

**THE MODERN PEDAGOGICAL DEVICE AND THE SIMULACRUM-CHILD: FOR
A DIFFERENT WAY OF THINKING ABOUT CHILDHOOD**

***O DISPOSITIVO PEDAGÓGICO MODERNO E A CRIANÇA-SIMULACRO: PARA
PENSAR DIFERENTEMENTE A INFÂNCIA***

***EL DISPOSITIVO PEDAGÓGICO MODERNO Y EL NIÑO-SIMULACRO: PARA
PENSAR DISTINTAMENTE LA NIÑEZ***

Helena Almeida e Silva SAMPAIO¹
Luiz Guilherme AUGSBURGER²

ABSTRACT: Exploring the tension between the constitution of a notion of governable childhood and that child untamed power, this paper proposes reflections on the concept of a becoming childhood: the simulacra-child. Therefore, on the one hand, from the notions of biopolitics, neoliberalism, and dispositive studied by M. Foucault, it seeks outline how a childhood concept is formed as of the modern pedagogic dispositive, mainly on its neoliberal form. On the other hand, it explores the idea of simulacra, becoming, and their relations with child notions, from F. Nietzsche, and G. Deleuze, slipping out of transcendental and transcendentalizing concepts, to be proposed, finally, reflections on the concept of child as simulacra, being the notion itself in continuous becoming and immanence.

KEYWORDS: Contemporaneity. Dispositive. Child. Simulacrum.

RESUMO: *Este artigo, explorando a tensão entre a constituição de uma noção de infância governável e aquela força indômita da criança, que nos escapa, propõe reflexões sobre o conceito de criança em devir: a criança-simulacro. Para tanto, por um lado, a partir das noções de biopolítica, neoliberalismo e dispositivo trabalhadas por Michel Foucault, busca-se delinear como se forma um conceito de infância governável a partir do dispositivo pedagógico moderno, sobretudo em sua forma neoliberal. Por outro, explora-se a ideia de simulacro, devir e sua relação com as noções de criança, em Friedrich Nietzsche e Gilles Deleuze, escapando-se aos conceitos transcendentais e transcendentalizantes, para, por fim, propor reflexões acerca do conceito de criança como simulacro, sendo a própria noção algo em constante devir e imanência.*

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *Contemporaneidade. Dispositivo. Infância. Simulacro.*

¹ Pontifical Catholic University (PUC), São Paulo – SP – Brazil. Doctoral Student of the Graduate Program in Philosophy. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6639-8670>. E-mail: helenaalmeida@me.com

² Santa Catarina State University (UDESC), Florianópolis – SC – Brazil. Doctoral Student of the Graduate Program in Education. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3136-9890>. E-mail: luizg.augs@gmail.com

RESUMEN: *Este artículo, explorando la tensión entre la constitución de una noción de niñez gobernable y aquella fuerza indómita del niño, que se nos escapa, propone reflexiones sobre el concepto de niño en devenir: el niño-simulacro. Por lo tanto, por una parte, desde las nociones de biopolítica, neoliberalismo y dispositivo trabajadas por Michel Foucault, se busca trazar la formación de un concepto de niñez gobernable desde el dispositivo pedagógico moderno, sobre todo, en su forma neoliberal. Por otra, se explora la idea de simulacro, devenir y su relación con las nociones de niño, en Friedrich Nietzsche y Gilles Deleuze, huyéndose a los conceptos trascendentales y transcendentalizantes, para, por último, proponer reflexiones respecto al concepto de niño como simulacro, siendo la propia noción algo en constante devenir y inmanencia.*

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Contemporaneidad. Dispositivo. Niñez. Simulacro.*

Preambular Note

In "The enigma of the childhood," Larrosa (2017) points out an ambiguity surrounding childhood in our time. Children are "these strange beings about whom nothing is known, these wild beings, who do not understand our language" and, at the same time, "childhood is something that our knowledges, our practices, and our institutions have already captured: something we can explain and name, something on which we can intervene, something we can welcome" (LARROSA, 2017, p. 229-230). This diverse arrangement of practices, institutions, and knowledge that allows a government of childhood and makes it productive according to certain criteria of truth, we call "pedagogical device." In its contemporary form to us, this device enables the neoliberal management of a child's life, capitalizing it. The explosion of discursive and non-discursive practices around childhood, however, does not prevent an indomitable power from residing in the child, which is not only apprehended on the material plane of this child knowledge-power, but in a conceptual and existential territory. The child, in this sense, would concern, according to Larrosa (2017, p. 230), that "which, always beyond any attempt at capture, unsettles the security of our knowledge, questions the power of our practices, and opens a void in which the well-constructed edifice of our foster care institutions is shaken." What we will explore in this article, then, is precisely, on the one hand, how this modern pedagogical device works - in its form contemporary to us, producing and managing a capitalized childhood - and, on the other hand, how, in the face of this, it would be possible to liberate, not only the subject-child, but also, and above all, the concept-child, from the neoliberal and biopolitical uses that are made within this pedagogical device.

To this end, this article is divided into two parts. In the first, we explore elements around the modern pedagogical device and contemporary childhood: the notions of power and

device, from Michel Foucault; the operation of biopolitics and the issues of government of the individual and the population that it implies, explored by the same author; the differences of this logic of government, in its liberal and neoliberal variations, as well as its reverberations on (contemporary) childhood. In the second part, we explore elements around the simulacrum, the becoming and its unfoldings in the concept of child: epistemological and ontological issues involving the relations between model, copy and simulacrum, especially in Plato; the reversal of platonism or the positivization of the simulacrum in contemporary (philosophical) thought, from Gilles Deleuze and Friedrich Nietzsche; and, finally, the unfoldings of this in the concept of child-simulacrum.

Pedagogical device and contemporary childhood

To explore the idea of modern pedagogical device, it seems prudent to outline what we mean by device and how it relates to the idea of knowledge and power (or truth and government), from Michel Foucault. In the writings of the French thinker, power does not refer to a theory, nor does it refer to an "idea", a "substance" or "theoretical identity" (FOUCAULT, 1975), as something locatable in some place or person. It is always about a "power relation" and, as such, it is an exercise, a practice that spreads and forms the fabric of the social fabric. This applies to institutionalized educational relations and practices as well as those that, inside and outside educational spaces, shape and guide children in less institutional ways (e.g., advertisements directed to children or 'pedagogical manual' books to parents). "Power," from where we take it in this article, "only exists in its concreteness, multifaceted and everyday nature" (MUCHAIL, 2017, p. 14). In its everyday and multifaceted nature, power prescind from a suprarelativational or metaphysical unit, nor, given the heterogeneity of the ways in which power relations occur, can they be gathered into a homogeneous or generalizable concept, which could be particularized here and there. Because of this, we evoke the notion of "device".

The Foucauldian notion of device is not only concerned with power relations and/or non-discursive practices, it also encompasses knowledge and discursive practices. The practices, strategies, technologies, and institutions of knowledge and power are what a "strategic device" will comprise. In the device, then, heterogeneous elements of these intersect, allowing the articulation of discursive and non-discursive practices, without the intention of amalgamating them. He will thus admit both the presence of power effects in discursive practices, and will also perceive the effects of truth in power practices. An example

of this is in *Discipline and Punish* (FOUCAULT, 1975), where the author shows how a disciplinary device works and how its dimensions of knowledge and power support and tension each other, without resulting in a synthesis or hierarchy of them. Moreover, Michel Foucault (1975, p. 162-163) explains the heterogeneity and immanence of the "invention" of this device:

[...]is not to be understood as a sudden discovery. But a multiplicity of often minimal processes, of different origins, of sparse locations, which recall, repeat, or imitate each other, build upon each other, distinguish themselves according to their field of application, converge and slowly sketch the façade of a general method.

The notions Foucault works with do not exist in an abstract and generic way, but always in their specific and plural uses, from where it is possible to deduce them and move them to other contexts and/or uses, making the necessary adjustments. The pedagogical device, as we think of it from Foucault's point of view, has as a condition of possibility the confluence of two practices or strategies of government that emerge, at a distinct time and pace, in contrast with the sovereign logic of the *ancien régime*. It is from the 17th century on that the sovereign power - to make die and let live -, whose politics of death emanated from the figure of the king and was expressed through (public) torture, gives way to a power over life. While the sovereign power escaped things, both at the level of the individual and at the level of the population, this modern form of power articulated both the discipline of individuals and statistics and calculations of population probability, allowing a more thorough and/or specific treatment in the management of these subjects. Michel Foucault (2004b) called this new form of government "biopolitics".

Biopolitics acts actively on life - both individually and at the level of the human species - seeking to generate and amplify the forces of the subjects, based on a criterion of governmentality. This criterion, also called veridiction, is what allows us to define which practices are truly adequate, efficient, corresponding to a logic or not; it is what allows us, for example, to calculate which power strategies are desirable or constitute good government, or not. Until the first half of the 20th century, but especially throughout the 19th century, this criterion of veridiction was the market and its subject, the liberal *Homo oeconomicus*, the subject of exchange. The market, then, constituted the logic from which one could evaluate the efficiency of the biopolitical practices of that time: it was not about achieving an ideal society or an ideal conduct of individuals, but defining, from the "natural" reality of the populations, which practices had the desired effect on the lives of the subjects, making them

productive. After World War II, there was a change in this logic, and it was from neoliberalism - either in its German form (ordoliberalism) or in its American form (anarcoliberalism) - that a specific governmentality started to be organized. The veridiction from the market became a calculation of profitability and investment, a game of production and administration of liberties, while the subject ceased to be that of exchange and became that which understands itself as a business.

When we drag biopolitics into the pedagogical field, we see both technologies whose object is the body-individual and those whose object is populations at work. From the perspective of discipline, one can position the pedagogical device as the process of manufacturing a politically docile and economically useful subject, in which the body ceases to be unfit to become the machine one needs and which operates as one wants. This is produced by means of a calculated and meticulous action, attentive to details, that "runs through every part of the body, takes possession of it, bends the whole, makes it perpetually available, and prolongs itself, in silence, in the automatism of habits" (FOUCAULT, 1975, p. 159-160). Thus, the disciplinary power, which was born in the 17th century and developed throughout the 19th century, made new objects appear: the gaze to the insignificances, to the offalities, to the most minute and subtle details in the individual body. It was the invention of an anatomic-politics in which "coercion [...] establishes in the body the coercive link between an increased aptitude and an accentuated domination" (FOUCAULT, 1975, p. 162), through techniques of description and documentation, of surveillance, of punishment, of organization and arrangement in space and time. Foucault (1975) took power, both disciplinary and other of its forms, in its productive rather than repressive character. Disciplinary power, for example, is exercised by and over individuals, in various social spaces, with the main objective of producing a body, before annihilating it, and always with some margin of resistance from the subjects, otherwise the power relationship becomes pure violence.

The process of individualization that unfolds with disciplinary power also represents a change at the level of knowledge, especially with the emergence of the figure of Man and the human sciences (FOUCAULT, 1966), but also of knowledge with the radical "psycho". Here, in the words of Michel Foucault (1975, p. 226-227, emphasis added),

[the] moment in which we passed from historical-ritual mechanisms of formation of individuality to scientific-disciplinary mechanisms, in which the normal took the place of the ancestral, and the measure, the place of status, thus replacing the individuality of the memorable man by that of the calculable man, this moment in which the sciences of man became possible, is the one in which a new technology of power and a political anatomy of the

body were put into operation. And if from the earliest Middle Ages to today "the adventure" is the account of individuality, the passage from the epic to the romanesque, from the important deed to the secret singularity, from long exiles to the inner search for childhood, from justices to ghosts, is also part of the formation of a disciplinary society.

Disciplinary technologies produce not only a body, but also produce the "normality" to which an individual could be contrasted and evaluated. Once the portrait of the norm is established, it becomes possible and necessary to act upon the behavior of individuals, taken as "normal" or "abnormal" and, in this second case, upon which it would be necessary to act in a special way - either to adapt it, or to make a (bad) example of it, in order to subjectivate the desire for the normal. It is in this game of (a)normality that, as we know, the "psi knowledge" had and has special importance.

Driven by a "will to truth" about mankind and, consequently, about children, psi knowledge will play a double role. On the one hand, they will compose the human sciences and will be part of the invention of modern man through a calculation of normality. On the other hand, they will establish a knowledge, a reason, and a power that will be part of the construction of a specific mode of childhood: childhood, which once allowed to delineate the adult subject, being the Other of this subject (childhood as negated), will now be object and subject (positivized) of a power and a knowledge that act on the child in order to make its conduct normalized. The norm is articulated both with discipline and with security devices. The norm, as discipline, is not regulated by law.

On the other hand, biopolitics, through the bias of security, also made another use of the idea "norm". Different from the disciplinary notion of norm, which is more legal and individual, there is a conception of norm that is more oriented to the practices of government and security, whose subject (and object) is the population. In the text "Social policies, human capital and childhood in neoliberal times," Bujes (2015, p. 267) writes:

Historically, the definition of the population as a new target for the exercise of power was linked to the perception that the legal rules that until then allowed governing no longer satisfied, which implied that the political rationality that marked biopower made a new type of rule appear, a natural rule: the norms.

In the 18th century, the norm became linked to population. The concept of population came to designate a set of living with its own phenomena and problems (e.g., health, mortality, birth rate, longevity, race) and in relation to the environment (e.g., urbanism and ecology), which implied governmental practices permeated by mechanisms of forecasting, statistical estimation and global notions of government (FOUCAULT, 2004a, 2004b). At this

other level, power and knowledge do not act to achieve a perfect state or an ideal body, but, within a certain margin of flux and variation, to achieve population balance (homeostasis) and a management of behaviors that makes them profitable. Distinct from the purely disciplinary logic, in which bodies are produced in order to behave, individually, in a certain productive way, biopolitics on population will take the phenomena and behaviors proper to the population and convert them into productive ones, on a collective level (FOUCAULT, 2004a).

These technologies ensured, in the development of the capitalist mode of production, the management of population and its own phenomena in line with a control of the bodies within the liberal and then neoliberal productive and social logic. For Foucault (2004a), it would be impossible to dissociate (neo)liberalism from biopolitics, at least if we understand those notions beyond the merely economic sphere and think of them in the field of government (i.e., of conduct). That said, liberalism and neo-liberalism, *mutatis mutandis*, gave the economic subject a prominent place, by making *Homo œconomicus* a category that went beyond the economic sphere, *stricto sensu*. This (neo)liberal subject was transposed to a broader level of analysis, especially that of governmentality, which allowed Foucault (2004a, 2004b) also to take liberalism and neoliberalism as notions concerning the sphere of government.

However, it is worth noting that, if in the (classical) liberalism of the 18th and 19th centuries, *Homo œconomicus* was taken, collectively, as a population and object of statistics and, individually, as a subject of exchange; from the second half of the 20th century on, in neoliberalism - either *ordo* or anarcho-liberal - *Homo œconomicus* gained other contours, giving him the place of an active economic subject. From now on, with the passage from a society thought of as a "supermarket" to one understood as a "company", "*Homo œconomicus* [...] is not the exchange man, he is not the consumer man, he is the man of the company and of production" (FOUCAULT, 2004a, p. 152).

From this social-economic displacement derives a redoubling of governmental action. If the liberal biopolitical subject had been fundamentally passive and collective, by demand of the very market exchange game and its economic mechanisms, the neoliberal subject was thought of as active and hyper-individualized, even if, evidently, inserted in relations with other individuals. The subject's practices would no longer have a foundation in something external to his own practices, with the emptying of a morality (strict and of duty) and its replacement by an ethic and an entrepreneurial verdict, "which allows us to analyze all these behaviors in terms of individual enterprise, the enterprise of the self with investments and

incomes" (FOUCAULT, 2004a, p. 237). In their essay on neoliberal society, P. Dardot and C. Laval (DARDOT; LAVAL, 2010, p. 413, emphasis added) ironize such ethics: "one could say that the first commandment of the entrepreneur's ethics is 'help yourself' and that this ethics is an ethics of 'self-help'." In this ethic of self-help, which, from a moral precept in the 18th century, became a logic of government, "self-assessment" was established as a strategic element of this codification of the world through the ethos of "self-enterprise" and the asceticism of performative performance and skill development. This codification, in turn, has gained ground not only in adult life, but begins in an early exercise of business, entrepreneurial, or "labor market" oriented education on children (LAVAL, 2019).

Another important aspect of biopolitics in neoliberal government, is:

[...]that on the horizon of such an analysis, what appears is by no means the ideal or the project of an exhaustively disciplinary society in which the legal network, enclosing individuals, would be replaced and extended from within by, shall we say, normative mechanisms. Nor is it a society in which the mechanism of general normalization and the exclusion of the non-normalizable would be required. On the contrary, on this horizon, the image or idea or program-theme of a society in which there would be optimization of the systems of difference, in which the field would be left free to oscillatory processes, in which there would be an agreed tolerance of minority individuals and practices, in which there would be an action not on the players of the game but on the rules of the game, and, finally, in which there would be an intervention that would not be of the type of internal subjection of individuals, but an intervention of an environmental type (FOUCAULT, 2004a, p. 265).

Instead of a focus on a normativity about the individual, an action on the swing of the population; acting on the rules, not on the players directly. Thus, the nodal point of neoliberal governmental action is to act on the environment, instead of some kind of direct action (of subjection) on the bodies. And in the meantime, psycho-knowledge has begun to act in order to intensify the effects and prolong the reach of subjectivation of the corporate ethos, allowing individuals to be subjects of this type of government - *Homo aeconomicus* governable in this neoliberal biopolitical logic. This kind of plunge into the psyche, however, does not represent a taking possession of an henceforth passive subject. What is at stake here is a kind of empowerment of the self, from the truth of a subject who is an agent in an economic game of production and consumption of liberties (ROSE, 1998).

It is under the sign of this logic of neoliberal government that the pedagogical device and the management of childhood takes place in our contemporaneity, as we will explore more specifically below. However, it is worth noting that the technologies of population and individual, of security and discipline, are mechanisms that do not act at the same level,

although they articulate, without excluding each other - body and population, working as a kind of poles of a government that is exercised over childhood

What we call "device", Márcio Danelon (2015) calls "war machine". It is this war machine/device that neoliberalism evokes when the problem (of government) of childhood:

What to do with this problem called childhood? This is what education has to solve [...]. At each childhood that comes with birth we have to use the war machine to seize it, to construct a knowledge about childhood - and define what it is - determine its needs - define what it will be. At each birth we use the war machine to make it an equal to us, an identity, thus eliminating its foreignness and its newness (DANELON, 2015, p. 218).

Faced with the foreignness of the child, the pedagogical device: an arrangement of technologies, strategies, practices (discursive and non-discursive) put into action to domesticate this force. In its disciplinary aspect, it implies a dimension of discourse or discursive practices (Pedagogy) and a visible dimension or non-discursive practices (school). Beltrão (2000, p. 70, emphasis added), in this sense, says that:

what refers to Pedagogy and school [...], despite the junction of the two forms, to "forced encounters" between them, "encounters" that make it possible to produce the truth about education. It is these "forced encounters" that allow one to draw segments from the other: Pedagogy uses the frameworks, the programs, the exercises, the tactically composed forces, the surveillance, the punishment, and the examination that the school builds in order to extract from them its discursive knowledge. In turn, the school uses the pedagogical enunciations to, in their name, refine and give scientificity to all those techniques of subjection and objectification that its knowledge-machine realizes.

From this meeting, heterogeneous and not always harmonious, between discursive and non-discursive, emerge the modern contours of education and, consequently, of its disposition (or war machine). A discourse of childhood associated with the image of the child attending school and that both disciplines, watches over, and evaluates them for the sake of becoming a student and, later, an adult; and allows them to be managed on a macro level, where they form a collective body, subject to statistics and probability calculations. A machinery that orders diffuse (and confusing) multiplicities into personalized individualities, to form, finally, a living picture of unique (yet multifunctional) subjects and, at the same time, organizable in arrangements of performances and abilities - of subjects and educational technologies.

However, if at one time this domestication had a stricter and more direct meaning - the disciplining of individual bodies appears clearly in the emergence of the modern school and in

pedagogical knowledge - in our contemporaneity, it acquires a more subtle, insidious, and indirect tone. What we see presented with the most current and innovative pedagogy - the management of childhood - are those in which the child gains autonomy, time must become playful, and the space is a motivator for the development of his or her abilities, including social and emotional ones. Silva and Souza (2009) show, for example, that the "autonomy" attributed to children is very close to the "entrepreneurial responsibility" of the neoliberal *Homo oeconomicus* - active, hyper-individualized, a company of its own. In the same scope, M. Bujes (2008) will indicate that the action of pedagogies on the space-time of early childhood education concerns a care with the environment similar, not to say the same, to that of neoliberal strategies of indirect environmental control.

The individualization of the child (MARCHI, 2007), under the neoliberal regime, reaches other dimensions. Its government, then, becomes more and more refined: physical punishments are being replaced by medicalization of the bodies, souls are being psychologized and desires are being commodified. These subjects-children-adults-patients-come through discourses that promise healing and/or performative gain. And so, little by little, the differences, instead of being homogenized to become useful, are used in their diversity, through the customization of life. Normality is no longer in the moral field, but in the economic field - if productive, normal.

In this game of (a)normality that, as we know, psi knowledge has had and has special importance, and where, also, the child has a special place in the detection of pathology or deviation:

Childhood as a historical phase of development, as a general form of behavior, becomes the major instrument of psychiatry. And I will say that it is through childhood that psychiatry came to appropriate the adult and the totality of the adult. Childhood was the beginning of the generalization of psychiatry; childhood was, in psychiatry as in other domains, the trap for adults (FOUCAULT, 1999, p. 286-287).

To bear any trace of childishness meant to be understood as pathological. At the same time that, from now on, with the advent of the self-mademan, a whole literature unfolds in which health (read health for good performance) comes from the reconnection with the inner child. The child, then, is captured in the two poles of the device: it is a sign of illness and part of the technology of a health for good performance. The child is taken at the articulation between "psi" knowledge and pedagogical knowledge, both on an individual and a population level. There, both the norm and the exclusion of the abnormal act as a function of a child (and adult) model to be subjectivized in each one; as well as in the statistical and investment

calculations (state and private), through the inclusion of abnormality in the population phenomena, making the deviant child behaviors part of the market and public policies game.

Although the pedagogical device is evident in the school, its action goes beyond the school, just as its composition exceeds the field of strictly school knowledge. The "pedagogical" device is much broader than the strictly pedagogical and increasingly composed of things outside the field of Education. Some authors point out what would be a kind of colonization of the pedagogical by the entrepreneurial discourse and the modus operandi of the market: learning, efficiency, flexibility, information, innovation, interactivity, motivation, problem-solution, professionalism, quality, network, usefulness, etc. (BIESTA, 2017; LARROSA, 2019; LAVAL, 2019). The corporate ethos enters the school institution and pedagogical knowledge, expressing itself strongly on the dynamics of performance, about what Masschelein and Simons (2014, p. 114) write:

With the advent of performativity, the competitive drive becomes an end in itself and a culture of proof and spectacle is created and, of course, a race in everything and for everything. The key words of a performance-based society are well known: faster is better; more is better; to stop is to go backwards. Think of the performance mentality that permeates the world of cars, computers, and also researchers [...]. The obsession with learning outcomes and learning gains could be considered the educational equivalent of all this. Just as the whip of efficiency and effectiveness drifts into instrumentalization [...], the whip of performativity leads to control.

The modern pedagogical device is not an apparatus restricted to the interior of the school institution; it is part of the frenetic and multilateral updating of the apparatuses of the State and other instances of social and economic management. It encompasses a wide range of strategies and skillful machines of capture that seek to govern childhood. In short, in the face of the disconcerting force of childhood, modernity has invented a complex and multifaceted device - pedagogical, we call it here - to capture it. This is how J. Larrosa describes it (2017, p. 230):

Childhood is something that our knowledge, our practices and our institutions have already captured: something we can explain and name, something we can intervene on, something we can welcome. Childhood, from this point of view, is nothing but the object of study of a set of more or less scientific knowledges, the thing apprehended by a set of more or less technically controlled and efficient actions, or the user of a set of institutions more or less adapted to its needs, its characteristics or its demands. We know what children are, or we try to know, and we try to speak a language that children can understand as we treat them, in the places we organize to shelter them.

Although there is a wide range of refined knowledge, practices, and institutions for

childhood, children are not mere effects of this device. At the same time that childhood captures the child and makes him/her a neoliberal, governable subject, the child is an "other," that is, "that which, always beyond any attempt at capture, unsettles the security of our knowledge, questions the power of our practices, and opens a void in which the well-constructed edifice of our institution." (LARROSA, 2017, p. 230).

Simulacrum, becoming and child

The idea of norm passes epistemologically and ontologically, inescapably, through the figure of the model and the question of resemblance, which we can call the game of representation. In this game material bodies are submitted to resemble a model that they represent. Although it is recognized that the model has historical variations, it produces an intrusion of greater or lesser degree on a plane of transcendentality, in which what the body needs to correspond to something outside its own plane of existence, be it outside the realm of ideas, concepts, or even words. One of the founding philosophies, if not the founding philosophy, of the play of representation and model was the Platonic.

In Plato's *The Republic* (2018) is one of the most famous allegories of philosophy: the allegory of the cave. It is in this dialogue where the Athenian philosopher exposes fundamental elements of his epistemology and ontology. Analyzing the game played in the allegory between the figures of the sun, the cave, and the shadows, Paulo Ghiraldelli (2009, p. 79) states:

What is at stake are the distinctions between the intelligible world, which at the limit is bathed by the sun, which plays the role of the good, and the sensitive and illusory world, which is the world represented, in the allegory, by the shadows. All men are, of course, in the sensible world. They walk, eat, sleep - so they live in the world that is continually changing, of the flux of alternation, which Heraclitus saw as being the real world. Now, it is an existing world, but imperfect. The unchanging world, the one that can be called real, is not a perfect reality; however, in this world, with our feet on the ground, we can grasp what is in the non-sensible reality, in the real world of that which does not change: the place of forms. All the forms are there, real, and the environment is fed and maintained by one of the forms, the form of good - which, in the allegory of the Cave, is the Sun.

The ontological tension that is exposed here, according to the interpreter, is the classic tension between the sensible and the intelligible world, between what is perfect reality, the world of Ideas, and imperfect reality, the world of copies. The epistemological aspect, on the other hand, is the one in which the human being walks between these two worlds. When

leaving the cave, the individual leaves the shadow condition that he used to take as reality, and, seeing things illuminated by the light of the Sun, he ascends to a new plane, the intelligible. Thus, Plato would show a path to be followed to reach the knowledge of the truth, through the contemplation of the idea of Good.

This division (sensible/intelligible, perfect ideas/imperfect copies, essence/appearance) is where the keynote of the reading of book VI of *The Republic* (PLATO, 2018) is usually placed, from where the ontological question - essence of being - usually gives way to the (ascetic) question of epistemology - access to the truth of being. In the Platonic perspective, it is the objects of the intelligible world, because of their order and stability, that allow true knowledge, while the objects of the sensible world, in turn, make knowledge unfeasible, given their immersion in instability, mixtures, and constant transformations. The intelligible objects (models), then, would coordinate the sensitive objects (copies), making possible a knowledge of the essence of things - in their order and limits - from the contact with the sensitive. However, the copies that for Plato (2018) would be valid for this access to truth would be those that, even if imperfect, would maintain a minimum of similarity with the model, thus allowing extracting (or abstracting) it from its imperfection, submitting it to the play of identity and being and, thus, referring it to a unique, true and stable essence. To objects that escape representation, that is, the possibility of being referred to a model, Plato (2018) called "simulacrum". When this copy without a model, precisely because of the absence of a model, does not allow itself to be subjugated to the stability of being and does not internalize a necessary minimum level of similarity, it must be despised (or eschewed) on the path of asceticism to truth, in favor of good copies.

Commonly, the center of gravity of platonism is placed in the relationship between model and copy, therefore, its reversal would be given by the subjection of the intelligible world to the sensible world. However, in *Difference and Repetition*, Gilles Deleuze (2011, p. 166) proposes a shift at the core of the "true Platonic distinction," saying that "it is not between the original and the image, but between two kinds of images. It is not between the model and the copy, but between two kinds of images (idols), whose copies (icons) are but the first kind, the other being constituted by the simulacra (phantoms)." Thus, the point of reversal would indeed be in the relationship between representation and simulacrum, that is, in the impossibility of it functioning properly within the scheme in which the model subjects the (imperfect) copy by identity and stability (of meaning).

In "*Plato and the simulacrum*", Deleuze (1969) exposes the effect of the dialectic logic in which it would be possible to prolong the scheme of representation, from the model to the

most imperfect copy and vice-versa, except when this "copy" does not carry a minimum degree of similarity, that is, when its degradation or imperfection reaches the degree of "simulacrum". The main function of the Platonic method of division would not be, therefore, to narrow the distance between the intelligible and sensitive worlds, but to separate thought from its greatest risk: the bad copies, the simulacra. The latent division between copy and simulacrum would establish a crucial point for Platonic philosophy, that is, the condition for the possibility of true knowledge. Such is the strength of the simulacrum that Plato (2018) finds no other way to deal with it but its exclusion, as exposed above. Hence the task of contemporary philosophy would pass, for Deleuze, necessarily through the simulacrum, through the cut that it produces in the sensible world and in the relationship with truth:

[...]The simulacrum implies great dimensions, depths, and distances that the observer cannot master. It is because he does not master them that he experiences an impression of resemblance. The simulacrum includes in itself the differential point of view; the observer is part of the simulacrum itself, which is transformed and deformed by his point of view (DELEUZE, 1969, p. 298).

The gap that the simulacrum opens in Platonic epistemology implies, at the same time, a narrowing - and even an elimination - of the distance between subject and simulacrum, which transforms and deforms along with the point of view. This transformation and indomitable instability posed by the simulacrum makes the whole of Platonism (and its heirs) dominated by a kind of obsession against the simulacrum, always requiring a distinction between it and "the thing itself". However, the proposal of a Deleuzian philosophy of difference goes in another direction, proposing, thus, the "reversal of platonism," that is, "to refuse the primacy of an original over the copy, of a model over the image. Glorify the realm of simulacra and reflections" (DELEUZE, 2011, p. 92).

The simulacrum thus is something that exists despite or independently of the existence of a plane of transcendence - intelligible world, in Plato's case - that would coordinate the plane of matter or the sensible. The simulacrums are the unmanageable, the unlimited and changing margin that does not allow itself to effectively conform and fix contours. The existence of the simulacrum, thus, takes place on a "plane of immanence" - a plane whose rules, orders, and foundations reside in itself (and not in an external and transcendent plane). Without this plane of transcendence, the simulacrum has no link or dependence on a being (stable essence), even if it is "virtual" (e.g., the being of the tree that would virtually coordinate the seed's becoming). On the plane of immanence, where subject and object are mixed, the simulacrum exists as becoming (i.e., in a perpetual between-being, not-being

").(DELEUZE, 2011).

Finally, in the reversal of Platonism, there is a reversal of the status of the (concept of) simulacrum itself. For Plato (2018), the simulacrum constitutes the reverse of philosophy: a poorly made copy, and even a bad copy, that evades any real model, ensnaring the subject of knowledge and making the ascesis to truth impossible. In Deleuze (2011, 1969), the simulacrum gains a new status and becomes a driving concept in philosophical thought, as Favreto (2012, p. 161) explains: "The simulacrum corresponds neither to the Copy, as reproduction, nor to the Idea, as model, since it does not carry bound at its core representation." Therefore, the reversal of Platonism is not only the "transvaluation of values," but the opening of philosophy to thinking "without image," to thinking without model(s) and where creation overrides representation.

Using the thought of the German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, Gilles Deleuze will approximate simulacrum and eternal return (of the same), which seems paradoxical: how could the simulacrum, this savage concept that eschews all models, be linked to the Eternal Return of the Same?

The idea of "eternal return" consists in an eternal repetition of the same, as in Nietzsche; but, what would this same be? We return here to Difference. We could, thus, say that what exists is an "eternal return of the Difference", since it is the Difference that always returns as multiplicity, that always repeats itself singularly. The simulacrum can thus be conceived as Difference itself, since it is recognized in it as a potency capable of manifesting itself as happening. The Event is understood as the manifestation of singularity, since no event is equal or similar to the other, everything that happens is new and unique (FAVRETO, 2012, p. 161, emphasis added).

Although the theme of this text does not coincide with the central theme of Difference and Repetition, Deleuzian thought seems to help us insofar as the process of "differentiation" - that event in which difference repeats as the only possible same - is, fundamentally, a process of creation.

Thus, the simulacrum is dissimilitude, singularity, difference itself, and therefore that which would allow us a creative thought. What Deleuze (2011) does is just one of the possible ways of following what F. Nietzsche (2011, p. 29): "to find delirium and agency even in the most sacred." Even if we move away from the Deleuzian use of the Nietzschean eternal return of the same, this concept would still be of great value to us. After all, for Nietzsche (2011), only that which is strong enough is capable of return, only that which is most noble returns eternally. And what else would be nobler and stronger for Nietzschean thought than creation? The Same in Nietzsche (2011), it seems to us, could not but pass through the

question of the new, even if essentially the same. Now, the simulacrum is this concept that gives vent to the eternal return, that allows the non-crystallization of the sensitive through subordination to the intelligible.

Which figure in Nietzsche, then, will carry the creative power to the last degree? The child! After all, the child, in Nietzsche (2011), can do what the lion and the camel never could. She can creation-playing with the world and with an active forgetfulness, open space in the already given or instituted, so that something else can take place.

Whether from a biological concept of child, or from practices linked to the psychopedagogized, medicalized, mercantilized, culturalized child, etc., the child (i.e., an individual who is the effect of a child model and who is subject to the dictates that treat it as a subject/object of childhood) has been established. In opposition to this model childhood, we propose to give up the ideals and the most varied categorizations of children and their effects, and then, instead of trying to define the child and enunciate what she is, to make room for what she can. The counterposition of the child to a child, however that power - child-power and becoming a child - has already been explored by several authors (CORAZZA, 2008; DELEUZE; GUATTARI, 1980; KOHAN, 2010; ORLANDI, 2018). In this perspective, one can enunciate a child-power (or child-power) capable of playing and suspending chronological time, functional time, suspending "what is" and "what should be" and also, one who can access the aionic time (HERÁCLITO, 2017), the time of play and, why not, the time of simulacrum. Here then, is the possibility of a child-power becoming part of the order of the simulacrum, of becoming (or in-between-being).

Since the "simulacrum is not a degraded copy, it contains a positive potency that denies the original and the copy, and the model and reproduction" (DELEUZE, 1969, p. 303), the child thought of from the simulacrum, however, besides not existing as the child and as a potency for thought, would be an ultimate opening to immanence. Instead of being subjected to a model, to be a copy, the child-simulacrum is always a concept in becoming. The question here, however, would not be so much that of a becoming-child that, dragging beyond/beyond the larger territoriality of the adult, would lead us to think, exist, experience differently, regardless of the age of the one entering into becoming (DELEUZE; GUATTARI, 1980).

If we posit the simulacrum, and understand it not as a lack (of a model), but as full existence and open to becoming, it is the very concept of child there that opens itself to an eternal return of difference. The Nietzschean child doubles back on itself and allows us to think of itself as a concept in becoming, as a concept launched into the territories of invention, (active) forgetfulness, and immanence. We intend to pull the concept of the child from this

place where it is conceived as a stage (biological, psychological, juridical, etc.) of the human, especially marked by incompleteness or lack, but also, and above all, to free it from the (permanent) subjugation of the model, launched to the (eternal) experience of differentiation. The child, in this way, could be dragged to other places of thought, reopening it to an existence without models - beyond gods and demons (or cherubs and devils): child-simulacrum. A child, extrapolating the idea of L. Orlandi (2018), as heroine of the very concept of child.

REFERENCES

- BELTRÃO, I. R. **Corpos dóceis, mentes vazias, corações frios**: Didática - o discurso científico do disciplinamento. São Paulo: Imaginário, 2000.
- BIESTA, G. **Para além da aprendizagem**: Educação democrática para um futuro humano. Belo Horizonte: Autêntica, 2017.
- BUJES, M. I. E. Artes de governar a infância: Linguagem e naturalização da criança na abordagem de educação infantil da Reggio Emília. **Educação em revista**, Belo Horizonte, n. 48, p. 101-123, dez. 2008. Available at: <https://www.scielo.br/j/edur/a/GM8PnGnmgm8ZQGQPXw8b5jk/?lang=pt>. Access on: 15 Mar. 2018.
- BUJES, M. I. E. Políticas sociais, capital humano e infância em tempos neoliberais. *In*: RESENDE, H. **Michel Foucault**: O governo das infâncias. Belo Horizonte: Autêntica, 2015.
- CORAZZA, S. M. **História da infância sem fim**. Ijuí: Unijuí, 2008.
- DANELON, M. A infância capturada: Escola, governo e disciplina. *In*: RESENDE, H. **Michel Foucault**: O governo da infância. Belo Horizonte: Autêntica, 2015.
- DARDOT, P.; LAVAL, C. **La nouvelle raison du monde**: Essai sur la société néolibérale. Paris: La Découverte, 2010.
- DELEUZE, G. Platon et lesimulacre. *In*: DELEUZE, G. **Logique dusense**. Paris: Minuit, 1969.
- DELEUZE, G.; GUATTARI, F. **Mille Plateux**: Capitalisme et schizophrénie 2. Paris: Minuit, 1980.
- DELEUZE, G. **Différence et répétition**. 12. ed. Paris: PUF, 2011.
- FAVRETO, E. K. Modelo, cópia e simulacro: Uma perspectiva deleuziana ao problema platônico. *In*: SEMINÁRIO DOS ESTUDANTES DA PÓS-GRADUAÇÃO EM FILOSOFIA DA UFSCar, 8., 2012, São Carlos. **Anais** [...]. São Carlos, SP: UFSCar, 2012. Available at: <https://docplayer.com.br/15959170-Modelo-copia-e-simulacro-uma-perspectiva-deleuziana-ao-problema-platonico.html>. Access on: 12 Oct. 2021.

FOUCAULT, M. **Lesmots et leschoses**: Une archéologie des sciences humaines. Paris: Gallimard, 1966.

FOUCAULT, M. **Surveiller et punir**: Naissance de la prison. Paris: Gallimard, 1975.

FOUCAULT, M. **Lesanormaux**: Cours au Collège de France (1974-1975). Paris: Gallimard, 1999.

FOUCAULT, M. **Naissance de labiopolitique**: Cours au Collège de France (1978-1979). Paris: Gallimard, 2004a.

FOUCAULT, M. **Sécurité, territoire, population**: Cours au Collège de France (1977-1978). Paris: Gallimard, 2004b.

GHIRALDELLI, P. **Filosofia e história da educação brasileira**. Barueri, SP: Monole, 2009.

HERÁCLITO. **Os pensadores originários**. Tradução: Emmanuel Carneiro Leão e Sérgio Wrublewski. Petrópolis, RJ: Vozes, 2017.

KOHAN, W. O. **Devir-criança da filosofia**: Infância da educação. Belo Horizonte: Autêntica, 2010.

LARROSA, J. O enigma da infância ou o que vai do impossível ao verdadeiro. *In*: LARROSA, J. **Pedagogia profana**: Danças, piruetas e mascaradas. 6. ed. Belo Horizonte: Autêntica, 2017.

LARROSA, J. **Esperando no se sabe qué**: Sobre el oficio de profesor. Barcelona: Candaya, 2019.

LAVAL, C. **A Escola não é uma empresa**: O neoliberalismo em ataque ao ensino público. São Paulo: Boitempo, 2019.

MARCHI, R. C. **Os sentidos (paradoxais) da infância nas ciências sociais**: Um estudo de sociologia da infância crítica sobre a "não-criança" no Brasil. 2007. Tese (Doutorado em Sociologia Política) – Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, Centro de Filosofia e Ciências Humanas, 2007.

MASSCHELEIN, J.; SIMONS, M. **Defensa de la escuela**: Una cuestión pública. Buenos Aires: Miño y Dávila, 2014.

MUCHAIL, S. T. Insurreições Espirituais. **Dois pontos**, Curitiba, v. 14, n. 1, p. 89-98, abr. 2017. Available at: <https://revistas.ufpr.br/doispontos/article/view/56539/34023>. Access on: 20 Aug. 2021.

NIETZSCHE, F. W. **Assim falou Zaratustra**: Um livro para todos e para ninguém. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2011.

ORLANDI, L. B. L. **Arrastões na imanência**. Campinas, SP: Phi, 2018.

PLATÃO. **A República**. Tradução: J. Guinsburg. São Paulo: Perspectiva, 2018.

ROSE, N. **Inventingourselves: Psychology, power, and personhood**. Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1998.

SILVA, M. V.; SOUZA, S. A. Educação e responsabilidade empresarial: “Novas” modalidades de atuação da esfera privada na oferta educacional. **Educação & Sociedade**, Campinas, v. 30, n. 108, p. 779-798, out. 2009. Available at: <https://www.scielo.br/j/es/a/ZhPRpPMfNLPJPznfWLczLwv/?lang=pt>. Access on: 06 Dec. 2018.

How to reference this article

SAMPAIO, H. A. S.; AUGSBURGERL. G. The modern pedagogical device and the simulacrum-child: For a different way of thinking about childhood. **Revista Ibero-Americana de Estudos em Educação**, Araraquara, v. 17, n. 3, p. 1735-1753, July/Sept. 2022. e-ISSN: 1982-5587. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21723/riaee.v17i3.15975>

Submitted: 07/12/2021

Revisions required: 15/02/2022

Approved: 22/05/2022

Published: 01/07/2022

Processing and publishing by the Editora Ibero-Americana de Educação.

Correction, formatting, standardization and translation.