

# Sustainability practices and ecosophies in Primary Education schools in Brazil and Australia<sup>1</sup>

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## *Práticas de sustentabilidade e ecosofias em escolas da Educação Básica no Brasil e na Austrália*

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### ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is to put in perspective how practices in sustainability are undertaken by public primary schools within the context of neoliberalism and top-down model approaches in two different realities: in Brazil (Espírito Santo) and in Australia (Victoria). This study is based on the philosophy of ecosophy, a term coined by Guattari (1989). This qualitative study adopts cartography as a methodology to produce research narratives based on a doctoral project conducted between 2017 and 2020. The data collection consisted of individual and focus group interviews as a form of cartographic management. In Brazil, this study was conducted in the state of Espírito Santo in 13 schools that developed practices in sustainability or that joined the Programa Dinheiro Direto na Escola [Direct Money in Schools Program] (PDDE) in the cities of Vitória (capital), Cariacica, Vila Velha, Viana and Serra. In Australia, the data collection was conducted in six schools that joined the ResourceSmart School (RSS) program in the cities of Melbourne and Geelong, both in the State of Victoria. This study finding indicates that, even in such diverse contexts, schools weave a nets of relationships and

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develop agency in an open space for creation, allowing for solidarity nets that emerge from the emergence of practices from people in these schools, permeated by the plurality of everyday interactions.

*Keywords:* Sustainability. Ecosophical practices. Narratives. Sustainable schools.

## RESUMO

A proposta deste artigo é perspectivar como as práticas de sustentabilidade, em meio a contextos neoliberais e modelos prescritos, transitam nas escolas públicas do ensino fundamental em duas realidades distintas: Brasil (Espírito Santo) e Austrália (Victoria). O trabalho orienta-se a partir do pensamento filosófico da ecosofia de Félix Guattari (1989). O estudo, de abordagem qualitativa e de inspiração cartográfica, agencia-se à pesquisa narrativa e tem como base a investigação doutoral conduzida no período de 2017 a 2020. A produção de dados ocorreu a partir da realização de entrevistas individuais e/ou em grupo como manejo cartográfico. No Brasil, a pesquisa aconteceu no Estado do Espírito Santo, em 13 escolas que desenvolviam práticas de sustentabilidade ou que participaram, por adesão, do Programa Dinheiro Direto na Escola (PDDE), nos municípios de Vitória (capital), Cariacica, Vila Velha, Viana e Serra. Na Austrália, a produção de dados ocorreu em seis escolas que aderiram ao Programa *ResourceSmart School* (RSS) nas cidades de Melbourne e Geelong, situadas no Estado de Victoria. Este estudo evidencia que, mesmo em contextos tão diversos, as escolas tecem uma rede de afetos e agenciamentos em uma abertura a inventividades, potencializando redes de solidariedades que emergem das práticas dos seres dessas escolas, permeadas de multiplicidades nas relações cotidianas.

*Palavras-chave:* Sustentabilidade. Práticas ecosóficas. Narrativas. Escolas sustentáveis.

## **The narrative production within environmental education in the schools' sustainability**

The concept of sustainable schools has been strengthened in official publications in various initiatives aiming at confronting social and environmental problems. However, programs and policies that address sustainability in schools produce different narrative meanings. The notion of sustainable school encompasses different concepts, such as sustainability, sustainable development and the very idea of environmental education.

This article aims to discuss the experiences and practices of sustainability in schools researched in two different realities: one region in Brazil and another in Australia, both of which operate through movements of singularities and through opening different territories through ecosophical ethical, aesthetic, political, economic and socio-environmental realities. This paper emerges from a doctoral research study (REZENDE, 2020) that investigated ecosophical practices in elementary education schools in Brazil and Australia.

Both countries are influenced by international policies on sustainable schools programs (TRISTÃO; REZENDE, 2017). Most of these policies bring to light the concept of sustainable development, which has been increasingly criticized by environmental education researchers in the Latin American, national and international contexts. Meanwhile, this same concept of sustainability has seen increasing popularity in the media and official documents.

Amidst a context of political demobilization, denialism, and uncertainties, the Brazilian environmental education has seen a series of programs being discontinued, regardless of their multiple previous achievements such as the *Política Nacional de Educação Ambiental* [National Policy for Environmental Education] (BRASIL, 1999) and the *Diretrizes Curriculares Nacionais para a Educação Ambiental* [National Curriculum Guidelines for Environmental Education] (BRASIL, 2012). A current example of this is its near exclusion from the *Base Nacional Comum Curricular* [National Curriculum Guidelines] (BNCC) as well as the dismissal of the Management Body in charge of the *Política Nacional de Educação Ambiental* [National Policies on Environmental Education].

It is not the aim of this study to engage in the controversies involving BNCC, but it is worth pointing out that in the Australian context it is mandatory to use the national curriculum in public schools. In the Australian Curriculum, there are three Cross-Curriculum Priorities (CCPs): sustainability, the engagement between Asia and Australia, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait's Islander stories and cultures. Some studies (BARNES; MOORE; ALMEIDA, 2018; SALTER; MAXWELL, 2016) show that despite the three CCPs being mandatory, there are challenges to be faced while implementing transdisciplinary approaches in the Curriculum.

The idea here is to find clues to a brief overview of two different contexts that try to resist the encapsulation, modeling and serialization imposed by Integrated World Capitalism (IWC) – also known as Post-Industrial Capitalism (GUATTARI, 1989). The IWC is characterized by the end of ideologies and unifying ideas of political action, making the mass media – globalized mass media – its most potent weapon for achieving social control. The IWC promotes a production of subjectivities in series, serialized by a homogenization of subjectivity, which Guattari (2012) points to as capitalistic subjectivity. This

production of subjectivities is based on a scientific-rational paradigm in which profit, exchange value, consumption, anthropocentrism and the loss of social relations and the environment are its objectives.

Thus, the concept of reference universes (GUATTARI, 2012) seeks to articulate the capitalist value and the trade value in the Marxist sense with other segregated valuation systems, such as social systems; groups; individuals; individual, artistic, religious sensitivities in order to articulate them with each other, without allowing the economic value to dominate and distance them. The reference universes are coupled with singularities, interspersed with the trajectories of research in movements that promote other practices of opening up possibilities and other existential territories in public elementary schools. The subjectivity and idea networks of sustainability are sometimes encapsulated by the IWC, and sometimes they raise other meanings of *ethos* and ontology of being.

This study is based on ecosophic cartography and uses sensitive listening to produce narratives that are supported by the use of methods as pointed out by Hart (2005), when he says the methods can

[...] help us specify, for example, how life stories or meaningful life experiences, within cultural boundaries, might have influenced the formation of beliefs. [...] as researchers, we must recognize the possibility of other (multiple) interpretations, based on other realities (paradigmatic and cultural) (HART, 2005, p. 38-39, our translation).

According to Tedesco, Sade e Caliman (2013), the interview process based on sensitive listening is shaped by the processual dimension of experience, not only regarding the representations that respondents make of the objects or state of things, but also considering the subjectivity processes that are acted through agency. We used open-ended questions that were transcribed and analyzed based on narrative research without the use of themes or categories.

It is important to highlight that due to the processes of the Ethical Committees, the Brazilian schools will be represented as letters in the alphabet and the Australian schools will be represented by the number of stars that were awarded to them.

## **The statements of sustainability practices and their composition with ecosophy**

We live at a time when the colossal dimension of environmental threats has been mobilizing the meanings of a climate emergency and, consequently, the enunciation of sustainability that permeates the daily lives of schools, official curricula and training programs on sustainable schools. The concept of sustainability ended up being co-opted by the military sectors and the corporate world, permeating discursive practices in multinational corporations, world organizations, governments, educational policies, institutions and curriculum (PARR, 2009) in the context of neoliberal policies generated by the IWC (GUATTARI, 2015).

Hence, we argue for the formulation of a new paradigm in an ethical-political articulation in which ecosophy – the link between environmental, scientific, economic, urban, mental, and social ecologies – serves to signalize “[...] the perspective of an ethical-political election of diversity, of the creative dissent, responsibility, respect to differences and the alterity” (GUATTARI, 2015, p. 31, our translation).

We focus on inventive processes that are distanced from positivist paradigms and instead adopt an ethical-aesthetic paradigm. This way, in certain social contexts, the subjectivity gets individualized. Thus, one could put themselves in relation to local customs, laws, family relationships, etc. However, in other contexts,

[...] subjectivity becomes collective, it must take into consideration intersubjective human instances expressed by language and by suggestive and identifying instances regarding ethology, institutional interactions of different natures, mechanical appliances like computers, incorporeal reference universes related to music and art (GUATTARI, 2012, p. 20, our translation).

However, Guattari (2015) points out that, in a society in which the IWC imposes the production of subjectivation processes, in order to reinvent otherness, it needs to be triggered in new living conditions out of nostalgia for the past, remembering that we inhabit a planet that undergoes all sorts of demographic, technological, climatic and dramatic changes that urgently require solutions, as the dominant ontological redundancies need to be set aside.

Félix Guattari's (1989) ecosophy puts into perspective that there is no way to bring about the disjunction of the material and axiological dimensions of environmental problems, the loss of biodiversity, social conflicts, hunger and poverty, wars, migratory movements, among others. This is because we cannot consider in a reductionist way only the loss of animal and plant species, but also the loss of our social fabric itself.

Thus, by defending sustainable ecosophical practices, we promote the formulation of ecosophy to sustainability practices, which are all actions that take into account the socio-environmental, political-economic, cultural, ethical-aesthetic, gender, spirituality and territorial dimensions.

Sustainable environmental technologies known as ecotechniques, disseminated by different sustainability programs, are also included here, as there is not one single end to be achieved with these practices, but the potency they can cause. According to Pereira (2015), ecotechniques are a set of environmentally sustainable technologies capable of reducing the ecological footprint, such as a green roof, ventilation, energy saving, solar cookers, integrated biosystems, solid waste treatment and selective collection, reused kitchen oil, vegetable gardens, water collection systems, green consumption, sustainable purchases, production of paints with soil, etc. These sustainability practices step in as mechanisms against immobilization and they produce agencies and openings to ecosophy.

Ecosophical practice can be understood as mental ecology that arises when one manages to rebuild and work a certain youth, making it a nascent in today's world that considers the conditions of life, age and social inclusion. As Guattari (2015, p. 71, our translation) states when he says of the need for reinvention, in a "[...] world that ages, hardens, becomes rigid [...] it is a permanent job to find emergence again".

From this perspective, sustainable ecosophical practices are those permeated by the ethos of community care that resist crushing processes by neoliberal policies and create other processes of subjectivation. For Guattari (2012), large-scale struggles are not necessarily in sync with ecological praxis and micro-politics of desire.

Thus, a school that adopts sustainable ecosophical practices welcomes new worlds and people. In general, it maintains relationships with its space, with economic actions, with the procedural exploration of the singularities of events, in short, with everything that can contribute to authentic creation with the other (GUATTARI, 2012).

## First trajectory – the Espírito Santo territory in focus

In the first trajectory of this study, in the State of Espírito Santo, the investigation mapped schools that developed sustainability practices or that joined the *Programa Dinheiro Direto na Escola* [Direct Money at School Program] (PDDE) – *Escola Sustentável* [Sustainable School]<sup>2</sup>. This, among other structural policies of environmental education, ceased to exist in the current Brazilian context.

Data collection in Brazil takes place in the State of Espírito Santo, in 13 schools in the municipalities of Vitória, Cariacica, Vila Velha, Viana and Serra, which form the Greater Vitória Metropolitan Region, where public elementary schools were mapped. This mapping took place based on the Departments of Education of each municipality, following two criteria, namely: those that developed sustainability practices or that joined PDDE. A large part of the initiatives linked to the development of sustainability practices in schools in Brazil was triggered by the Sustainable School PDDE, which brings the concept of sustainable educators space (TRAJBER; SATO, 2010). These schools, faced with global environmental changes and the educational challenge of contributing to comprehensive education, engage in environmental education and the premises of sustainability.

There is no specific state government program to support the creation of sustainable schools in the State of Espírito Santo. The only program to cover a large part of the state was the Sustainable School PDDE. This did not prevent the development of sustainability practices in schools, on the contrary, it encouraged them.

In all, 56 were interviewed with a focus on principals and teachers responsible for sustainability practices, but research design also led to conversations with some students, pedagogues, employees and contractors, who helped with sustainable practices, as well as community members. The analysis of the interviews was based on narrative research.

<sup>2</sup> The *Programa Dinheiro Direto na Escola* [Direct Money at School Program] (PDDE) – *Escola Sustentável* [Sustainable School] was created in 2013 and aimed to ensure resources for the inclusion of the socio-environmental theme in the school's Political-Pedagogical Project. In addition to being linked to holding the *Conferência Nacional Infantojuvenil pelo Meio Ambiente* [National Conference for Children and Youth for the Environment] (CNIJMA), it also encouraged the creation and strengthening of *Comissões de Meio Ambiente e Qualidade de Vida* [Environment and Quality of Life Committees] (COM-VIDA) and the adaptation of the physical space to the concept of sustainability.

Our understanding is that schools that promote sustainability practices are schools that are premised on processes of observation, care for oneself, the other and the planet, care for time and listening. One of the teachers points out this process of observation and taking care of time:

*I think the children here like it, they want this reconnection. We talk very little. Not to talk about it, but I know you feel the same way I feel. Although we don't talk and don't write this, for me, that's a time when there is growing, germinating; it's dying to germinate and to feed another, it's a waiting time, sometimes the time of harvest, but sometimes it is also the time of frustration. I think it's a lot to deal with this bunch of emotions and children make the questions move, right? Why? What for? (TEACHER, School A, our translation).*

In the field of this trajectory, it was also evident that schools believe that Environmental Education, being inserted in the *Projeto Político-Pedagógico* [Political-Pedagogical Project] (PPP), obliges the Government to guarantee sustainability actions in schools, as the former director points out:

*SEME requires everything to be registered and we get mad at that, but it is necessary. It is important to draw out what is the matter of sustainability. School XXX made a movement with Teacher XXX where sustainability was present. In PPP, you can ensure that it continues. If it is documented, registered, institutionalized, I, K, X can leave, whoever it is. It's there in the guideline that there has to be an understanding that this action is important, so we can guarantee some actions (FORMER PRINCIPAL, School B, our translation).*

Guattari (2015) emphasizes that the Rule of Law is an illusion, as there will always be conflicts between opinion machines and social machines. In this way, it is about living in antagonism and dissent, as power dynamics are much more complex in our societies. For this, there is a need to renounce the simplification of the discourse of the media, which ascend to the personalization of powers in individual figures. For the ecosopher, we need to claim a uniqueness of life in



the community, in the neighborhood, within each ethnic group or region, but at the same time, contemplate actions of solidarity, cosmopolitanism and the right to be different because they embrace internationalism and difference.

It is precisely through the micro that social and environmental changes are started, but it does not seem ethical for government officials, and even companies that provide services to society, to use schools to solve problems that are the responsibility of the Public Power. Distancing those who formulate public policies from those who are directly working in the spaces is a great challenge. Schools continue to play their role and need to bypass the power relations of territories at the local level in the network of basic services, which are not adequately offered by the public service:

*[...] something that jams everything up is this collection that we do so well but that is lacking in Viana! But when we get there, it goes to the same place. And there is more, Fernanda, we try to do our part showing some attitude. You go to the yard to check if there is any garbage. They don't litter anything. They are the ones to say: "Ms, but where does this garbage go, if they are the ones who mix everything up? My mum separates oil, separates everything, and nothing happens...". Then you see the girls talking about sustainability as the city government's car littering behind the school. Then we went there with the students, and they got angry! Then, this week, there was a party and they threw dirt on top of the garbage and left. It looks beautiful. It's like this river here! The Council should save this river! How can it be saved? The sewage from all houses end up in the river! (EDUCATOR, School J, our translation).*

Social inequality is imposed by CMI's appropriation of the State. This capillarity affects public education, as it is at the heart of its social project that modeling subjectivation processes are promoted. In this sense, a reorganization of the way in which the spheres of the public sector are structured, in a less hierarchical and more rhizomatic way, could promote the creation of working groups with different technical or non-technical backgrounds to advise schools that intend to pursue sustainability. The strength in the daily life of sustainability practices lies in the schools' insistence on promoting ways of life and social practices that go beyond the understanding and bureaucracy of the Public Power.

## Second trajectory – the Australian context in Victoria

In the second trajectory, in the State of Victoria, Australia, the research followed six elementary and high schools in the cities of Melbourne and Geelong that joined the *ResourceSmart School* (RSS) program.<sup>3</sup> The origin of the *ResourceSmart School* Program comes from the pilot program *Australian Sustainable Schools Initiative* (AuSSI), which had a partnership between Government, States and Territories. The intention was to promote a systemic change in the educational system, reorienting it towards sustainability. Research (RICKINSON; HALL; REID, 2014, 2016) on RSS shows frequent assessment of the program's impacts on the schools involved. We did not notice in the production of the narratives – although this analysis was not the objective of the study – the use of the term “environmental education”, which indicates a certain ethical-political stance. However, it should be noted that official documents prior to the liberal party governments mention environmental education more often (CLOUD, 2005).

In this program, which also works by adhesion of schools, there is an obligation to complete a series of modules – a common core (central) followed by four specific modules of resources – in the areas of biodiversity, energy, waste and water (GOUGH, 2006).

The program presents a series of indicators in a step-by-step manner where an extensive data-database needs to be frequently inserted into the RSS system. Once the data is included, information is generated to be shared with the school community. From then on, decisions on how to review expenditures to invest revenue in new projects are made with students, protagonists and direct participants in the school.

Meeting all the requirements of the five modules leads to certification that enables schools to reach the highest level, the *Five Star ResourceSmart School* (Leading School in Sustainability) and participate in the *ResourceSmart Schools Awards*, an award that recognizes schools for notable achievements in sustainability.

<sup>3</sup> RSS adopts an approach to deliver measurable environmental, financial, educational and social outcomes through improved resource management and the integration of sustainability education into the curriculum and daily operations of participating schools. The program aims, among other goals, to minimize waste, save energy and water, improve biodiversity and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The selection of interviewees from the school community was carried out by teachers responsible for sustainability practices. There were 80 respondents in six schools. The interviews took place individually or in groups that, depending on the school, had the participation of the teachers responsible for sustainability practices, principals or vice principals, mothers/fathers of students, members of the community, volunteers and students who, in some schools, are known as the *Green Team*. In addition, we interviewed sustainability experts from two Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) – Centre for Education and Research in Environmental Strategies (CERES) and The Farmer's Place. They provide practical support to schools that are part of the RSS. This assistance consists of regular visits following the construction and implementation of modules in accordance with the desires and possibilities of the schools.

In the Australian trajectory alone, six videos around seven minutes long each were produced, based on more than 30 hours of audio and video recorded. Some of them were used on the official websites or blogs of the researched school. These videos functioned as audiovisual narratives and were intended not only for reflection with the school community, but also to capture the theories of teachers, which expressed stories about the world in which we want to live. We did not intend to colonize their ideas, but we were interested in the creation of their own stories and their life and ontological experiences.

One of the bets of ecosophy is also the understanding of machinic production – the high degree of sophistication of technological machines exerts a great influence on the creation of the machinic subjectivity concept – together with ecologies, that is, how technology networks can produce movements other than those of modeling and serialization imposed by the Integrated Worldwide Capitalism (IWC), but by molecular networks of creation.

As Guattari (2015) points out, subjectivity is not only human, but also machinic, as it is produced by means of communication, computers and language systems. Subjectivity is the raw material of the human species. For Pelbart (1993), it consists in extending the idea of production that would be essential in the machine:

[...] to all levels, including desire, the unconscious, of existence as a whole, but, on the other hand, it also broadens the notion of production; production is not only the production of material and immaterial things within a realm of possibilities, but also production of new possibilities, that is, production of productions, bifurcations, fertile imbalance, creation from singularities, finally getting to the idea of self-creation from singularities, self-positioning, autopoiesis (PELBART, 1993, p. 44, our translation).

In the current Australian neoliberal context, we see from interviews that the RSS has been cut, and many sustainability experts from these NGOs have been left with the responsibility of mentoring a significant number of schools. Demand for the program increased with the disclosure of the positive effects of its actions. In addition to giving visibility to the practices developed in schools, in a way, joining the program brought validation to the experiences that involved the school community:

*[...] the RSS program validated what justified my being a crazy greenie and gave me, I suppose, some recognition for what I was doing. It made people stop and listen because it wasn't just me being crazy. It's actually problems happening in the world and the government is now recognizing these issues, so I think ResourceSmart in this way supported my journey of spreading sustainability as it's something that is a valid concern in schools. If it weren't for the RSS, I would still be the person who was really banging my head against the wall, but still trying to make small changes (TEACHER, 5 Star School, our translation).*

We are based on concealing, reducing, the responsibility of the Public Power and protecting the economic power. Allied to the media is a sensationalist discourse, devoid of ethics, which infantilizes and immobilizes. It is just a strategy that exempts elites from any barriers in their path. Guattari (2015), in turn, draws attention to the role of the media, the media and the relationship with their audience, who insists on remaining passive in the face of a non-responsible media that reproduces empty enunciations of world leaders. A teacher addresses the Australian neoliberal policy and the non-disclosure of the facts of the climate crisis:

*[...] when you have world leaders who don't think this is happening, it's a little scary and, coming from a scientific background, there are so many different scientists who are in many different areas of science, there are climate scientists, soil scientists or not, we are testing and measuring air pollution, they might be botanists, they might be from horticulture, they might be zoologists, but they recognize that something is changing and it's not good, so I think all these people all over the world looking at climate change and all these different ways can't be wrong, and we need to start trusting scientists again, not the people on YouTube and the influences on the internet. We really need to believe in science again (TEACHER, Ground Zero school, our translation).*

There is resistance to school models that are handed over to the community, as it reflects a political will for participation by those who make up its body, as they also have the desire to experience other reference universes. Thus, when a school offers sustainability practices in an attempt to resist modeling processes and break patterns, with regard to curricular experiences, it promotes new universes of reference, as the principal points out:

*[...] when we teach school kids, it is really important to teach them to see the school community, the school environment as a part of the world. This way, whatever we teach them here, any skills we teach, they will like and will be able to take to the world and be a global citizen. That is why we do not teach thinking of this specific community (PRINCIPAL, 2 Star School, our translation).*

The school here takes on a cosmopolitan idea, as it does not affect the community. The social practices brokered in these spaces try to break into other spaces, such as future workplaces. It is not about assigning the school the responsibility for the labor world, this task is already attributed to the school. This it is about digging up a new labor world, recognizing that many of the professions required for the near future have not even been created yet.

We emphasize that the Australian curriculum proposal (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority, [between 2010 and 2020]) emphasizes sustainability as a priority of studies that connects relevant aspects in learning areas and states that CCPs are fundamental to understanding how social, economic and environmental systems interact to support and maintain human life, to appreciate and respect the diversity of visions and values that influence sustainable development, with an emphasis on education for sustainability.

## **Inventive experiences with sustainability**

The research trajectory of following these schools with sustainability practices promotes understanding of the power of experiences, of the different subjectivity productions in order to escape the idea of representation and weave lines of experimentation instead. Intertwined lines that form another intersection: Brazil and Australia and their narratives permeated with inventiveness, affection and flows.

Guattari's (2015) paradigm shift promotes the concept of ecological democracy that requires all living components to be within movements organized among themselves and in connection with the associative movement. The goal is to prepare a complete recomposition of the political ecology movement. This future movement must be pluralistic and deeply implemented in society, based on popular and sensory groups, also caring about issues related to women's emancipation and participation in politics, as pointed out, respectively, by a mother questioned about the possible impacts of knowledge acquired by her daughter in the sustainable school and a student about her role in the exercise of democracy:

*[...] probably because it makes women think outside the box, making them think: "I can be an engineer who takes care of cleaning the oceans!" Whatever it is! They're not thinking: "I'm a woman, I can't do this!" They're thinking it needs to be done and now she's learned how to go ahead and do it, that's what she chooses (MOTHER, 5 Star School, our translation).*

*So we are separated from the environment, but we are in class writing letters or petitions to the government and deciding whether it will be video or email to the federal, state or local government. We want to resolve the issue of plastic, we no longer want production. We want more people to be interested, even if it isn't followed by many of them. We want you to include this in the environment in our classes every day. And, with petitions, this can be a start... (STUDENT, 2 Star School, our translation).*

For Guattari (2012), there is a scientific myopia that separated the "body from the head", an essential part of the planet's social and environmental challenges. Thus, for the ecosopher, scientists need to be inserted in an international democracy, reaching an agreement on common projects, respecting singularities. The way in which these reductionist knowledge and conceptions enter curricula with little possibility of articulation promotes more disconnections. The professor responsible for sustainability practices talks about a possible connection:

*[...] connect the head to the heart and hand, because if you don't connect the three, learning won't happen. You can't have one without the other, so when people say to me, "Oh, but I'm going to get dirty", they need to*

*get dirty to understand what the soil is like, and it will connect with what it should be when they know they are talking about the soil. It is about what you need to think about in order to buy the things that will make it all better; which is to say, whatever it is, you need to connect the head to the heart to the hand, you can't do one without the other. The world will not survive with intellectualism alone, otherwise everything will be dead, because we will be thinking about ourselves to the point of death! Who will be using their hands to make food for us to eat while we're busy thinking? Again everything is connection, everything is connection (TEACHER, 5 Star School, our translation).*

Promoting contact, connecting with different areas with a view to creation is the role of schools as well, so rethinking the hierarchies of those who hold or who dictate knowledge is more than necessary, because

*[...] building these connections with students from this perspective is really important and then building relationships with them, bringing them back to hear from them about sustainability. They are the ones who should create discussions and debates about what they want, not what we teachers are trying to teach, as this expands the understanding of concepts (TEACHER, 5 Star School, our translation).*

*[...] the truth is, you have to have the set first, this set from the school. Second, you have to listen to the teachers, because many ideas come from them, such as these pallets, all these questions here, it was done together; talking to the teachers, they know I like it, right? And I also have the affinities like them, there's this set and it worked. It was something that worked, we have to have this relationship with nice teachers. They have to allow the students to get involved, it's because, if we don't have a partnership with the students, they can ruin what we've done. So, it's the whole set (DIRECTOR, School L, our translation).*

In the cartographic experiences in Australian schools, the different nationalities that coexist in their spaces emerge. Internationalism suggests that it is inconceivable that a political struggle for libertarian societies is restricted to geopolitical units called countries, created for the consolidation of a process of domination and exploitation. We need collective movements that claim the uniqueness of life in the community, in the neighborhood, within

each ethnic group or region, but at the same time, contemplate actions of solidarity, cosmopolitanism and the right to be different because they embrace internationalism and difference.

*I think that because all children go through this program [...] and we are talking about five years, this makes an impact, because these children are teaching their parents. This is what happens, we are influenced by our children! They bring just some of these things home. I think that if English is the second language, the child is coming back home and telling them what is happening, and you are leaning about culture, so that these children take in that information at this age, so that they can make an impact on their parents. In five years you will see a huge difference [...]. I see children change, whether they're Chinese, Indian, Vietnamese, Mexican, or Australian, or whatever, when they leave school, when they become young adults, I see them making an impact on their community for 5 years, 15 years. These children, in this school, have the power to make a difference, it doesn't matter if now or later (MOTHER, 5 Star School, our translation).*

*I think that the biggest benefit would be making us aware of sustainability because the children here come from different, from diverse origins. Where you are in a suburban area is like that a lot. I am not sure that everyone has the same experiences at home, with the same exposure to ideas about sustainability. So I think it is nice that they learn these concepts and then take them home to their own families and implement them at home and have these opportunities, particularly to make simple things, like gardening, recycling, composting, and things that you know in a different way. I think it is very valuable to learn most of these skills at school and translate them at home (MOTHER, 4 Star School, our translation).*

From an ecosophical perspective, the relationship of North and South countries is embodied in the mutual cooperation of exchanges aiming to enrich ethnic and cultural singularities, as well as other ways of valuing work, interfering with racisms and segregations in which the old polarities, established in vertical power relations, are replaced by agency to social movements and planetary economic solidarity with consequent ethical repositioning. A new internationalism is based on social and environmental ecology, in which geopolitical relations are not detached from the collective imagination.



That is why Guattari (2015) tells us of the need to reinvent the social fabric through technological revolutions that actually produce free time, and not new modeling processes. The creation of diversified possibilities to recompose an existential corporeality was a mapped clue explained below:

*[...] they may create a permanent connection with education, but also with the whole concept of sustainability... They may not have any other success at school, no other reason to go to school, and this can happen. I have seen this before in education, since prep<sup>4</sup> until high school children. That is why they look for kids that could really be in other schools or disengaged and sometimes labeled as bad kids when put in a type of sustainability environment where they are working with their hands and really getting into it. They see a completely different side from these kids and that can be life changing (PRINCIPAL, Ground Zero school, our translation).*

*[...] one of my students who does not have a great relationship with learning in the classroom, academic environment... My favourite memory of him was to see him when we started taking care of vegetable garden. I had never seen him as motivated and had never seen him as excited. The children who don't like to stay seated, working at their desks, must have the opportunity to learn with hands-on activities. Really, this was really great to see (TEACHER, 5 star school, our translation).*

*[...] I will speak for myself, it relaxes me, it feeds me, it gives me hope, and I think that to them, like, a world of discovery of so many different things that they... You ask them to water the plants and there are children who stay there, water the leaves, caring for them, and are very attentive to everything [...]. Maria is nine years old now and she struggles a lot to learn, but her other side, this side that is able to absorb things, is very impressive (TEACHER, School A, our translation).*

Guattari (2012) speaks of the experience of creating local instances of collective subjectivation, as it is not a remodeling of subjectivity, but a *sui generis* production, for example:

4 Prep serves as a transition year for five-year-olds entering Australian elementary schools.

[...] psychotic rural patients [...] will be taken to practice arts, theater, video, music, etc, when these were universes that they completely missed. On the other hand, bureaucrats and intellectuals will be attracted to physical labor, in the kitchen, in the garden, ceramic, etc. Because what matters here is not only the confrontation of a new way of expression, it is the constitution of subjectivity complexes: multiple individual-group-machine exchange, which offer people diverse possibilities of recomposing an existential bodiliness, of leaving their repetitive impasse, and, in some way, to become a singularity again (GUATTARI, 2012, p. 17, our translation).

We mapped partnerships with universities for more elaborate actions that demand: a network of knowledge, such as species identification and conservation projects; concern with improving visual and noise pollution in communities; creation of organized collectives that enter the school, such as the *Green Team*, the *Sustainability Squad*, the *Community Gardens* and their mobilization with a focus on reducing loneliness and depression rates voluntarily or through partnerships:

*[...] we also signed up for Riverwatch next quarter, so I'm going to a training day this semester to learn how to sample water with recorded monitoring. It's going to be in Dandenong Creek. So I think the students will like it a lot, because it's near here. They'll be able to use the water for a river bath, and we'll probably have to collect samples and bring them back. Almost like we did before in the River Detectives project. A fantastic initiative that the University of Swinburne offered for free. A free ride that works really well and the kids loved it. What's in the water? What is the chemistry in the water? Which animals? And how to evaluate solutions to water problems (TEACHER, 2 Star School, our translation).*

It is necessary, then, the condition of affirmation of social and political practices adapted to the new problems of urbanism, neighborhood relations, family life and education (GUATTARI, 2015). This revolution should not only be concerned with visible power relations on a large scale, but it also needs to take into account molecular domains of sensitivity, intelligence and desire, as the teacher points out:

*[...] we inherited it. The banana tree is an heirloom plant. We're taking care of it because we don't want it to die. The pavement (cement) was opened there. It was opened by our very hands, like: "Look, we can put something here and make this space different". Let a special student go there to run, look, play, it was worth it, because it was a lost, abandoned space in the school, a place of dirt locked with a padlock where no one had access (TEACHER, School A, our translation).*

Perhaps the very notion of school can be rethought, as the rupture is not only of the physical cement, it is also political and reveals a desire to break down barriers, which are not only disciplinary, both in the epistemological and in the pedagogical fields, but political, cultural and socioeconomic. Breaking the cement and digging the earth here seems much more like an attempt to subvert the idea of a school of serialized and modeling practices.

## **Final Remarks**

The means to change life and create a style of new social values are within our reach. What we lack is the desire and political will to take on such transformations. Therefore, the collective work of social ecology and mental ecology needs to be carried out on a large scale. From this perspective, modalities of time use within the modern machinery are necessary. Opening up and digging new ways of conceiving relationships with childhood, with the female condition and with cross-cultural relationships.

It was possible to map singularities and reference universes in elementary public schools, their surroundings, their bottlenecks, their impressions on the Public Power as well as on the processes of subjectivities engendered in the networks of knowledge and practices woven in schools.

Schools intend to share their social practices with the community. In these contexts, prescriptions, formation of networks, models, inventive experiences, agency, silences are produced, all operating within processes of subjectivation.

It is noteworthy that public or private initiatives on the idea of sustainable schools in Brazil generally adopt environmental education as a generator of sustainability practices. This happens because environmental education entered the educational system not as a school subject, but with an interdisciplinary

approach that aims, according to Tristão (2005), to strengthen collective actions to enhance the meaning of the repoliticization of collective life. In Australian schools, the idea of education for sustainability is more emphasized.

Many narratives addressed stories of struggles and resistance against IWC. In many Espírito Santo schools, the poor conditions offered by the Public Power was constant, which, in a way, did not make the practices unfeasible and generated a reconstitution of collective and individual subjectivities based on the social relationships.

The data production brings stories of how schools promote sustainable ecosophical practices. These practices are possible; they open up gaps in the concept of sustainable schools and promote solidarity networks. Networks that have never been as necessary as in this moment of resistance, but which are the first ones to disappear within the logic imposed by the IWC. It is worth remembering that, were it not for the solidarity networks of the school community that make schools sustainable, the public school would already have its end decreed. Its dismantling is a reflection of public policies that do not fulfill their role, but also of the absence of solidarity networks among its main stakeholders.

A school that brings references from ecologies in the aesthetic world means ethical processes of creativity. These creative processes introduce ethical responsibility into every movement, as nothing is given and the success of the process and its goal is never guaranteed. Thus, we understand how ecosophical practices generate networks of affections and agency in an opening to inventive practices, enhancing solidarity networks that emerge in the daily lives of these schools permeated by multiplicities in the relationships woven in their daily lives.

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