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WANGARI MAATHAI – FOR SUSTAINABILITY, A SOCIO-ENVIRONMENTAL STRUGGLE THAT CANNOT BE FORGOTTEN: FROM AFRICA TO THE WORLD!

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ABSTRACT

The article presents the life of Wangari Maathai, a Kenyan woman and political activist for the environment, empowered by the notion of environmental justice and fully aware of her political-historical context, weaving with her countrymen from historically marginalized communities a new, more sustainable and democratic country. In a post-colonialist historical context that is still quite sectarian evidenced in this narrative, we reinforce ecofeminism in a decolonial vision as an example. Pointing out ways of social organization that potentiated alternative actions in favor of socio-environmental sustainability, that is, in an additive perspective through a geopolitical historiography – coupling it with the environmental reality in contemporaneity; from Africa to the world. In an educational practice in Geography and Biology classes in Basic Education, with 2nd year classes at the Federal Center for Technological Education of Minas Gerais (CEFET-MG), Campus I, Belo Horizonte-MG.

Keywords: Sustainability, Wangari Maathai, Africa, Decoloniality, Environmental justice, Ecofeminism.

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INITIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The contemplation of effective sustainable practices with real production of meanings led us to know the story of an extraordinary woman: Wangari Maathai. She changed the lives of thousands of people in her home country of Kenya. Through it and its actions, which gave rise to a collective movement in favor of the environment, the expansion of the desert area was reduced and a degraded ecosystem was recovered, in which springs resprouted, enhancing the empowerment of historically marginalized communities. In these communities, most women took the lead in solving environmental problems with the retaking of a land rescued by the struggle in a post-colonialist historical context that was still quite sectarian.

With the willingness to promote the realization of an improved cognition in the classroom about sustainability with classes of the 2nd year of Integrated High School at the Federal Center for Technological Education of Minas Gerais (CEFET – MG), in Belo Horizonte, interdisciplinarily (Geography and Biology) we began the studies on Wangari Maathai as a political activist of the environment founded on the notion of environmental justice and on the political-historical context woven by the society in question.

Both the reciprocations between nature and the social body were seen, embracing here the investigation of the factors that originated the process, as well as the dynamics of the numerous protagonists involved and the forms of social organization that potentiated the power of alternative actions in favor of socio-environmental sustainability, that is, in an additive perspective through a geopolitical historiography – coupling it with the environmental reality in contemporaneity; from Africa to the world.

In order to enter our reasoning into the educational universe about the environmental dimension, in the Geography classes of Basic Education, multidisciplinary, which involves different sets of knowledge, we require to define what sustainability itself would be. Leonardo Boff (2017, p. 5) conceptualizes it as:

> (...) the set of processes and actions that are intended to maintain the vitality and integrity of Mother Earth, the preservation of its ecosystems with all the physical, chemical and ecological elements that enable the existence and reproduction of life, the fulfillment of the needs of present and future generations, and the continuity, expansion and realization of the potentialities of human civilization in its various expressions.

We consider that the dominance of Western civilization has proceeded, over the centuries, in the aggrandizement of its ideas and forms of structuring, and in a high quality of life of its populations. However, these gains were accompanied by barbarism, slavery, racism, the occupation of the territories of native peoples on all continents, the

dismemberment of their productive forces with the generation of misery "legitimized" by capitalism.

In addition, among other consequences, to the contempt and cultural disaggregation of knowledge and associative capacity of traditional communities, the imprisonment of democratic freedoms, the usurpation of natural resources, the institution of the belligerent governmental yoke, the systematized surveillance of civil institutions and the preponderance of globalized economic mechanisms that, in a cunning way, systematically prevented the "liberation" of the shackles tied to poor countries in this world-economy since the colonial period.

Therefore, we must undeniably complement the concept of sustainability with the idea of social and environmental justice in correspondence with other designations such as: geopolitics, native peoples, colonialism, coloniality, imperialism, environmental racism, domination, oppression, prejudice, racism, savagery, post-colonialism, ideology, ecofeminism, decoloniality, Africanity, etc.

Unfortunately, within the poor/emerging countries there is still the injunction of a scheme that would be more "adequate" to the production of food and goods necessary for the survival of their inhabitants (is it really?). The advance of export-oriented agribusiness is an example of this: a powerful and concrete danger that frightens the food sustenance of traditional/native peoples in Brazil and the rest of the world, causing a shortage of food and land, large-scale forced migration of affected local populations, deterioration of soils, greater violence in the countryside, loss of biodiversity, among other sequelae, undermining, until this time, the balance of ecosystems.

This event is even more aggravated in poor/emerging countries that have climatic problems, desertification/water scarcity, as well as with a greater dispute for access to available resources in the midst of planned capitalist interests – as long as in the territories of the exploited countries there are means that meet the economic ambition of the richest countries, even if these countries are on the periphery of the system.

We have an agricultural complex that also makes it difficult for other practices and understandings different from their own (subsistence agriculture, agroforestry systems, permaculture, crop-livestock-forestry, no-tillage as a sustainable practice in agriculture, organic fertilization...), the maintenance of the territories and cultures of native peoples and their biodiversity. All of this is funded by a neoliberal political elite that dominates and/or influences the congresses of their respective countries and that has historically seized the neocolonialist discourse – putting it into practice – in the name of exorbitant profits.

Aimé Césaire (1978, p. 26) makes it clear as follows: "But I speak of natural economies, of viable and harmonious economies, of economies adapted to the condition of the indigenous man that are disorganized, of subsistence cultures destroyed, of installed malnutrition (...). They boast about suppressed abuses."

Therefore, the oppression and maintenance of a single version of history are done by various artifices and languages (physical/mental/psychological, ideological, symbolic, by force/militarism/occupation, prejudice/racism...). The debased societies of the colonized native peoples were "not only pre-capitalist societies, as has been said, but also anti-capitalist. They were always democratic societies. (...) cooperatives, (...) societies destroyed by imperialism" (Césaire, 1978, p. 27).

In these terms, Achille Mbembe (2014, p. 11), counting on Gilles Deleuze, augurs: "there is always a black, a Jew, a Chinese, a Mongolian, an Aryan in delirium". And he continues:

> By reducing the body and the living being to a matter of appearance, skin or color, granting skin and color the status of a fiction of a biological nature, the Euro-American worlds in particular have made the Negro and the race two versions of one and the same figure, that of codified madness. Functioning simultaneously as an original, material and phantasmagorical category, race has in the course of preceding centuries been at the origin of innumerable catastrophes, and has been the cause of unheard-of physical devastation and incalculable crimes and carnage. (Mbembe, 2014, p. 11)

Aimé Césaire highlights the meaning of colonialism, the "hypocrisy", the "progress" and the "pseudo-humanism" of civilizational preaching, a continuous act:

> (...) whereas the great historical drama of Africa was not so much its belated contact with the rest of the world as the way in which this contact took place, which was at the moment when Europe fell into the hands of the most unscrupulous financiers and captains of industry that Europe 'propagated'; that our misfortune wanted it to be this Europe that we found on the way and that Europe has an account to render to the human community for the largest pile of corpses in history. (...) that colonizing Europe grafted modern abuse onto the old injustice, hateful racism onto the old inequality. (Césaire, 1978, p. 27-28)

Thus, we must entrench among these colonialist/imperialist discourses and their chronologies the impacts of the past until today, critically unmasking them, reviving the world as "like a river with multiple tributaries, at this precise moment when history and things turn to us, and when Europe has ceased to be the center of gravity of the world" (Mbembe, 2014, p. 9).

With this scope, we must assimilate environmental knowledge (Leff, 2009; 2010) as a crucial parameter that, worked in the classroom, must transpose academic disciplines to

the constitution of new essences, but in a way that encompasses content that communes with the bonds that traditional/original peoples have with nature.

Since they habitually incorporate them into their identities, procreating cultural knowledge in a worldview that speaks of other ways of living and relating to nature – of which we are all part – and its natural resources; "vivifying", "repersonifying" the world by becoming a planetary consciousness.

> This confrontation took place from the first contact with the colonizer and persevered in the continuous "struggle against colonialism and in the period that followed the emergence and consolidation of independent states" (in Africa and the rest of the world) until the present day. In the confrontation with "the mystifiers of our common destiny with renewed courage in the vibrant wave of the national liberation movement. A sign of fidelity to Africa and far beyond, to universality – of all human hunger and thirst" (Césaire, 1978, p. 10).

Decolonization, gerally, happened in Africa and other continents with much violence. That's why "*all decolonization is an achievement. Exposed in its nakedness, decolonization allows you to guess through all your pores, bloody bullets, bloody knuckles*" (Fanon, 2016, p. 33-34).

Meanwhile, "*this creation does not receive its legitimacy from any supernatural power: the colonized 'thing' becomes man in the very process by which it is liberated*." (Fanon, 2016, p. 33)

Even after the independence of the former colonized countries, difficulties remain and require answers to more immediate problems even those that can only be solved later in the next descendants. According to Fanon (2016, p. 70):

> *It is then said that the colonized want to go too fast. But we must never forget that not long ago its slowness, its laziness, its fatalism were affirmed. It is already perceived that the violence channeled in very precise ways at the time of the liberation struggle, does not magically extinguish after the ceremony of raising the national flag. All the more so since nation-building remains inscribed within the framework of the decisive competition between capitalism and socialism.*

Unraveling this network of complex interrelations of colonialism and its tactics in the historical process, trying to understand it today as neocolonialism[4], encompassing the vision of the "Third World", its diversities and voices, its adversities and deeds, allows us to examine the judgments clearly in order to better combat it.

The Third World, as Fanon (2016, p. 10) expresses:

[4] Neocolonialism: "The old colonialism was based on mercantile capital. (...) The new colonialism needs to organize the society of the victims, to have the same – or almost the same culture – as the exploiter. Only then will he – the victim – cease to be a passive exploited and will become an active exploited. That is, an exploited person who supports and cooperates with the neo-colonialist for the destruction of his own culture and his own nation. The effects of the industrial revolution created, therefore, the need for neocolonialism" (Barbosa, 2011, p. 8).

> It is already known that it is not homogeneous and that there are still subjugated peoples within that world, others who have acquired a false independence, some who struggle to conquer their sovereignty and still others, finally, who although they have won full freedom live under the threat of imperialist aggression. These differences have been born of colonial history, that is, of oppression.

With this ability inserted in gnosis (Leff, 2009; 2010), men will be able to restore and/or strengthen their authenticities and, consequently, to resume the connection with the world starting from "being", that is, sustainability and its coming is introduced into heterogeneity and relationship/recognition with/from the other. Further: "Environmental knowledge is on the run; (...) moving to the exteriority of established paradigms, freeing themselves from the yoke of the totalitarian purpose of all global and unifying thought" (Leff, 2010, p. 11).

As an example of an inexorable path towards the dissimil, we allude to Krenak (*apud* Cohn, 2015, p. 93):

> Any idiot can reproduce and pay for maximum consumption, but not just any idiot can transcend the fissure of himself and have the perception that we are more than animals that reproduce and dominate territories. We are capable of ideas, perceptions, and feelings that reestablish for ourselves the sense of sacredness. And sacred can be everything we put our eyes on, depending on the eyes with which we see the world. If we see a mountain as tons of ore being turned into cars and other trinkets, then it cannot be sacred. If we look at a forest and fail to see it with any transcendent meaning, then it becomes just a stock of natural resources. (...) Someone looks at a river and only thinks about how much energy can be taken from it. They are true vampires who look at nature with their fangs out.

To this end, we made verifications on the history of the original peoples of Africa and the rest of the world and the misery/socio-environmental inequalities derived from the Eurocentric exploitative models suffered by them.

In addition, we conform to the reality of the students and, particularly, to live in cities/metropolises where the majority of the country's population is domiciled, with glaring socio-environmental disparities, a reflection of a deterioration in the living conditions of its citizens and a crisis of rudimentary ethical/human values. We are in the midst of a socio-environmental collapse that is not only happening in Brazil, but is worldwide.

In other words, we are heading, as educators, towards an irremissible consideration of our educational practices and how they can help in new configurations of thinking and conduct on the part of students in the face of current environmental issues, which are increasingly disturbing and complicated.

Both Krenak (2020; 2022) and Leff (2009; 2010) discuss the obstacles placed in place to solve the enormous and successive environmental problems of today, and to return/create a new style of society through a profound modification of the structures of

precepts, procedures and foundations different from the latter, and our answers lie in another type of development – based on the wisdom of the peoples of the origin, in early inheritances.

OTHER QUESTIONS

Many reflections arose in the classroom, making it obvious to be careful to work on the tonic in a comprehensive way, raising other arguments besides those mentioned so far. Some such as: the "being" nature and its meaning; democracy/citizenship/socio-environmental justice; the dignity of the human person and the rights of indigenous peoples; and the Anthropocene, ecological footprint and climate change.

The merit of studies on the history of Africa and native peoples also emerged; structural racism, racial equality and anti-racist struggles; sustainability, environmentalism *versus* the worldviews of traditional peoples; women's emancipation today, the role of women in politics; globalization, geopolitics and poor/emerging countries. The discussions were heterogeneous in terms of content and procedures in each of the six classes in which the activities took place.

The didactic-pedagogical verification asserted the importance of the thesis, noting that the researched topics are already beginning to be part of the debates in the disciplines of general culture, in this case if not in an integrated way and more frequently (in interdisciplinary/transdisciplinary projects), such as the one exposed in this article, with a concrete presence in some of them (Geography, Biology, History, Sociology, Philosophy, Portuguese Language/Writing), helping to the human formation of students in a federal technical school.

It also reiterates the need for good planning aimed at pedagogical designs concerned with the agnitive and qualitative development of students. For the realization of an estimatory awareness of the world, articulating the real existence of students with ecopedagogy, vital education must be based, in the authors' perception, on a contextualized historical-critical reach and judge:

> today the Earth also as an oppressed, so we also need a pedagogy of this oppressed that is the Earth. We need a *Pedagogy of the Earth* as a great chapter of the pedagogy of the oppressed. A pedagogy that is supported by the Earth Paradigm that considers this planet as a single, single and diverse community. (Gadotti, 2009, p. 2, emphasis added)

In other words, in this reported event, the students of CEFET-MG, in Belo Horizonte, matured for their age, improving their conviction as subjects with rights and duties, urged – most of them – in marginalized/vulnerable social groups, made coherent confluences

between the history of the struggles for autonomy of the peoples subjugated by the European "conquerors", the independence of the former colonies and how they are at the moment.

The students acted in the same way with the engagement configurations of the different social groups present today, which seek to face all types of violence/prejudices crystallized in the socio-historical structural foundations of the ongoing civilization, expanding, equitably, the interpretation of the environment "objectified" by capital to "sustainable education that is not only concerned with a healthy relationship with the environment, but with the *deepest sense* of what we do with our existence, from everyday life" (Gadotti, 2009, p. 2, emphasis added).

The didactic-pedagogical articulation carried out, supported by the life story of Wangari Maathai, encouraged interest and research on the part of both teachers and students, resorting to the knowledge of authors of original matrices, mainly. Conceiving that, as Krenak (*apud* Cohn, 2015, p. 152, emphasis added):

> Indigenous solidarity is founded on principles that are not the principles of confrontation; they are not the principles of the bourgeois revolution, of the modern revolution; they are tribal peoples. (...) The issue of solidarity among indigenous peoples must be thought of very carefully, because they are alliance societies par excellence, but they are not societies that accept, or accept the dispensation of their identity in the formation of a mass. Modern politics thinks about this business of solidarity of everyone together; *Tribal societies think of solidarity within differences*, within the identity of each one. So, to think about the issue of indigenous solidarity from the Latin American perspective would be to circumstantiate to a geographical region a reality that is cultural, ethnic, historical, mythical, cosmic. For indigenous peoples there is no Latin America, for indigenous peoples there is the universe.

Arroyo (2017) reflects that the "Other Subjects" – belonging to the collectives, in schools and in life – are often not considered, but "highlight that even in these experiences of oppression, subalternization, human subjects were learned" (Arroyo, 2017, p. 9). Moving these so-called "peripheral" points of view to the center of formal/traditional education will certainly provide an "oxygenation" in learning by enabling a political consciousness.

Wangari Maathai and the community movements he brilliantly rallied for legitimate socio-environmental rights are "pedagogies of resistance to domination" that lack visibility. In Arroyo's words, once again:

> These popular collectives show that every social experience, even the most brutal ones, of suffering, of victimization, of oppression produces knowledge, radical questions, lucid readings of oneself and of the world, readings of power relations, of expropriation of their lands, readings of the exterminations of which they were and are victims. Experiences so radical that they produce radical knowledge. They produce, as Eric Hobsbawm reminds us, the political awareness of these subjected populations, experiencing these very radical experiences. (Arroyo, 2017, p. 9)

Going beyond this institutionalized "invisibility", we draw a parallel between the socioeconomic conditions of Afro-descendants in Brazil, the "expulsion" of marginalized students from schools, the hiatus in teacher training and how racism is rooted in society. The school is a "microcosm" of this situation and has not been able to deal with the differences. Pluriculturalism has not yet reached the classrooms. In this regard, Munanga (2005, p. 16):

> We do not need to be prophets to understand that the prejudice instilled in the teacher's head and his inability to deal professionally with diversity, adding to the prejudiced content of books and teaching materials and the prejudiced relationships between students of different ethnic-racial, social and other backgrounds, discourage black students and harm their learning. This explains the highly high repetition and dropout rate of black students, compared to white students.

Once again, still in the deductions of Munanga (2005, p. 17), there is an urgency to "reverse this prejudiced picture that harms the formation of the true citizen and the education of all students, especially members of ethnic groups". Promptly adding:

> The rescue of the collective memory and history of the black community is not only of interest to students of black descent. It is also of interest to students of other ethnic ancestry, especially white, because when they receive an education poisoned by prejudices, they also had their psychic structures affected. In addition, this memory does not belong only to blacks. It belongs to everyone, considering that the culture on which we nourish ourselves daily is the result of all ethnic segments that, despite the unequal conditions in which they develop, have each contributed in their own way to the formation of economic and social wealth and national identity. (Munanga, 2005, p. 17)

In the bulging of improved meanings, we must not fail to mention also, and no less important, how women in past and recent history have been and continue to be excluded, dominated, imprisoned, addicted and tortured always (particularly those considered "inferior" by the oppressors – Afro-descendants, "indigenous" societies) and how this patriarchal/racist/exclusionary mentality prevails, still trying to relegate them to the role of procreators, servants and sexual "objects".

This "subordination", added to racism, has not ceased to happen in all societies, it remains at different levels: lack of access to education; power of life or death on the part of the man/family over them; lower salaries compared to men; low insertion in politics; inadequate protection in the face of domestic/labor/environmental/symbolic violence, discrimination, among others.

It has been perfected in a Machiavellian way, as prejudices and discriminatory attitudes persevere and contribute to the maintenance of immense inequalities in the midst of societies that should be multiple/egalitarian. A palpable reality in both poor/emerging and rich countries.

METHODOLOGICAL SKETCHES

Like Freire (1981), we believe in an instigating education, in which the student is intellectually active and also a subject of knowledge, in which, "In the gnosiological situation, the object of knowledge is not the term of knowledge of the knowing subjects, but its mediation" (Freire, 1981, p. 71). On this occasion, "The theme that I have before me, as the nucleus of my reflection, cannot be the end of my act of knowing" (Freire, 1981, p. 71), but rather the initial device that qualifies the intelligible relations between me and the other co-participants in the debate.

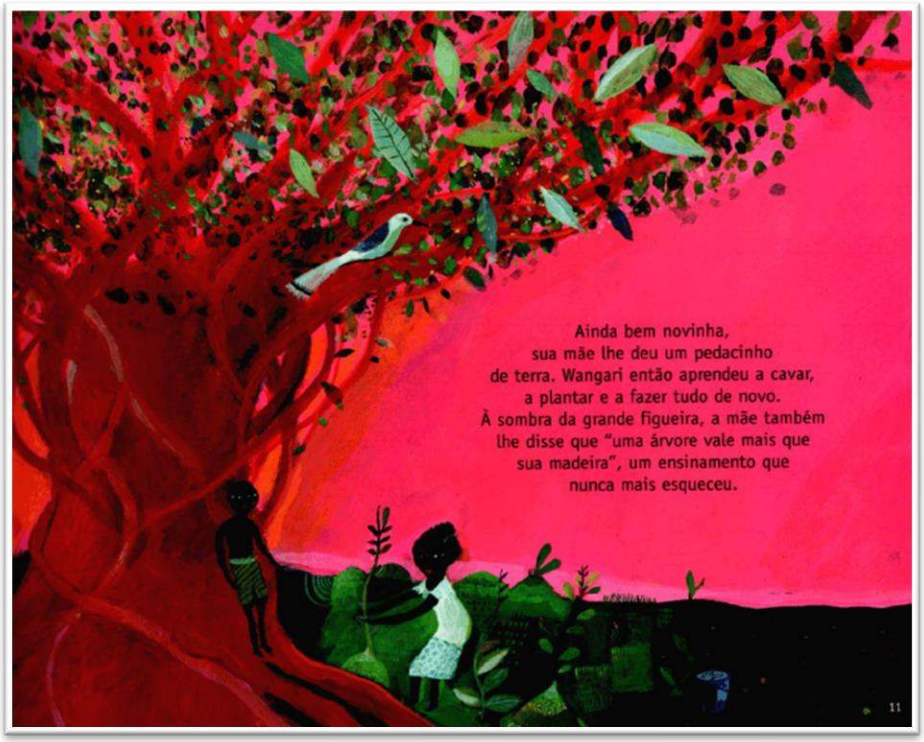
Wangari Maathai faced a suppressive system (family/political-dictatorial/post-colonialist/economic) and sought education, political representation, economic independence, defense of the environment and biodiversity, making other women/men have a voice – pleading for political-socio-environmental justice.

Their trajectory must be known and replicated, it is linked to the cultural identity of the students and can help to unveil the direct/indirect prejudiced structural mechanisms that still resist in our country. Identifying them and then refuting them, in lucid and transversal dialogues, is the least the school can do.

Referrals made:

- Interdisciplinary diagnostic evaluation (Geography and Biology) in classes on basic concepts and their correlates necessary for the work to be carried out: Political geography; Geopolitics and misery in the world; coloniality, postcoloniality, decoloniality, and globalization; ecology, environmentalism, sustainability, climate change and biodiversity conservation; environmental justice (...);
- Interdisciplinary planning (participating classes, approaches and methodologies, number of classes; assessments, dates, availability of materials, etc.);
- Proposal taken to the classes;
- Classroom discussions with adjustments based on the specificities of each class after the diagnostic evaluation, if necessary;
- Guiding the work with the chosen classes;
- Availability of books on Wangari Maathai for the selected classes, individualized and later, collective readings, in the classroom (three books in total – Figures 1, 2, 3 and 4);
- Complementary thematic research in groups such as: phases of colonialism in the world and neocolonialism today; native peoples of Brazil; current situation of the former European colonies; history of Africa and African diaspora; history of Kenya; structural racism; socioeconomic inequalities in Brazil and in the world

Figure 1 – Wangari Maathai: the woman who planted millions of trees



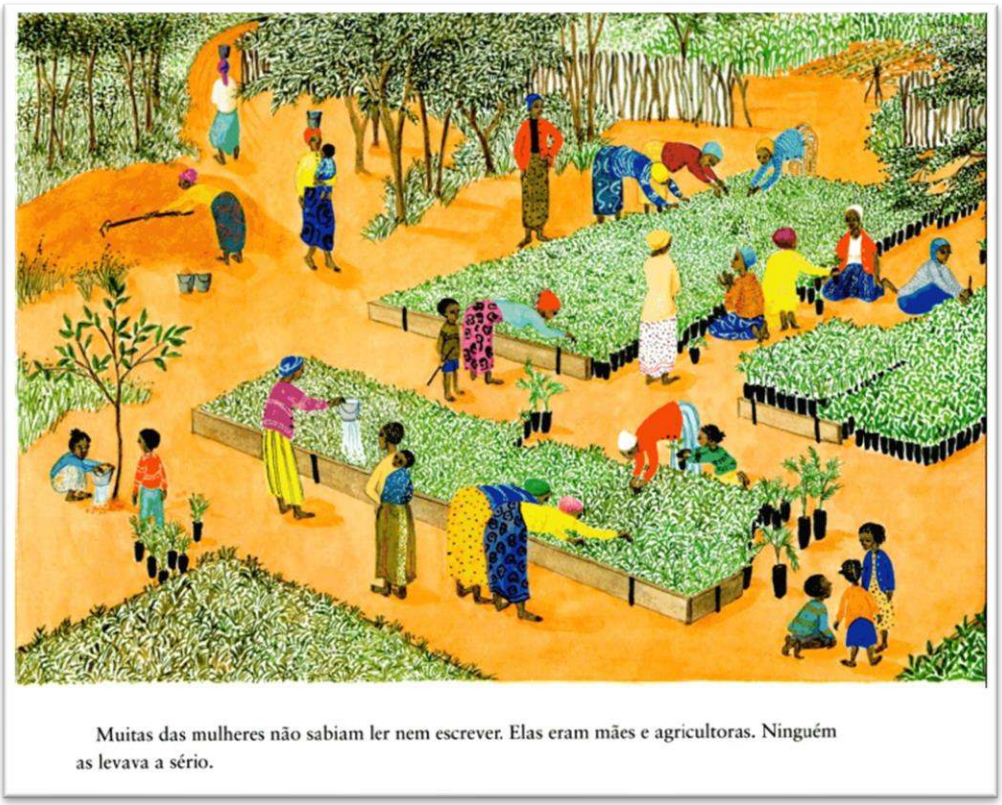
Cast by: Prévot, F., 2013.

Figure 2 – Wangari Maathai: the woman who planted millions of trees



Cast by: Prévot, F., 2013.

Figure 3 – Planting the Trees of Kenya



Source:Nivola, C., 2015.

- And also: capitalism and globalization; sustainability and sustainable development; local, regional and global environmental problems; Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change; environmental justice, traditional peoples and climate change (...). The themes varied from class to class, with the mediation of the teachers, depending on the interests expressed;

Figure 4 – Wangari Maathai and the Green Belt Movement



Source: Ofoego, Obioma, 2016.

- Debate in the classroom with an essay record based on key questions (which varied from class to class). Some examples below:

1. Explain the importance of trees in mitigating climate change, conserving biodiversity, and improving air and water quality.
2. How can each of you make a difference in your own lives and in your localities?
3. Reflect on our local ecosystems present in the Metropolitan Region of Belo Horizonte – MG (RMBH – MG), their fragmentations and the environmental history of our region. Observe the fauna and flora, studies on the quality of the soil and water; What is the importance of preserving these natural resources?
4. Think of a research project on local environmental issues in which we live, such as air pollution, deforestation, water conservation, or another of our urban environmental problems. Describe the content investigated, the causes and impacts of these problems, seeking sustainable solutions.

5. Correlate the Kenyan Green Belt Movement put into practice by Wangari Maathai and thousands of collaborators in his country, with other initiatives in defense of the environment, human rights/minorities/women and/or against colonialism in the world (Examples: Chico Mendes in Brazil; Labotsibeni Mdlulina Swaziland; Danielle de St.Jorre in the Seychelles; Rose Lokissim in Chad; Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti in Nigeria; Alda do Espírito Santo in São Tomé and Príncipe; Gisèle Rabesahala in Madagascar; Sarraounia Mangou in present-day Niger; Aoua Keitano in Mali[5]...); choosing one of the activists surveyed for further study.
6. Association of research with the methodological principles of Geography (causality, activity, extension, analogy, connection or interaction).
7. Symbolic planting of one tree per class in the school area.

Figure 5 – Planting at school (around the soccer field)



Source: Material by the authors.

Some examples: First, the importance of trees in mitigating climate change and conserving biodiversity is related to the principle of causality, as it seeks to explain the positive effects of these natural resources. In addition, the study of air and water quality is related to the principle of connection, as it involves the identification of the relationships between the environment and human health.

> In relation to the second question raised, about how students can make a difference in their own lives and their localities, it can be associated with the principle of activity of Geography, which emphasizes the importance of the action and engagement of individuals in the transformation of their environment in historical time.

[5] Women in African History – Unesco. Available at: https://en.unesco.org/womeninafrica/. Accessed on: 23 set. 2023.

In the third question, which proposes to reflect on local ecosystems and the importance of preserving natural resources, it is possible to relate it to the principle of extension, which highlights the need to delimit the fact to be studied and locate it on the earth's surface.

Finally, by encouraging students to think about research projects on local environmental issues and seek sustainable solutions, they can be related to the principle of analogy or General Geography, when we analyze the causes and impacts of environmental problems by comparing them with other places, and to the principle of causality, when we seek to explain and predict the evolution of these problems.

SOME FINDINGS

Consequently, starting from the results seen – without considering them in any way conclusive – the obliquity of an education focused on socio-environmental and anti-capitalist justice is not normally rooted neither in curricula nor in teaching practices, in a systematized way.

The consummation of a problematizing education requires a change in the Eurocentric/neocolonialist cultural paradigm that is still recurrent in schools and in the collective imagination due to an intense and long acculturation in the course of history.

The unspeakable story of Wangari Maathai serves as an inspiration for all of us and gives perceptibility to those who, historically, until then, were hidden. Chimamanda Adichie (2019, p. 16), enriches this position:

> Stories matter. Many stories matter. Stories have been used to plunder and slander, but they can also be used to empower and humanize. They can shatter the dignity of a people, but they can also repair that shattered dignity. The American writer Alice Walker wrote of her Southern relatives who had moved north when she presented them with a book about the life they had left behind: "They sat there, reading the book themselves, listening to me read the book, and a kind of paradise was revived." I'd like to end with this idea: when we reject the single story, when we realize that there is never a single story about nowhere, we regain a kind of paradise.

The activities applied required many readings and explorations for us to reach their applicability in the classroom, which caused a delightful feeling of discoveries, as if another veil had been removed from our eyes, because, in this conjuncture, the analyses were very deep. Engaged with interested and aware students, they produced a clearance in the round tables processed.

We recognize that educators' research must be cohesive with teaching practices in the classroom and it is desirable, each one of us already does it well and daily when planning our didactic-pedagogical progress, with the advantage of knowing our students.

In this path – which is neither linear nor continuous, but individuated – we experience satisfactions and many possibilities of encounters in which permutations of methodologies, new instructions, materials and meanings occur.

When discussing popular education, Carlos Rodrigues Brandão (2001, p. 8) adds: "the fact that it emerges historically, wherever it arises on the continent, as an education movement or, if we want, as education in a state of movement".

Of course, there are many impasses that we routinely try to circumvent, however the main question that makes a big difference in our daily praxis and is coadduced with the subjectivized perception of the world that we have is: what kind of education do we believe in?

After we have answered this previous question, *a posteriori,* they are the result of our educational principles. Nevertheless, a renewed education is procedural, it is not a circumstance that happens quickly and does not demonstrate immediate evidence, since in order to give the beginning of a critical consciousness (on the part of teachers and students), supported by plurality, ethics and new dialogical interpretations, we need to situate ourselves as beings in transformation and open to the unknown, since there is no oneness or totality of thought.

For "There is an abyss between understanding a thing rationally and understanding the same thing emotionally" (Adichie, 2014, p. 23)."Culture doesn't make people. People make culture. If an entire humanity of women is not part of our culture, then we have to change our culture" (Adichie, 2014, p. 34).

The investment in new learning and exchange of experiences that help us break our comfort zone, "breaking" our cultural "glasses", is a good start to, in a second moment, break with our ideological/mental ties, providing opportunities for the distinction and identity richness of the other, recognizing the dignity of all subjects and living beings on the planet from the intrinsic "metamorphosis" of ourselves to, This time, we can increase changes in the world with local socio-environmental actions as a starting point.

In line with Paulo Freire (1981, p. 35): "In fact, this orientation in the world can only be truly understood in the dialectical unity between subjectivity and objectivity. Understood in this way, orientation in the world poses the question of the purposes of action at the level of the critical perception of reality".

In view of this, "The more we are able to unveil the reason for why we are the way we are, the more it is possible for us to also reach the reason for the reality in which we are, thus overcoming the naïve understanding we may have of it" (Freire, 1981, p. 72).

Adichie (2014, p. 30) acrescenta:

> The gender issue is important in any corner of the world. It is important that we start planning and dreaming of a different world. A fairer world. A world of happier men and happier women, more authentic with themselves. And this is how we should start: we need to raise our daughters in a different way. We also need to raise our children in a different way.

With the wisdom of Brandão (2001, p. 9), we infer that:

> This "being in movement" in part opposed to dominant and consecrated forms of "doing education" (...), since education – whatever it may be – has a political dimension in its core (...), there is nothing to prevent it from becoming, from one moment in history onwards, a pedagogical work differently placed at the service of subjects and popular classes that, We continue to believe, they must participate in the conduct of what makes the history of a people take this or that course.

May we be, as educators, in our practices, being part of this process, "beings in movement", in the rhythm, time, intensity and ways that each one is willing to perform, sowing the meaning of learning for life so that others are equally displaced.

In order to implement this transposition, as Gadotti (2009) expresses, "we need a new pedagogy":

> Educational systems, in general, are based on predatory principles, on an instrumental rationality, reproducing unsustainable values. To introduce a culture of sustainability into education systems we need to re-educate the system: it is both part of the problem and part of the solution. (Gadotti, 2009, p. 4)

Wangari Maathai taught and continues to teach us this at all times!

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