

# When the curriculum becomes a catwalk for difference<sup>1</sup>

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## *Quando o currículo se torna passarela para a diferença<sup>2</sup>*

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### ABSTRACT

Living in multiple ways (in) the curriculum is the main theme of this work. From four narrative scenes about fashion shows held in a public school in Recife by high school students, we weave the main lines of the text, seeking to recompose the way those collective actions uniquely inhabit the curriculum, significantly affecting the experiences of gender and sexuality of those people. We understand curriculum as a signifier that refers to an enunciative space-time, in constant (re)formulation based on processes of cultural hybridization. We point out the importance of subjective interpellations for the composition of “new” and / or “unknown” elements in the curriculum and how this can be understood as an opening of this field to the passage of the difference that displaces and recreates the ideals of education from the meaning other experiences.

*Keywords:* Curriculum. Difference. Subjectivation. Gender. Sexuality.

### RESUMO

Viver de múltiplas formas (n) o currículo é o tema principal deste trabalho. A partir de quatro cenas narrativas sobre desfiles de moda realizados por

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alunos do ensino médio numa escola pública do Recife, tecemos as linhas principais do texto buscando recompor a forma como aquelas ações coletivas habitavam o currículo de maneira singular, afetando significativamente as experiências de gênero e sexualidade daquelas pessoas. Compreendemos currículo como signifiante que remete a um espaço-tempo enunciativo em constante (re)formulação a partir de processos de hibridização cultural. Pontuamos a importância das interpelações subjetivas para a composição de elementos “novos” e/ou “desconhecidos” no tecido curricular e como isso pode ser entendido enquanto uma abertura desse campo à passagem da diferença, que desloca e recria os ideais de educação a partir da significação de outras vivências.

*Palavras-chave:* Currículo. Diferença. Subjetivação. Gênero. Sexualidade.

## Introduction

This work develops from the discussion of four scenes that are part of the master’s research of one of the authors (MELO, 2020), and that helps us to reflect on the possibilities of (re)imagining the curricular space-time, considering the game of the difference. Such possibilities of (re)imagination necessarily go through, in our view, the consideration of daily bodily experiences and performances that, generally, remain unnoticed or ignored by the traditional grammar of pedagogy and that challenge to think about education from the strange, the banal and slippery (RANNIERY; MACEDO, 2018). Therefore, it is in the reports about the fashion shows held in a public school in Recife, by high school students, that we find the main threads for sewing this text, seeking to recompose the way those collective actions inhabited the curriculum in a completely private way, significantly affecting the subjective experiences of those people.

The research was developed through interviews/conversations with former students of that school, who shared the experience of having been, even when students, people who challenged, in the school environment, the demarcations conventionally related to bodies considered as masculine by culture and social organization traditional. Their experiences drew our attention not so much because of the strangeness of bodies supposedly “dissident”, with their daily performances, but mainly because of the wealth of finding a curricular space-time that has become densely intertwined by these manifestations.

It is worth considering that the notion of curriculum that permeates the development of our reflection is that shared by a group of researchers who, based on the post-structuralist perspective of discourse, think of it as a discursive

practice (LOPES; MACEDO, 2011; LOPES; OLIVEIRA A.; OLIVEIRA G., 2018). Thus, we see culture not as an object of teaching, as many theoretical proposals - whether designated as traditional, critical, or post-critical - tend to consider. We assume “curriculum” as a signifier that refers to an enunciative space-time, in constant (re)formulation based on processes of cultural hybridization (MACEDO, 2006a; 2006b). Also, we understand that knowledge does not stop at the possibility of describing something real or cultural, as if in a reflex operation. Culture and knowledge are both in constant (re)meaning, creating multiple *loci* of meaning production in the game of the curriculum, never fully fixed. Thus, it is possible to affirm that the curriculum is culture. Not in the sense of being something that competes for a place in the list of catalogable and recognizable cultural traditions. But, in the perspective that it is itself a living space-time in which the possibilities of translation of any meaning or referent are constantly negotiated (LOPES; CUNHA; COSTA, 2013).

It is from this perspective that, in line with Macedo (2006a), we interpret the curriculum as “frontier space-time in which different cultural traditions interact and in which one can live in multiple ways” (MACEDO, 2006a p. 286). We understand “cultural traditions” in the same direction that Lopes (2015) gave to curricular traditions, as “arising from acts of power that hinder meaning and its free flow. They are records subject to the political struggles that institute meaning. Traditions constantly recreated, translated in different ways” (LOPES, 2015. p.460). They are not rational rules or historical settlements stabilized and capable of defining once and for all the possibilities of knowledge. In this way, we emphasize the concept of curriculum as the place of the undecidable, the unforeseen, of acts of creation that enable the eruption of subjectivities (MACEDO, 2012, p. 733). This place of creation is fiercely disputed by norms that are, at the same time, producers and effects of identities that seek to account for intelligibility of the real through stagnations and crystallizations in the continuous flows of signification. Such articulations of meanings are like nodal points (LACLAU; MOUFFE, 2015) that forge specific identities in the social dynamics and, depending on how they articulate, can generate more or less stable hegemonies, more or less rigid, to curb more force or to pave the way for the emergence of multiple possibilities of difference that never cease to be produced and mobilized. Thus, the curriculum is that space-time in which subjectivation is almost imperative. Education, in this sense, is also an old name for the subjectivity processes themselves.

Thus, living in multiple ways (in) the curriculum is certainly the main motto for what we intend to think about in this work. Taking advantage of the experiences discursively constructed in the scenes presented, we will then point out the importance of subjective interpellations for the composition of “new”

and/or “unknown” elements in the tissues of the curricular space-time, and how this can be understood as an opening of this field the passage of the difference that displaces and recreates the ideals of curriculum and education based on the meaning of other experiences.

## **On subjective interpellations and possibilities of *montação* in/of the curriculum**

**Scene 1:** Sunny starting of the week, as only found in Recife. On the bus from the city center, towards the school, reminiscent of the usual route of the curricular internships of yore, sufficient reasons to reach this research, now in the conclusion phase. Upon arrival, at first glance, it seems that almost nothing had changed in its colors, walls, corridors, and, mainly, in the old habit of entering through the small gate of the basement that is on the left side. Everything is practically the same, although all the students are no longer the same as those of years ago. However, even those of today do not look very different from those. We go directly to those who were interested in: the teachers who are frequently mentioned in conversations with the alumni of that school. With two of them, we sat down, as we always did, near the snack bar on the sidewalk, practically deserted, typical of that uninhabited central region of the city, marked by the lack of care and security on the part of the local authorities. Even today, that “isolated” school between public institutions and dozens of buildings that mix the abandonment and bureaucratic service of several companies seems to be perhaps the only breath of vital movement, of the pulse of the new and, certainly, of hugs, smiles and educational experimentation that resists that social slump. These educational experiments were so peculiar that they gained the accent in our conversation when asked about the school’s projects, so vividly punctuated by the alumni as fundamental to their personal experiences with gender and sexuality. The relationship of one of them - Ariel - with these teachers and their thematic fashion shows were aspects mentioned in the conversation, to which Professor Paulo promptly commented: *“And the cool thing about this is that it is a natural thing. I encouraged him from the moment the school made him show me his clothes designs. Then I was fascinated. And I told him right away: you have to be a stylist. So challenged him to what was his first fashion show”*.

**Scene 2:** After we talked a lot via WhatsApp, we met at the university library, just as it would happen in other combined interviews from thereon. The calmed rhythm of the bodies in that reading environment, purposefully chosen, contrasted with the recurrent exaltation of the words put in to account for those school experiences. *“And at the time, too, Ariel had a fashion show that was - my God! - the opener! ‘Respect me, the fags are going to enter now’ get it? And it was a milestone in my life too because I was already in this process [of discovering myself]. I discovered, during this period, that I started*

*working with Ariel, that I had a desire to participate in an activity like this with my body, understand? It was from there, from that moment, that I started to, like, my body... 'I love my body'. So, for the others, little will matter what they will think, get it? Then I got this self-confidence so, when it was over, I wanted it again. It was terrific. It was a very big self-affirmation. It was so much work. We worked so hard at the time"* - shot Juno, just when the theme of the fashion shows at school appeared on the agenda of our conversation.

**Scene 3:** Shortly after lunchtime, Luke was already waiting at the place we had arranged. The library looked more like an oasis in the heat, noise, and movement of the city center. Recorder turned on, Luke soon also reported the importance of those moments of appearance: *"When I saw Ariel in the parade and [when], in the end, he would come in with a classic, low, black scarpin heel. And then everyone - wow! - vibrated, that thing: school icon! And he is on heels! And then I was like: my God, how come? How is it to feel what he is feeling there? And at school, at the last show, he got his name as a designer, stylist, designed, and projected the clothes and I was the one who sewed everything and made the project move. And, in the end, he and I stayed ahead. It was amazing because I sewed all the clothes and didn't sew mine. I had to finish other people's, but there was no time to do mine. Then he said: 'you will have to enter somehow'. He gave me a pair of six-inch heels. And then it was a euphoria when that happened because Ariel first came, high heels, like that, with clothes and all. Then another girl came. And when I came in, I was wearing heels, shorts, a jacket without a blouse and the crowd... [signs of exaltation with his hands]. It was wonderful! I thought there was going to be criticism, but I got none. No. And there were lots of clothes which broke gender"*.

**Scene 4:** Taking advantage of his break from work, we found Ariel close to the rectory, and soon the visual impact for his aesthetic presentation takes us. The streak of his steps on the way to the library already performed, performatively, much of what would be narrated about the meaning of the fashion shows in his constitution: *"I always liked to watch everything, noticing costumes, noticing the scenery. And when I saw it, it was a very quick thing, like [referring to Professor Paulo] seeing me drawing and asking me to do the job and stuff. And I was like: 'but I don't even know how to draw', you know? Then when I started doing things, the plug started to drop. I even think that if you talk to Mom, she will talk about me, that you will not believe to be me. She will say that I am a quiet person, that I suffered from not having friends at school, and that when I had this debut, I made friends with everyone. I became a popular person for being who I am. For being communicative, for being funny. Because I dress differently, because I like to dress up, you know? And it was all at once. I came home with a Mary Kay kit: 'mom, I'm going to do my makeup!' Like, virou uma chavinha<sup>3</sup> of nowhere, and I started to see everything with different eyes, you know? Before, I didn't think of anything about my future. For me, I didn't know anything that I wanted to do in college. Everyone had an endowment for something. I was another person who was going to study for an entrance*

3 *Virou uma chavinha* or *virar a chavinha* are popular expressions in Brazil, which refers to a process of change, new experimentation or opening up to something new.

*exam. And when it clicked, I started to see all this as, like: ‘ok, now I have to think about something because I have to be something’, you know?’*

It seems to us that interpellation is the first fundamental point in the reports produced. Its potency in the educational relationship aligned the scraps of the four scenes presented and leads us to reflect on the importance of actions that are often banal in school daily life, but that can trigger significant performances and experiences in the subjective (de/re) constitution process of those who are intertwined there. The speech of Professor Paulo, who is central in the first scene, directly triggers the articulation of experiences that involve both the preparation and the spectacle of the fashion shows shared by the students and, therefore, the very inflection in Ariel’s understanding of himself. This inflection is perceived, mainly, when he refers to his moment of “clicking”, the clear sign of a moment of radical subjective assumption. It makes no sense to try to state that the challenge proposed by the teacher was the only one responsible for the student’s subjective movement. However, in the strength of the report produced, it is clear that the interpellation in the teacher-student relationship was an important factor in promoting acts of creation, not only in clothes, accessories, and gestures but also in forms of existence. Not only from Ariel but from the scenic space constituted in that curricular context, from other students who could experience the game with other signs of gender and sexuality through the production and participation in the fashion shows. It was the production or even the *montação* of a curricular zone markedly favorable to the manifestations of those bodies, from their most daring artistic experiments.

*Montação* and/or *montaria* are very common terms among people who share the drag scene and art in some way. They refer to the act of dressing and producing that persona that you want to perform. However, as argues, there is, above all, “a scenic social function, being it entertainment or politics that is not enough in self-pleasure and ordinary fun” (AMANAJÁS, 2015 p. 21). It is this political function that we refer to when we refer to the *montação* and bring it to the curriculum through the operation of its performance character, capable of (mis/re)aligning the ideals and possibilities of education. By the game of fashion production, analogous to that of *montação*, those subjects uniquely inhabited the curriculum. Bodies normally read as masculine, in the hegemonic social horizon, modeled on the catwalk other modifications which challenge the scenarios and costumes of the expressions of gender and sexuality that, commonly, are reiterated by the grammar of masculinity. Therefore, the performances developed from the teacher’s interpellation seem to constitute the curriculum as a safety field (RANNIERY, 2018) for those subjects, which could only be done with the contribution of aesthetic, practical, and performance knowledge related to

fashion which, until then, was not prescribed in curricular programs, but which has been extremely fruitful since its integration into activities.

The interpellation that arose in this (extra-)curricular event, therefore, is a significant part of a broader set of interpellations, which cross the subjectivity dynamics of these subjects, which develop with particular nuances in the life of each one of them. We are, in some way, the constant re(l)a(c)tion between the other who exercises some power over our lives, whether that other is named as we wish, through more or less stable rules and conventions and our own vital and reflective negotiation of these rules and norms that challenge us (BUTLER, 2015a). In this sense, subjection “consists precisely in this fundamental dependence on a discourse that we never choose, but that, paradoxically, initiates and sustains our action” (BUTLER, 2017, p. 10). It is an ambivalent process of both subordinating to power and becoming a subject. And this power, in the case of our research, is materialized in the normalizing regulation of specific performance scripts, with gender and sexuality.

Subjectivity always emerges, therefore, from a regulatory movement that operates through a double directionality. There is no unilateral imposition to determine what is subject, neither on the part of a normative and social structure that supposedly produces it in a certain way nor on the personalism of an ontological autonomy on the part of an essential and a-historical subject who produces everything for its agency. But, specifically, amid the paradoxical relationship of subjection itself. It is in the in the *volta*<sup>4</sup>, in the *vir-a-ser*<sup>5</sup> or “*virar a chavinha*”, if we want to use Ariel’s expression, between the normalizing and the normalized, between the power and that “self” against which one acts with power, that the subject breaks out. It is at the *vira*<sup>6</sup>, in the “*entre-lugar*”<sup>7</sup>, where the passage seems to be present (BHABHA, 2005, p. 24), that the possibility of subjectivity emerges. And that is why “there is no subject, in the strict sense, that makes this turn. On the contrary, this return seems to function as a topological

4 *Volta* is a common expression in fashion shows and refers to the act in which one or a model develops the complete route on a catwalk. The term *volta* [turn] is also common in the writings of Butler (2017) to emphasize that subjective production does not depend exclusively on the external interpellative force, on a subject given beforehand or on his conscious action. The emergence of the subject occurs between the failures of the movements of power.

5 *Vir-a-ser* is a concept proposed by Heidegger (2015), which breaks with the idea of being as a fixed or constant presence. For the author, the being finds its meaning in a temporality that brings together, at the same time, the past, the present and the future. In this way, being is also what signals a projection, what it can become. Being and becoming are always involved in each other.

6 *Vira* is a sewing technique that turns the inside out into a right. It also refers to a narrow strip of leather that is sewn between the soles of a shoe, to join its edges.

7 “*Entre-lugar*” is a concept present in the work of Bhabha (2005) that refers to a hybrid place, of border or of passage.

inauguration of the subject, a founding moment whose ontological status remains permanently uncertain” (BUTLER, 2017, p. 11).

Thus, “*virar a chavinha*” is an important step in your (self) recognition, especially from and in that curricular experience. This gives us clues that one may be creating oneself in this tension with all this tangle of regulations that cross the curriculum. And what is this if not a process of subjectification, the power of educational action emanating from acts of (self)creation that are constituted as fundamental forces in the (re)imagination of democratic horizons that broaden the strategies of existence. Performance operations to realign the parameters of the field of appearance itself, which, in the case of the experiences of those students, had a lot of influence on regulations about gender and sexuality.

In this sense, gender and sexuality are social markers of difference that mobilize articulations of meaning and are capable of producing those that can be identified in the field of hegemonic representation or in what Butler (2015a; 2018) calls “conditions of possibilities to appear” or “recognizability”. These identifications can either corroborate expectations of the norms of representation, but they can also frustrate what is expected of them, creating those who are considered to be outside the norm, or simply strangers to the norm. Such social marks of difference have sewed and continue to sew, the most diverse enunciative practices that compose us and are decisive discursive moments in origin and policing of our sexualized and gendered lives. This stitching does not occur only in a linguistic representation, but mainly through the embodiment of the norms effected by the performativity, continuous repetition of acts that reiterate the discourse that produces gender identities (BUTLER, 1999). Thus, the continuous enunciation of certain codes on gender and sexuality enables the establishment and naturalization of repertoires that legitimize types of identity as essential. And they determine which lives are true, and which are not.

However, as in the subjectivation relationship, we understand that the regulatory movement is never unilateral and constitutes itself under attacks and reactions, in such a way that it is necessary to understand that, also in a larger scope, “the normative schemes are interrupted by each other, they emerge and disappear depending on broader operations of power, and, very often, they encounter spectral versions of what they claim to know” (BUTLER, 2015b, p. 17). This means that there is a strong failure component accompanying every normative instance in the sense that identity or nomination or representation “is never total or that recognition itself generates the non-recognizable as an exterior that stabilizes it” (MACEDO, 2017, p. 546).

Therefore, that curricular space-time and, also, those subjects to whom it refers are not pre-established nor given entities, but are mutually constituted by the relationship that crosses them. The subjectivation process of those bodies is



significantly marked by the social expectations of gender and sexuality, in which they invest practices that tension and challenge the regulatory frameworks of masculinity, through the experiences of setting up fashion shows, sewing and wearing clothes that “break the gender”, as Luke said in the third scene. In other words, with the use of high heels, short shorts, and exposition of parts of the body, these boys questioned their social expectation about “being a boy” that has always been relegated to them. And more than that, it seems that they wanted to teach, in the cadence of the catwalk, the steps with which one can parade all the fictional character of those social expectations.

At the same time, too, these experiences point to the porosity of the curriculum, even when marked by the fantasies of wholeness and prescription with which we habitually project it. These are experiences that take that space-time by storm and start to constitute it, also, based on its characteristics and demands although, this means a dispute depending on the limitations previously strengthened. This will always be a dispute, although without much tension, such as what was presented in the scenes of our research. It will always be a negotiation because it involves contingent attempts to fix the curricular identity and the drive for the difference that is unstoppable and always challenges.

This relationship also gains very productive outlines when we think of the power of difference concerning the very possibility of a reflection on democracy and the curriculum. This is because, in addition to a prescriptive allusion of what a democratic curriculum should be, what we notice is the difference itself forging something democratic from its performances outside the script. The condition of being different that requires its social recognition as an educational agency and producer of knowledge contributes to the creation of what Rannieri (2018, p. 215) calls “curricula that support life”.

The democratic game, in this sense, is projected as a horizon in the passage of difference in the curriculum a passage that transforms it – even if partially and contingently – into a safe place to live, not independently of the different forms of life, but, precisely, because of the countless multiplicity that surrounds life. “Inhabiting” the curriculum is a fundamental imperative in the democratic making that we intend to outline, and this is effective among the varied regulations that determine or not the appearance of people. Such regulations can be understood analogously as the beacons of precarious conditions (BUTLER, 2018)<sup>8</sup> that underlie social, and political life. Thus, to make democracy is to

8 It is worth noting that Butler (2018) elaborates these notions in a scenario of analysis that interrogates movements organized in the political struggle, in what she plants as a performative assembly theory. In spite of this original theoretical-analytical context, we twisted the notions a little more towards the specificity of our cases, as we considered them conducive to the analysis of these “dissident” bodifications.

manage and (un)twist and regulate (basically, disturb the differential distribution of the precarious condition) so that, repeatedly, more people appear. It is to broaden this field of appearance in which those who are read as living can live.

In the specific case we are dealing with, gender and sexuality acted for those students *dar o truque*<sup>9</sup> to the dynamic of the differential condition of the appearance in which they were submerged. With these tools, they assemble the performances, (un)twist the regulations, and weave their appearance in the curriculum. As foundations, powders, and lip glosses, the social markers of gender and sexuality bypass the *montação* to produce appearances in one way and not in another. Everything so that they can produce a livable life in the curriculum while also, the curriculum itself will become something possible for more people. This is because, as we have already said, nothing is given beforehand: neither the curriculum nor people. What takes goes on as *passável* is<sup>10</sup> what has been continually reiterated as normal and natural - it is the *montação* that is the result of a very smoky contour.

Our questions lead us to suggest, then, that we go beyond the attempts of definitive prescription of what could be the best curriculum – which, perhaps, even starting from an idea of democracy, flirts with the essentialization of differences in the name of tolerance and / or inclusion – and we understand that the curriculum becomes democratic while producing conditions for the safe and visible passage of beings, amid the endless negotiation of social regulations. Thus, if we want to question it as to its democratic intensity, we can assume that the curriculum will be much more democratic the more it is marked by the crossing of possible differences. And there is no rule about this because there is no subject given beforehand. There is only one non-negotiable appeal for encounter and coexistence.

Coexistence here, not as a way of trying to neutralize the potential antagonism that exists in relations, as Mouffe (2019) points out about the liberal-democratic pluralist policy. But, as a condition of life marked by an agonistic conflict that

9 *Dar o truque* or just *truque* are typical expressions of the LGBTI+ vocabulary and refer to “cheating”, “giving a glance”, or the ability to solve a problem. It is used in the drag (get a drag) process when using unconventional techniques for body production. In our case, we use the trick to indicate all the skills developed in the relationship of those students and their curricular occupation.

10 *Passabilidade* is a notion that we bring as an expression of a kind of performative corollary related to certain performance scripts of gender and sexuality, more or less socially agreed. Become *passável*, thus, is to forge itself performatively within some hegemonic social intelligibility. “*Passabilidade* is implied in a set of acts that ensure a substantial image of gender in the registration of a heterosexual and cisgender matrix” (PONTES; SILVA, 2017, p. 407). Here, we translate the term to indicate that, considering the inevitable negotiation game of social regulations, we can think of both educators and students, as operators in/of the curriculum, as subjects often desiring *passability*, in the sense of being constituted under perspectives of social intelligibility and politics.

can be rich and fertile in terms of difference. “The agonistic confrontation is different from the antagonistic one, not because it allows a possible consensus, but because the opponent is not considered an enemy to be destroyed, but an opponent whose existence is perceived as legitimate” (MOUFFE, 2019, p. 140).

Even though the agonistic perspective recognizes the impossibility of full and definitive reconciliation in pluralist politics, we argue that it is possible to think and animate the experience of the curriculum as “a new way of life that is more radically democratic and more substantially interdependent” (BUTLER, 2018, p. 238). On an open catwalk for creations, experiments, and discoveries – like a recurring circuit of negotiations – pains and joys, desires and fears, doubts and elaborations can be experienced collectively in the game of multiplicity that crosses us. In this type of perspective, there are no guarantees, but in its place, there is a permanent provocation that instigates the search for a curricular game that “keeps democracy as an open horizon” (RANNIERY; MACEDO, 2018, p. 26).

## **Learning to build paths and balance steps**

The curricular performance of the experiences highlighted in the scenes can easily frustrate the expectations that are often created when we analyze the existence considered “dissidents” in the school spaces. This is because we are used to a considerable set of personal, social, and academic reports of violence, oppression, and exclusion that denounce the reality that LGBTI+ people need to deal with in their school trajectories. Situations like these are extremely recurring and need to be continuously denounced and challenged by research and academic productions ethically committed to the horizons of the struggle for freedom, justice, and permanent democratization of education. However, the works that we have developed in this area point us to the importance of recognizing that the “dissident” experiences of gender and sexuality in school education are not, inexorably, destined to be annihilated by a “scorched earth” policy (OLIVEIRA; SANTOS, 2019; OLIVEIRA; SANTOS, 2018), but that can build viable and productive alternatives from a “policy of the livable” (RANNIERY; MACEDO, 2018).

We are forged, since before birth, under gender and sexuality norms agreed from different contexts. This normative operation imposes performances, directs desires, and tries to condition the dynamics of pleasure. The activation of these codes through expressions such as “it’s a boy”, “it’s a girl” or, simply,

by marking a square on a civil registration document (BUTLER, 2018), for example, is what it institutes, in some way. In this way, the operation of a whole repertoire of representations of sexuality and gender in the sense of a performative standardization. The repertoire that presents itself as a path to be followed and as a criterion for policing and mobilizing bodies. We are charged with these standards that have passed through us long before we became aware of ourselves and the world.

The (re)production of normalized performance standards presents itself, in this sense, as one of the central tasks of the curriculum in some perspectives and education projects (OLIVEIRA, A.; OLIVEIRA, G., 2018). The curricular space-time is crossed by numerous norms that seek to control the teaching practices, the contents, the forms of behavior of the subjects, the training policies, the delimitation of the territories, that is, that seek to establish the possibilities and limits of the universe school education. These norms also refer to socially acceptable gender performances (male and female), which must be incorporated by the students, as well as by teachers and management, constituting the realization of specific, more or less regular social identities. These aspects are discussed in several studies (ABRAMOVAY, 2004; AUAD, 2004; BORTOLINI, 2015; CÉSAR, 2009; FERRARI, 2007; FREITAS, 2004; JUNQUEIRA, 2013; LOURO, 1997; 1999; 2001; NETO, 2015) experiences involving the relations between gender, sexuality, and education. These determinations, however, become a problem when subjects working in school spaces explicitly distance themselves from the rules that constitute genders and, even under the weight of threats and violence, their lives violate the normative condition.

It is evident, that normalization has a double and, apparently, paradoxical functionality: at the same time that it produces a certain model of subjectivity, the normative standard also seeks to prevent the emergence of subjective dynamics that challenge the limits and functioning of the established order. The subject of the norms is illusory and sterile. Subjectivation happens between what is possible and what does not conform, “*entre-lugar*” this clash, as we have already reflected in the previous topic. Among the conditions that make social legibility or illegibility possible, subjects, especially those considered to be sexual and gender “dissidents”, are constituting themselves and constituting their space-time, including in the curriculum. Developing ways to become recognizable and forging the agency of the new through its performances.

In this sense, those curricular (re) formulations operated by the activities of drawing, sewing, and modeling clothes are much more a (re)signification of the readability of those people and of what is considered “educational” and/or “curricular” than some kind of coping with specific situations of violence possibly experienced there. The curriculum as a space-time of multiple

interwoven experiences (MACEDO, 2006a), as we presented at the beginning of the text, could then be understood as a safe place in which, contrary to what is experienced in the broader social sphere, those bodies, primarily read as masculine, could make use of other signs and artifacts, generally idealized and naturalized by a supposedly feminine grammar. Besides, they could also circumvent this binary cloister and take risks in experiences that do not make identifications so “readable” socially, experiencing the possibility of living in transit, as is the case with Ariel himself, who, in the conversation, identified himself as a non-binary transgender person<sup>11</sup>.

It is in this sense that we prefer to bet that “the curriculum is a space-time in which there are no constituted identities, but relationships that at all times constitute identifications” (LOPES 2017, p. 124). This is because identities are always efforts to stem this continuous and incessant movement of producing meaning about things they are attempts to create stability and intelligibility about reality. What we call “reality” is always a name, a concept, an identity that represents this pause, this nodal point (LACLAU; MOUFFE, 2015), and/or the set of them produced so that existence has meaning.

Therefore, identity is always precarious, given its impossibility to completely close the possibilities of meaning. Thus, it makes sense to think of *montação* of oneself and one’s curriculum, since in the discursive game of producing everything, which is radically political, nothing is completely given. Efforts to build both curricular and subjective legibility always involve relations of identification that, in some way, are also attempts to organize the multiplicity that surrounds us, to deal with the field of the undecidable. What we call “being of things”, “being of the world” or, simply, “being”, and which serves, since the Greeks, as the fundamental reference of the classic idea of identity is nothing more than our belief in duration, in regularity, and our psychological need for permanence (MOSE, 2018). We live, in some way, under the need for security and this leads us to produce a world that “is not changeable and fluctuating in becoming, but one that is [being]” (NIETZSCHE, 2013, p. 291).

In addition to the normative operations that forge identities, it is important to recognize and investigate the dynamics of articulations and disputes that constitute the regulation of oneself and things in the world. It is a matter of emphasizing, as we have been discussing, that no curricular prescription can cope with educational activities in all their possibilities, nor is any subject integrated

11 For people who identify themselves in this way, the binary gender categories generally do not satisfy their ways of being in the world. According to Gabby Hartemann (2019, p. 100) they can be “agender, bigender, genderqueer, transmasculine, transfeminines, tranvestites, transvestigender, fluid in the gender, transgags, lesbotrans, among multiple other categories that we use today”.

into the curriculum as someone ready, finished, and impeccable. The curriculum and subjectivities are constituted according to the questions that come from themselves and from other social spheres that affect the educational process. It is interesting to resume the expression of Professor Paulo when he said: “from the moment the school made him show me the drawings”. He does not simply refer to the knowledge that people at school had regarding Ariels’ skills. It also indicates the production dynamics of that curricular space-time as marked by the opening to new possibilities, not as a mere mechanism for monitoring and reproducing social regularity.

The opportunity to express themselves through fashion shows, to expunge certain fears produced in the experience of differentiating performance, often marked by insults, offensive jokes, and violent *games* (OLIVEIRA; SANTOS, 2019; OLIVEIRA; SANTOS, 2018), made it possible for those young people not only to reach the level of a readable social identity but also to conquer a place of recognition (as reported in scenes 2, 3 and 4), but also allowed them to learn how to handle the tools and strategies of the art of differing, of identification, of creation of livable contexts. Essential tools and strategies for conquering and building a democratic experience. Furthermore, they allowed them to exercise a critical eye on a curricular territory not exempt from heterocisnormative regulations<sup>12</sup>, and taught them about the precariousness of norms and the importance of their denaturalization. It dismantled the fiction of bodies artificially shaped with gender and sexuality and opened up the possibility for them to explore the gaps, fractures, and escape points of this structure.

## **A few more words**

In this last part of our text, it is worth saying that the experiences reported, which served as a starting point for our analysis, give us rich elements to think about the possibilities of education open to difference, animated by the

12 According to Mattos and Cidade (2016, p. 134), cisheteronormativity or heterocisnormativity, as we use (only by aesthetic choice), is a perspective “that has the heterosexual matrix as the basis of kinship relations and the cisgender matrix as the organizer of compulsory designations and experiences of gender identities; both producing effects that are naturalized in our culture, from the constitution of a notion of normality to the detriment of the condition of abnormality, producing the abjection and concealment of transgressive and subordinate experiences”. The term comes up with the objective of improving what until recently was conceptualized as only “heteronormativity”, referring to “cultural practices that force assumptions that heterosexuality is normal and natural for all people” (MANNING, 2009, p. 414).

horizon – always mobile – of a “democracy to come” (DERRIDA, 2005). They strengthen the perspective that the joint performance of bodies in public spaces as a strategy of “corporeal demand for a more bearable set of economic, social and political conditions, no longer affected by the induced forms of precarious condition” (BUTLER, 2018, p. 17) is also valid for thinking about curricular actions and practices.

Through the fictional character of “assembly” of clothes and modeling, the students of our research also unmasked the fictionality of social regulations that act on bodies under specific modes of power and produced a political action of a radically democratizing character. The fashion shows, for those students, in addition to being an opportunity to get to know aspects of other cultures, were, primarily, curricular space-time in which they could discover more about aesthetic possibilities and produce gender visualities that blur the boundaries of the heterocynormative framework. Visualities that challenged the hegemonic regulation of masculinity, for example, boys wearing skirts and high heels. Experiences synthesized in expressions that appear in narrative scenes, such as “breaking gender” and “empowerment”. In the exercise of this public appearance, they demonstrated that they can negotiate social recognition strategies at school and in social spaces.

Building spaces in which less traumatic possibilities open up for their appearance is very significant for any type of precarious experience, especially for those involving the conflicting exercise of gender and sexuality. Bypassing the expectations that limit them, stepping “on high heels” on the curriculum catwalk, moving it with challenging expressions, turns, and steps, in the experience of these former students, was able to propel them to social life with less fear and more desire to move ahead. With more courage to risk discoveries and be able to assert themselves. Through their exuberant steps that produced a profusion of colors, smiles, and acclaim, even without so much need to face that curricular context, those “different” bodies exercised (performative) their right to appear, as a kind of demand for their experiences to be more and more possible and their lives, livable (BUTLER, 2018). So they made the curriculum their catwalk.

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