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PENSAR O MÉTODO E A PRODUÇÃO DE CONHECIMENTO THINKING ABOUT METHOD AND THE KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION

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Abstract

We live in a time of intense mediatization and image production. Many people give up their ability to develop critical thinking, exercise their potential for transformation and seek creative solutions to everyday problems, and end up developing an attitude of compulsive consumption. In the context of high education courses dedicated to the education of individuals who will act in creative economy segments, the repetition of models and habits of reading the world based on an uncritical attitude is an even more serious problem. How can education contribute to changing this scenario? How can we provide contexts that encourage and stimulate a generation of creative and critical people? The power of producing knowledge from the confluence of Education, Art, and Politics is the starting point of this article. The focus of the discussion is on process-oriented art projects that address political issues from an educational perspective. Understanding education as a practice of freedom, the value of dialogue in the knowledge production, the dynamics of thinking through images, and the production of texts, documents, and records as power devices, this article presents a curation of works of art, develops reflections based on the method of cartography of imaginaries, and elaborates a teaching proposal for creative processes. As a result of the workshop, we were able to notice that the proposed teaching method aroused the learning and knowledge production powers.

Keywords: Method, Education, Arts and Politics, Creative processes, Cartography of Imaginaries

People who talk about revolution and class struggle without referring explicitly to everyday life, without understanding what is subversive about love and what is positive in the refusal of constraints, such people have a corpse in their mouths. Raoul Vaneigem

Anyone familiar with research in the human sciences knows that, contrary to common opinion, a reflection on method usually follows practical application, rather than preceding it. Giorgio Agamben

The arts celebrate multiple perspectives. One of their large lessons is that there are many ways to see and interpret the world. Elliot W. Eisner

1 Introduction¹

Transgressing the most widespread understanding that defines the method as an orderly set of principles to develop a route towards a pre-established destination (Chalmers, 1994), the intention of this article is to think about the method as a path of deviations and returns, a maze to be experienced (Leão, 1999). When Walter Benjamin discussed philosophical writing, he said: "Presentation is the crux of their method. The method is indirection. Presentation as indirection, as the roundabout way – this, then, is the methodological character of the tractatus" (Benjamin, 2019, p. 2). In this sense, this paper aims to reconstruct deadlocks, reorganize fragments, and trace clues. As Agamben (2019b) said, reflecting about the method is, oftentimes, an exercise anchored in the memory, documents and traces we leave along the way. The organization of practices and experiences in a narrative that can be shared with our readers is a reflection task that demands to review processes, searching for records, and reliving moments of research, teaching, and creation. So, the reflection on the method is, for us, a task that resembles the procedures of games and combinations, processes of collages, transparencies, and juxtapositions that were intuitively experimented before becoming systematic.

We live in a time of intense mediatization and production of images. In the society of the spectacle, as Guy Debord (1992) would say, many people assume an attitude of passive consumption, giving up their capacity to think critically and exercise their creative potential. For him, the spectacle defines social relations between people through the mediation of images. The propositions elaborated by Debord in 1967 and other participants of the situationist movement still provide us with powerful clues to think about the contemporary society (Duncum, 2001, Becker, 2002, Frymer, 2005, Lipovetsky, 2007, Gutfreind, and Silva, 2007, Smyth, 2008, McInerney, 2009, Han, 2017). For Baitello Júnior, we are living the era of *iconophagy*, a time defined by the exacerbated production of images, mirrors, and narcissistic gestures where we are both devourers of images and devoured by them (Baitello Junior, 2014).

In the context of higher education courses dedicated to the education of individuals who intend to work with creative processes in segments of the creative economy, the situation is complex (Alexenberg, 2008). How can we contribute to the education of people capable of developing critical, creative, and autonomous thinking, free from repetitive and meaningless consumption habits? As Csikszentmihalyi (2014) has already expressed, it is necessary to develop researches that point towards new conceptions and approaches about creativity and education. How can education contribute to change this scenario? How can we provide contexts that encourage and favor the formation of creative and critical people?

Parallel to this scenario of fascination, narcosis, submission, and consumption of systems, and regimes of *spectacularization*, it is important to consider the clash of forces that operate in the construction of knowledge, which many times surrender to hegemonic and colonial models. Understanding the crisis of paradigms and the need to overcome dichotomies, we suggest that the teaching method should be built from the perspective of complexity. In this sense, it is important to reclaim the revolutionary contribution of Gaston Bachelard in *The New Scientific Spirit*, a book originally written in 1934, which presented his critique to the traditional rationalism and realism, defending the essential complexity of scientific philosophy (Bachelard, 1996, p. 9). However, as stated by Morin (2014), there is still a lot of work to be done for the consolidation of the understanding and application of the complexity paradigm. In the case of the necessary changes in creative process researches, strategies must be devised to free us from the paralyzing influences that derive from the inherited positivism and the belief rooted in the idea of research that is neutral, objective, and free of contradictions.

In the academic context, from the establishment and prevalence of digital communication networks and policies linked to practices and processes of platforming, the expansion of access to information is an indisputable fact. However, it is important to emphasize that these cultural systems reaffirm a colonial-

capitalistic mode of existence, as Suely Rolnik (2014) would say. More than ever, the need to overcome the epistemological colonialism requires us to rethink the method.

The power to produce knowledge that potentially resides at the confluence of Education, Art and Politics is the starting point of this article. The focus of the discussion is on process-oriented art projects that address political issues from an educational perspective. There is a long tradition of works that discuss the relationship between art and politics (Thompson, 2012). Randy Martin, in the anthology of articles *The Routledge Companion to Art and Politics*, states:

Art and politics – what was once was thought of as a narrow intersection now opens to an increasingly expansive landscape. [...] art elaborates what can count as politics, from the solitary expressions from the solitary expressions of a lone creator, to the interventions on the surfaces of an urban landscape [...] (Martin, 2015, p. 18).

Freed from the old boundaries of gender and support, art can manifest itself in different media and take on the most varied configurations. The notion of art as an expanded field, which was initially developed by Rosalind Krauss in 1978, is now a fact we can easily see in major exhibitions, such as Biennials and museums. Going through a myriad of proposals ranging from documentaries of life stories, activism, urban intervention, manifestos, and uprisings to creative workshops and collaborative projects, among others, the landscapes that emerge from the combination of art and politics do not cease to multiply.

Understanding education as a practice of freedom (Freire, 1967); the value of dialogue in the production of knowledge (Flusser, 2007); the dynamics of thinking through images (Didi-Huberman, 2018); and the production of texts, documents, and records as devices of power (Agamben, 2009a), the article presents a selection of works of art, develops reflections based on the method of cartography of imaginaries (Leão, 2019) and elaborates a teaching proposal for creative processes.

Let us begin our reflection with Paulo Freire. The great Brazilian educator and philosopher inaugurated new perspectives to think about adult literacy and the teaching method. Unlike conventional proposals, based on prefabricated, abstract, and imposed knowledge, such as spelling books, *The Paulo Freire Method* begins with the search for the dialogue between educators and students. For this, the first phase of the application of the method involves getting closer to the group, its practices, habits, conversations, and parties. The goal is to get in touch with the words, expressions, puns, and narratives that are part of people's daily lives. Named as a *survey of the vocabulary universe*, in this phase, according to Brandão:

The very fact that the first stage of the method is being carried out with the survey must be clearly announced. Future animators of cultural circles, future students becoming literate, should be encouraged to participate in the work and to evaluate its progress. At all times, it is necessary to escape from the image of traditional research, which feeds precisely on the researcher/researched opposition. What is "discovered" with the survey are not object-men, nor a "neutral reality". They are people's thoughts-languages. These are statements that, in their own way, reveal the world and contain, for research, the generating themes spoken through the generating words (2017, p. 30, our translation).

In Freire's view, education involves aesthetic, ethical, and logical dimensions. In his words, education is a: "[...] knowledge process, political formation, ethical manifestation, search for beauty, scientific and technical training..." (Freire, 2003, p. 10). In *The Importance of the Act of Reading*, Paulo Freire tells us that "reading is much more than identifying a code written in your language, to read is to read the world" (Freire, 1981, p. 9, our translation). In short, and considering the objectives of this article, education for Freire is always a political act, a method of action that transforms consciences:

Naturally, in a prophetic line, education would establish itself as a method of transforming action. As political praxis in the service of the permanent liberation of human beings, which does not happen, we repeat, in their consciences only, but in the radical modification of the structures in whose processes consciences are transformed (Freire, 2003, p. 102-3, our translation).

Our second-axis for discussion is based on Vilém Flusser's propositions on communicational processes. Understood as a phenomenon of freedom, communication can be of two types, dialogic and discursive:

To produce information, men share different available information expecting to synthesize new information. This is the form of dialogical communication. To

preserve, keep the information, men share existing information expecting that they, such as the shared ones, may resist better to the entropic effect of nature. This is the form of discursive communication (Flusser, 2007, p. 97, our translation).

For Flusser, one of the great difficulties resides in producing effective dialogues, capable of generating new information and knowledge. In his criticism, the philosopher argues: "The encoded world in which we live no longer means processes, becoming; it doesn't tell stories, and living in it doesn't mean acting" (Flusser, 2007, p. 135, our translation).

Georges Didi-Huberman's ideas provide us with a foundation for the study of images and the power of imagination in the processes of knowledge production. In his argument, the historian, philosopher, and art critic defends the importance of the image. When he discusses in his book *Atlas, or the Anxious Gay Science the Mnemosyne* project by the German art historian Aby Warburg (1866-1929), Didi-Huberman tells us about "the inexhaustible, or knowledge by imagination" (2018, p. 3). When Didi-Huberman discusses the image atlas, he proposes that this would be a "visual form of knowledge or a wise way of seeing" (2018, p. 5) and "a reading machine" (2018, p. 6). Besides, he states:

Reading the world is something far too fundamental to be confined to books alone or to be confined within them, for to read the world is also to link up the things of the world according to their "intimate and secret relations," their "correspondences", and their "analogies" (Didi-Huberman, 2018, p. 7).

Before beginning our cartography of artistic projects, it is important to clarify that, in this article, we use the term device in the sense proposed by Agamben. In the synthesis that the Italian philosopher elaborates from Foucault's thought, the device or apparatus:

- a. It is a heterogeneous set that includes virtually anything, linguistic and non-linguistic, under the same heading: discourses, institutions, buildings, laws, police measures, philosophical propositions, and so on. The apparatus itself is the network that is established between these elements.
- b. The apparatus always has a strategic function and is always part of a power relationship.
- c. As such, it appears at the intersection of power relations and relations of knowledge (Agamben, 2009a, p. 2-3).

Further on, in the same text, after developing a terminological genealogy involving the study of the Greek idea of *oikonomia* until reaching the Latin version *dispositio*, Agamben elaborates an even broader generalization for the term:

(...) I shall call an apparatus literally anything that has in some way the capacity to capture, orient, determine, intercept, model, control, or secure the gestures, behaviors, opinions, or discourses of living beings (Agamben, 2009a, p. 14).

Based on the idea of education as a practice of freedom (Freire, 2003); considering the value of dialogue in the production of knowledge (Flusser, 2013); the creative and inexhaustible power that derives from the dynamics of thinking through images (Didi-Huberman, 2018); and the production of texts, documents, and records as devices of power (Agamben, 2009a), we will now move on to the discussion about our poetic cartography.

2 The cartography of imaginaries

We developed a cartography method based on the understanding conceived by Deleuze and Guattari throughout the work of the thinker duo, especially in *A thousand plateaus* ([1980] 2005). According to the authors, cartography is one of the principles of the rhizome and it must be understood in relation to escape lines, movements of deterritorialization, de-stratification, and overflow. According to this proposal, a rhizomatic type of thought is an influx thought, always in process, multiple, and heterogeneous. Similarly, the mapping processes are linked to a thought of multiplicity, permanent becoming. Thus, the mapping act is definitely an unfinished gesture. As a centered, non-hierarchical, and non-significant system, the rhizome projects constantly new and multiple connections. "[...] the rhizome pertains to a map that must be produced, constructed, a map that is always detachable, connectable, reversible, modifiable, and has multiple entryways and exits and its own lines of flight" (Deleuze, and Guattari, 2005, p. 32-33).

The concept of imaginary that we adopt is linked to Durand's conception: "[...] as a set of images and image relations that constitute the capital of *homo sapiens*" (2002, p. 18, our translation). It also dialogues with Almeida's studies that deal with the pedagogical pressures of the imaginary:

The imaginary, precisely because of its dynamism that organizes reality, has an educational character and circulates narratives, symbols, and discourses through different sectors of the social fabric, finding in the cultural and aesthetic manifestations a privileged space to manifest (Almeida, 2017, p. 151, our translation).

Considering the intersection between the two universes, we propose that the cartography of imaginaries method is a process of knowledge production based on the complexity paradigm, composed of procedures of object selection (curatorship) and an intense exercise of proposing relationships between images and selected objects (Leão, 2019). It is important to emphasize that the cartography method does not intend to establish truths, laws, or even propose classifications. The cartography is a method of discovering relationships, assemblages, and becomings that permeate phenomena. The method of cartography of imaginaries seeks specifically to organize relationships between mythical, archetypal, and symbolic narratives, and the complexities that constitute the phenomena under study.

In other words, the act of charting is an experience of drawing relationships between dialogues, drawings, texts, and propositions of artistic projects that are based on an educational, political, and transformative conception of art. Searching for relationships, the cartographic act aims to create situations that catalyze the emergence of contents, discoveries of passages, unfoldings, and developments. It is worth mentioning that, in line with the principles of cartography, the choices are not intended to offer a definitive view on the issues raised. On the contrary, our cartography aims to be open, removable, and connectable, a system that helps in the construction of new escape lines, entrances, and exits.

3 Clues for a curatorship

The invitation to think about dialogue, drawing, and text is, above all, a call to understand the transformative power that we activate when we dare to relate life, knowledge, and art. As Elliot W. Eisner (2002) states, art plays an important role in the transformation of consciousness.

In the context of a culture of excesses, when everyday life is lived in tension, with demands of endless tasks, constant pressure, and an endless feeling of emptiness, something fundamental disappears. Overworked, dispersed, and hyper-stimulated, we follow strenuous routines that compromise our relationships with others, with ourselves, with time and space. In the speeches that analyze the problems related to this situation, issues such as the low quality of life, burnout society, and psychopolitical dynamics bring clues to think about the seriousness of the problem (Han, 2017). Not by chance, mental disorders such as generalized anxiety, depression, chronic fatigue, and burnout syndrome have alarming rates. Our society is in crisis. What can education and art do?

We argue that education and art can contribute to the transformation of this scenario, questioning the conditions, opening space for new perspectives, and highlighting the importance of an attentive attitude to everyday events. The relations between art and politics are based on an understanding of communicational complexities and necessarily reach the bases of an educational project. The transformative forces of art operate in three layers: the field of sensitivities, daily actions and practices, and expansion of consciousness.

Raoul Vaneigem, in *The revolution of everyday life*², published in 1967, tells us that creativity and poetry are powerful revolutionary ammunition. For the Belgian activist, there is only one way to happiness: the re-reading of the world. The revolution must begin in everyday life, in refusing a passive stance based merely on the consumption of images and spectacles.

Adapting Vaneigem's ideas to the objectives of our discussion, we can affirm that it is necessary to recover dormant values and cultivate the idea that life can be lived as a work of art. Creative powers are activated through dialogues in conversations, partnerships, groups, and workshops. It is around a table, on the street, in the park, or even on the blackboard that we can activate an attentive perception. At parties, in joint efforts, in *gambiarra*³, the search for solving problems and the passion for life are intertwined and, full of invention, generate new arts and procedures (De Certeau, 1994). We need to learn how to see our daily lives with empowered eyes, assuming a perspective of freedom and covered with an understanding of the transformative power that lives in all of us.

For the debate, we chose to think about meetings or aesthetic experiences that value the power of knowledge production that only dialogue, in its fluid orality, triggers (Flusser, 2007). To understand the readings of the world as an activity in flux while searching for connections between images, we incorporate to our cartography the proposition that Didi-Huberman elaborates to discuss the image of the atlas form (2018). We are also interested in considering the creative capabilities of the cartographic activity, that is, the cognitive potential that emerges from the activity of free doodling, from notes, diagrams, images, and drawings. Conceived as a device (Agamben, 2009a) of territorialization (construction of territory) and deterritorialization (construction of escape lines), cartography helps us to exercise thinking in flux. In the case of collective poetics, cartography builds a common territory where we can share ideas, impasses, and relationships.

Finally, we devote our attention to reflect on the power that resides in the text weaving. It is important to clarify what we call text creation processes. To refer to this stage, we would like to bring the image of the weaver that produces the most diverse weaves in his work. In writing texts, we can allow ourselves a different kind of attention, which focuses on the lines and letters and accompanies a rhythmic reverie. In this sense, writing is a meditation, a journey through the depths of thought. Writing is a travel record and a sharing of experience.

4 Blackboards

Blackboards, green boards, and, more recently, whiteboards, glass whiteboards, and interactive digital whiteboards are objects that follow the educational experience in the classroom. Whether we think of accessories such as chalk, erasers, pens, or digital systems in daydreams about collective moments of interaction and learning, the blackboard figure is always present. The act of writing, exposing thoughts, and words is a precious aid in the organization of ideas and development of arguments. The images that fill the blackboard also compose a record of the process.

Joseph Beuys (1921-1986), one of the most provocative artists in the history of art, carried out a series of projects and actions that left blackboards as records of the processes. *Four Blackboards*⁴ (1972) and *F.I.U. Blackboards*⁵ (1977-1979), for example, are still cause for inquietude. *Four Blackboards* is a series of blackboards that document an action taken at London's Tate Gallery in 1972, during an event in which Beuys discussed art, communication, and the foundations of democracy (Beuys, Harlan, 2007).

At the Smithsonian, the *F.I.U. Blackboards*, an installation consisting of two blackboards, chalk, bucket, and a piece of cloth, is even more enigmatic. The blackboards seem empty and erased. However, a closer look reveals traces of old notes. In front of it, a bucket and a dirty piece of cloth indicate marks and other residues derived from the act of erasing. How can something so trivial and ordinary also be a work of art?

During the years of 1970, Beuys traveled to different countries to present his ideas. The blackboards were fundamental communicational and didactic resources in these projects. His speeches were about the most different subjects, including social problems, relations between art and politics, and defense of the environment. Beuys was a teacher and his projects sought to contribute to the creation of a fairer society.

In 1977, with a group of friends, he founded The Free International University (F.I.U) for Creativity and Interdisciplinary Research, a school that operated in Beuys's atelier in Dusseldorf. The innovative school had an interdisciplinary approach as its pedagogical plan, with a heterogeneous and unusual curriculum. Among the subjects listed, for example, traditional arts disciplines such as drawing, painting, sculpture, color theory, are side by side with philosophy, knowledge theory, information theory, dialectics, and phenomenology of history. Totally unusual, the social behavior subject is alongside with the solidarity discipline.

The F.I.U offered free courses and promoted seminars. Its mission, in general terms, was to promote a meeting between art and social issues. According to the F.I.U manifesto, written by Beuys and Heinrich Böll⁶:

Creativity is not limited to people who practice one of the traditional forms of art, and even in the case of artists, creativity is not limited to the exercise of their art. Each of us has a creative potential that is hidden by competitiveness and the search for success. Recognizing, exploring, and developing one's creative potential is the school's task. Creation - be it painting, sculpture, symphony, or romance - involves not only talent, intuition, the power of imagination and dedication, but also the ability to shape material that can be expanded to other relevant social spheres... It is not the school's objective to develop political and cultural orientations, form styles, or provide industrial and commercial prototypes. Its main objective is to encourage, discover and promote democratic potential and its expression (Beuys, Böll, 1979)

Beuys saw the communicative power and social function of art as intertwined forces. His actions, the term he used to refer to his projects, sought to raise awareness of problems such as inequality and the destruction of the environment. He developed an expanded concept of art that received the name of social sculpture. According to Beuys, conceiving social sculpture as art implies the understanding that each one of us, with our creative potential, can and must explore the laws of the social organism and engage in the transformation of society.

The F.I.U. Blackboards, forcefully presented in the museum, works as an educational device and is a reference to the thoughts that guided the artist's actions. In this case, the work documents the process in which, during the presentation of lectures by scientists from different disciplines, the artist positioned himself before the pictures and made notes, drawings, and diagrams. When the blackboard was complete, Beuys wiped it off with a cloth and started a new process of graphic reflection. Articulating lectures, speeches, listening, words, graphic signs, writing, and erasing, the Beuys' blackboards configures as a work-device of actions.

5 The tree

Paulo Cesar Teles has been developing interdisciplinary projects that bring together educational, media, and political issues since 2001. The Tree of Wishes project, a mix of reflective collective experience and hypermedia creation workshop, recovers mythical images and revives rituals. It is, above all, a festive celebration of life and the creative power that inhabits all people (Teles, 2014).

In Teles' installations, the participatory role of community is crucial since the fundamental symbolic elements – which will set the tone for the project – are discovered and chosen from the establishment of a conversation space where everyone involved has an active voice. The idea of the Tree of Wishes is based precisely on the valorization of the power, simultaneously catalyst of affections and discoveries, dialogue addresses.

Participants are encouraged to express themselves using different media (drawings, texts, videos, and others). The knowledge about themselves and the community in which they live is transformed during this dialogue. In his creation process, Teles also incorporates the idea of travel as an opportunity to experience other cultures. The project has already been carried out in various parts of Brazil and the world, such as Portugal, Germany, Greece, New Zealand, and Nigeria. For our cartography, we chose the experience “IGI AA MU ERONGBA SE” (Tree of Wishes), held in 2016, in Nigeria, in partnership with the local artist Sunday Olaniran Olaniyi, his team, and the community of the region.

The experience begins with moments of conversation about everyday life and community life, culture, art, and technology. Teachers from the region and students – children between 9 and 14 years old – participate in the meetings. A tree, built by the community from recycled materials, is the base that will collect the wishes. Written, drawn, and photographed, the wishes are expressed in various formats and placed on the branches of the tree, which, like an axis, organize the shared affections.

The tree, an ancestral symbol for the most diverse traditions and cultures around the world, evokes natural processes of growth and transformation and, in this way, is an image that translates the rhythms of life. According to the study on the anthropology of the imaginary of Gilbert Durand (2002), the tree is the matrix image of an entire universe of ascending images. In this universe, we find a whole range of images that speak of the verticalization and movements focused on higher pavements or transcendence. In their movements of growth and search for light, the image of the tree and the image of the sky are inseparable.

Like any complex symbol, the tree holds a paradox within itself: at the same time the tree denotes movement in its growth dynamics, it is also an explicit expression of rooted fixedness and immobility and, in this sense, it is used to express ideas of stability, firmness, sedentary lifestyle, and imprisonment.

The observation of trees, their cycles of growth through the seasons, blossom, and death is the basis of semiotics of life, of a deep and indisputable understanding of eternal mutations. Paying attention to changes, in the wind signs that appear in the movement of the leaves, may have been the origin of a whole meteorological thought, which seeks to anticipate the arrival of rains and storms. Through the observation of dry leaves or even their falling, we learn about the needs of trees and their passage through the year.

On the tree, we can also discover an image of the wholeness, a synthesis image that brings together the four elements of the universe: earth, water, fire, and air. The earth is a mother, cradle, and support element. The place where the tree sprouts and from which its roots explore the depths of the hidden, underground world. Water is an essential nutritive element in the process of maintaining life and the sap that circulates throughout the tree organism. Fire is an image derived from wood and, in Chinese wisdom, an element that provides vital energy and regulates metabolic balance. Finally, we can recognize air in the image of the tree, understood

both as a surrounding environment, microcosm and *umwelt*, as a means of transporting light, and the constant chemical exchange between oxygen and carbon dioxide.

For Chevalier and Gheerbrant (1988), the tree is a universal symbol of the relationships established between Earth and Heaven, as:

[...] they equally put the three levels of the cosmos in communication: the underground, through its roots, always exploring the depths where they are buried; the surface of the earth, through its trunk and its lower branches; the heights, by their upper branches and their summit, attracted by the skylight (Chevalier, and Gheerbrant, 1988, p. 84, our translation).

The interactivity and participation in the project are created from meetings and workshops. After conversations, songs, and storytelling, children are invited to share their dreams. More than an anthropological exploration workshop, the project created by Teles aims to develop a platform for dialogues and discoveries. Children also participate in videos with the recording of stories, testimonies, and poetry. Some of the drawings are animated and the material produced is digitized and projected in layers in the exhibition space.

In the specific case of the "IGI AA MU ERONGBA SE" experience, considering the importance that music has in Nigerian culture, the instruments were recorded separately. On the hypermedia platform developed by Teles, motion and proximity sensors trigger projections of drawings, texts, and images that, together with the rhythms and melodies of the sound experience, create a changing landscape of dream and enchantment.

6 Workshop

Based on the constellation of concepts presented, we developed the foundations of a teaching program. Starting from the premise that the course would have a theoretical and practical character, the classes were organized to always bring a conceptual discussion and an exercise. Besides, dialoguing with Freire's proposals, throughout the course we were getting closer to the students' imaginary, their choices, and preferences in the great collection of cultural production.

The discipline had as its main objective the creation of a video experiment and started from the assumption that it is possible to elaborate critical thinking about audiovisual from the development of a reflection using this language. This idea is supported by several studies that stand for the importance of carrying out exercises that use the audiovisual language for critical discussions. As the curator, artist, and professor at the University of London, Catherine Grant, argues in the article *The Audiovisual Essay as Performative Research*, even though much of the scientific production on audiovisual is still based on Ekphrasis practices, that is, verbal description of elements of language, we observe an increase of a kind of critique that adopts the creation of essays with the audiovisual language (Grant, 2016).

Presenting the video-essay exercise proposal to the students, we started a conversation about different conceptions of rehearsal, its origins in literature, examples in the cinema, and video essays uploaded on digital platforms. The class received the proposal positively because, in addition to already know several works of video-essays, they liked the idea of conducting a video analysis on an audiovisual product that was already part of the group's repertoire. During the conversations, we noticed that the choice of the audiovisual pieces to be analyzed by the students was guided by affective reasons. Respecting each life story, several students began to present suggestions for films and/or series.

The study of videographic poetics that assumes an essayistic character and proposes a critical discussion about films, serial narratives, and documentaries focuses on an emerging phenomenon in digital networks: the video-essay. Understood as "form of thinking at the crossroads of academic textual analysis, personal choices, cinephilia and popular online fandom practices" (Baptista, 2016, p. 2), the video-essay is a language still under construction, which has aroused the interest of researchers from the fields of media, cinema, and video studies (Biemann, 2003, Corrigan, 2015, Grant, 2016; Van Den Berg, and Kiss, 2016; Rascaroli, 2017). In search of a synthesis of the debated ideas, we elaborated the following proposition:

The video-essay is a type of knowledge production that uses the audiovisual language to develop a critical and/or poetic reflection on a theme. In particular, the video-essay uses images, film scenes, theories, intersemiotic analysis, quotes, and other conceptual issues. As a production inserted in the context of digital social networks and online platforms such as YouTube and Vimeo, the video-essay dialogues with online fandom practices, with the culture of sharing and recommendation lists (Leão, 2019, our translation).

The classes were organized in three phases. In the first phase, the use of the blackboard was the basis for creating a space for conversation with students, collective organization of ideas, and their networks. In line with Beuys' thinking, concepts and keywords were also written down, and several of the images on the blackboards were being documented in digital files, creating a system of thinking through images (Didi-Huberman, 2018). The idea of thinking in flux and the emergence of dialogues (Flusser, 2007) with the class guided the whole process in the classroom and created an environment for the sharing of imaginaries and the emergence of new meanings. It was extremely rich to see the students' enthusiasm for the challenge of developing critical thinking about films and series chosen by themselves.

In the second phase, inspired by the Teles' *Tree of Wishes*, the students were encouraged to share stories, memories, and curiosities about the chosen audiovisual piece. In this moment of reports and memories, the cartography and the exercise of the free association began to take on a more personalized configuration and the voice of each student became present. The recording of audios, testimonies in front of the still camera, and videos with records of browsing websites as well as the discussion forums generated situations of empathy and embracing of differences.

The third phase, dedicated to the writing of the topic and script, and the practical development of the video-essay, was the moment of greatest concentration in the process and involved the development of several versions. As a way of stimulating a more attentive perception, at the beginning of classes at this stage, we brought back the study of the concept of the device (Agamben, 2008) and political power that resides in the creation of texts. We also brought reports from filmmakers and videographers about the singularities of their creative processes. Students were told all the time that the biggest challenge of the video-essay is to contribute to the creation of spaces for critique about aspects of the audiovisual language and that each video-essay should be a personal and unique reflection on the matter in question.

For the development of the analysis – which will be the basis for the development of the argument of the video-essay –, we present the fundamentals of a phenomenological method composed of three spheres of study. Dedicated to the observation and description, in the first investigative sphere it is necessary to develop an attentive look and, without making quick judgments, to reflect on the conceptual proposal of the audiovisual piece under study; its visual and sound characteristics; aspects of the film's art direction and photography (scenarios, ambiance, colors, lighting, composition, camera movements, editing, use of post-production resources, among others). For the second sphere of study, the objective is to propose relationships between what is present in the film and external elements, such as other films, images of the history of art and culture, media references, etc. Finally, in the interpretation itself, the third sphere of analysis, it is possible to incorporate symbolic aspects, narratives, and personal critical elements. In the third sphere, the subjective and inventive dimension of the essay emerges and, in harmony with the discoveries of meaning that resulted from the analysis, the argumentative construction of the video-essay script is defined.

7 Discussion and final considerations

Can aesthetic experience, through studies of process-oriented art projects that address political issues from an educational perspective, contribute to the development of teaching programs for disciplines of creative processes, with a theoretical-practical character? We argue that this is possible, and inspired by the reflection about the art and politics projects presented in the cartography of the imaginary, we drew some lines about this potential.

We know, since time immemorial, that trees communicate. Trees are media that inform and teach us about the entire ecosystem. In Teles's project, the vital functions of the tree as a teacher and as a catalyst for a life in community are revived. In the aesthetic experience with the *Tree of Wishes*, participants are encouraged to live moments of expansion of these vital functions. From the videos available on the networks that relay the project, it is possible, in an entire reverie attitude, as Bachelard (1988) would say, to put the poetic dynamics of the imagination into action. In the journey through this creative exercise, imagining these experiences, we are invited to think that in each tree, in each corner, a vibrant semiosphere rests waiting for a translator.

The dialogues, listenings, and free flow of thoughts are embodied in cartographies on Beuys' blackboards. Proposing that art is a social sculpture, that is, a means of shaping history, the artist developed devices that trigger transformations in the way of seeing the world and understanding the multiple perspectives of social problems and sciences. From the complexities that emerge from their actions, the valorization of the dialogues between different kinds of knowledge, and the creative power of each person, we can extract inspiring reflections for new actions in the interface of education, art, and politics.

In summary, the participatory projects we analyzed trigger learning and knowledge production powers. These forces operate through dialogues, images, and texts. With the dialogues, in listening and in the interest in getting to know the universe of the other, transformations in the conscience and in the way of seeing the

world become possible (Freire, 2003). Still regarding dialogues, in the free flow of thought, and the discoveries provided to us through exchanges with others, we create space for the creative production that emerges from communication (Flusser, 2007). With images, with the thought that is embodied in drawings and diagrams, we conquer space in its horizontalities (Didi-Huberman, 2018), and in its movements searching for understanding, new landscapes of signs unfold and instigate us to unveil them. Finally, in the documentation, recording, and production of texts, understood as operating platforms, the findings are positioned as devices (Agamben, 2009). In the poetics studied and in knowledge management inflows, it was possible to find propositions with aesthetic, logical, and political strength capable of catalyzing multiple other experiences.

In summary, and as a contribution to the future developments of teaching plans for courses in creative processes in different media, we point out nine guidelines: (1) approximation with the students' imaginary; (2) creation of a space for dialogue and sharing of experiences, memories, and affections; (3) development of sketches, images, concept maps and diagrams from the group's experiences; (4) construction of a file system for the images, documents, and notes of the creation process; (5) presentation of a phenomenological analysis method based on three spheres of investigation; (6) project orientation, discussion and organization in three stages (or phases); (7) development and presentation of drafts and pre-projects; (8) development and presentation of other phases of the project to the class; and (9) presentation of the final project.

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2 Originally published as: *Traité de savoir-vivre à l'usage des jeunes générations*. Paris: Gallimard, [1967] 1998.

3 *Gambiarra* is a Brazilian expression that refers to the ability to create a solution to a problem using improvised methods and with the materials available.

4 *Blackboards* (1972), by Joseph Beuys, at Tate Gallery, is a graphic action created during the event in which the artist discussed art, communication, and social philosophy.

5 The work F.I.U. *Blackboards* (1977-1979), by Joseph Beuys, currently belongs to the collection of the Hirshhorn Museum in the Smithsonian Institute, Washington, EUA.

6 Heinrich Böll (1917-1985) was an important German writer in the post-war period, a 1972 Nobel laureate in Literature. It is interesting to observe that the Heinrich Böll Foundation, in Rio de Janeiro (<https://br.boell.org/pt-br/categorias/fundacao>), is a tribute to this writer. According to the foundation's website: "The Heinrich Böll Foundation is a German non-profit political organization that is part of the green political chain... The name of the Foundation is a tribute to the German writer Heinrich Böll, winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature, who embodies the values with which we identify: the defense of freedom, justice, tolerance, socio-political engagement, open debate, and the valorization of art and culture as independent spheres of thought and action".