

Missives for learning communities: training and counter-colonial practices

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Abstract

The present article is about a bet on conceptual tools that can break with the great heroic narratives of origins and authors. It is about delineating other psi and research practices that propose ruptures in the forms and acts established by the reigning social mandate, which asks psychologists to speak for others. The bet of the article is to affirm clinical gestures that refuse imposed models of thinking and to propose ways of research-working as makers-of-interiors-in-turn. It aims to refuse practices based on a “colonial matrix of power” that is expressed in precarious work relations and exploitation. It asks itself: what is the nature of our present? What are we becoming? What have we been doing in confronting the colonial matrix of power? Contrary to colonial frameworks and crossings, the article considers that necropolitical practices are intolerable, and it is based on the ethical-political and aesthetic principle of investing in other practices of research and thinking, which corroborate counter-colonial crossings.

Keywords: teacher training; counter-coloniality; pedagogical practices.

Missivas para comunidades de aprendizagem: educação e práticas contracoloniais

Resumo

O presente artigo trata de uma aposta em ferramentas conceituais que possam romper com as grandes narrativas heróicas de origens e autores. Debruça-se em delinear outras práticas psi e de pesquisa que proponham rupturas nas formas e atos estabelecidos pelo mandato social reinante, que solicita que psicólogas falem pelos outros. A aposta do artigo é afirmar gestos clínicos que recusem modelos impostos de pensamento e propor modos de pesquisar-trabalhar como fabricantes-de-interiores-em-revolta. Ambiciona recusar práticas pautadas em uma “matriz colonial de poder” que se expressa nas relações de trabalho precárias e de exploração. Interroga-se: qual a natureza do nosso presente? O que estamos nos tornando? O que temos feito no enfrentamento da matriz colonial de poder? Contrário aos marcos e atravessamentos coloniais, o artigo considera intoleráveis as práticas necropolíticas e se situa a partir do princípio ético-político e estético de investidas por outras práticas de pesquisa e de pensamento, que corroborem travessias-navegantes contra-coloniais.

Palavras-chave: formação docente; contra-colonialidade; práticas pedagógicas.

Misivas para comunidades de aprendizaje: educación y prácticas contra-coloniales

Resumen

Este artículo trata de una apuesta por herramientas conceptuales que puedan romper con las grandes narrativas heroicas de orígenes y autores. Se trata de delinear otras prácticas psi y de investigación que propongan rupturas en las formas y actos establecidos por el mandato social imperante, que pide a los psicólogos hablar por los otros. La apuesta del artículo es afirmar gestos clínicos que rechacen modelos de pensamiento impuestos y propongan formas de investigar-trabajar como fabricantes-de-interiores-en-vuelta. Pretende rechazar prácticas basadas en una “matriz colonial de poder” que se expresa en la precariedad de las relaciones laborales y la explotación. Se pregunta: ¿cuál es la naturaleza de nuestro presente? ¿En qué nos estamos convirtiendo? ¿Qué hemos hecho frente a la matriz colonial de poder? Frente a los marcos y cruces coloniales, el artículo considera que las prácticas necropolíticas son intolerables y se basa en el principio ético-político y estético de los ataques a otras prácticas de investigación y pensamiento, que corroboran los cruces contracoloniales.

Palabras-clave: formación docente; contra-colonialidad; prácticas pedagógicas.

*If things are unattainable...well!
That's no reason not to want them...
How sad the paths, if it were not for
The distant presence of the stars
("From the utopias", Mário Quintana, 2006)*

Quintana's poem helps us to draw this text. Which psychologists and teachers could we have been, and which ones we could not? But, above all, what kind of teacher-psychologist-researcher are we becoming? What do we long for? The stars?

Teachers, university students, and psychologists. In our journey, through many occasional encounters – others, not so many – we have searched for knowledge, practices and, mainly, we have created shortcuts. To say that

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we have been psychologists and university professors, “identities” that serve to be dismantled, may express very little of the affective, political and historical bonds that singularize our trajectories.

These trajectories are marked by the refusal of a social mandate to manage, to gesture, to direct practices and to mold, in an unconcerned and orthopedic way, the “subjectivities”. A mandate that, in a more or less explicit configuration, orders us an exercise of domination. Deadly practices are on the horizon of such demands. We, the “psis”, institute, and, also, have been instituted; through strategies that ask people to carefully examine how close they are – or not – to the models of individual, subject, child, man, woman, father, mother, worker, lover, student, student, citizen, citizeness proposed by metrified modes of existence and, thus, we end up removing the possibilities of invention and fabrications in the existential territories that may enable the production of other-new that escape and (re)exist from a certain mode of being that is placed as an aspired standard and source of any and all happiness.

Despite calling ourselves “psi”, therefore, we seek to establish ruptures, even minimal ones, in these practices outlined by a social mandate. In our bets as psychologist-teacher-researchers, we do not give up affirming clinical gestures (clinical in its expanded sense of production of deviations-Clinamen) that refuse true copies of models. We pursue simulacra. We place ourselves as manufacturers-of-interior-return (BAPTISTA, 1987; RODRIGUES, 2020), for we aspire to take tools from many of our allies and “with them, fabricate others, happily break with the great heroic narratives of origins and authors. One cannot always go much beyond that in the fabrication of interiors in revolt” (RODRIGUES, 2020, p. 9). We aspire to the stars, like Quintana.

We take as unworthy the social mandate that asks us to speak for others. We are moved by the will to speak with all and everyone who make up our networks, and then to refuse the social mandate that leads us to be sad and deadly.

As teachers, we know well that we not only produce knowledge, but, above all, we transmit it and do research. Transmitting the “ability to recognize, to construct, to work the ‘facts’, which are those of a certain profession, as if they were incontestable evidence” (STENGERS, 1988, p. 54-55) and marked, in our understanding, by patterns of hierarchization and oppressions. Making an inflection on what Quijano (2007) says, professions are results of a “colonial matrix of power” that expresses itself in precarious labor relations and exploitation, in the implementation of violent policies in the peripheries and in the daily lives of peripheral peoples, and acts in the subjective and material control of various dimensions and spheres of social life.

In the Foucauldian trails, we, psychologists, professors, researchers, ask ourselves: what is the nature of our present? What are we as present? What have we done in confronting the colonial matrix of power?

Contrary to colonial frameworks and crossings, we consider necropolitical practices intolerable. Contrary to these frameworks that violate a living that expands and is made as art, we ally ourselves with movements and actions that aim at building ever-renewed meanings of ways of living. To live is not to submit; it is to transgress what constrains, to face the many faces of a micropolitical fascism that forces us to speak, (BARTHES, 1997) to think in a certain way, and to work according to the dictates of the dominators. It is to confront a system that seeks to guarantee its longevity and immunity. According to Barthes (1997), it is up to intellectuals and writers to play the role of an effective resistance, an agitation and a fight against the power that servile us.

To produce transversalized research, as ‘clumsy researchers’, to present and discuss counter-colonial clues from actions, movements and ways of organizing our work, through the construction of multiple knowledges, in intersubjective processes, aligned to sociopolitical agendas that produce common and community, and aligning ourselves to counter-colonial agendas, has been our challenge. Moving towards breaking the imposition of knowledge and hierarchies in the way of producing science is only possible from an ethical-political commitment that leads us to produce other worlds as an act of resistance. Putting our thoughts and tools at the service of this utopia requires us to occupy the place of militant researchers-psychologists-teachers, who get involved and allow themselves to be involved by the crossings and affects of the field where we are immersed and, together, with colleagues, students, and whoever else comes along, generate other beats, other melodies. Clumsy Researchers.

Psychologists, professors, militants, involved with research understanding it as a social practice that aims to break with the colonization processes, in which, many times, the researcher is a producer-reproducer agent. We are referring to a militancy that says about the non-Western ways of producing science and that seeks to abjure the coloniality of knowledge, to confront the colonization process that was and has been imposed in a generalized way, marked by a hierarchized knowledge, used as one more weapon to violently eliminate what does not matter to the subjugating ways of living. Eliminating lives that cannot be mourned, that are irrelevant.

Castro-Gómez and Grosfoguel (2007) call attention to the universalistic and Eurocentric view of ‘point zero’, which believes that the production of knowledge in the fields of humanities and social sciences should be taken from a “neutral point”. For the authors, this idea is a Western strategy of economic, political and cognitive domination of the world, of which the social sciences – among them Psychology – have been part. Thus, they indicate the urgency of producing a political, positioned knowledge that has no pretensions of neutrality and objectivity.

Thus, we are installed in this debate: desiring a posture of counter-coloniality, which starts from a critical perspective of the present modes of social organization, understanding that such modes are governed by what Quijano (2007) calls the coloniality of power – a subtle sys-

tem of social power, sustained by knowledge that is seen as unquestionable and necessary, and that updates the control and violence over those who were colonized, exploiting territories, nature, work, people and their ways of life. According to Maldonado-Torres (2007), coloniality survives through the way work, knowledge, authority and subjective relations are articulated among themselves, determining hierarchies and relations of domination.

We make an alliance with “countercolonial” practices. Countercolonialities, which is a term used by Antônio Bispo dos Santos (2019), names resistance movements of Afro-Pindoramic peoples (black and indigenous Brazilian peoples) developed in the daily lives of these subjects as ways to create subsidies to keep their cultures and knowledge alive, create strategies against violence, and produce dignified lives. Teachers, psychologists, researchers, we start from the coloniality of power and its oppressions, positioning ourselves counter-colonially, creating breaches to destroy the necropolitical practices that manifest themselves in diverse and multiple ways in the socius.

According to Quijano (2002), precarization is a necessary state for the installation of domination, no one can exploit anyone if they do not dominate him, and to dominate, it is necessary to make the dominated dependent; this is what defines a process of colonization, scarcity, violence and precarization promoted as tools to make the dominated peoples hostages of a power. The same “hand” that has the power to provide rights and access, also has the power to take them away and, by taking them away, makes those who need them, dependent and, therefore, vulnerable to it (FONTES; TAKEITI; CORREIA, 2022).

Still on the colonization process, Antônio Bispo dos Santos (2019) exposes in his book *Colonization Quilombos: modes and meanings the Papal Bulls*, exchanged letters and other historical documents of the colonial period. The narratives produced in such Bulas constituted themselves as relevant tools for the production of domination, especially the narratives referring to a God, father and all powerful, who determined who possessed soul and the color of the skin of those who possessed sin. Bulls based on narratives of a Euro-Christian intelligibility that produced, and continues to produce, truths and impositions for the colonized peoples.

Here we make the first fold of our text: Cartagraphy as a methodological strategy in countercurrent to the social mandate established, beforehand, for researchers in universities. Letters as a research device and that, here, have another purpose. By using them as a counter-colonial research practice, we aim to produce a radical rupture in the Papal Bulls. Letters as a project to share experiences, to produce common, to re(exist) to domination, to abjure the colonial matrices of knowledge, and to produce celebration, as Nêgo Bispo indicates.

What do we need to do to achieve peace? Go to the cemetery. There is the closest place to peace – when the living is not there. We are not of peace, we are of celebration! (NÊGO BISPO, 2021, *online*)

We write letters as an exercise in craftsmanship in the constitution of bonds. We write letters as a way to sustain the encounter with otherness. We write letters to proliferate worlds in which untried sensitivities take place. We write letters as a way to address our presence and lateralized companionship. We write letters in order to inhabit a slower temporality. We write letters to elaborate grief and pain. We write letters as a project of sharing experiences. We write letters to meet the distances that inhabit and singularize us. We write letters to foster “learning communities” (hooks, 2021).

For bell hooks (2021), a learning community is constituted by the efforts of democratic educators as they strive to create closeness in educational relationships (hooks, 2021). The author points out that the constitution of learning communities is expressed in the constitution of a quality of intimacy/proximity woven in a handmade manner as openness to differences, which is not to be confused with an intimate stance in which homogeneities are valued. In other words, a learning community is erected in the midst of tensions, so as to value agonistic relationships that displace and invite processes of openness of subjectivity.

This text aims to present reports of an ongoing experience, in which the crossing of letters between students from different undergraduate courses (mathematics, pedagogy) and teachers living in three Brazilian states (Pará, Espírito Santo and Minas Gerais) experiment with the sending and receiving of letters as an exercise of constituting learning communities.

In her book *Teaching critical thinking: practical wisdom*, bell hooks (2020) states that she never asks students to do a writing exercise that she herself is not willing to do as well. “When we all take risks, we participate mutually in the work of creating a learning community. We discover together that we can be vulnerable in the shared learning space, that we can take risks” (hooks, 2020, p. 31). In this way, it is important to highlight that the professors who proposed this project, from the Federal University of Pará (UFPA), the Federal University of Espírito Santo (UFES), and the State University of Minas Gerais (UEMG) also started to write letters and postcards to each other, standing next to the students and a professor linked to the city hall of Venda Nova do Imigrante, in Espírito Santo, in this bet of creating a learning community.

The proposal arose after one of the authors of this text – a migrant who had recently arrived in the Amazon to work as a teacher at UFPA – put into practice, as a sharing exercise, the sending of postcards to distant friends in a continental territory such as Brazil. Sending postcards became frequent, which brought her into contact with the writing of letters to prolong the experience of sharing, allowing her to narrate the sensitive layers inscribed in her body from the lived arrivals, and also to elaborate the mourning for the absence of such cherished convivial presences.

In a course on Educational Psychology offered at the Federal University of Pará (Bragança Campus) to Mathematics students, the following work proposal was made: what if you wrote letters telling a little bit about the formation process, about what it is like to be a graduate student in training in the northeast of Pará, and addressed them to other students from different regions of Brazil?

The students were immediately excited about the proposal. They had never sent letters by mail before, nor had they received or sent postcards. They considered the proposal a bit “retro”, but, at the same time, they were happy with the possible openings. So, after talking to friends/teachers from different Universities (UFES and UEMG) who agreed to the proposal, we put the project into practice, because we felt in this exercise the possibility of updating a powerful formative device.

After some initial agreements we were able to start the project by making the letters that started, initially, from the state of Pará – and that were written by groups of students, in which they presented the cuisine, music and culture of Pará, but also looked at the regional differences, the geopolitical dimensions that cross the constitution of subjectivities in different ways in the different Brazilian macro-regions.

It was interesting to immediately observe a concern on the part of the undergraduate mathematics students at UFPA to demystify certain stereotypes that they thought were hovering over the imaginary of students from the Southeast. “Teacher, can I write here that there are no alligators on our street and that this is not just a bush like the people from the southeast think?”. In addition to comments like this, which made everyone laugh and also invited them to reflect seriously and carefully on the situation of the Amazon as a region situated on the national periphery, we started to talk about the historical constitution of this marginalization, discussing the correlated subjective effects.

Other comments prevailed, further indicating the possibility that these letters became the beginning of the constitution of more lasting friendships. “Teacher, can I put my Whatsapp in the letter? My Instagram account?”. The writing and sending of the letters then became openings for new encounters; unanticipated, unpredictable.

It was also frequent among the mathematics undergraduates at UFPA to open a quality of curiosity regarding the territories to which the letters would travel. During one of the Psychology of Education classes, the students spontaneously started to visit the cities of Vitória-ES and Divinópolis-MG on the internet, observing what were the predominant landscapes in the destination cities, if there was the presence or absence of beaches and mountains, besides researching data such as the number of inhabitants, the location on the map, etc.

For sure, we could observe that the device “letters” sharpened curiosity, expanding the interest for writing. At first the proposal was put forward by the teacher during a class, so that the letter would be written in the course of an activity inside the classroom. However, most of the

groups requested that the writing time be extended, so that they could think better about what to write and how to write it. In short, we could observe a zealous slowing down that groped for less dashing layers of time.

Their interest in the encounters that opened up seemed to invite them to a singular interest in writing, which was also manifested in their care for their handwriting. “Who here in the group has the most beautiful handwriting?”. Questions like this signal the students’ interest in becoming “legible” – beyond handwriting. It was possible to map in the class a genuine inclination for building bonds with the recipients.

We also talked about the possibility of, in the not-too-distant future, inviting all the students who took part in the project, linked to the three different Universities, to participate together in an online meeting, so that we could get to know each other – even if virtually – and, thus, open the possibility of collecting the effects of the experimented course. It is as if the writing of the letters was a first step towards other possibilities of meeting.

We also observed that at the end of the letters, in general, it was common to find greetings with phrases that invited us to be present: “When you want to come visit us, be my guest”; “Don’t forget to come and visit Pará. It will be a joy to receive you. It is interesting to observe how the writing gained body in the exact measure in which it invited the dwelling of existential textures, of presence regulated by the sharing of culinary flavors, besides the sensations of the contact of the body with streams, with music, and, in short, with vivid encounters.

About writing letters: inhabiting word crossings between ways of life

We continue writing this text in the company of the navigator Amyr Klink, who, in 1984, crossed the South Atlantic from Namibia, Africa, to the Brazilian coast in Salvador in a small rowboat. In the book, named *One hundred days between sky and sea*, that resulted from the logbooks of the trip, Klink states that “I was not obstinate by the idea of the crossing, as it might seem – I was simply enchanted” (KLINK, 2018, p. 17).

The writing of the book was constituted as an effect of the logbooks, a kind of letter addressed to interlocutors not defined beforehand and, above all, to himself in the course of an intense crossing. Klink’s trip aroused his interest and curiosity, stimulated by the course into the unknown. As we read *One Hundred Days between Heaven and Sea*, we are transported to the small boat in his company and, then, we can put into perspective that the crossing experienced by the navigator over more than three months on the high seas was not to be confused with isolation and loneliness.

After two months of so many stories, I started to think about the meaning of loneliness. An inner state that does not depend on distance or isolation, an emptiness that invades people and that simple companionship or human presence cannot fill, loneliness was the only thing I did not feel after I left. Never. At no time. I was, yes, attacked by a voracious longing. Of everything and everyone, of things and people I

had not seen for a long time (KLINK, 2018, p. 105).

The moment we read the navigator's words we can put into perspective that, in fact, the sending of letters in crossing processes, in general, is associated with the feeling of voracious longing that seeks to find, at a distance, the presence of friends, remembered while the sender writes to the recipient, touching sensations and revived memories, as well as concerning the desire to share what is found in the frank process of inhabiting the crossings.

In the case of our project, however, a novelty is installed in relation to this experience, for, in fact, what is posed is the possibility of a presentation, of a binding opening; that is, of the beginning of a weaving of contact, and not its rescue. In other words, our project of sending and sharing letters aims to operate the establishment of a non-pre-established learning community.

In his book, Myr Klink (2018) states that he was not isolated during his trip, as everything around him was a sign of life: seagulls, seabirds, waves with whom he discussed, countless goldfish that accompanied him, immense and kind whales, fellow radio amateurs, sharks, etc. The navigator states that in many moments he needed to deviate the route, because "at sea the shortest path between two points is not necessarily the shortest, but the one that has the most favorable conditions" (KLINK, 2008, p. 50).

As we write this text, the idea occurs to us that, in crossing processes, it is common at certain times to be struck by a feeling of helplessness and longing for "land in sight," which occurs when there is a predominant desire to inhabit familiar zones and territories already known. In other words, we could say that when crossing borders towards the unknown, as exercised by Klink in his journey, we are surprised by eventual sensations of tiredness, voracious longing for the territory already known and, in these moments, the addressing of letters, to known or unknown interlocutors, is an exercise of territorialization.

It is also common for crossings to be abodes of joy and of new existential textures – which occurs when the sensation of exile is transmuted into ecstasy and deterritorialization can be affirmed. Thus, between one experiential quality and another, according to an experienced navigator like Myr Klink, the prudent thing is to scrutinize such sensations with patience. "Sailing is an act of patience, and there are decisions that should only be made when the time is right" (KLINK, 2018, p. 116). And, after all, wouldn't writing be a singular way of navigating?

This seems to be the clue we try to follow through this ongoing project.

Maritime charts during Klink's voyage occupied a prominent place in enabling him the sense of guide and safety towards the faraway destination. Very often in his book, the navigator tells us how reading the sea charts of others who came before him was fundamental to support his journey. The sea charts he had read prior to his voyage served the function of establishing guidance, companionship, and direction on the way. In the same way, his writings could support other navigators, as well as launch us along with him on his journey.

Writing is sailing.

It is also interesting to follow the task assigned to him by a reporter on the coast of Namibia, asking him to take to Brazil a message sealed in an envelope. "No, no, and no! [...] Forgive me, but I think that by mail will be safer and faster" (KLINK, 2018, p. 135). Although Myr tried, in several possible ways, to get rid of the assignment, he was eventually convinced and took the sealed envelope with him, on the rowboat, and on the high seas. While chatting by chance with a student from the School of Naval Engineering at USP, who had already been to Africa, I remembered the letter and commented on my intention to divert it to the trash. To my astonishment I discovered that [...] he was the addressee himself (KLINK, 2018, p. 135).

We find it interesting to share this conversation of Klink's when he was already on Brazilian soil, to dimension the constitutive fragility of sending letters – which can be diverted, lost, erased, crumpled or destroyed along the way. In the particular case reported above, after overcoming the dangers of the shipwreck (which seemed to circumscribe the most serious risks), in fact, the letter almost didn't reach the addressee, and it wasn't because of the threats of sharks – but because of the carelessness that would send it to the dump.

Perhaps this is what moves us with this kind of correspondence, as fragile as it makes possible another relationship with time: letters are not instantaneous, for they need countless points of contact, they invite the inhabitation of thick layers and the deceleration of time, besides circumscribing, at all times, the possibility of deviations and misplacements. The clandestine destiny of a letter is made of non-predictable layers, which foster and enable the crossings in its singular journey.

Navigating is necessary. Writing is not necessary.

What brought us together in this itinerant proposal of pursuing crossings in-between, also entangled us in the realization of a multicenter research on the memory of the teaching profession during the pandemic by Covid-19 with the Universities: Federal of Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS) and Federal Fluminense (UFF), in the period from 2020 to the present moment. And in this intense intersection between so many territories and investigations, the search for practices of openness and displacement became the researchers' mode of engagement in creating devices for research and analysis of the work.

Inspired by the movement that was built in the exchanges between the letters from Pará, Espírito Santo and Minas Gerais, we experimented, in the multicenter research, to record some virtual meetings in the form of letters addressed to the researchers-travel companions who were not present on that day, in order to address letters that inscribed our experiences in a kind of insistence of telling, through absence, bypassing it, as a network of whispers (JAFFE, 2020) active and powerful.

*Dear companions Sabrina, Beth and Cris and dear Fabio,
I hope to find you wishful thinking.*

Once again, I'm leaning over the memory records of the meetings with my fellow travelers from Profanópolis (fictitious name invented by a fellow Foucauldian researcher to trace the location of our online meeting that gathered Minas/Divinópolis, Sampa/Sampa, Rio Grande do Sul/Porto Alegre and other invented territories last Saturday) to tell you our prose, with coffee, of the last two research meetings here in these parts. At the end, I ask myself, as Luiz, a companion from Foucauldian studies, demonstrated, if we are not assemblers of words, images and fictions.

Our companion Livia, upon arriving with her notes on the text by Marcelo (Ferreira) told us: "I am beginning to understand what we are doing here"? (laughs). She tells us that the infinity of the associative character of memory faced, at the same time, with its finite and selective manifestation produces a potential for breaking and building history in an unfinished and tense way, always launching us to that which was left behind, but which can be shared again and re-launched to the flow of sharing among men, since memory shelters the movement of time and triggers resistance positions, by sustaining that the traces of the dead and the vanquished are not erased. It reminded us of a beautiful encounter we had with Célia Xacriabá in the courtyards of UEMG/ Divinópolis in which she states that the first book she read was her grandfather's! Now, a living book. Existence-writing. We were amazed by this testimony.

Livia also told us that she now realizes that the work of investing in these narratives left by teachers in the research memorial is an audacious desire to show collectively what belongs to everyone, what seemed impossible to think about and which interrupts automated flows to make way for a new reading of time. It recalls the story of a teacher who tells how her kitchen became a work space, during the pandemic, not without problems, but still managing to keep alive a question: "what would it have been like?"

The Benjaminian question, of the messianic in-between time. It shows the gap, kairós, the opportune that does not stop at closure of any order, that erupts. Then Livia sighs and says: "I'm not a teacher, but I can be touched by history.

At that moment, I remembered two things: a dream I had with Marcelo and a group practice done by Luiz (our other little fellow here) who did a beautiful meeting entitled: "memory of the future" with a group of students. They produced some materials about the experimentation and stored them in the University Memory Center (CEMUD) to be opened 20 years from now. Funny that, isn't it? I don't even know why exactly I am telling you this now. Maybe to talk about the will to register the course of things... that we cannot fully fathom, except by this inexact work of memory in its frank desire for connection.

In the dream I had with our dear Marcelo, and it makes a lot of sense, since one of the texts we read and discussed was his, about the issue of narrativities, he signaled me something like "writing in another way". I have been thinking about this, what does it mean to work with the narration that people tell us? How to operate with what has been narrated and heard? Voice and ears. Body, corpus. Production of a

willingness to build other ways, other modes. The experience of listening to strangeness. A kitchen/bedroom; a tired body in a moving body that reaches the other's house without even being there, driven by the image; a glimpse of sun that invades a room and still makes us see that there is light outside.

Suddenly, our companion Miguel, it is worth saying, told us: to disobey? and that is the fun of it. How do you order us not to follow the order? Laughter ... he cleverly said, "I disobeyed Carol" ... because we had agreed to search the research platform for a different story than the one we had read last time. This boy is perceptive. Going back to the same story and treating it as another story makes you discover things. Chances. Plural journeys. Ithaca's. And of course, that we don't cross oceans without disobeying orders. And the little fellow reminded us, following in the footsteps of Gagnebin (in the text about the lovely spring losing its perfume) and Ulysses: our Odyssey is not to hurry the journey, never. For it to be beautiful and plural we must seek out the other stories in history. To become men of experience. As if, even in the face of the auratic loss and the loss of hope of reciprocity, we could glimpse in the exercises of distance and proximity, something beyond the past that, even if based on an irremediable loss (we are no longer the same, we are others), insists on pulsating.

Our alley at the beginning of the century that reminds us of other alleyways at the end of the century. A century is always a lot and a little. Too much and too little time. But in its lasting trace, in what crosses the end and the beginning, there remains what leads us to narrate a turn, an outline, a decay, a salvation.

Our meeting was beautiful. Kelly and I looked at each other, remembering our conversations with the teachers with whom we had talked for a while? we found in their stories our own. In ours, others. In others, a strange, chaotic, but still spring-like world.

Memories,

See you.

Carol

(Archive/Research Records, 2020)

But still, we bet on that navigation. A writing can perpetuate the living even when announced by its own death. The transmissibility of that which is engendered between men, designed many times by the shape of absence, as Gagnebin (2009) suggests, can insist on writing. Even in the face of forgetfulness, produce a demand for transmission and fulfill a task: that of not considering the dead, the vanquished, the unknowing as those to remain forgotten.

To break with institutional reproductions and set out in the deviant direction of inaudible territories. Working on a writing-missive, to dare to say an experience, re-launches the choice to share something with another: it situates the relational character of production. Experience as public sharing points to the political character of communion among men. Transmission, then, is affirmed not as an exchange of information or as the passing on of information to someone else, but as something that ger-

minates. An indeterminable pregnant with germs, which is thrown forward and, in its unpredictable character, hits us on the target, like a decision in the face of the imprecise real. A production of a strange knowledge, a knowledge that is not known, a stirring of things that insistently germinate passages and escapes.

One can never fully recover what has been forgotten. And maybe that's just as well. The shock of retrieving the past would be so destructive that, at that very moment, we would forcibly cease to understand our nostalgia. But that is why we understand it, and all the better, the deeper the forgotten lies within us. Just as the word that was on our lips a moment ago would free our tongue from the demosthenic burrs, so the forgotten seems heavy to us because of all the lived life it has in store for us. Perhaps what makes it so heavy and pregnant is none other than the vestige of lost habits in which we could no longer find ourselves. Perhaps it is the mixture with the dust of our demolished dwellings that is the secret that makes it survive (BENJAMIN, 1987, p. 104-105).

Missiva, missus in Latin, past participle of mittere: to send. "To send the letter" (MENDONÇA FILHO, 2001, p. 76). "Transmitting" would link to a "passing the letter," passing to the plane of agitation, pulsation, and the germination of untimely forces.

Write differently. Bet on fostering guerrilla warfare and combat exercises. Writing to combat the colonial forces that operate by trying to extend dominations. Writing in minority, as one who digs holes through which an empire can collapse. Drifting and navigating forces.

Costa and Costa (2019) state that academic writing should also situate a combat, as a life commitment, guided by a drive of writing that, tactically, produces a link between desires of life and creation. They take up the Barthesian proposition that writing, as a small, intimate, and daily life commitment, constitutes a way to fight against injunctions and domination.

It is about establishing a work on oneself that, as an act of creation, invades, touches, and produces an inevitable testimony of oneself in that which is inscribed. By tending to connection, produce doings, practices of connection, contagion and multiplication (COSTA and COSTA, 2019).

Wanting to write as something to offer, a politics of the Text that builds a zone of exchanged goods, zones of unsuspected circulation and averse to the reigning states: "my force: it is that which circulates and which, somehow, allows certain things, here among us, to keep in motion" (COSTA and COSTA, 2019, p. 176).

It is necessary, the authors remind us, to ask about writing and teaching in movement of creating an embodied bond between feeling and creating, with the urgency of sustaining blows in the flesh, that is, by living testimony in cutting experience. Struggles of our time. Finding our own navigations. Weaving modulated, cartographic combats, that, even when uncertain and fragile, may carry a transforming, intertwined, and indispensable poetic gesture.

Final considerations: on the power of storytelling

Noemi Jaffe (2020), in her book *What she whispers*, narrates the vital effort of a Russian writer to keep in memory the poems of her husband and Russian poet, killed by Soviet persecution in 1938. In order to preserve and pass on the lyrics, less for herself or even for her husband, but in an attempt to passionately transmit the living word in a temporal exercise, the writer weaves a network of whispers of the poems and verses she has memorized as if, in this laborious act, she could give other meanings to history.

If poems could change the world, they would not be poems, but machines. Their strength lies in their inability, their instantaneous movement of doubt, a displacement of the eyelid, an unnoticed absence that comes to settle in the soul in a more lasting way. The winners know this, and that is why they hate and fear us, because they know the danger of the slightest displacements (JAFFE, 2020, p. 28).

By indicating the potency of minimal displacements, Jaffe (2020) helps us situate the ethical-political and aesthetic principle of our onslaughts for other research and thinking practices that corroborate countercolonial crossings-navigations.

In *Teaching critical thinking: practical wisdom*, bell hooks (2020) states that storytelling is one of the ways we have to begin the process of community building because stories are "multidimensional" (HOOKS, 2020, p. 21). In other words, stories embody the "when" and the "where," and they situate singular experiences in an embodied way, allowing us access to the multidimensional layers of experiences.

We consider that the ongoing project of sharing the letters has inscribed some airs in the sense of burrowing homogenizing visions of each one's experiences, besides inviting to the sharing of new existential textures for students from different Brazilian regions. We also emphasize that, for bell hooks, the sharing of stories helps students to think critically and to foster a quality of active listening that brings us closer, since it allows contact with intensities that a theoretical text does not reach.

"We need more stories..." (HOOKS, 2020, p. 54).

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