



**“Washing
one’s hands
of the
conflict
between the
powerful and
the
powerless
means to
side with the
powerful,
not to be
neutral. ”**

|MARGIN|

A Accessible education is our goal. |MARGIN| is a community that supports people who need help learning. Today a lot of people and families have no access to good education. Some families have no money for books, school supplies, transportation, etc. Some people are not able to continue their education because they need to work or experience many forms of alienation from the conventional education system.

|MARGIN| seeks to fund and help in any way possible groups and individuals with specific ideas on how to further their education.

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UN*learning*

Pointing to the chronic separation between universities and the knowledge produced by the popular classes, the Portuguese sociologist Boaventura de Souza Santos of the University of Coimbra, opened the World Forum of Popular Education on Sunday in Porto Alegre, warning that everything needs to be redone in this area. We need to unlearn the ways of education employed today. Historically, as he showed, there has been a double exclusion of the popular classes: for not having access to universities and finding, when they can access, content hostile to their interests and aspirations. "The university

imparts knowledge of the elites to reproduce the elites," he said. Against this role of education today there are some experiences that indicate ways of the insurgency of emancipatory education of Paulo Freire, and currently within a context in which popular knowledge is made more aware of itself - in street demonstrations, politics, the use of new technologies in alternative media.

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The **abandoned** *School*

Unfortunately abandonment of schools is not a rare phenomenon. Especially in poor areas, maintaining wages and expenses is close to impossible without government support, and even then it's a struggle. This is clear considering the recent events in São Paulo state, where over 200 schools were occupied as protest against the restructuring of basic education. 'Restructuring' meaning the closing of hundreds of schools and downsizing of staff.

In the state of Rio de Janeiro there are many schools already abandoned that often serve as shelter

for drug addicts/dealers, while other abandoned properties serve as temporary shelter for homeless workers. On the bright side, Brazil has developed a strong resistance movement that inspires people to self-organize in protest for their rights to education and shelter.

There is one school in particular in the neighborhood of Santa Luzia, in the city of São Gonçalo, Rio de Janeiro state. This area is fairly near the city of Rio, but opposite direction from the advertised coast. There is no iconic skyline to disguise the poverty, homelessness, drug addiction and fundamentalist Christianity. In an attempt to 'clean up' the city of Rio for the World Cup, a special branch of the police department was formed called UPP and drug traffickers were moved to these poorer areas in the inland of the state. Such abandoned schools are regularly used by the cartel, and young

children are easily recruited due to the lack of alternatives. Autonomous spaces are non-existent and Evangelicalism and drug trafficking heavily influence the community.

This abandoned school is the private property of a deceased woman, and it has collected a large amount of debt from property taxes (IPTU). Renovations and clearing the debt will provide us with the opportunity to make this space into an even bigger educational and cultural reference it once was. Young women will have a stimulating and inspiring place to leave their children while they pursue financial independence or an education of their own. There can be safer spaces for women and girls to discuss psychological and physical health. Educators and activists from all over the country and abroad can come teach, organize events and be hosted at the adjacent house for an extended period

of time. We can provide Internet access and workshops to develop computer and language skills for people of all ages. The redevelopment of this school as a cultural center would make an enormous impact on the community and its influence can ripple across the country.

This elementary school had over 15 classrooms, a swimming pool, football court, vegetable garden and a 4-bedroom adjacent house. Every one in the neighborhood participated somehow; they studied, sent their children to study, taught or got married there. It was extremely influential in the community. Almost 20 years ago the school closed and it has never been replaced.

The **Occupied** *Schools*

November of 2015 was the month when hundreds of middle schools and high schools in the state of São Paulo began to be occupied by their students. 11 to 15 year olds clinging tightly to their schools and leading a radical autonomous movement against the government and the capitalization of education. When the state's governor announced a massive restructuring of the public education system, everyone was frustrated; from students to parents to teachers and staff. The changes meant the closing of hundreds of schools, the division of middle school and high school and the relocation of many students. Once one school was occupied over 200 followed and the military police eventually took action against the children. Even the schools that were not occupied and were not

scheduled to close participated in the resistance by refusing to take the standardized test the state's education ministry conducts in order to grant the top schools a financial bonus. The students refused the government's money, they refused their military force, and they refused their law. They went on cleaning, cooking and learning.

The numbers:

- 311 thousand students were going to be relocated,

- 74 thousand teachers would be 'affected,'

- At least 33 students were arrested,

- Up to 213 schools were occupied in total,

- 30 million reais were not paid as bonus to top schools,

- An estimated loss of 1 million reais in the negotiation process,

After 50 days of negotiations the re-structuring of the schools was suspended and the student's demands met.

Brazil's youth has a radically critical view of capitalism and the government while not raising any ideological flag. Still in places where such a large portion of the population faces misery, the anti-government movement operates in a very different way from the way it happens in Europe, where the negative symptom of the system is middle class anxiety instead.

