

Dossier: “Critical Theory and Education - 25 years”

The articles that compose the dossier “Critical Theory and Education - 25 years” refer to the need for studies which are capable of understanding and resignifying Education today. The authors of these articles present several themes and cast a watchful eye on aspects that constitute the intricate scenario of today’s society. The studies in this Dossier perform diagnoses of the present while revitalizing critical analyses on education based on the writings of thinkers of the Critical Theory of Society.

The articles were presented and debated as conferences, round table discussions, and scientific communications during the “X International Congress of Critical Theory: Technology, Violence, and Memory” held at the Universidade Federal de São Carlos – UFSCar between October 10 and 14, 2016¹. The Congress was organized by the Grupo de Estudos e Pesquisa “Teoria Crítica e Educação”, which is affiliated to the Graduate Studies Programs in Education of the following institutions: UFSCar, UNIMEP, UNESP/Araraquara, UFSC, UFES, UFLA, UEM, PUC/Minas, UNESP/Bauri, USF, and UNESC². The local coordination of the Event was conducted by professors at UFSCar, namely, Antônio Álvaro Soares Zuin (general coordinator of the Grupo de Pesquisa “Teoria Crítica e Educação”) and Luiz Roberto Gomes. The central guiding theme of the Congress - Technology, Violence, and Memory - was addressed and debated specifically at the Opening Conference by professor Bruno Pucci, at the conferences by professors Michael Löwy, José Antonio Zamora, Rodrigo Duarte, and Miguel Vedda, and at the round table with professors Marcos Nobre and Oswaldo Giacoia Jr. The following theoretical and methodological lines associated with the central theme that guided the five conferences, six round tables, and the Communications and Posters of participants of the Congress were Critical Theory and Education; Communication and Cultural Industry; Esthetics and Formative Experience; Critical Theory, Ethics, and Formation; Visual languages and Formation; Critical Theory, Digital Culture, and Formation; Critical Theory and Psychoanalysis; Critical theory of technology; Critical Theory and Literature, and Critical Theory and Social Sciences. Articles that problematize the meaning of formation today, within the scope of the results of current research conducted in the field of critical theory and education were selected in the context of reflections of the aforementioned Congress for the dossier “Critical Theory and Education - 25 years”.

It is worth mentioning, in the context of the presentation of this Dossier, the trajectory of more than 25 years of the “Grupo de Pesquisa “Teoria Crítica e Educação””. This Group started its activities in August 1991, at UFSCar, and has always been affiliated to the Department of Education and the Graduate Studies Program in Education of this University. Currently, the Group conducts its research activities in eight locations: UFSCar (1991), UNIMEP (1996), UNESP-Araraquara (2000), UFSC (2011), UFES (2011), UFLA (2012), a UNESC (2013), and PUC-Minas (2014).

¹ Full information on the X International Congress (programming, scientific report, and proceedings) can be found on the website of the Grupo de Pesquisa “Teoria Crítica e Educação” available at: www.teoriacriticaeeducacao.ufscar.br.

² UFSCar – Universidade Federal de São Carlos, UNIMEP – Universidade Metodista de Piracicaba, UNESP/Araraquara – Universidade Estadual Paulista “Júlio de Mesquita Filho”, UFSC – Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, UFES – Universidade Federal do Espírito Santo, UFLA – Universidade Federal de Lavras, UEM – Universidade Estadual de Maringá, PUC/Minas – Pontifícia Universidade Católica de Minas Gerais, USF - Universidade São Francisco, UNESC – Universidade do Extremo Sul Catarinense.

It congregates several other research scientists in several regions of Brazil, in addition to maintaining cooperation with several researchers from abroad. Professor Bruno Pucci (UNIMEP) was the leader of the Research Group since its foundation. As of April 2015, professors Antônio Álvaro Soares Zuin (UFSCar) and Luiz Antonio Calmon Nabuco Lastória (UNESP-Araraquara) were chosen, respectively, as leader and vice-leader of the Group. Professor Luiz Roberto Gomes is the current coordinator of the Group at UFSCar.

Over these 25 years of existence, the Group has organized 10 congresses: three national and seven international. As a result of the scientific events and studies conducted, more than 400 articles, 100 books, and 300 book chapters have been published in journals and in selective editorial publishers. The scientific production of this Group also includes more than 250 master's theses and 100 doctoral dissertations guided by researchers from many Brazilian institutions. Several translations of original texts in German and English are also part of the work of these researchers. In terms of research, the Group has already developed 10 institutional projects, with participation of researchers from various regions of the country. The first five thematic projects were named "The pedagogical potential of Critical Theory - *O potencial pedagógico da Teoria Crítica*" (I, II, III, IV, and V); they were developed between August 1991 and February 2002, and had the general objective of investigating the theoretical and methodological contributions of the Critical Theory of Society and, from these elements, explore its formative potential. Currently, key concepts developed by thinkers associated with the Frankfurt School, such as cultural industry, formation, and semi-formation, are being re-evaluated in terms of how mediations of digital culture reconfigure them.

A brief summary of the eight articles which comprised the Dossier is presented below. The first two articles were written by foreign researchers. The first study - "Migratory movements of refugees: An analysis in light of the Critical Theory - *Los movimientos migratorios de los refugiados: un análisis a la luz de la teoría crítica*", by professor José Antônio Zamora, Instituto de Filosofia CSIC, Madrid, Spain - argues, in the form of a critical diagnosis, that the recent refugee crisis caused by the closure of European borders to asylum seekers from Syria and other war areas represents the culmination of the neoliberal migratory regime and, at the same time, its end point. The author claims that this fact evinces the crisis of the capitalist system and reveals the failure of the European political project for human rights. The second article, written by professor Andrea Díaz, from Universidad Nacional del Centro de la Provincia de Buenos Aires (UNCPBA), reconstructs the notion of formation as the central problem of Critical Theory. In this sense, the author examines the possibility of rebuilding the concept of *Bildung* by means of the processes of symbolic reproduction of society. To this end, she critically examines the pragmatic concept of lifeworld, as formulated by Jürgen Habermas, aiming to evaluate whether an idea of formation can be justified in the processes of symbolic reproduction of society.

After that, the article by professor Bruno Pucci (UNIMEP), "Technology and Violence in the contemporary world: A look at the Critical Theory of Society - *Tecnologia e Violência na contemporaneidade: um olhar da teoria crítica da sociedade*", analyzes, from fragments of Theodor Adorno's Negative Dialectics, contemporary tensions and phenomena associated with the problematic of technology and violence. According

to the author, the exacerbated development of technologies at the beginning of the 21st century has provided an exaggerated increase in violence in the relations among human beings, and has led to the indifference of one individual for the suffering of another individual; of one people in relation to the fate of another people; and, at the same time, it has weakened the memory of moments of pain and oppression, the memory of the dead.

Another interesting text was written by professor Antônio Álvaro Soares Zuin (UFSCar) - "YouTube and the Cyberbullying of students against teachers around the World - *O YouTube e o Cyberbullying de alunos contra professores around the World*", which addresses the way students practice cyberbullying with their teachers using images recorded by mobile phones and posted on the site of image and comment sharing called YouTube. The author analyzes videos posted by students from three different countries (Brazil, Portugal, and England) whose images refer to situations experienced with their respective teachers. According to the author, it presents evidence of radical transformations that are occurring with respect to how students identify teachers as pedagogical authorities.

The next article, written by professor Luiz Roberto Gomes (UFSCar), "Objective Hermeneutics and Empirical Research in Education: The experience with classroom studies in Frankfurt - *Hermenêutica Objetiva e Pesquisa Empírica em Educação: a experiência com os estudos de sala de aula em Frankfurt am Main*", presents the results of a postdoctoral research conducted in Germany. From concepts underlying the teaching process (education, instruction, and formation) and on the formulation of an empirically based pedagogical theory, operated with the epistemological theoretical framework of Objective Hermeneutics, the text discusses the current situation of political education in German public schools. As a result, three general aspects are highlighted: 1) Analysis on the methodology of Objective Hermeneutics show the relevance of this type of research in Education, if the purpose is to highlight the immanent aspects of the pedagogical process; 2) Recent reforms in the German educational policy indicate a process of instrumentalization of education and the impoverishment of socio-political formation; 3) Empirical reconstruction of the classes on politics in German public education evidences knowledge superficiality, pedagogical authoritarianism, pseudo-democratic pedagogical practices, in addition to the instrumentalization and judicialization of politics as an educational theme.

The next article, by professor Ari Fernando Maia (UNESP-Bauru), "Acceleration and Education: Occasional reflections on temporality in school - *Aceleração e Educação: reflexões pontuais sobre a temporalidade na escola*", analyzes the impact of the thoughtless process of time acceleration in school based on the theories of Social Acceleration of Hartmut Rosa, Experience of Walter Benjamin, and Bourgeois Coldness of Andreas Gruschka. In the author's opinion, to think time in school critically involves looking beyond the partial and fragmentary temporalities manifested in the form of cycles, periods, grades, rhythms, etc., but keeping the search for meaning which is still possible for a time articulation with the cultural objects inherited from the past, with our own experience and ability to produce significant synchronizations and desynchronizations.

The article by professors Luciana de Azevedo Rodrigues and Márcio Norberto Farias, both from UFLA, "Esthetic formation of teachers: A reading of the film

'Day for Night' - *Formação estética de professores: uma leitura do filme 'La nuit américaine'*", addresses the importance of the study of cinematographic images in teacher formation. To this end, they perform a critical reading of the film "Day for Night", directed by Francois Truffaut. The article also discusses, in the context of undergraduate courses, how the attention of people and students has been occupied by audiovisual images, which function as substitutes for their reality.

Finally, the article by professor Alex Sander da Silva (UNESC), Christian Muleka Mwewa (UFMS) and Gladir da Silva Cabral (UNESC), "Narrativity, Memory, and Experience: Notes on African-Brazilian tales - *Narratividade, Memória e Experiência: anotações em contos afro-brasileiros*", studies the pedagogical-formative potential of African-Brazilian narratives under the perspective of education for ethnic-racial relations. It is a theoretical and conceptual study, in the context of critical theory, which brings the narratives, memories, and experiences of African-Brazilian culture in the tales of a female higher priest (*Mãe-de-santo*) called Beatriz Moreira Costa (*Mãe Beata de Yemanjá*).

We hope that the reading, reflections, and criticisms contained in the texts of this Dossier contribute to a critical analysis of today's society and help us to critically examine the meaning of Education in Brazil.

Enjoy your reading!

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