

The meddlesome poetics: A|r|t|ography as a pedagogical practice in Basic Education in Brazil

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Abstract

This study is based on pedagogical practices that dialogue with the philosophical proposal of A|r|t|ography. My research intends to verify if these pedagogical practices carried out at the Centro Educacional São Francisco, a secondary school in a dormitory city on the outskirts of Brasília, have the necessary power to promote changes in education, making learning more critical, more meaningful and more pleasant. These pedagogical practices (re)territorialize aesthetics in education and consider the political will to change the traditional pedagogical practices refractory to a good part of the students in Brazil. From the dialogical meetings between the concepts of practice, theory and poetry, it is possible to observe "the intrusion" of art in education, not as a curricular discipline but as a way of proceeding, to allow dialogues between areas of knowledge, disciplines and concepts, besides promoting the criticism of the visualities that flood our daily life. In this study I articulate the new pedagogical perspectives proposed by this philosophy of education, with a new look at art in dialogue with the Education of Visual Culture and with Cultural Pedagogy to understand the changes that occur when art affects education. This new look intrudes on artistic education and education as a whole.



Figure 1. Leísa Sasso, 2012, "Once upon a time": Graduation of teachers and students as Conflict Mediators.

When I started in 2013 the theoretical research on my pedagogical practices, I realized that I had collected, over 13 years of professional practice, thousands of visual data of the works made by public education students in Brasília. There were, however, few of my writings or of my colleagues on these projects and artistic and pedagogical events, which encouraged me to construct texts from the visual data resulting from these

events. I also looked for other approaches about these practices, in digital presentations made with colleagues, but above all with my voice and my emotionally involved memories.

What I was trying to do was a self-ethnography, and it was my own professional biography. Creating an impersonal and nonessential narrative as I have observed in much of scientific research has made no sense, however, Geertz (1993) understands that the only possibility of describing cultural facts is to interpret them, which means that my subjective view could be present in my investigation. In addition, the visual data present in the investigation were not restricted to the recording of the facts, they allow different interpretations, since they're plastic, performative works of the students and teachers that generate inconclusive interpretations in function of the subjectivities that they carry. These images introduce or deterritorialize ideas generated from the subjectivities that art and education bring to research. Thus, the Poetics again meddles in Education. For millennia poetics were banished from education when Plato expelled the Poets from the Temple. Since then, art has been viewed with distrust in the educational field.



Figure 2. Leisa Sasso, 2014, "Carranca Antenada": Edition of photography in anonymous intervention with headphones in frown in the CED. San Francisco.

The a|r|t|ography, which (re)considers poetics in education, has been presented (SPRINGGAY 2001; WILSON et al., 2002; IRWIN 2003; DARTS 2004; SPRINGWORK; IRWIN; KIND & WILSON. IRWIN & SPRINGGAY, 2008, DAYS, 2011, SPPRINGAY, IRWIN, LEGGO & GOUZOUASIS, 2008) as a liberating possibility to write in first person, to involve me in the investigation for narrating the personal experiences that I had experienced in 17 years of teaching and 7 years running a public school with almost 2,000 students in the outskirts of Brasilia. The adventure of creating and making happen a school that had the art as guide of the pedagogical

practices was the focus of the investigation, however, to know how the art dialogues with the education brought even more my practical work developed in the school of a|r|t|ography.

Since then I understood that a|r|t|ography is much more than a research methodology, is a philosophy of education. The will of the teacher, her students and a collective of teachers to relate poetics to education was put into practice. My individual artistic or pedagogical work doesn't exist in an autonomous way, they're collective constructions; they're not my works, but the creations of the students, proposals of teachers executed by the students or vice versa. It's a curatorship that I do these jobs, but that has my voice and my implied look. These images aren't only illustrative, but informations about my pedagogical practices, the experiences of my students, as well as other ways of seeing the world. I would even say an artistic way of seeing and reinterpreting the world. It's, therefore, with the affective, romantic and baroque voice that I present myself.



Figure 3. Leísa Sasso, 2009, "Red": School parade on the Avenue in performance/protest.

These thousands of photographic records could be presented aesthetically, poetic presentations in dialogues and crossings with the texts, throughout the research work, just as the educational process had been intended in school. Poetics, theory and practice worked together in several projects where students experimented with these dialogues that became the master's thesis, *Livro-Objeto A/r/tográfico* (SASSO, 2014). I understood the rigor of the investigation was no longer based on the rigidity of the norms of presentation of scientific papers prescribed by ABNT, APA among others, nor in the proof of preconceived hypotheses. I began to consider various researchers from American and European academies who think about artistic production as a possibility to insert the sensitive in academic research and not only the rationalism of the positivist model.

It is not a matter of rationalism or poetry, but of rationalism and poetry, of pedagogical practice with theory and poetry, neither a fusion of concepts, but of dialogues, exchanges of looks and positions, of experiments. I understood that what I was transposing into the research was what we had done at school. It was these practical, textual and artistic crossings that were familiar to me, but which always turned my view to the aesthetics of the other.



Figure 4. Leisa Sasso, 2014, "Constructivism X Sun": Guache Ink in Cardboard of the lunch (student intervention).

I became a|r|tographer not only because I was an artist, researcher and educator, but also because I sought a libertarian, creative and creative writing to present my work. I considered that the images were not just factual records, but products for understanding and information. They're registers bearing a real knowledge, with which my words can dialogue. This format of Art-Based Educational Research, a non-prescriptive approach, on the contrary, is presented in images of poetic practices interspersed with texts, performances, orities, musicalities, metaphors.

Metaphors are understood as other images derived from concepts, or vice versa, that transcend cultural or linguistic boundaries and become other images and other concepts that extend the understanding, the meaning of a fact, an idea, an artifact, to the same time in which they obscure, redefine and disidentify concepts. In addition to providing openings for other interpretations or dialogues, the work is situated in several spaces, in what we call "between places", between epistemologies or between oral, musical, visual and textual narratives, between plastic forms and representations mediatic themes that reverberate and re-create in these dialogues that took place in the São Francisco Educational Center and which now occur between the teacher who I became and my readers between the teacher's and her students' view for the lived and felt experience.

This form of inquiry creates near or near plastic or poetic subjectivities of pedagogical theories and practices in order to consider life in progress as a creative experiment in experimentation, open, under construction. In this space, it is possible to relate, cut and paste and move with greater flexibility between the boundaries that define the concepts that interest me, education, art, culture, society, politics, identity, otherness and sexuality.

From the aesthetic conviviality, of feeling and experiencing its power of cultural construction, of reflection on the reality and transcendence of this reality, it is possible to find alternatives to the traditional molds present in education. The meddlesome poetics in education implants affection in the school, beyond knowledge. Affect in the

sense of touching the other, sensitizes you and engages you as the educational process could be from another perspective. This alternative to traditional school/academic practices has a clear intention to critique and social transformation, it has the intentionality of the teacher, the artist and the researcher to walk in new directions.



Figure 5. Leisa Sasso, 2010, "Mired in the Mud of Digital Exclusion":
Performance/protest in Avenida de São Sebastião.

I see a|r|t|ography as a philosophy of education, a proposal of work in the school universe related to (re)union of concepts that were separated for didactic effect throughout history and never reunited. The concepts that define a|r|t|ography (poetics, theory and practice in dialogue) become pedagogical challenges. They do not have to be understood only as a methodology of academic research that relates poiesis, theoria and praxis, to arrive at a better understanding on a theme, but as dialogues between concepts that find the emancipation of the subjects.

It is proposed here an aesthetic that uses its power transforming reality, that dialogue with the theory that bases the reflection in practice, that realizes the will of the actors of the educational political scene. It's the practice that one thinks in the theory

and it's realized in poetics. These're inseparable concepts that make possible another vision of the world, life and above all education. Another education. The difference is that in the teacher's pretension "aesthetics would be accessible to all" (ONFRAY, 1997, p.237), and not intended for the privileged few. How to distribute aesthetics, poetics? How do you "share the sensitive" (RANCIÈRE, 2005)? How do you democratize poetics? Another education is through creative artistic practice.

That's the will of the subjects of transformation of reality observable in some researches and "practices of self-exploration" (JAGODZINSKI, WALLIN, 2013, p.85) that were the main target of criticism directed to the a|r|t|ography. In a special passage from the book *Arts-Based Research: A Critique and a Proposal* more precisely in Chapter III entitled Questioning the Radical Edge: ABER's Mirror Games, in the Mirror Game image is the metaphor of the illusion of a|r|t|ographer to see the distorted image itself. In the affirmation, "the artist reterritorializes the world in the image of his egoic activities" (JAGODZINSKI, WALLIN, 2013, p.88, free translation of the author), it's possible to perceive that it is the subject and his behavior, that of the researcher supported in his practices artistic criticisms that are at the epicenter of criticism of recent research or Arts-based Educational Research (IEBA), in particular the a|r|t|ography.



Figure 6. Leisa Sasso, 2008, "Master Funayama in concert".

Critics take little account of teacher identity and practice, emphasize the identities of the artist and researcher, not their educational practice. The professional practices of the teacher, who is simultaneously or possibly an artist and researcher, can't be absolutely defined as "egoic activities", because in some cases they are pedagogical practices that aim at the empowerment of the students. They're practices that should at least aim at social criticism from the visuals and, at the same time, promote political resistance, through art and artistic practices. It's also important to empower the teacher so that he or she feels stronger in the face of society, which considers the transformation of education and, if boldness allows, the transformation of society. If we think more ambitiously, it would be the teacher's assignment, being an artist or not, to create with students alternatives to think and rethink the current reality, if not to transform at least to (re)know.

Our pedagogical practices, for example, intended to elevate students self-esteem, make them protagonists of their own stories, in order to have a voice both in school and in the community. As a photograph that registers reality and at the same time re-signifies this reality, this is the work, not of the art teacher but of the educator immersed in visualities seeking poetic meddles in life.



Figure 7. Leísa Sasso, 2014, "Film Festival "Chica de Ouro"

In this way, when one considers that our work is the multiple identities of the subject in formation, of our two thousand students, for example, the images produced at school, become evident, they produced materialities without phrases, at the same time, the otherness of the student's transit identity printed on the papers. The focus of a speech, my academic and professional discourse, becomes a photographic image and, at the same time, an analysis and a byproduct of a collective artistic doing. If the images produced in the processes of artistic and educational practices were more considered by the critical authors of a|r|t|ography, the "egoic activities" of some artists, which for them began to form a|r|t|ography would no longer be the focus of these criticisms.

While the a|r|t|ographer was embarrassed by the criticism of jagodzinski and Wallin to the a|r|t|ography, and thus to my way of acting as a researcher and teacher, criticism of dangerous associations that management of concepts of practice and poetics and theory makes possible in educational context. The problem, if there is one, would be to assume that it stems from an initial motivation to insert, from interspersing poetics with pedagogical practices and theories in school. Well, it's true. It is the will of the teacher and his understanding of the world that guides the pedagogical action, his praxis aims to awaken the criticism, the sensitivity in his students for his artistic creations, perhaps poetic.

The problem is not the non-poetic image or the artistic practice of the "I", but the understanding that does not associate with the imagination of the artist and his view of the world, the final product of his action, because, according to Agamben, poetics is understood as a production without content" (JAGODZINSKI; WALLIN, 2013, p.87). So would a|r|t|ography be wrong in proposing dialogues between practices, theories, and poetics? No. If there are, in fact and in theory, artistic and pedagogical practices that can generate or become poetic, and which are political actions coming from these dialogues between practice, theory and poetics in the school context, it seems sensible and logical to me consider them. The impossibility of predicting the scope of a political or artistic action that can become poetic or not, would preclude action itself? The praxis confused by some researchers with poiesis would be sufficient to put the proposal to a|r|t|ographic in check?

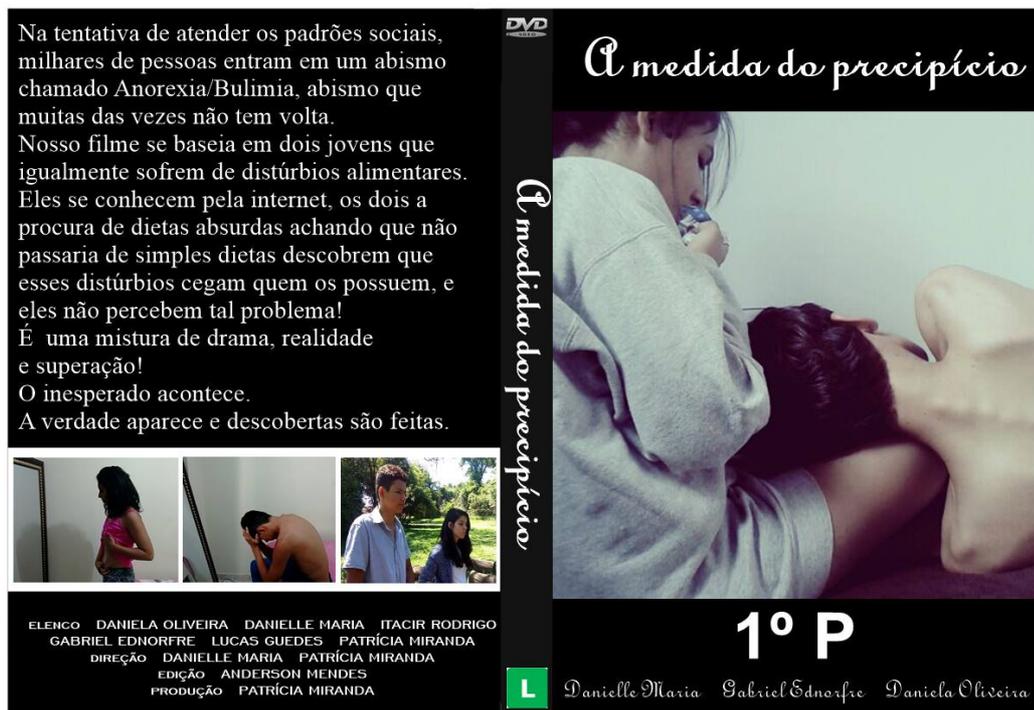


Figure 8. Danielle Maria, Gabriel Ednorpre, Daniela Oliveira 1º P, 2014, DVD ‘The measure of the Precipice’.

The theory of the three sisters

When will the conciliation of practice and poetic sisters, separated in the cradle by their third sister the theory? The action inherent in practice and poetics were dormant, prevailing in education, only the reflective aspect of theory. To give greater value to the theory than to practice and to poetics was the strategy found since Plato to delay the outbreak of poetic and political actions of unpredictable repercussion for the maintenance of pre-established order in schools and consequently in societies.

In this exercise of creation and suppositions, it is inferred by the logic that separates the practice of poetry, that would be alien to the school context or the would be out of context in schools practices that aim to foster poetics or that are mixed with poetics. If there is no poetic without artistic action, what would be the appropriate context for the emergence of the "good" poetics, production without content? If so, it is necessary to recognize that there is a poetic, which is not true, distinct, unique, sublime,

beautiful that is not confused, does not recreate, is not dirty of realities, intentionalities, visualities.

There is rather the invisibility of the artistic practices of the school, and there seems to be no poetics in the school. In this social space of creative and creative action, youths would not fit poetics or artistic practice? However, it's necessary to consider that there is an interdependence between the political and the poetic aspect when its "utility" comes to be considered in education.



Figure 9. Leisa Sasso, 2009, "Student Performance".

I reiterate that there seems to be a misunderstanding on the part of critics of a|r|t|ography, since they refer to *poiesis*, prioritizing allusions to the work of the artist and not to that of the teacher who "practices artistic dialogical exercises" and policies with his students in attempts poetics. If the artist, the teacher, and the researcher do not separate into distinct identities, the problem related to the authors critique of a|r|t|ography would come not only from the dissociation of the singular identity of the artist, researcher and educator, but also the dissociation of concepts of theory, practice

and poetics in the school universe and the harmful consequences of this separation that is what we already live in schools.

It's inferred after reading the chapter "Questioning the radical edge: ABER's mirror games", that the subject, the teacher, artist and researcher that makes use of practices with a view to poetics; he would be "vitalist" in his activity, pretending to recreate reality by inserting poetics in school, recreating an anthropocentric metaphysics where man occupies God's place in creation. Now it's clear that the teacher intends changes or subversions in the established order. It's not possible to create poetics, because this is the result of creative action; the aesthetic isn't predicted from politics or political action isn't predicted from aesthetics, but it's possible creating the means to favor its appearance. Perhaps it would not be ethical or possible for the educator from aesthetic seduction to foster social criticism, but that is another matter. The poetics, theory and practice in dialogue in education is the political action that modifies the environment, the practices in the São Francisco Educational Center, the "Chicão" point in this direction.

According to criticism, "arts-based research has adopted the aesthetics of incompleteness" (JAGODZINSKI; WALLIN, 2013, p.88). As teachers or researchers and even artists, we would be decontextualizing the poetics of their conceptual origin and resignifying it in school in an incomplete, careless way, using the same strategies of attractiveness of marketing and the "neo-liberal designer subject" (JAGODZINSKI; WALLIN, 2013, p 90). To these critics I respond that it is the will and the understanding of the world's teacher, who guides his action, his praxis intends to awaken the criticism, the sensitivity in his students for his artistic creations, perhaps poetic. The "I" teacher is in dialogue, in one between place, between the Self and the others, the You, Us, They. I do not believe that the vitality of the educator is harmful to the resignification of artistic practices in a school context.



Figure 10. Leísa Sasso, 2008, Prof. Eduardo Marucci in presentation "Circus Rescue".

I may be doing a disservice to a|r|t|ography disregarding that these criticisms may be directed particularly to the artists who are using these new investigative possibilities, intending to validate their practices as being a priori poetic. I identify, however, that there is a misconception on the part of the authors that perhaps it is the same mistake generated by the academic means of Visual Arts Education (EAV) that dissociates the artist from the teacher, valuing the first, the poet, to the detriment of the second. In this sense, instead of criticizing the artists who make use of a|r|t|ography to give their practices a higher value status, they would be annihilating the possibility that the a|r|t|ography gives to the teacher to see their practices valued as the possibility of (re)creation of education, adopting education as a privileged space of poetic outbursts.



Figure 11. Leisa Sasso, 2008, "Body painting in artistic performance"

It's possible to perceive that the discourse of these critics presents inconsistencies or gaps, when the thesis is confronted with the pedagogical practice. It would be a consistent discourse if he clearly assumed that he distrusts the teachers and the school as an institution capable of making "good use" of poetry. The usefulness of production without content is to sell products and ideologies.

In fact, between practice and poetry is politics, and it would be inadvisable for education to approach philosophically the metaphysics and vitality of the teacher "by reinforcing a style of practice in which the vitalism of the artist is produced through its realization" (JAGODZINSKI, WALLIN, 2013, p.87). Confused with an "all-powerful, artist and creator," the teacher would use artistic practices to benefit his own will to transform reality. Perhaps the authors understand that the vitality of the teacher or artist is in fact an evil for education.

The association of poiesis with pedagogical practices can engender processes of continuous transformation of its actors. These actors of the educational process, contaminated by aesthetics and the political will of artistic creations can recreate their own education in an engaging and pleasurable way. The political question associated with the reterritorialization of aesthetics in education is therefore inserted once again,

not as a possibility, but as a necessity for the self-transformation of education itself, including academia.

The expulsion of the poets from the temple

The only fear of the market seems to be that the subject, the consumer, stops consuming their products. Nothing more modern than the belief in the ideological constitution of the subjects, if we consider Santos as in the contemporary:

[...] ideology becomes real and is present as reality, especially through objects. Objects are things, they are real. They present themselves before us not only as a discourse, but as an ideological discourse, which calls us, in spite of ourselves, to a form of behavior. And this empire of objects has a relevant role in the production of this new man, which we are all threatened to be (SANTOS, 2000, pp. 50-51).

If objects carry ideologies, it is time to create objects that share other ideologies, other poesis dissociated or associated with the market to spread in its scope, other ideological discourses. In articulating poetics to education and the politics contained within it, it may be possible not to subvert the dominant logic, but to include individuals in other ways of thinking and acting. If, like Plato, we expel once again the poets of the temple, the history of exclusion and domination over one another will remain.



Figure 12. Leísa Sasso, 2008, "Performance of Diones Gomes da Silva (National Congress in Brasilia)"

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