

Spinozian Practice of a Minor Education

Fernando Bonadia de Oliveira¹

¹Universidade Federal Rural do Rio de Janeiro (UFRRJ), Seropédica/RJ – Brazil

ABSTRACT – Spinozian Practice of a Minor Education. The concept of minor education, proposed by Silvio Gallo, in his work published on *Educação & Realidade* in 2002, is based on a displacement from the concept of minor literature, created by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari. The aim of this article is to identify Benedict de Spinoza (1632-1677), in the context of the XVII century, to the practice of a certain type of minor education. Such identification will be accomplished through the examination of certain aspects of the philosopher's biography and elements picked from his work. It is shown that Spinoza, in his practice as a teacher, kept a non-institutionalized, de-territorialized and rhizomatic way of educating, as it is defined in the concept of minor education.

Keywords: Benedictus de Spinoza. Minor Education. Desterritorialization. Rhizome.

RESUMO – A Prática Espinosana de uma Educação Menor. O conceito de educação menor, proposto por Sílvio Gallo em trabalho publicado na Revista Educação & Realidade no ano de 2002, parte de um deslocamento do conceito de literatura menor, criado por Gilles Deleuze e Félix Guattari. O objetivo deste artigo é identificar Bento de Espinosa (1632-1677), no contexto do século XVII, à prática de certa espécie de educação menor. Tal identificação será construída por meio de um exame de alguns aspectos da biografia do filósofo e de elementos colhidos de sua obra. Demonstra-se que Espinosa, em sua atividade como professor, manteve uma forma de educar não institucionalizada, desterritorializada e rizomática, assim como define o conceito de educação menor.

Palavras-chave: Bento de Espinosa. Educação Menor. Desterritorialização. Rizoma.

A Minor Education Practice in the XVII Century

Gilles Deleuze, contemporary reader of the modern Dutch philosopher Benedictus de Spinoza, when writing his book on Kafka with Felix Guattari, developed the *minor literature* concept. By involving this concept in the field of philosophic studies, Silvio Gallo (2002) created the notion of *minor education*, bearing in mind to contribute to the Deleuze becoming in the educational field. Since its first occurrence in an article in *Educação & Realidade*, this notion has been studied and mobilized in several dimensions of the educational practice, awaking the debate about ways of educating differently from the great and traditional ways of pedagogical thinking in use in contemporary Brazil.

Minor literature is the literature that resists, confronts, is produced outside of the so-called major literature, controlled and appreciated by the State and the institutions. Deleuze and Guattari thought the *minor* also in the scientific and philosophic fields (Gallo, 2015b) and, just like them, we can think of a minor education that *leaks* and is practiced on the sideline, differently from the major education, which is guided by planned, established and institutionalized pedagogic activities, typical of the big educational plans, of the *guidelines* and of the *orientations* shaped in official documents and legislation (Gallo, 2015a).

The way in which the concept of minor education is described and presented coincides in many aspects with Spinoza's way of thinking and making education in his time and space: the XVII century in Holland, where free religious education was created and was growing (Luzuriaga, 1959). The philosopher refused to integrate with Leiden University and carried out an intense pedagogic activity with a collegium in Amsterdam established to read and study his writings. Spinoza kept correspondence with this group, and, from this dialogue, he improved his work, always aiming for clearness of exposition of his thoughts. Furthermore, he was an active private teacher, receiving in his house a range of young students willing to know Cartesianism, the *new philosophy*.

The purpose of this text consists in examining the correlation between Spinoza (a philosopher from the XVII century) and the practice of a minor education (proposed by Gallo in the beginning of the XXI century), in light of the recovering of certain data concerning Spinoza's life and passages of his work. As an argumentative resource, we will resume a comment by Deleuze in a lesson in a Course on Spinoza on November 25, 1980.

The Minor Education Concept

The collection *O que é filosofia da Educação?* [What is philosophy of education?] was launched in 1999 containing a range of texts about the articulation between philosophical systems and education. Gallo published in this book the first introduction to the Deleuzian becomings in the educational field. In the first paragraph of the text, he warned that

he was looking to “[...] apply certain principles of philosophy worked by Deleuze to the philosophy of education”, recognizing that *no one is Deleuzean* (Gallo, 1999, p. 157).

The methodological caution was expressive: opening doors and connections between Deleuze and education, but out of a foundationist perspective committed with the global and thorough application of a foundation (the Deleuzean philosophy) to a specific practice (the educational practice, in this case). Saying or making a *Deleuzean education* is not feasible. In *Notas deleuzianas para uma filosofia da educação* [Deleuzean notes for a philosophy of education] Gallo offered a few notes to the readers, which clearly resulted from stealing, that is, from a *creative attitude* of *retaking* or displace a philosopher’s particular concept and, thus, “recreate” it (Gallo, 1999, p. 157).

In the exercise of this creative activity, it is essential – as Deleuze recalled – to not limit ourselves to “[...] shake old stereotyped concepts as skeletons aimed to imitate every creation” (Gallo, 1999, p. 181). The philosophers of education define themselves as creators of concepts, capable of creating not only by reinventing old concepts set in motion, but also by manifesting the topicality of a concept alongside issues raised by contemporary education (Gallo, 1999). By setting in motion the Deleuzean-Guattarinean *minor* concept in the education field, the author displaced, twisted, updated and then created, from its uniqueness, new issues and new perspectives to think and make philosophy of education. According to him, it is important to displace the concept in order to create a *device* to think the education, “[...] especially the one practiced in Brazil nowadays” (Gallo, 2008, p. 62). The new issues raised by the minor education concept opened up space to new studies, as the fluxes that detached from it were increasingly being connected to actual situations of the contemporary pedagogic making. Brazilian education has often been a victim of public politics which promised to save it; its own history justifies the pertinence of the debate around the minor education, i.e., of an education that is made in a different sense of the education of great plans and great policies. It is not surprising that the minor education notion has been often remembered since its first draft in 2002, especially after its replacement in 2003 in *Deleuze & a Educação* [Deleuze and Education], a book of wide circulation in Brazil that was published by *Autêntica* publishing house.

Overall, the argumentative exposition is the same in the article in *Educação & Realidade*, and in the book chapter. Minor education is introduced to answer the question: “[...] how to think and produce a revolutionary educational in the beginning of the XXI century?” (Gallo, 2008, p. 62). A revolutionary education certainly applies, in this context, against the structures of the major education, which is *established and wants to be established* on the desks of the managers’ offices and in the macro politics of big reforms. However, it does not differ negatively only, i.e., by opposing or by refusing the dynamics of the major education. The three characteristics that Deleuze and Guattari assigned to the minor literature define positively the minor education (Gallo, 2008).

First, the characteristic of deterritorialization of the language. According to Gallo (2008, p. 63), “[...] every language has its territoriality, is in a certain physical territory”, it is *immanent to a reality*; minor literature is able of subverting this reality because it “[...] disintegrates this real, snatches us off this territory”. Detached to education, the deterritorialization of the language converts into deterritorialization of educational processes. As the French thinkers wrote, *a minor literature* “[...] does not come from a minor language, but from what a minority makes out of a major language” (Deleuze; Guattari, 2015, p. 35). It subverts the language, making it operate against what established it as major language. According to Gallo (2008), minor education can also deterritorialize the teaching and learning modes already established and overcome the control machines of the educational apparatus. How would this be possible? Just like Kafka made use of a language going against the established use, wording the voice of the minority, we can make a differentiated use of the established educational processes, assigning them a meaning that is distinct from the one to which they were imposed, giving way to the liberation of minorities. This is about resisting from within the control machine, using the cracks and gaps it presents.

Political ramification, the second characteristic of minor literature, includes the rhizomatic, segmented and fragmented nature of this literature, willing to produce incessant connections relations that always present a political dimension, though it may not be explicit in its content. In contrast to the major literature which “[...] does not make any effort to establish links, chains, agency, but on disrupt these linkages, to territorialize in the traditions system at any price and by all means” (Gallo, 2008, p. 63), the minor literature always operates by deterritorialization. Correlatively, the minor education is always an everyday political expression, always enabling new connections and opening distinct ramifications that reveal themselves in a two-sided political agency: (a) a machine agency of the militant educator’s desire and (b) collective agency of the educator’s enunciation in the relation with the learners (Gallo, 2008).

Collective value, the minor education third characteristic, shows up in the voices occupying it. Gallo claims that every minor literature work does not express itself, but expresses the voice of thousands of individuals. When it deterritorializes, the language gives voice to the minority. The minor literature becomes a collective work in which the periphery and the margin recognize themselves in a collective project. The minor education, believed that way, is not a solitary action coming from a teacher that proclaims how teaching should be done, but a constant exercise of production of multiplicity involved in collective projects.

Much has been written since the first time these ideas were expressed. In 2015, the Transversal Group from FE/UNICAMP (Education School / University of Campinas, Brazil) organized a collection entitled *Minor Education: concepts and experiments*. In this publication, several male and female researchers established new articulations between

Gallo's concept and effective experiences in the pedagogical practice. Previously, ten years before the first edition of *Deleuze & a Educação*, Prado-Neto (2013) wrote his MSc thesis in Aracaju, focusing on cases of minor education based on the *teacher deterritorialization*. In the last two years, articles involving this topic have been published in Education journals. Rosa (2016), for instance, dedicated to exploring the relationship between literature and minor education; Varela, Ribeiro and Magalhães (2017) worked on minor education focused on gender discussions in schools. What we propose hereinafter is to make Gallo's concept identify itself – in the XXI century – through the life and work of Spinoza, commented by Deleuze.

Spinoza and his Small Network

René Descartes, the notorious rationalist, Spinoza's ancestor in the traditional manuals of history of philosophy, is the pure representation of someone who wishes, as an educator, to incorporate himself to a major education notion, in the sense shown by Gallo. Denis Moreau justifies this claim in his presentation to the Preface-Letter of *A Discourse on Method – The Principles of Philosophy*.

In a letter dated of November 11, 1640, addressed to his great friend and interlocutor in scientific research, the priest Marin Mersenne (1588-1648), Descartes expressed that his intention when writing the *Principles* was to compose *in order a whole course* of his Philosophy, which he would make “[...] in the form of theses in which, without any discourse superfluity” (Santiago, 2004, p. 34), all his *conclusions* with *true reasons* from where they were taken were made clear. Moreau fiercely assures that in the pedagogic and academic mentality of the XVII century, a Philosophy course meant “[...] a manual aimed to be used as a support in schools, especially at Jesuit schools” (Moreau, 2003, p. 13); Descartes expected to *win to his cause* the priests of the Company, aiming to become part of *the school*. The *Principles* take the form as Cartesian *philosophical summa*, a *subversive manual* to nurture a place in the great institution (Moreau, 2003). The French philosopher consulted several scholastic manuals adopted by the school of his time, and worked hard on them, intending even to write – instead of the *Principles* – a book for comparative purposes, in which his explanations would be paired to the scholastic explanations, evidencing clearly the inferiority of the other explanations confronting his. The project was never completed. The *Principles* were written as (dense and short) articles and Descartes, ultimately, was disappointed: his work was not understood by the institutions that kept administrating the same type of education to the students (Moreau, 2003).

Descartes, having found the range of mistakes made by the institution where had studied, decided to write a whole course of his Philosophy to be established in the school, without questioning the power structure of major education. It is noteworthy pointing that the revolutionary and subversive impetus has always been part of Descartes's at-

titude (he aimed to unmask the innocuous Aristotelianism of his time), but in fact he was seeking for a subversion that contradictorily aimed to reterritorialize, i.e., to yield to the very structures against which they were imposed, only to seize the throne¹. This movement of reterritorialization (or even non-deterritorialization) of educational processes kept by major education did not happen with Spinoza. The risk of reterritorialization of minor education practices, the retreat when the minor education is co-opted by major education, is permanent (Gallo, 2008). Descartes, as Moreau stated, always sought pedagogical success in schools, while Spinoza, when given the opportunity to put himself in what we now call major education, refused to do so.

In a lesson on November 25, 1980, Deleuze described Spinoza as the one who “[...] polishes his lenses, who abandoned everything, his heritage, his religion, all the social success” (Deleuze, 2012, p. 20); he is a marginal philosopher: *Ethics*, different from the *Principles*, was not even published. Spinoza, according to Deleuze (2012, p. 20), “[...] does nothing and before writing anything” is reviled and denounced; for everyone at this time, he is the abominable atheist, he is censored before his death and long after that.

Deleuze, without strictly observing the rigor of the statement, claims that *Spinoza did not want to be a teacher*. However, he knew that Spinoza not only wanted to, but was a teacher, in at least two senses: as a *private teacher*, assisting several university students who sought him to understand the new philosophy (Cartesianism), and as a *mentor to the collegium* of Amsterdam, dedicated to studying his own thinking². Spinoza never wanted to be a public teacher, i.e., to lecture *public lessons*. Deleuze knew the content of Letter 48, in which the philosopher refuses Fabritius’s invitation to become a professor of Philosophy at Heidelberg Academy. If he carefully looked at the text, Deleuze observed that Spinoza wrote: “If I had ever wanted to accept teaching in some college ...”, and later on, “[...] as I have never been willing to teach publicly [...]” (Espinosa, 2008, p. 113). Teaching, however, is an activity that Spinoza not only wished for himself, but which he advocated as a free activity for all in a truly free Republic. The final chapter of the *Theological-Political Treatise*, published in 1670, does not describe anything else (Espinosa, 2003, p. 303): “So we see to what extent an individual can say and teach what he thinks, with no danger to the rights and the peace of the Republic”.

In the class, Deleuze (2012, p. 20) recovers a certain passage from the *Theological-Political Treatise* (VIII, §49) in which Spinoza is overwhelming: “The Academies, founded at the expense of the Republic, are established not so much to nurture the mills, but to coerce them.” At this point in his work, a vehement criticism is made to the universities in activity in the VXII century, as representatives of this major education with which Descartes sought to articulate himself. For Spinoza, 2009, p. 118), “[...] in a free Republic, both the sciences and the arts will be optimally nurtured if anyone is granted permission to teach publicly, at his expense and at the risk of his fame”.

Deleuze (2012, p. 20) interpreted this paragraph as revealing of a political-educational conception for which “[...] teaching would be a benevolent activity and [...] would have to pay to teach. Teachers would teach by risking their fortune and reputation”³. In fact, Spinoza did not exactly want a system in which one would have to *pay to teach*, but a policy that guaranteed the teacher’s right to autonomously manage his school, without the tutelage or oppressive intervention of the State and the Church, more responsible for retracting than boosting sciences and the arts⁴. By letting the learner of a free republic to have the right to be guided by the fame or reputation of the teacher, Spinoza did not intend to establish a meritocratic policy, for which the rule is that the most popular teacher has more prominence than the others⁵. He aimed to achieve the only possible standard for moderating teaching in a free society: to set the freedom of the citizens to choose *how* and *with whom* they want to learn.

Nothing could agree more with what Spinoza himself practiced throughout his life. Recent studies by Jonathan Israel – resumed by Filip Buyse (2013) – show that Spinoza lectured courses on the new philosophy for several students. This new information concerning Spinoza’s teaching activity corroborated the old suspicion that the philosopher had enjoyed, in his youth, a good reputation in the scientific world, especially as a connoisseur of Cartesianism.

Certainly, the craft job of polishing lenses, the rigorous daily study and the classes university students allowed Spinoza to go beyond the teaching promoted by the religious public education of his time. The philosopher was, in any place he had been, a free teacher, practicing an education that rose against the established educational system, putting itself on the sidelines.

Spinoza’s correspondence holds important news referring to one of his students, the young Caesarius, a Leiden student who ended his life as a botanist. In a letter from the beginning of 1663, Simon de Vries (Spinoza’s close friend) claimed to envy Caesarius for being able to enjoy an intimacy with the philosopher that he, from a distance, could not experience. Spinoza responded kindly to his friend, but was both hard and generous with his student, who was then about twenty years old.

You must not envy Caesarius; no one is more hateful to me than he is, and there is no one I suspect more than him. So I want you to know, as well as our friends, that none of my opinions should be conveyed to him before he reaches a more mature age. He is still very young and not very stable, more interested in novelty than in truth. But I hope you will mend these vices over the years, and I’ll say more: from what I can judge of his ingenuity, I’m sure that will happen. That is why his nature leads me to love him (Espinosa, Letter 9, 1973, p. 378).

Spinoza’s reaction to Simon de Vries’s envy might have been accentuated in his critical contours to the student’s personality only to ease the distress of a friend who, being much dearer than the young student, was inclined to envy, an affection born of sadness and hatred.

However, it seems that the young Caesarius was a troublesome student (Meinsma, 1983) and inspired cautious; he was being seduced by the Cartesian novelty, and did not seem inclined to recognize Spinozean truth. In spite of his fickleness, Caesarius must have been a uniquely ingenious boy, since he gave the teacher *hope to amend* over time, and it aroused *generosity*, an affection set forth in the scholia of Proposition 59 of *Ethics* III as the “Wish through which each one strives to favor other men and unite them to each other by friendship through the sole dictates of reason” (Espinosa, 2015, p. 335). Caesarius ended life recognized in his profession, becoming remarkable by a work on botany entitled *Hortus malabaricus* (Meinsma, 1983). He was probably the disciple to whom Spinoza confessed having *dictated* the second part of Descartes’s *Principles*, demonstrated in geometrical order. This ditto integrates the only work that Spinoza published with his name, the *Principles of Cartesian Philosophy*. In a letter to the secretary of the Royal Society of London, Henri Oldenburg, Spinoza wrote:

Some friends asked for a copy of a treaty which contains, in short, the second part of Descartes’ *Principles*, demonstrated by the geometrical method, and the main themes dealt with in metaphysics. I had previously dictated this treatise to a certain young man, who did not want to openly teach my opinions. Later, I was asked to elaborate, as soon as possible, according to the same method, also the first part. And I, in order not to contradict my friends, immediately began to write it and I concluded it in two weeks (Espinosa, Letter 13, 1988, p. 139).

The author of *Principles of Cartesian Philosophy* started from a dictation to his private student to compose the work, using the geometric method and dictation practice (annotated, read and explained). The dictation instituted by the major education of the old Jesuits⁶ was employed by Spinoza to teach the Cartesian system *outside* of the university’s limits of his time. This way, the typical deterritorialization of an educational process, characteristic of major education, happens, as Spinoza, with unique ability, teaches – at his own risk and in his own house – what the Academy forbids teaching. The teacher, in this case, teaches using the geometric method as didactic resource; he does not make a *philosophical summa* in brief and dense articles like Descartes’s *Principles* were composed. This freedom allowed Spinoza to not make philosophical concessions to adjust his thoughts to what would have pleased the established education and the institutionalized university⁷.

The correspondence with Simon de Vries also reveals Spinoza’s second kind of minor educational practice, namely, mentor of a *collegium*, established in Amsterdam. The group, made up of Spinoza’s closest and most trusted friends, received by letter the first versions of the *Ethics* and studied them in detail. In this case, the practice was directed not to the teaching of the novelty (Cartesianism), but to the truth, i.e., the Spinozean thought in open construction. Something of the recourse of dictation seems to remain in this practice, after all, according to the correspondent, the dynamics of the meetings of the *collegium* was as follows:

One of us (by turn) reads a passage, explains it at his discretion, and furthermore, demonstrates all propositions according to the order you have given. And if it happens that the answer that one gives does not satisfy the other, we think it is worth taking note of it and writing it, so that it clarifies to us, if possible, so that, with his help, we can defend the truth against the superstitiously religious and Christian, and to stand against the attacks of the whole world (Espinosa, Letter 8, 1988, p. 114).

As Deleuze (2012, p. 20) wisely commented on the *collegium*, “Spinoza is related to a large collegial group, he sends them the *Ethics* as he writes it, and they explain to themselves Spinoza’s texts, and they write to him, who replies”. Who, after all, made up this collective? Deleuze only recalled that its members were *very intelligent people* and rightly so: Simon de Vries and a young student named Joahannes Bouwmeester; doctors like Lodowijk Meyer and Johannes Hudde; traders, jurists, among other profiles, also attended the meetings.

Deleuze states that the Spinozian correspondence with the *collegium* is *essential*, making it clear that Spinoza had *his little network* (*son petit réseau*). Well, we see in a clear way, through Gallo’s conceptual displacement, that such a network is not simply *small*, but *minor*. For both the universe to which it was intended and the horizontal way in which it developed, there is pure political ramification in the practice of colleges members expressing that double political agency.

The rhizomatic form of this type of education does not appear so clearly if the role played by geometry in this process is not observed. According to Part I’s Appendix of *Ethics*, mathematics has value because it has brought to humans a rule of truth which has allowed them to escape the scheme of ordinary prejudices. After all, mathematics has no purpose in its course; it is not committed to any prejudice, since it is limited to be a machine of right and true deduction (Espinosa, 2015, p. 113). This coincides with the rhizomatic aspect of minor education didactic resources. The geometric demonstrations are never concluded, insofar as we can, from the deductions already obtained, always draw other original conclusions, and so on indefinitely. It is worth mentioning also that in this dimension, Spinozism recreated a consecrated method in the major education, making it turn against major education itself. Spinoza taught a doctrine that could not even aspire to the place of the great institutions, but used an expedient legitimized by them. Mathematics had surpassed, in the XVII century, the *Quaestio de certitudine mathematicarum*, a polemic that had put in check the certainty and evidence of mathematicians (Chaui, 1999). Finally, mathematicians’ knowledge triumphed, being recognized by countless Jesuits. Geometry, reinvigorated in its institutional legitimacy after *Quaestio de certitudine*, is applied to demonstrate novelty (Cartesianism) and truth (Spinozism)⁸.

Spinoza did not strive at all costs to be recognized in the whole, but on making himself felt in human singularities producing multiplicity, i.e., a unique collegiate group, immersed in the reading of a vast array of geometry definitions, propositions and demonstrations. He

warned the *friends* to whom he wrote the *Short Treatise on God, Man and his Wellbeing*, so that they would not tell anyone the *truths* found there, and to be careful about following the brand new ideas of that time; the author pays all attention only to the reader's salvation and well-being (Espinosa, 2012).

As we can see, there is a collective value in the practice of the *collegium*, a heterogeneity and multiplicity of voices that object to the master regarding the clarity of *Ethics* and, this way, he gradually reforms and improves it. We do not see, as in the *Principles*, a manual to be offered to the students, but a work – the *Ethics* – being built *with* the disciples. The attentive reader perceives in the *Treatise on the Emendation of the Intellect* that Spinoza sometimes does not speak of *Ethics* as *mea Philosophia*, but as *nostra Philosophia*, probably referring to his association with the *collegium* (Domínguez, 2009). Like all minor education, according to Gallo, Spinoza and his friends have a *collective project* that is clearly presented: *defending the truth* against the violent superstition of Christians and resisting the *attacks* of the ignorant and intolerants.

Spinoza, an Extemporaneous Practitioner of a Minor Education

The introduction of the concept of minor education begins with the Deleuzean- Guattarinean suggestion of the image of the writer who composes his work as the *dog that digs its hole* and the *rats that makes its lair*. Gallo asks:

What if we think about educating like a dog that digs its hole, a rat that makes its lair? In the desert of our schools, in the endless – but overpopulated – loneliness of our classrooms will we not be, each of us, be dogs and rats digging our holes? (Gallo, 2008, p. 59).

The teacher who digs his hole and acts micro-politically, producing minor education in the context of the great mastery of major education, is very close to the figure that Antonio Negri called *militant*, a political profile that is distinguished from the *prophet*. From Negri's ideas, Silvio Gallo – again through a robbery, this time silent – allows himself to think the teacher-prophet, who “[...] from the height of his wisdom tells the others what should be done” (Negri; Gallo, 2008, p. 60). This is the critical and conscious teacher, aware of the global problems of education, heralding a revolutionary future that sets a new world open. The teacher-militant, in turn, is the one “[...] who, from his own desert, from his own third world, operates transformation actions, however small they may be” (Gallo, 2008, p. 60). The teacher of militant action lives the situations and from the interior of the experienced situations “[...] produces the possibility of the new” and “[...] seeks to live the misery of the world, the misery of his students, whatever it may be” (p. 62).

João Wanderlei Geraldi, Maria Benites and Bernd Fichtner (2006, p. 139) place Spinozism as an ally in what they call the “[...] ethical radi-

calization of public education". For the authors, Spinoza's philosophy and example clarify exactly how some *new experiences* in education are currently implemented as social practice. We will not recover in this text, the experiences described by the authors, but only point out that they perceive, in a certain way, the inclination of the philosopher to be this teacher-militant engaged in experiencing pedagogical practices different from those instituted. The path trodden leaves no doubt that Spinoza's attitudes are attitudes of a minor educator who educates as *the dog that builds its hole* and *the rat that makes its lair*. As Deleuze said in his class on November 25, 1980, the Dutch philosopher has *son petit réseau, un grand groupe collégial*. He practices, in his own way, an education alien to what happens in the great academies, representatives of the major education; there is deterritorialization of teaching processes and creation of political ramifications on behalf of a collective project of defense against the onslaughts of the superstitious and judgmental.

We have already stated at the beginning of this article that the Brazilian context is the privileged context of the reflection on the minor education proposed by Gallo, because in Brazil, as evidenced by a series of scholars⁹, the so-called major education has always imposed itself to produce margins and the marginalized. The current high school reform (Brasil, 2017), imposed without popular participation, once again addresses the challenge of creating strategies to crack the system that corporate reformers in education intend to establish (Freitas, 2012). Spinoza can spark reflections on ways of effecting deterritorializations, ramifications, and collective values that are common to the voice of the minority. In his time – we cannot forget – the social and political pressure on the part of the Church and the State was intense, but even so he created a way to weave his small net and inscribed his name among those who were willing to practice a revolutionary education.

In fact, as Gallo points out, it is not possible to dichotomize a major education *or* a minor education, polarizing both in an irreconcilable way, since the practice of major education and the form of minor education *coexist*, sometimes conflicting more, sometimes less, according to changing circumstances (Gallo, 2015a). In the same way, it is convenient to think of a certain kind of teacher who joins the teacher-prophet and the teacher-militant, having the critical awareness of his role as a teacher endowed with a revolutionary practice announcing the new as a prophet, but also experiencing and creating lines of flight in his own space as a militant. Such a teacher, as Spinoza was, still have a global view on how education should be instituted in a free republic, but, at the same time, it continues making his own way, imprinting his marks on transformations, however small they may be.

Translated from Portuguese by Isabelle Cardoso and proofread by Ananyr Porto Fajardo

Received on March 28, 2018
Approved on September 27, 2018

Notes

- 1 Deleuze (2002, p. 14), also recognized this double face of the reception of Descartes's thought. For him, in the XVII century, Cartesianism was already interpreted as "[...] a new and prodigious scholastic", but that had "[...] nothing to do with the old [scholastic], let alone with Cartesianism".
- 2 In *Spinoza: practical philosophy*, Deleuze (2002, p. 17) acknowledges that "Spinoza is part of this strain of 'private thinkers' who change values and practice a philosophy that is hammered, not of the 'public teachers' (those who, according to Leibniz's praise, do not interfere with established sentiments, in the order of the Moral and in the Police). That is, for Deleuze, Spinoza is effectively against the publicly established system.
- 3 This position is in line with the one supported by Abreu (1993). Spinoza appears here as a genuine liberal, who defends a minimal state, regulatory of education, that would balance with the help of the invisible hand of the consumer market.
- 4 Instead of understanding Spinoza's initiative as a liberal, we might think of it as an initiative of self-management of education, as far as *social self-management* is understood as a contemporary political principle, as an intransigent defense of individual autonomy that denies "institutionalized power" and "hierarchy" (Gallo, 2000, p. 34).
- 5 Diego Tatián (2004) demonstrates how much the Spinozian philosophy strays from assigning any positivity to the notion of merit.
- 6 Although it was not recommended by the Jesuits, dictation was required in the ninth article of the *Ratio Studiorum's* "Common Rules for All Professors of Higher Colleges" in the following terms: "[...] those [teachers] who dictate should do not stop after every word, but speak in one breath, and if need be, repeat; and do not dictate the whole question and then explain it, unless they alternate dictation and explanation" (Franca, 1952).
- 7 Unlike Descartes, who withdrew the final causes of physics, but had to keep them in metaphysics in accordance with the scholastic imperative (*Principles*, Part I, article 28; Descartes, 2007) Spinoza was able to, with freedom, expel them once and for all from its system, emptying his doctrine of the tendency to superstition (*Ethics* I, Appendix, Spinoza, 2015).
- 8 Abreu (1993, p. 171) presents a conception that is in great agreement with the interpretation proposed here: "The reach of the geometric method is not only epistemological and ontological. For A. Malet, this method has religious significance, since it respects more than any other one the essence of God and his independence from man". In this reading, Spinoza chose the method of the geometers not for being rationalist and humanist, but because of the knowledge by mathematics replaced the knowledge by the final causes.
- 9 In order not to extend the list of classics of the Brazilian education with the same diagnosis, it is enough to recall the findings of Saviani (2004), Lima (1974), Freire (2002) and Fernandes (1989).

References

- ABREU, Luís. *Spinoza: a utopia da razão*. Lisboa: Vega, 1993.
- BRASIL. Lei nº 13.415, de 16 de fevereiro de 2017. Altera as Leis nos 9.394, de 20 de dezembro de 1996, que estabelece as diretrizes e bases da educação nacional,

e 11.494, de 20 de junho 2007, que regulamenta o Fundo de Manutenção e Desenvolvimento da Educação Básica e de Valorização dos Profissionais da Educação, a Consolidação das Leis do Trabalho – CLT, aprovada pelo Decreto-Lei no 5.452, de 1o de maio de 1943, e o Decreto-Lei no 236, de 28 de fevereiro de 1967; revoga a Lei no 11.161, de 5 de agosto de 2005; e institui a Política de Fomento à Implementação de Escolas de Ensino Médio em Tempo Integral. **Diário Oficial da União**, Brasília, 17 fev. 2017.

BUYSE, Filip. Spinoza, Boyle, Galileo: was Spinoza a strict mechanical philosopher? **Intellectual History Review**, Abingdon, v. 23, n. 1, p. 45-64, mar. 2013.

CHAUI, Marilena. **A Nervura do Real I**. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1999.

DELEUZE, Gilles; GUATTARI, Félix. **Kafka**: por uma literatura menor. Tradução: C. Vieira da Silva. Belo Horizonte: Autêntica, 2015.

DELEUZE, Gilles. **Espinosa**: filosofia prática. Tradução: D. Lins e F. Lins. São Paulo: Escuta, 2002.

DELEUZE, Gilles. **Curso sobre Espinosa**. Tradução: E. Fragoso, F. Castro, H. Cardoso Junior e J. Aquino. Fortaleza: EDUECE, 2012.

DESCARTES, René. **Princípios da Filosofia**. Tradução: A. Cotrim e H. Burati. São Paulo: Rideel, 2007.

DOMÍNGUEZ, Atilano. Introducción. In: SPINOZA, Baruch. **Ética**. Tradução: Atilano Domínguez. Madrid: Trotta, 2009. P. 9-32.

ESPINOSA, Bento. Carta 9. In: ESPINOSA, Bento. **Correspondência**. Tradução: Marilena Chauí. São Paulo: Abril, 1973. P. 378-380.

ESPINOSA, Baruch. **Tratado Teológico-Político**. Tradução: D. Pires Aurélio. São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 2003.

ESPINOSA, Bento. Carta 48. **Trilhas Filosóficas**, Caicó, v. 1, n. 1, p. 113-114, jan./jun. 2008.

ESPINOSA, Baruch. **Tratado Político**. Tradução: D. Pires Aurélio. São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 2009.

ESPINOSA, Bento. **Ética**. Tradução: Grupo de Estudos Espinosanos. São Paulo: Edusp, 2015.

FERNANDES, Florestan. **O Desafio Educacional**. São Paulo: Cortez; Autores Associados, 1989.

FRANCA, Leonel. **O Método Pedagógico dos Jesuítas**: “Ratio Studiorum”. Rio de Janeiro, Agir, 1952.

FREIRE, Paulo. **Educação como Prática da Liberdade**. Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 2002.

FREITAS, Luiz Carlos. Os Reformadores Empresariais da Educação: da desmoralização do magistério à destruição do sistema público de educação. **Educação & Sociedade**, Campinas, v. 33, n. 119, p. 379-404, abr./jun. 2012.

GALLO, Sílvio. Notas Deleuzianas para uma Filosofia da Educação. In: GHIRALDELLI, Paulo. **O Que é Filosofia da Educação?** Rio de Janeiro: DP&A, 1999. P. 157-184.

GALLO, Sílvio. **Anarquismo**: uma introdução filosófica e política. Rio de Janeiro: Achiamé, 2000.

GALLO, Sílvio. Por uma Educação Menor. **Educação & Realidade**, Porto Alegre, v. 27 n. 2, p. 169-176, jul./dez. 2002.

GALLO, Sílvio. **Deleuze & a Educação**. Belo Horizonte: Autêntica, 2008.

- GALLO, Sílvio. Educação Menor: produção de heterotopias no espaço escolar. In: GRUPO TRANSVERSAL (Org.). **Educação Menor: conceitos e experimentações**. Curitiba: Appris, 2015a. P. 75-88.
- GALLO, Sílvio. Prefácio. In: GRUPO TRANSVERSAL (Org.). **Educação Menor: conceitos e experimentações**. Curitiba: Appris, 2015b. P. 11-14.
- GERALDI, Wanderlei; BENITES, Maria; FICHTNER, Bernd. A Radicalização Ética na Educação Pública. In: GERALDI, Wanderlei; BENITES, Maria; FICHTNER, Bernd (Org.). **Transgressões Convergentes: Vigotski, Bakhtin, Bateson**. Campinas: Mercado de Letras, 2006. P. 135-151.
- LIMA, Lauro. **Estórias da Educação no Brasil: de Pombal a Passarinho**. Rio de Janeiro: Editora Brasília, 1974.
- LUZURIAGA, Lorenzo. **História da Educação Pública**. Tradução: L. Damasco Penna e J. B. Damasco Penna. São Paulo: CIA Editora Nacional, 1959.
- MEINSMA, Koenraad Oege. **Spinoza et son cercle**. Tradução: S. Roosenburg. Paris: Vrin, 1983.
- MOREAU, Dennis. Introdução. In: DESCARTES, René. **Carta-Prefácio dos Princípios da Filosofia**. Tradução: H. Santiago. São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 2003. P. 11-48.
- PRADO-NETO, Manuel. **Desterritorializações Docentes: casos de uma educação menor**. 2013. 111 f. Dissertação (Mestrado em Educação) – Programa de Pós-Graduação em Educação, Universidade Tiradentes, Aracaju, 2013.
- ROSA, Francis. A Literatura Menor em Deleuze e Guattari: por uma educação menor. **Educação**, Santa Maria, v. 41, n. 3, p. 685-696, set./dez. 2016.
- SANTIAGO, Homero. **Espinosa e o Cartesianismo**. São Paulo: Humanitas, 2004.
- SAVIANI, Dermeval. **A Nova Lei da Educação**. Campinas: Autores Associados, 2004.
- SPINOZA, Baruch. **Correspondencia**. Tradução: A. Domínguez. Madrid: Alianza, 1988.
- SPINOZA, Benedictus. **Breve Tratado**. Tradução: L. César Oliva & E. Fragoso. Belo Horizonte: Autêntica, 2012.
- TATIÁN, Diego. **Spinoza y el Amor del Mundo**. Buenos Aires: Altamira, 2004.
- VARELA, Cristina; RIBEIRO, Paula; MAGALHÃES, Joanalira. Questões de Gênero na Escola: potencialidades para pensar uma educação menor. **InterMeio**, Campo Grande, v. 23, n. 46, p. 15-37, jul./dez. 2017.

Fernando Bonadia de Oliveira is a Professor of Philosophy of Education in the Teaching Theory and Planning Department of the Instituto de Educação, Universidade Federal Rural do Rio de Janeiro.

ORCID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-4627-3162>

E-mail: fernandobonadia@ufrj.br

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License 4.0 International. Available at: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>.