, their wandering, their applications in everyday life. The politics of post-fact or post-truth as many researchers have studied is configured as a new model of nationalist authoritarianism, which denies scientific evidence, most of the time, in the name of an economic or market ideology, linked to transformations of the capitalist system.

In themselves, the rules are empty, violent, unfinished; they are made to serve this or that; they can be defrauded at the will of one or the other. The big game in history will be whoever gets hold of the rules, whoever takes the place of those who use it, whoever disguises itself to pervert it, use it inside out and turn it against those who had imposed it; from whom, introducing themselves in the complex apparatus, will make it work in such a way that the dominators will find themselves dominated by their own rules (FOUCAULT, 2005, p. 283-284, our translation).

Science, therefore, is not partisan, but is eminently political. The balance between the instances of absolutism and denial needs to be stimulated through critical and comprehensive reflection of the facts, with educators, journalists, intellectuals committed to research as direct agents, not of the order of essences, but of pluralities. New ethical and moral discussions are necessary, unveiling interests and vicissitudes, in the articulation of the body/man with history. The emptying of Brazilian average thought serves specific interests that must be exposed, so that rearticulations and resistance can be generated.

Some direct examples of these questions about science, which have concrete consequences in daily life, are, for example, movements such as “Anti-vaccine”<sup>6</sup>, which are configured as people who support the non-immunization of children. This trend grows worldwide and forms significant groups in Brazil, causing vaccination coverage to plummet dramatically in recent years in the country. The movement, formerly influenced by religious or opponents of the pharmaceutical industry, today gains more and more young followers linked

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<sup>6</sup> NASSARALLA, A. “*Dimensões e consequências do movimento antivacina na realidade brasileira*” (2019). Available: <http://revistas.unievangelica.com.br/index.php/educacaoemsaude/article/view/3813/2651>. Access: 5 July 2020.

to “natural” issues, denying allopathic medicine. The movement grew out of questionable reports and studies and false news circulating on social networks, in line with the population's deep distrust of its leaders.

A report by the World Health Organization included the Anti-vaccine Movement as one of the top ten health risks to the population worldwide, in a list that includes the Ebola, HIV, Zika and dengue viruses<sup>7</sup>. The movement threatens to reverse progress in the fight against eradicated and preventable diseases, which save 2 to 3 million people a year. Another theoretical question that is almost unimaginable, but which is gaining more and more followers in various parts of the world, is the Terraplanist Movement<sup>8</sup>. This aims to question all Kepler's Laws, which date from the 15th century and underlie Aster Physics, in addition to Copernicus's Heliocentrism and Newton's laws of gravity. Founded in the USA, the “Flat Earth Society” emerged in the middle of the 20th century, but gained strength in 2009, with new members and new challenging theories. They are based, basically, on conspiratorial texts, which include the involvement of Freemasonry and the Illuminatis, questioning concepts legitimized in science for more than 2 thousand years. Recently, the Flat Earth International Conference (FEIC) announced a cruise to the “limits of the earth”, which they believe to be an immense wall of ice, Antarctica, which would separate us from the “outside”.

These two examples illustrate the wave of anti-scientific discourses emerging in contemporary times, which are enhanced by the democratization of the media, which, at the same time that it expands access to information, feeds reasoning motivated by “thinkings” and personal perceptions of situations. Illustrated as a perspective, the truth acquires a fragile position, since, sustained by the construction of a modern “self”, supposedly autonomous and liberated, the personal character of the beliefs is claimed.

The adhesion of the technological ideal as a development discourse for Brazil has great responsibility in face of the exposed scenario, in view of the exclusion of social problems and the emptying of the perspective of human work, adhering only to the global statements of competitiveness of “information societies” and market concepts such as “productivity and entrepreneurship”, prioritizing the mastery of skills to critical reflection aimed at social education (BAPTISTA; PALHANO; DINIZ; SILVA, 2020).

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<sup>7</sup> SBMT, Sociedade Brasileira de Medicina Tropical: Movimento antivacina é uma das dez ameaças para a saúde mundial. 11 abr. 2019. Available: <https://www.sbmt.org.br/portal/anti-vaccine-movement-is-one-of-the-ten-threats-to-global-health/>. Access: 05 July 2020.

<sup>8</sup> SERRA, “*Educação Geográfica, dilemas e desafios contemporâneos*” (2019). Available: <http://periodicos.puc-rio.br/index.php/revistaeducacaogeograficaemfoco/article/view/1153/653>. Access: 5 July 2020.

PAOLILLO. “*The Flat Earth phenomenon on Youtube*” (2018) – Indiana University. Available: <https://firstmonday.org/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/8251>. Access: 5 July 2020.

These trends evoke the need to seek an explanation of the phenomena within the culture, analyzing their forms of development and identifying the discursive practices that would constitute the game of the true and the false. The forms of subjectivity are constantly crossed by the power devices, they are renewed and reinvented, varying in non-linear intensity, not necessarily constituting scales of evolution or progress. These movements of retroactive discourses, therefore, are part of the human path, which seems to have a kind of life management in the crisis, as they are unable and plastered in the face of the creation of other possible ones.

Under the Deleuzian perspective of difference<sup>9</sup>, it is possible to think beyond the search for integration, guided by the goals of the school system, understanding education for difference as this learning focused on the temporality of the event, this being the movement in which the singularity is produced before the virtualities that orbit the Being and that, when they meet, produce new singularities. The process of differentiation is renewed dynamically, and cannot be reduced to internal or external attributes, as it transposes any form of representation or universalization into categories, considering each individual as something unique, a unique expression of each Being (LANUTI; BAPTISTA; RAMOS, 2020). In this sense, a new formation process needs to be built/invented, supported by the perspectives of difference and diversity, in order to overcome and resolve the exclusions and disregard for fundamental rights so present in the scenario of social barbarism, fruits of intolerance, violence, the negation of the other.

## Final considerations

We seek to discuss in this text issues considered relevant due to their current and urgent need for problematization, in view of the constitution of a culture that has enabled the reinvigoration of traditionalist and obsolete ideals. At first, it was important to point out Michel Foucault's understandings regarding the constitution of discourses, discursive practices and the devices that incessantly produce subjectivities. It is also important to demarcate how we look at our problems in terms of their location in time and social space. For that, we looked in Agamben (2009) for the possibility of delimiting the Contemporary as the moment of fracture,

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<sup>9</sup> When the body combines its remarkable points with those of the wave, it establishes the principle of a repetition, which is not the same, but which understands the Other, which understands the difference and which, from one wave and gesture to another, transports this difference through the repetitive space thus constituted. Learning is to build this space of encounter with signs, a space in which the relevant points are returned to each other and in which repetition is formed at the same time that it is disguised (DELEUZE, 2006, p. 48-49).



of exposure, of perceiving the darkness in yesterday that we say is today; being untimely, the contemporary is questioning the present time, despite believing only in the now; rhizomatic, understands the existence of an unimaginable threshold.

In a second step, it was shown to be fundamental to understand education as having an indispensable role in consolidating the look at the historical phenomena present in the culture of a country. Thus, to avoid the rise of barbarism, the individual and the social environment need to be integrated from a critical pedagogical perspective and that preserves the singularity (ADORNO, 2006). The reified condition, permeated by formalisms and great narratives that configure the model of universal education, reduces the process of formation of the subject to objective and economic guidelines, reflected in culture, already captured by productivist and technical interests.

The role of History and its daily teaching is put into analysis, in the hypothesis that its practices seem to enable the reinvigoration of certain ideals experienced in Contemporary times. Bloch (2002) then asks, "what is history for?" and presents the inevitability of establishing a dynamic relationship between past-present, a moving look at the object and its causes, denying an alleged linearity. Still on History, there is a need for a history of the event, arranged by chance, assuming its perspective position and the encounter with forces that are in constant struggle. It is questioned, then, that fast and low-lying, anthropocentric, informative place that History assumes in education, which disconnects the individual from his social environment (ADORNO, 2006).

Finally, we exemplify some of the discourses that resonate in different spaces in contemporary Brazil, which illustrate the model of man and morality dissolved in many corners of culture. Among them are the return of the monarchy in Brazil, revisionisms about the Military Dictatorship and requests for intervention, or the supposed Gender Ideology. Still in this sense, we see a repositioning that makes truths, especially scientific ones, fragile, as this space creates new hegemonies and fails to transmit its functioning, its errors and mistakes, which makes it a new "mystical" field inaccessible, and ends up enabling the flourishing of anti-scientific discourses such as those of the Anti-Vaccine and Terraplanist Movement, or the radicalization of moral discourses.

The proposal of an education for difference makes us pay attention to the current model of machinery production, always hidden by new frameworks and subjective captures, under the demarcations of the social roles produced, wrapped in moral values and enunciative regimes (CORDEIRO; FELDENS, 2016). It remains for us to take Education in its encounters with chance, seeking to strengthen the micronarratives of difference (VIEIRA; FERRONATO,

2017), understanding the state of crisis of truth experienced in Contemporary times, needing to deconstruct the modern ideals that support the idea of the subject of knowledge as a primordial figure, making it possible to look at gaps and cracks and the construction of more horizontal knowledge.

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