

## Interview

Mario Sérgio Cortella<sup>1</sup>

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### The school nowadays

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Considering this moment in which the world undergo the Covid-19 Pandemic , in which education professionals have faced challenges and sought alternatives to reinvent their practices, rediscover their skills and adapt the curriculum, the purpose of this interview was to dialogue with Prof. Mário Sérgio Cortella about school nowadays. Our brief dialogue turned to the need to (re)think the present, (re)define new directions, or (re)discover other ways to (re)build the school today, as one of the great challenges that have been faced by education professionals, parents and society in general. Thus, the School in the present day and reflecting on the present and (re) discovering – who knows – other ways to contribute to education is the objective of our dialogue.

#### **Brief curriculum of Professor Mário Sérgio Cortella:**

Graduated in Philosophy from the Faculty of Philosophy Nossa Senhora Medianeira (1975), Master's in Education (Curriculum) from the Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo (1989) under the guidance of

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Prof. Dr. Moacir Gadotti and Doctorate in Education (Curriculum) from the Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo (1997) under the guidance of Prof. Dr. Paulo Freire. Professor at the Department of Fundamentals of Education and Graduate Studies in Education (Curriculum) at the Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo, where he worked for 35 years (from 1977 to 2012), 30 of which also in the Department of Theology and Sciences of Religion. He was Municipal Secretary of Education of São Paulo (1991/1992) and member of the Technical Scientific Council of Basic Education of CAPES / MEC (2008/2010); He has experience in the field of Education, with an emphasis on Specific Curricula for Levels and Types of Education, working mainly on the following topics: liberating education, ethics, multiculturalism, philosophical anthropology, epistemology and curriculum. He is the author, among other books, of *The School and Knowledge: epistemological and political foundations* (Cortez); *In the Labyrinths of Morals*, with Yves de La Taille (Papyrus); *Don't Wait For The Epitaph: Philosophical Provocations* (Voices); *We are not born ready!* (Voices); *About Hope: Dialogue*, with Frei Betto (Papyrus), *What is the Question?*, with Silmara Casadei (Cortez), *Leadership in Focus*, with Eugênio Mussak (Papyrus), *Philosophy and High School: certain whys and therefore, a proposal* (Voices), *Politics for not being an idiot*, with Renato Janine Ribeiro (Papyrus), *Life and Career: a possible balance*, with Pedro Mandelli (Papyrus), *Education and Hope: seven brief reflections to refuse biocide* (PoliSaber), *We live Most! Do We Live Well?*, with Terezinha Azerêdo Rios (Papyrus), *Don't Desperate!: Philosophical Provocations* (Voices), *Thinking Well Makes Us Good!/Philosophy, Religion, Science, Education* (Voices), *Thinking Well Makes Us Good!/Family, Career, Coexistence, Ethics* (Voices), *Thinking Well Makes Us Good!/Faith, Wisdom, Knowledge, Training* (Voices); *Ethics and Shame on the Face!*, with Clóvis de Barros Filho (Papyrus), *What is your work? Propositional Concerns about Management, Leadership and Ethics* (Voices); *Education, School and Teaching: new times, new attitudes*

(Cortez); Pedagogical Thoughts: We and the School, agonies and joys (Voices), Thinking Well Makes Us Good!/Family, Professional, Intellectual, Moral Experience (Voices, The Age of Curatorship: what matters is knowing what matters!, with Gilberto Dimenstein (Papyrus), Education, Coexistence and Ethics: audacity and hope! (Cortez), Felicidade went away?, with Frei Betto and Leonardo Boff (Voices); Why do we do what we do? Vital Afflictions about Work, Career and Achievement (Planeta); Truths and Lies: Ethics and Democracy in Brazil, with Gilberto Dimenstein, Leandro Karnal and Luiz Felipe Pondé (Papyrus); Living in Peace to Die in Peace (Planeta); Enough of Obscene Citizenship!, with Marcelo Tas ( Papyrus); Family: emergencies and turmoil (Cortez), Let's Think A Little?, with Maurício de Sousa (Cortez/MS Editora); Luck Follows Courage! (Planet); Let's Think More?, with Maurício de Sousa (Cortez/MS Editora) Ebullition Generations: the Past of the Future and the Future of the Past, with Pedro Bial (Papyrus); The Best of Cortella: Trails of Thinking (Planet); Neither Angels nor Demons: the human choice between Virtues and Vices, with Monja Coen (Papyrus); The Best of Cortella: Trails of Fazer (Planet); Happiness: ways of using, with Leandro Karnal and Luís Felipe Pondé (Planeta), There is still time!:the strength of persistence, with Paulo Jebaili (Planeta), Living, what is that?, with Leandro Karnal (Papyrus), Philosophy: and what do we have to do with that? (Voices); Diversity: learning to be human (Littera); Shall We Also Think About Values?, with Maurício de Sousa (Cortez/MS Editora); Wisdom to Share! (Voices) and Like the chorus of that historical song! (Planet).

**01 – Professor, we believe that the pandemic has imposed a series of changes on life in society. Along with the fear of the virus (still little known), with social distancing and isolation, came a wave of discoveries. The very idea of reinventing social**

**relationships in order to guarantee social interaction was also exercised in the school context. Based on this proposal for reinventing everyday life, would it be possible to say that there is a new normal also taking place in schools?**

**Mário Sérgio Cortella:** The notion of normal, that is, of contexts and behaviors that offer a habitual and usual routine, is flexible in historical time and in the immediate daily life; we live “new” normals in an episodic and persistent way. The novelty at this moment is the very accelerated replacement of our routines, which seemed like a rupture and, therefore, as a leap and a start that resulted in disorientation and the search to resume the immediately previous paths. In schools, this is no different, but it produces more acute effects, given that the school territory is supported by “routine scaffolding”, almost a reiterative liturgy that reaches the level of “normalities” that lead us to frequently ask each other in the school coexistence “Everything in order?”. As the order was changed, hastily and suddenly, the normal that arrived was still not well supported.

**2 – We know that the use of technologies demands that students spend a long time in front of “screens”. It is known that, in excess, this exposure can harm the development of students. How to think about a curricular reorganization in the face of these needs?**

**Mário Sérgio Cortella:** One of the key concepts in Science is parsimony, that is, the balanced, prudent and austere use of any practice, so as not to alter the ways and means for the correct and efficient result; well, any obsessive use or any rarefied use of technological devices implies breaking of parsimony and deviation from the successful route. Therefore, the curricular reorganization that incorporates the new demands and platforms has to verify its compliance with prudence in order to be put into practice.

**3 – In Brazil, we have noticed that, with the advent of the pandemic, neoliberal ideals are increasingly present with voracity in the educational context. Could we say that this movement will be able to promote a kind of privatization of education at all levels?**

**Mário Sérgio Cortella:** The privatization of the Public, that is, the private appropriation of the collective patrimony, is not restricted to eventual changes in the ownership and management regime; in many times (and now it is no exception) the economic and political elites enjoy privately from the Public, without changing the Administration and Management of institutions and services, in which Education is inserted, either by serving it or by serving itself. her.

**4 – Still in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, is it possible to measure the effects that the Corona virus pandemic brought to the teaching and learning process of Basic Education students? What are the main weaknesses of this period? What actions can be taken to minimize the impacts of this process?**

**Mário Sérgio Cortella:** The mismatches in action and resolution at the different levels of education and in the different social classes brought harmful consequences that are not similar neither in extension nor in duration; Brazilian Basic Education, especially that of public schools (largely predominant) suffers disastrous shocks but, the worst, invigorates systemic shocks. Thus, the necessary distance and suspension of the presence of the school activity was not accompanied by complementary measures and means to fill or protect the gaps, resulting in a malfunction

that can only be minimized with public policy that includes parallel, in-person and remote processes of restoration and qualitative improvement of what, when lost, was relegated to the pit of negligence.

**5 – Is it possible to think of a different school in the post-pandemic period? From what aspects?**

**Mário Sérgio Cortella:** A school that is not relevant in the present time, a school that persists in anachronism, that cannot go beyond the obvious past, marked by nostalgia for “the world is no longer the same” (as a mere observation rather than a starting point for reinvention), fails to fulfill its social duty. The construction of a relevant and valuable schooling has to rethink its didactic paths, its fields of interdisciplinarity and planning, its requirements of technological contributions and its effectiveness of access and permanence.

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