
Moral enactions of the future in the school: Thoughts about an intersubjective moral background

Leonardo Henrique Brandão Monteiro
Antonio Alvaro Soares Zuin
Universidade Federal de São Carlos (Brasil)

Abstract

The article discusses students' conceptions of the future projected by themselves, or about them by other school actors and their links to certain moralities in the school environment. To achieve this, it undertakes reflections that allow us to understand the ways in which the future is embodied in the daily life of school institutions. The methodology used had an ethnography and was complemented by a series of semi-structured interviews. In the school analyzed, an intersubjective normative background was identified, shared, to a greater or lesser extent, by everyone. This background was articulated and crossed by several other moralities and built a certain symbolic horizon. We identified four ideal types that provided a framework of intelligibility for the ways in which the future was activated in the daily relationships. These will guide reflection, but they do not function as students' destinies or fixed positionings in this social space.

Keywords: Intersubjective normative background. School discipline/indiscipline. School moralities. Projects and projections of future.

1

Corporificações morais do futuro na escola: reflexões sobre um fundo moral intersubjetivo

Resumo

O artigo discute concepções de futuro de estudantes projetadas por eles mesmos ou sobre eles por outros atores escolares e as suas vinculações a certas moralidades, no ambiente escolar. Para tal, empreende reflexões que permitem compreender as maneiras pelas quais o futuro se corporifica no cotidiano da instituição escolar. A metodologia utilizada teve um viés etnográfico (Geertz, 2008) e complementou-se com uma série de entrevistas semiestruturadas. Na escola analisada, encontrou-se um fundo normativo intersubjetivo, compartilhado em maior ou menor grau, por todos. Esse fundo se manifestava articulado e atravessado por diversas outras moralidades e construía certo horizonte simbólico. Identificamos quatro tipos ideais que forneceram uma grade de inteligibilidade para os modos como o futuro era acionado nas relações cotidianas. Estes irão guiar a reflexão, mas não funcionam como destinos dos alunos ou posicionamentos fixos dos estudantes nesse espaço social.

Palavras-chave: Fundo normativo intersubjetivo. Disciplina/indisciplina escolar. Moralidades escolares. Projetos e projeções de futuro.

Las corporeizaciones morales del futuro: consideraciones desde un trasfondo moral intersubjetivo

Resumen

El artículo discute las concepciones de futuro de los alumnos proyectadas por ellos mismos, o sobre ellos por otros actores escolares, y sus vínculos con determinadas moralidades en el ambiente escolar. Para ello, realiza reflexiones que permiten comprender las formas en que el futuro se encarna en la vida cotidiana de la institución escolar. La metodología utilizada tuvo un enfoque etnográfico (Geertz, 2008) y se complementó con una serie de entrevistas semiestructuradas. En la escuela analizada, se encontró un trasfondo normativo intersubjetivo, compartido en mayor o menor medida, por todos. Este trasfondo se manifestaba articulado y atravesado por varias otras moralidades y construía un determinado horizonte simbólico. Identificamos cuatro tipos ideales que proporcionaron una malla de inteligibilidad de las formas en que se activaba el futuro en las relaciones cotidianas. Éstos orientarán la reflexión, pero no funcionan como destinos o posiciones fijas de los alumnos en ese espacio social.

Palabras clave: Trasfondo normativo intersubjetivo. Disciplina/indisciplina escolar. Moralidades escolares. Proyectos y proyecciones de futuro.

2

Introduction

Marx and Engels (1997) opened the Communist Party Manifesto of the Communist Party, saying that a spectrum haunted Europe in the 19th century. This spectrum was called communism. Many factions who held power on the old continent united to fight it. Thus, communism, as a phantom entity, influenced and conditioned different actions in capitalist States. Although the spectrum surrounding Europe today has changed, this paper will not deal with macropolitics. We aim to reflect on a spectral entity that walks around school hallways, conditioning and influencing social relations micropolitics of social relations in this space: the future. In the school environment analyzed – with a possibility that this also occurs in other institutions – the future appeared incessantly to delimit, reprimand, or reinforce social actions. The spectral presence of something that existed only virtually mobilized a moral space at school sociabilities. It allowed us to perceive the existence of an intersubjective normative background in the institution, a background shared by everyone to a greater or lesser degree. However, each person sharing this background articulated different moralities, with a considered school morality, and, consequently, expressed it over social relations in different ways.

The empirical reality found in our investigation is the source of the thoughts expressed here. We anchored this research in a case study based on a six-month ethnographic observation complemented by interviews with high school students at the Úrsula Iguarán Buendía school - all names of people and the name of the school are fictitious; in the case of school staff, we indicated them by their functions.

The analysis aimed to understand the students' future projects or protensions (Husserl, 1994) and the projections made over them by school professionals and other students; we consider how the students and the school professionals read some behaviors as disciplined or unruly to build our analysis. Nevertheless, our study revealed that the future was morally mobilized in the institution beyond its relationship with the intended discipline within school walls. In other words, the future of student projects and protensions enacted a moralized bias and embodied in practices were read by school actors based on a discipline/indiscipline binomial. This reading by school actors often appeared in the classifications of "good" or "bad" students, commonly used by students and school professionals. These classifications have long been denaturalized from a Western perspective (Nietzsche, 1998) but summarize a whole range of relationships present in that school environment. Thus, in this writing, the logic governing such classifications and the values expressed by it appears as something moral. Therefore, this text weaves comprehensive lines at the intersections between this moral dimension and how students were read from a virtual future perspective by their colleagues or school staff.

The article is structured as follows: In the next section, we present the research's theoretical and methodological framework. The following two sections, driven by the theoretical foundations, discuss the empirical data from the study and how it showed us articulations between an intersubjective normative background in the school environment and how the students themselves, their colleagues and/or school professionals glimpse their futures. This discussion leads to the understanding that the intersubjective normative background embodiments at school, based on discipline logic, are articulated situationally and can be enacted differently. However, they are mainly accompanied by future glimpses. Hence, these two entities will (almost) permeate all social relations in the investigated school environment.

Theoretical-methodological frameworks

4 We choose an ethnographic approach to grasp embodied social actions and transform them into research data. Geertz (2008) perhaps popularized the most famous definition for ethnography, defining it as a dense description; this methodological tool allows us to look at things from an interpretive perspective. According to this anthropologist, the terrain of culture is constructed as a place where social actions have intrinsic symbolic meaning. He, therefore, seeks to interpret embodied social actions rather than individual behavior – *a post facto* diagnosis. "The aim is to draw big conclusions from small but densely interwoven facts, to support broad statements about the roles of culture in collective life" (Geertz, 2008, p. 38). Goldman (2003) complementarily argues that the ethnographic perspective should aim to develop a model for understanding social phenomena. It should provide an intelligibility matrix for different contexts, even if produced in and for particular contexts. This author considers it a matter of moving away from abstract questions and focusing on social practices. In this case, the researcher must let himself be affected by what affects the "native." When this statement is taken to study complex societies, it implies that the researcher must perceive and let himself/herself be affected, not by what afflicts him as a living being but by what affects people with whom his/her research was conducted. Quirós (2014) points out that ethnography is an apprehension of processes developed by living beings by another living being. Therefore, both constitute their sociability on social space. These interactions generate the specificity of the social environments.

At an early stage of our research, we thought our ethnography would follow an investigative line based mainly on Zigon's (2007) assertions. His approach focuses on rupture moments, in which a person must interrupt the automatic and almost unreflective flow – Bourdieu (1996) would classify it as pre-reflective – of their actions to make some moral decision. In this process, people decide as quickly as possible. Therefore, they can return to an automatic and unreflective flow of activities as soon as possible. The anthropologist argues that a person can rationalize this decision-making process sometimes. Our analytical focus dialoguing with this model was the trial to understand how young people guide their conduct. The projects of the future that they had, or the future projections over them, affected it? The interrelations between these

two analytical dimensions were the focus of the question that guided the data collection.

The hypothesis that students could rationalize these elements when discussing (in)disciplinary practices guided us during the interview guide preparations. They intended to discuss student indiscipline/discipline perceptions at school, as well as the perceptions of their future and the future of their colleagues. At the end of the interview, when a student had some record of an episode of indiscipline, the interviewer read it out to them and asked if they could comment on it. If we did not find this document, the researcher asked the student to explain a statement made during the interview. Moral elements constantly appeared when the interviewees described their actions and motivations in detail. The analytical focus never relied on allocating them within pre-established moral codes but rather on understanding them in their dynamic and precarious relationships with the social environment.

During the data collection, we realized that the students rationalize their conduct *a posteriori* and (re)update it, sometimes when confronted by a different interlocutor or for other reasons. In the ethnography, we observed conflict mediation sessions. On one of these days of ethnographic observation, the School Inspector brought student Vitor Hugo to Mediator's office; the student left the class for no apparent reason. The Mediator did not ask why he was absent from class but inquired if he would like to run for some student council board. He promptly refused.

When asked why he denied it, he could not answer. The Mediator then asked him to consider participating in the student council and if he was a 'good' student. To the last question, Vitor Hugo replied that he got good grades. The Mediator then wrote an authorization for the teacher, allowing Vitor Hugo to enter the classroom, and the student left. A few days later, surprisingly, he was one of the students present at a meeting where the Mediator explained the role of the student council board, and he even joined one of the competing boards. What made him (re)update his position in the school world? We will not address this issue here, but it gave us a critical reflection insight. However, as far as this paper is concerned, the social dynamic in which this student changed his position and attitude toward the council is relevant.

We note, therefore, that students can (re)organize their attitudes, forms, and intentions when acting and interacting with the school world when

instigated to do so. However, this movement to modify their attitude, behavior, and social actions was not so simple because students did not abandon social relationships and networks, where they were already immersed. When we spoke to young people who described themselves as 'troublemakers' in the past but currently considered themselves as 'good students,' many of them still were commonly associated with or practiced acts read as undisciplined. The relationships network with peers seemed to affect some students more than others. Likewise, some students seemed to care more about school professionals' conceptions of them than others.

This research encountered people with unstable and adaptable moral conceptions, similar to what Widlok (2009) found in his work. Based on nonconfrontational interviews, the anthropologist asked his interlocutors about moral and nonmoral dilemma scenarios. He verified that his interlocutors usually did not think abstractly about the presented dilemmas in each proposed scenario but brought other elements to discussion recurrently. According to the author, moral (re)update processes are characterized by a powerful creative dimension. Morality is not just norms internalization but their creative updating in social relationships. The author even differentiates the spontaneous morality manifested in everyday social relationships and the codified moralities pursued by ethnographers.

6

Our paper seeks to understand the insertion of school actors into a web of social relations where agents of a social interaction share, to a certain extent, a moral repertoire, conditioning them and not allowing some sovereignty of morality of their own (Widlok, 2009). At Ursula school, we observed an articulation process between the future as a moral entity and social dynamics driven by the logic of discipline. The shared moral repertoire at Ursula school presented itself as an intersubjective normative background. It did not only classify actions within a specific values system but was repeatedly subverted, being more embodied as an idea than a reality. Hence, there were constant attempts to explain what should be or how students should act. At the same time, actions are classified as "good," "bad," "wrong," or "right." At these moments, the future appeared as a prediction of a consequence. In other words, an action classified as "good" or "right" would lead to a future within the same valuations, and the same happened when actions read as "wrong" or "bad."

The students' actions and identifications, regarding the type of person they wanted to project themselves, or in other words, their identifications in moments of "being for the Other" (Bhabha, 1998), were consequently constructed amid articulations between moral dimensions, present in relationships with school professionals with peers, and of course with people outside school. People in this environment resembled the relational beings described by Zigon (2014). Furthermore - as defined by Bhabha (1998) in another context - students construct their identities and develop social actions through systems, sometimes divergent through articulations.

It's from Bhabha (1998), the articulation concept featured in this paper. He argues that identification processes happen when a person articulates himself/herself to other(s). Thus, identifications can be multiple. So, people sometimes embody apparently ambiguous and ambivalent behavior regarding certain moral expectations - expressed by them or projected onto them. Among students, we can say that at least three types of articulation can be expected: one involving family; another correlated to school institution, its rules, and discipline logic; and a third one encompassing the extremely heterogeneous realm of relationships with peers. These articulations built the student subject, producing certain moral expectations. The expectations may or may not be similar in the three articulations. Therefore, each student would act and produce their identifications in-between these articulations. In this way, the future in the school environment is configured as a moral entity that evaluates student behavior and actions. However, it does not allocate a student to any unavoidable and/or inexorable destiny. Asking the students to relate examples of classmates who they thought had a good future and others who did not they separated them based on moral assertions. Academic performance became relevant to corroborate the distinctions between students – stated by our interviewees – based on moral evaluations.

However, how would it be possible to apprehend as a research 'object' the future as a moral entity? Bhabha (1998) states that a third dimension in the identification process between oneself and other(s) gives realism and coherence to the 'self' constituted in the articulation processes. It would be like what filmmakers call: "the fourth wall." It's an element of depth. Hypothetically, the analytical model primarily proposed - based on Zigon's (2007) conceptions - in which the students' *a posteriori* rationalization of an act read as unruly by school professionals submitted to the scrutiny of the model, could

allow access to these articulated moralities processes, or even break this 'fourth wall.' However, the interaction developed in the interviews between the self of a particular student and another (the researcher) created another space of articulation. We did not find codified or codifiable moralities in this other articulation space. We note a dynamic with many articulations among varied moral elements shaping and/or influencing the social relationships of the school environment. Also, these articulations constantly updated the moral dimensions at school - almost always with a specific intersubjective normative background as reference.

Hence, the sociabilities on which this work focuses unfold from the existence of an intersubjective normative background. Corroborating Duranti (2010), we consider intersubjectivity as the basis where human existence flourishes. In other words, intersubjectivity precedes subjective experiences and human interactions. Indeed, it grounds human existence in a collective dimension. Intersubjectivity does not need human co-presence to be perceived. Whether we respect certain norms alone or intentionally violate them because we are by ourselves, intersubjective constructions are the action reference. Emphasizing an intersubjective normative background, we highlight a specific form of intersubjectivity. It refers to unwritten norms in the school environment that precede the sociabilities developed in this environment. The normative background, trying to be understood, can be seen through articulations between the school's disciplinary logic and the future as a moral entity in everyday school social relations.

The school is a disciplinary institution that mediates its social relations through disciplinary logic (Rodrigues, 2007). Another publication has discussed how actions read as being disciplined or undisciplined drive sociabilities at school in greater detail (Monteiro, 2022). The pleasure/power spirals involving disciplinary actions, being disciplined, being unruly, and reporting undisciplined behavior, among other dynamics arising from discipline logic, provide a fertile environment for moralizing behavior and actions.

Husserl and Bourdieu influenced us regarding the future and how it appears in the relationships experienced at school. For Husserl (1994), thoughts of the future are part of the present of consciousness. Pereira Júnior (1990) comments:

Husserl understands that the element of 'future' is not generated through a new reproduction of images from the original impressions but rather a mere projective modification of memories (primary or secondary) [...]. We have a single protension, with no content of its own, which affects temporal objects and directs them toward possible realizations, thus generating the sense of 'future.' Waiting is a retention in the opposite direction [...] and only differs from it in the way it appears (Pereira Júnior, 1990, p. 78).

Therefore, what affects the subjects related to the perception of their futures is connected to memories and projections (re)elaboration. In a school environment, this can materialize in many ways. Bourdieu (1996) uses Husserl's ideas on project and projection to argue in favor of the *habitus*, a system of practical dispositions. From this concept, it can be inferred that the insertion of a given person into a specific social realm is carried out more in a pre-reflective than a reflective way. Social agents will work most of the time with protensions rather than projects. Thus, the future woven into the present operates pre-reflexively and within the specificities incorporated into social surroundings, the agents' specific social action/sociation. It complicates the analysis because the desire that animates a social interaction often will not be the desired. During the ethnography, we observed a student who replied during the interview that students and teachers should respect each other, but later on the same day, when he had an opportunity, he made a joke about a particular teacher, calling him: 'sausage teacher,' because he knew his friends would laugh (Monteiro, 2023).

Last but certainly not least, we do not understand the future here from the foreground idea, which focuses on opportunities that young people can aspire to (Tessaro; Bernardi, 2019). As well as, we do not analyze idealizations or representations (Bonfim; Garrido, 2022) of the future. When we investigate the intersubjective normative background that permeates the Ursula school environment, we highlight the future as a moral entity reaffirming the school's disciplinary logic, delimiting, reprimanding, or reinforcing social actions and behaviors.

An intersubjective normative background embodied in perceptions of students' futures

Beyond disciplinary logic mediating social interactions (Rodrigues, 2007), the concern for about students' future was part of the constitution of an intersubjective normative background present in the school. To some degree, it was shared by all school actors, from professionals to students. School agents constantly push students to think about their future and problematize the consequences of their actions – often, the object of problematization is their future. In most cases, the future appears as a temporality in which young people would face the consequences of their attitudes. It means that if an action is morally labeled as something bad by any school actor when they scold the perpetrator, they highlight the negative aspects that the future could present for their life.

Based on data collected during the ethnography method here applied, we could typify some frequent ways of looking at the future as a moral entity. In a two-way analytical relationship within theoretical dimensions, the ethnographic data enabled us to work with four typical-ideal categories to understand the Ursula school's social reality, our study case. An ideal-type is an intellectual construction that describes a pure social phenomenon, that is, a social phenomenon without inherent irrationalities. They are, then, non-existent in the empirical world. The sociability patterns described in this work are ideal-types; so far, they are accentuations of certain aspects of perceptions and rationalizations of social actions and the social actions developed by the young people observed.

These typical-ideal categories are analytical Weberian ideal-types, and we constructed them in conversations and interviews with people from the school microcosm. Based on these ideal-types, we can analyze the ambiguity of the school's disciplinary dynamics. The moral content of these classifications lies in the idea of future consequences related to actions perpetrated in the present. The ideal-types presented here are the good future, the not-so-good future, the not-future, and the denial of future expectations (future denial). They will be detailed below. The categories good future, not-so-good future, and not-future correspond to categories used and managed by the research participants and other people at Ursula school. Not everyone uses these words, but the ideas related to them are shared by the school actors we observed to a greater or

lesser extent. They analytically synthesize protensions, projections, and projects over the future that our research subjects deal with daily.

The 'good future' would be connected to school rules submission and the real possibility of upward social mobility from the point of view of the majority of students. Marcela's words express an idea commonly held by professionals and those considered good students by these professionals.

They [school staff] 'give' everyone the opportunity. All you have to do is choose to study, or you can choose to mess around. In my case, I chose to study (Marcela, 2018).

However, in the eyes of school professionals, unrestricted discipline at school would not guarantee professional success, thus a social upward mobility. In an interview with a teacher and through a spontaneous conversation with a retrained teacher, determination appeared as the prerequisite for a student's social mobility success. The two teachers see the students, in general, as highly apathetic toward life, sometimes glimpsing a 'better future' in students who commit acts considered undisciplined since those acts do not involve violence or disrespect for the authority of school professionals.

If a student did not follow the path of being a "good" student and a person with enormous appreciation for their studies, two types of future were envisioned for her/him. A 'not-so-good future' in which the students maintained their social 'class' position and did not achieve upward social mobility. Most students belonged to families participating in the job market in positions with low social prestige and low economic return. It is common for most of these children to occupy similar roles to those of their parents. A future of this kind had moral legitimacy in the school environment. However, it is constantly labeled as a non-realization of a 'good future.' For example, when asked about the future she envisioned for her classmates, the student Rita stated: "Ah, not very good. It's because it's complicated, it's very difficult. And you have to make an effort. You just keep going like that; you don't get anywhere. And they don't want anything to do with anything" (Rita, 2018). Like the teachers mentioned above, the student sees a certain apathy in her colleagues. So, we can notice that a not-so-good future consummation ends in the non-realization of an upward social mobility movement.

The field researcher saw the legitimization of these future types on a panel with the word "Opportunities" written in paper letters of various colors at its top. Every poster on that board had to be approved by a school professional before being affixed. Side-by-side posters of free courses from very different institutions, were registered. There was a poster offering a free programming course by the Mathematics and Computer Sciences Institute at the University of São Paulo in São Carlos and two signed by the Spiritist house *Nosso Lar*, one offering a computer maintenance course and the other carpentry workshops. Sometime later, in addition to the old posters, the same panel showed new ones fixed. There were far more of them than at first glance. On this second look, a sign from the Physics Institute of the University of São Paulo stood out; posters for selection processes, such as the Federal Institute of São Paulo in São Carlos, the University of Araraquara, the State University of Campinas and a selection process for apprentice called "Young Banker"; some vocational courses and advertisements for the Ajax soccer academy. In addition to these posters, a poster from the Brazilian Math Olympics for Public Schools and another for the Brazilian Astronomy Olympics. The described posters materialize some futures morally envisioned in the school realm as good. They are things like access to higher education, formal jobs, considering technical or vocational courses, and even becoming a professional athlete - even though the latter is rare and school professionals rarely raise the influence of the school on this future perspective.

On the other hand, we have conducts that are stigmatized and linked to futures without moral legitimacy in the Ursula school environment. School professionals – not only them but also a significant proportion of students – connect certain behaviors to students with no future. Those labeled as non-future students by school agents and colleagues are frequently identified as junkies [*nóias*] – a "native" category that characterizes people involved in illicit drug consumption, mainly cannabis, cocaine, and crack, either directly or indirectly. However, this category can also include people who do not consume these substances but have friendship relations or do leisure activities with people who consume those or merely behave like illicit drug users in the view of those who classify them.

Another possibility for not having a good future is the allocation of students as part of the criminal world [*Mundo do Crime*], which is almost automatically linked to the image of a non-future. In this paper, the criminal

world is not necessarily a word used by the school's subjects; however, it describes a constantly perceived presence. Through the speeches addressed to the field researcher, it was perceived as an almost ghostly entity surrounding young people and 'co-opts' them onto 'a path' with no moral legitimacy. Thus, the expression 'criminal world' was chosen to summarize, as in the case of Feltran's work (2011), the set of sociabilities, social codes, personal objectives, and discursive relationships that are established, primarily, at a local level around illicit businesses such as drug dealing. Nevertheless, it is not about any crime or any perpetrator of these crimes.

A young man on probation was once singled out to the field researcher at Ursula school as having no future. This teenager's aesthetics, from his clothes to his posture, could have placed him on an aesthetic profile of marginalized youth - he wore baggy shorts and mirrored sunglasses and constantly walked around the corridors singing some Brazilian funk song or reproducing its characteristic rhythm with his hands. The adolescent ended up in a case of threatening and lightly assaulting a teacher. This fact reinforced his reputation as a student without a future. From the school's common sense point of view - beyond the moral reprimand of perpetrating illegal activities - the simple with perpetrators of such acts, with people just labeled like perpetrators, could result in imprisonment or even death. An excerpt from the interview with student Ana Carla can help us better understand the spectral no future possibility from these teenagers' horizon; simultaneously, it allows us to establish the typical-ideal category of future denial.

Interviewer: When you're in the classroom looking at your classmates. Do you imagine their future?

Ana Carla: I can imagine. [...] Like that girl who studies, I don't know if she wants to be an engineer or a doctor, I imagine her like that.

Interviewer: And those who don't study?

Ana Carla: Oh, I already imagine them selling drugs. That's already the thought.

Interviewer: And do you feel that your classmates imagine your future, too?

Ana Carla: Of course. We talk.

Interviewer: What do you talk about?

Ana Carla: No, we say that we're going to be good, just like that. But the kids are already thinking about the future, you know? These

things, selling drugs, these things. My thinking goes along with that, too (Ana Carla, 2018).

In addition to explicitly reporting the relationship between the 'criminal world' and what would-be students without a future, Ana Carla expresses a subjectivization going against the prevailing morality in the Ursula school environment and shows the ability to produce lines of escape and resistance (Deleuze; Guattari, 1997) – at least at first glance – the institution's subjectivization mechanisms and devices. Another text has better explored the issue of the production of resistance/lines of escape at Ursula school (Monteiro, 2022).

Ana Carla and the 'kids' mentioned in her statements refuse to talk about the future in terms the school morally legitimizes. 'Selling drugs' does not appear in this context as a crime confession, a felony already committed, or a plan; instead, this as a possibility for the future denies the school and rejects what is usually seen as 'good' at Ursula school, thus characterizing what we call "future denial." This denial is not based on a kind of YOLO (you only live once) but produces an ironic discourse (Friedrich, 2001) by stating something morally disapproved at school.

Ana Carla's words play with the spectral presence of a non-future perceived as the insertion into the criminal world; we can describe it as a pattern of sociability that creatively – because it articulates and resignifies an entity negatively valued by school professionals – denies any sociability pattern provided for the school's moral molds. She ambivalently plays with these parameters by affirming, for itself, a sociability that may or may not be concrete. It is only possible because there is a normative background at school, shared to some degree by all those involved with the institution. This sharing allows her words to resonate differently than if she stated them in another social context.

Designing those four ideal-types to interpret the school social reality concerning the future as an entity that organizes school social relations in a moral sense, we focus on the social dimensions glimpsed processes. As we saw in the descriptions above, the future as a phantasmatic entity is shared intersubjectively by everyone at Ursula school, and the school as an institution can reinforce, delimit, or reprimand certain student behaviors. In this way, we differ from approaches like the one from Bonfim and Garrido (2022) or the one from Tessaro and Bernardi (2019), who focused on the individual

dimensions of the perception of the future. Unlike the works mentioned, we examined how the future organizes certain sociabilities in the school realm based on its articulations with other social life dimensions. Bonfim and Garrido (2019) look at the future from the point of view of representations, cognitive images that represent an “[...] idealization of the future; one that guides hope in the realization of desires (Bonfim; Garrido, 2019, p. 3)”. In comparison, Tessaro and Bernardi (2022) individualize how people feel about their future based on the foreground. Our different perspective allowed us to conceive ideal-types that classify students and actions within the logics analyzed and to perceive the constant ambiguities in the school environment.

The articulations and ambiguities regarding an intersubjective normative background

In the interviews, when asked about the most prominent ‘problem’ in their school environments, most of the participants of this research pointed to indiscipline or lack of discipline as the one. We must emphasize that when answering about the lack of discipline in the school environment, the students indicated that the institution and/or its professionals are primarily responsible for making the students more disciplined. Among the students, two types of responses were the most common: some expected the school professionals to use disciplinary mechanisms more forcefully, and others stated resignedly about how their classmates behaved in the school environment. All this was asked by a researcher often mistaken as an intern from the school’s administrative department. Also, in all the interviews, we perceive articulations between the ‘I’ of the researcher, a specific student, and the logic of discipline present in the school.

Concerning the constancy mentioned above, rare exceptions did not deny what other students said but led to a possible understanding of what affected those adolescents’ school experience. One of these exceptions was Hanekawa, elected president of the students’ board. At the time of the interview, she was on a campaign. When asked what prompted her to run for the student board, she said:

Because I want to motivate, I also want to motivate the students to study and for the school to improve. For everyone to be able to study. Because if everyone can’t study, how will everyone have a

future? Because the council isn't just about creating a nice atmosphere for everyone. But also to motivate other students to achieve what they want (Hanekawa, 2018).

In one of the rare moments when a student talks about the possibility of an improvement in the school, she argues based on the notion of the future as a moral entity that delimits behavior in the Ursula school because, for Hanekawa, motivation would lead to good behavior and good behavior would lead to an academic improvement, thus to a good future. Nevertheless, Hanekawa's quote clarifies that there are two essential aspects. The first one indicates that there is much concern about the future at school; that is, the future, or the projections and protensions of this future, are constantly triggered in everyday life. Meanwhile, the second describes the idea that "it's the students who make the school," meaning that the institution would be limited to built itself as a 'good school' if its students were not 'good students.' This second aspect refers to the post-disciplinary logic, which is not the reflection object here but has recently become a pivotal part of the school environment. Also, this logic effortlessly merges with the future as a moral entity.

16 However, when the students addressed issues unrelated to the school's problems but related directly to their daily social actions in the school environment, they articulated exogenous elements. These exogenous elements often clashed with the school's discipline mechanisms. The Mediator, when talking with some students, sometimes mentioned the field researcher as an example of a life path that the students should follow – because, for the Mediator, he 'valued' what he learned in public school. The student Higor, who was constantly wandering around the school hallways after the Mediator mobilized the researcher as an example in a talk, repeatedly engaged in conversations about the processes that led him to his graduate studies and, consequently, to Ursula school with particular interest in the way he behaved during primary education. The student repeatedly seemed to wonder about the possibility of a "good future," even though he did not follow this sociability standard.

In the same context, student Violeta, who heard the same speech as Higor, said she wanted to study pedagogy to become a school principal. Nevertheless, at various moments in the interviews with the students, moralities other than those familiar with the school environment were brought to light. As in the case of Violeta, who repeatedly said she "doesn't take nonsense" from

anyone. Within this "not taking nonsense" is a morality in which respect is the emphasis, but not only that, a morality common in contexts where people from a very young age have to face adversities, such as abuse or violence. In the case of Violeta, at one point in the interview, she talked about her life with her father, who she previously said was in prison at the time of the interview.

I'm like that. I grew up like that, you know? Yeah, because, like, when I was younger, my father beat me and my mother. [unintelligible] me and my mother. So, like, I grew up with anger. Then, when I see any man wanting to raise his voice, I think he will want to hit me, just like my father. And I'm not going to keep my head down. Then, it gets worse. Because I'm hot-headed. I don't take any nonsense (Violeta, 2018).

At other interview moments, the student said she behaves the same way when any woman yells at her.

There are many disparities between the articulations presented by Hanekawa and Violeta. This brief description shows how different articulations can coexist in the school environment. From Vitor Hugo, classified by the Mediator as a good student because of his 'fear of authority,' to Hanekawa's intention to motivate students and teachers, or Violeta's story, in which there is a need not to feel subjugated, and even Higor's curiosity to know if the researcher's behavior at school was similar to his own, we observed the strong presence of moral values and judgments, constituting everyday school life. These moral dimensions involving every school actor cannot be overlooked in analyses that aim to understand how the future is activated in the present, whether by students or school professionals.

17

Final Considerations

The insight that disparate moralities were activated in everyday social relations at school is vital to the proposed discussion. Especially when we realize that these diffuse moralities also constantly appeared in the speeches of school staff and students when they addressed the future of students or discipline/indiscipline issues, this binomial was mainly related to the 'moralization' of the future, i.e., discipline/indiscipline, when moralized, also served as evaluation parameter for young people future, allocating them to specific

standards of sociability. The shared intersubjective normative background enabled us to formulate the four typical-ideal categories encompassing these three dimensions presented. In these different categories, articulations of the moral dimensions of a particular student's life could push them toward one type or another.

Due to the specific characteristics of the school studied, in borderline cases, a student's destiny could be higher education at a prestigious university or violent death due to involvement in illegal activities. Both merely demonstrate the range of possible futures for students at Ursula school. The second borderline case is much rarer than the first one. However, both are used in everyday school life as possible destinations, especially by students. In this paper, these categories appear as sociability patterns that match specific socialization frameworks and social actions. The future – as a moral entity – does not cause these sociability patterns in the present. Nevertheless, these sociability patterns and this future as a moral entity have, to some degree, what Weber (1999) called elective affinities. The situationality of the designed classifications allows us to state that one student can be allocated as a student with a good-future or a no-future student by the same school professional or colleague(s) in different articulations.

18

This setting reveals how student life is – almost - always embodied among intersubjective moral intersections – shared and articulated by all – and a virtual future constantly activated to reprimand, reinforce, or delimit social actions. Elsewhere (Monteiro, 2022), how these dimensions operate in micro-politics scenarios at school has been explored in depth. Nevertheless, the considerations presented here pointed to the relationship prominence between morality and the future as a moral entity developed in Ursula school, which may be constant in other Brazilian schools. The contribution of this paper lies in the social perspective of the analysis.

Notas

1. Ver Resolução SE-18, de 10 abril de 2017 da Secretaria da Educação de São Paulo.
2. O Nosso Lar é uma entidade vinculada a um centro de espiritismo. Mais informações estão disponíveis em: https://www.nossolarsaocarlos.com.br/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1&Itemid=2. Acesso: 1º set. 2023.

3. Mais informações podem ser consultadas em: <https://www.jovembancariobrasil.com.br/> ou <https://www.bb.com.br/pbb/pagina-inicial/sobre-nos/programa-aprendiz#/> Acesso: 1º set. 2023.

Referencias

- ANA CARLA. **Entrevista**. São Carlos (São Paulo), 22 maio 2018.
- BHABHA, Homi. **O local da cultura**. Tradução Myriam Ávila, Eliana Lourenço de Lima Reis e Gláucia Renate Gonçalves. Belo Horizonte: Editora da UFMG, 1998.
- BOMFIM, Natanael Reis; GARRIDO, Walter Von Czékus. Representações sociais sobre o futuro de jovens periféricos e suas contribuições às práticas socioeducativas. **Revista Educação em Questão**, Natal, v. 60, n. 63, p. 1-24, jan./mar. 2022. Disponível em: <https://periodicos.ufrn.br/educacaoemquestao/article/view/27188>. Acesso em: 12 maio. 2022.
- BOURDIEU, Pierre. **Razões práticas**: sobre a teoria da ação. Tradução Mariza Corrêa. Campinas: Papiрус, 1996.
- DELEUZE, Gilles; GUATTARI, Félix. **Mil platôs**: capitalismo e esquizofrenia. Tradução Peter Pál Pelbart e Janice Caiafa. São Paulo: Editora 34, 1997 (v 5).
- DURANTI, Alessandro. Husserl, intersubjectivity and anthropology. **Anthropological Theory**, v. 10, n. 16-35, p. 1-20, 2010.
- FELTRAN, Gabriel de Santis. **Fronteiras de tensão**: política e violência nas periferias de São Paulo. São Paulo: Editora UNESP/CEM, 2011.
- FRIEDRICH, Paul. Ironic Irony. In: FERNANDEZ, James W.; HUBER, Mary Taylor (org.). **Irony in action**. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2001.
- GEERTZ, Clifford. **A interpretação das culturas**. Tradução Fanny Wrobel. Rio de Janeiro: LTC, 2008.
- GOLDMAN, Márcio. Os tambores dos mortos e os tambores dos vivos. Etnografia, antropologia e política em Ilhéus, Bahia. **Revista de Antropologia**, São Paulo, v. 46, n. 2, p. 445-476, 2003.
- HANEKAWA. **Entrevista**. São Carlos (São Paulo), 22 maio 2018.
- HUSSERL, Edmund. **Lições para uma fenomenologia da consciência interna do tempo**. Tradução Pedro M. S. Alves. Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional/Casa da Moeda, 1994.

MARCELA. **Entrevista**. São Carlos (São Paulo), 22 maio 2018.

MARX, Karl; ENGELS, Friedrich. **Manifesto do Partido Comunista**. Tradução José Barata-Moura e Francisco Melo. Lisboa: Editorial Avante, 1997.

MONTEIRO, Leonardo Henrique Brandão. (In)disciplina e visibilidade: considerações sobre ambiguidades e tensões no ambiente escolar. **Revista Teias**, Rio de Janeiro, v. 23, n. 68, p. 176-192, 2022.

NIETZSCHE, Friedrich. **A genealogia da moral**. Tradução Paulo César Moura. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1998.

PEREIRA JÚNIOR, Alfredo. **A percepção do tempo em Husserl**. Trans/Form/Ação, São Paulo, v. 13, p. 73-83, 1990.

QUIRÓS, Julieta. Etnografar mundos vívidos. Desafío del trabajo de campo, escritura y enseñanza en antropología. **Publicar**, Buenos Aires, n. 17, p. 47-65, 2014.

RITA. **Entrevista**. São Carlos (São Paulo), 22 maio 2018.

RODRIGUES, Luciana Azevedo. **A (in)disciplina em revista**: um estudo sobre indústria cultural. 2007. Tese (Doutorado em Educação) – Programa de Pós-Graduação em Educação, Universidade Federal de São Carlos, 2007.

TESSARO, Mônica; BERNARDI, Lucí Teresinha Marchiori dos Santos. O futuro pode ter muitos nomes: significando o foreground. **Práxis Educacional**, Vitória da Conquista, v. 15, n. 36, p. 415-432, 2019.

VIOLETA. **Entrevista**. São Carlos (São Paulo), 28 maio 2018.

WEBER, Max. **A “objetividade” do conhecimento nas ciências sociais**. Tradução Gabriel Cohn. São Paulo: Ática, 2006.

WEBER, Max. **A ética protestante e o espírito do capitalismo**. Tradução Irene de Q. F. Szmrecsányi e Tamás J. M. K. Szmrecsányi. São Paulo: Pioneira, 1999.

WIDLOK, Thomas. Norm and spontaneity: elicitation with moral dilemma scenarios. In: HEINTZ, Monica. **The Anthropology of Moralities**. United Kingdom: Berghahn Books, 2009.

ZIGON, Jarrett. Moral breakdown and the ethical demand. **Anthropological Theory**, Bern, v. 7, n. 2, p. 131-150, 2007.

ZIGON, Jarrett. Attunement and fidelity: Two Ontological Conditions for Morally Being-in-the-World. **Ethos**, v. 42, n. 1, p. 16-30, 2014.

Ms. Leonardo Henrique Brandão Monteiro
Universidade Federal de São Carlos (Brasil)
Doutorando do Programa de Pós-Graduação em Educação
Grupo de Pesquisa "Teoria Crítica e Educação"
Orcid id: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5323-1107>
E-mail: monteiro.hb.leonardo@gmail.com

Prof. Dr. Antonio Alvaro Soares Zuin
Universidade Federal de São Carlos (Brasil)
Programa de Pós-Graduação em Educação
Coordenador do Grupo de Pesquisa "Teoria Crítica e Educação"
Bolsista Produtividade em Pesquisa CNPq, Nível 1 A
Orcid id: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6850-2897>
Email: dazu@ufscar.br

21

Nome e E-mail do tradutor
Jonatan Mikhail Del Solar Velarde
delsolarvelarde@gmail.com

Recebido 2 maio 2023
Aceito 31 ago. 2023