

(Self) Manifesting. Eleven exercises for education

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I pierce; the infinite thrusts through
Lucio Fontana (1899-1968)



A manifesto is a public declaration of principles and intentions that presents ideas or problems in a conclusive and intensive manner through a text which admits diverse interpretations. A manifesto is new in essence and invites (others) to dialogue with what we wish to say or do regarding a given issue. It allows and compels us to take a stance –or at least to question our current one. We could even argue that through a manifesto we communicate and venture an ethical and political intent. A manifest places us in the situation of opening up to the world –a movement that commits us to a better, freer and more solidary and respectful life. That is precisely the meaning conveyed by Lucio Fontana in reference to his own work: the manifest pierces and manifests, and in such motions –which are public– it enables the thrust of many infinities. A manifesto entails the quality of resistance, not only because it perforates what exists but also because such piercing aims at making other worlds, other sensitivities and meanings inhabitable.

This issue of *Praxis Educativa* –a journal sponsored by La Pampa State University in Argentina– is intended as a manifest, i.e. as communication, resistance and enhancement of meanings in favor of education. It entails a means to pierce realities, to put a strain on categories and practices through fluid conversation, with intentions, agreements and disagreements which enrich it.

Departing from the reading of *A Manifesto For Education*, released in 2010 by Gert Biesta and Carl Anders Säfström, the

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writers in this Issue respond to the invitation made by the Journal to inquiry, reflect and manifest in regard to some of the aspects of this document which remain up to date, after ten years, in a current context of crisis/agonny of education and the school system, as some argue. The original writers were also summoned to participate in the revision, who engaged in a journey to the past for the projection of other futures. We would like to thank them for joining us in such effort.

The Issue is structured into **eleven exercises** which manifest resistances, piercings and meanings in a diverse range of interpretational acts. Exercise **one** corresponds to the *Manifiesto For Education* itself, by *Gert Biesta y Carl Anders Säfström*, which is concerned with freedom, what exists and what does not exist, and the emphasis on the dissent, subjectivity and history that refer to freedom, the historical condition of education and its future possibility. Along these lines, they suggest that the theory of education should place liberty as the center of its concern and reference, lean towards aesthetics of freedom and highlight the way in which meaning is transformed when equality is assumed in a context of inequality. Two conversations complete the *Manifiesto*: Gert Biesta advocates for speaking not just of education but on its behalf, in such a way that a theory to build an educational object that speaks for education can indeed develop. In a second document, Carl Anders Säfström poses a focus of inquiry on educational policies, particularly on the relationship between education and state and the role of educational research in correspondence to such policies. As he interrogates us as to whether that situation actually responds to our wishes, the author urges a struggle for education.

The **second** and **third** exercises also belong to the authors of the *Manifiesto*. *Gert Biesta* and *Carl Anders Säfström* undertake its reinterpretation almost a decade after its release. The *Manifiesto* intended to say something about freedom, Biesta says. With a concern for the instrumental nature of measurement in education, Biesta ponders on matters which are even today worthy of struggle and which dialogue with the responsibility implied in freedom as a way of co-existing as subjects. Carl Anders Säfström resumes his defense on education to benefit education itself, and states the neces-

sity to revisit the ideas of the *Manifiesto* as a radical project.

In the **fourth** conversation, *Mario Di Paolantonio* reflects on the potential of the thought about education by questioning the sense of ideality/disillusionment implied in any manifesto. In such frame, the article invites to think of ourselves and to think educationally. The reflection about “what exists and what does not” enables the writer to defend the interpretational multiplication of the *Manifiesto* so as to guide, understand and interpret the value of representing, transferring and reading the operational strain of the vocabulary while translating that into political terms. As he engages in the **fifth** conversation, *Sebastián Plá* discusses aspects of the relationship between time and freedom in education. In order to do so, he deals with two theoretical lines: the significant historical and spatial limitations of some of the categories used and the similar temporal articulations between two antagonical educational proposals: the philosophy of education and instrumental reason. Plá agrees with the *Manifiesto*'s core concepts, though he objects to a temporal, cross-sectional articulation that restrains “divergent roads to diverse forms of freedom in the educational area”.

The **sixth** contribution by *José Yuni & Claudio Urbano* dialogues with those aspects which remain “open” in the *Manifiesto*. Thus, they favor a manner of inquiry that deals with the ontology of education for the construction of theory and educational research. The text reflects on the challenges of approaching the signifiers of education from different epistemic registers. Education in the domain of culture and the production of processes of humanization are central to Yuni & Urbano's work, which invites to further reflection in terms of paradoxes and complexities. *Rodrigo Matos de Souza*, *Ricardo Castaño Gaviria* & *Elizeu Clementino de Souza* present their theses in the **seventh** conversation. They focus on the re-configuration of pedagogical thought and its potential to question the anthropological and historical character which presents itself as truth. They are situated in an attitude of resistance, the philosophy of denial and the location of other corporealities to trigger instabilities that lead to other experiences and narratives “about the processes of formation and (de)formation in Education”.

José Tranier is the author of the **eighth** exercise, which discusses the effort to recognize how the school has needed to reconsider/rethink of itself in the face of new attacks rooted in contingencies along the years. Tranier inquires mainly on the configuration of new “border” situations that draw a line between “before and after” regarding ways of inhabiting school life, as he tries to (re)cognize the explicit and implicit flows in the new thresholds of rationality and institutional reflection. Nilda Alves, Virginia Louzada, Claudia Chagas & Alessandra Nunes Caldas author the ninth document –a differed dialogue with Gert Biesta y Carl Andres Säfström regarding the position the latter present in regard to school nowadays. Stemming from their research line on daily experiences, Alves and colleagues question some differentiated positions connected with the relationships between theories and practices, the articulations among educational times and spaces, and thesis of ubiquitous learning which includes the not-yet in the negotiation between what exists and does not exist yet.

The **tenth** conversation by Julieta Armella invites to consider school in its temporal-spatial materiality as the meeting place with others where common life is shaped. School is thus meant as an opportunity and an exit route, an alternative space that can “move against the grain, as a space time where dominant mode of relations can be suspended in order to make new ones”.

Finally, the **eleventh** contribution is presented by the Issue’s coordinators, who propose four emergences as an epilogue. By means of what they call “pedagogical polyphonic mani-

festations”, Silvia Grinberg & Luis Porta discuss manifesting in terms of education and the crisis of the present, the appearance of the subject and the problem of freedom, the aesthetic of affections, and manifesting *in* pedagogy. Blue and red alternate as they propose a journey into the importance of affections and the crystallization of the senses in the direction of a sensitive, humane and humanizing world. The epilogue thus serves as a new opening, rather than a closure, to refer to old, current and future manifestations that enable us to inhabit the educational word and question it.

The authors in this Issue have been urged to self-manifest by constructing threads that interrupt, unsettle and pave the way for diverse “potential futures”; this bilingual Issue has indeed constituted a possibility for the amplification of meanings. The huge translation efforts are justified in the enhanced visibility of the eleven conversations. We thank the members of the Research Team on Education and Cultural Studies (GIEEC) at Mar del Plata State University for their work in this regard.

As the epigraph proposes, we invite you to further pierce the world by manifesting, as a means to resisting, recognizing and becoming recognized by and in others so that many/all, the infinite/s come through.

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