

Artisan fishermen, surfers and nature: reflections from the viewpoint of Physical Education.¹

Fernanda Kandrát Brasil *
Yara M. Carvalho **

Artisan fishermen, surfers and nature: reflections from a Physical Education Outlook.

Abstract: The purpose of this paper is to present results of survey conducted with artisan fishermen and surfers in order to analyze the meaning of interactions between each one of these groups with Nature. Academic and field surveys (direct observation and free interviews) were used to investigate nine fishermen (eight male, one female; 28-71 years of age; 10 years practice minimum) and six surfers (male; 23-41 years of age, 1-29 years practice) in São Paulo's North Coast. The body and the way as it interacts with Nature, in the daily life of these groups, points out to subjects with little exposure in the Physical Education field.

Keywords: Nature Human Body. Cultural characteristics. Anthropology, cultural.

1 INTRODUCTION

This manuscript results from a masters dissertation whose reflections and analyses were interspersed by the manners of seeing, feeling and understanding Nature and human actions from an environment in particular: the sea. Paying attention to those who “inhabit” it (artisan fishermen and surfers) enabled an analysis beyond the remotest and most isolated manners of investigating the Human Being-Nature relationship and contributed toward creating a discussion and alternatives for Physical Education and, in a last moment, toward the socio-environmental transformations that threaten the health of populations and of the planet.

The purpose was to analyze the meaning of the interactions of artisan fishermen and surfers with Nature. The delimitation around these populations was motivated by the contributions that the particularities resulting from different sensitivities, understandings and manners of dealing with the body and with Nature could bring.

The group of artisan fishermen is part of the traditional communities, bearers of a culture with its own myths and relations with the natural world different from those shared in urban-industrial societies. The acting of the community is characteristic of its outlook on the world and is based on the reading of Nature constructed with time around intuition, perception and experience. It conforms to a way of appropriating spaces and natural resources that,

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* Masters in Physical Education from Escola de Educação Física e Esporte of Universidade de São Paulo. Researcher of the Physical Education and Collective Health Research Group of Escola de Educação Física e Esporte of Universidade de São Paulo. São Paulo, SP, Brazil. Email: febrasil@usp.br

** Doctorate in Collective Health from the Faculty of Medical Sciences of Universidade Estadual de Campinas. Post-doctorate from Instituto de Medicina Social of Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro and Facoltà degli Scienze della Comunicazione, Università La Sapienza di Roma-Italy. Lecturer of Escola de Educação Física e Esporte of Universidade de São Paulo and leader of the Physical Health and Collective Health Research Group. São Paulo, SP, Brazil. Email: yaramc@usp.br

according to Diegues (2002), results in the protection, preservation and potentizing of biological diversity. The fishermen represent the coastal people – the *caíçaras*² which, among so many changes that marked their lives³ (SILVA, 2004), is the straitening of ties with the sea environment by the daily search of the barter good, by the capital. However, the dependence on the market and relations of power resulting thereof does not completely destroy the old customs and practices regulated with Nature. The group of surfers represents a part of the urban-industrial societies who seek the coast for entertainment, whose view of Nature is based on sensitivities formulated historically; since the time when, in the Europe of the 16th and 17th centuries, the fresh and purifying air of the sea, the energy of the waves and hydrotherapy became recipes for the desired harmony of body and spirit, calling attention to the therapeutic virtues of Nature. These would be much more effective if the true rituals of prescription for corporeity were to be observed more upon a systematized and scientifically constructed body language. An encoded practice that propagated the collective longings for the seaside. Nature, which was formerly neglected, became acclaimed as a source of spiritual renewal, to be contemplated and to receive tourists longing for greater contact with the natural world (CORBIN, 1989).

Continuous appreciation of Nature results, in the present, in groups of people making real escapes from the urban centers in order to “enjoy”, through a diversity of practices, the idyllic landscapes. Romantic and also utilitarian view that was linked to Nature that seemed to reproduce the modern myth (DIEGUES, 2002) of the search for wild and paradisiacal places where the Human Being can cool himself.

In these contemporary scenarios, it is not rare to see expressions of bodies in tune with the trends elaborated and disseminated by the market that point to self interest; the affirmation of corporal materiality; the esthetic symbols of beauty and youth and the consuming of new ideas and needs among which we have the forms of diversion and entertainment linked to immediatism, with feelings of pleasure, excitement and adventure. Values attributed to the body based on modern scientific rationality formed in secular development⁴ – pointed out as cause of the current environmental crisis (LEFF, 2000; FUNTOWICZ; DE MARCHI, 2000), which contributed toward separating the body from the universe, dividing it and dictating its

² According to Diegues (2005, p.127), “native of the coast, of the region that extends from the south of Rio de Janeiro state up to the north of Paraná state. The term is of indigenous origin – *caá-çara*, which means: type of cercado around the homes of indians and also the fence used in the water to serve as trap to catch the fish”. The author also presents a pejorative connotation involving the term – found in some dictionaries and used by some people, equivalent to the *malandro*, indolente, vagabond. It also donates the allusion to the *caipira asselvajado*, rustic fellow, *caboclo sem préstimo* and untrustworthy person. Such stereotypes of the *praiano indolenteq* reflect the lack of knowledge of *caíçara* culture.

³ The fishermen represent the coastal people – the *caíçaras*³ which, among so many changes that marked their lives³ (SILVA, 2004), is the straitening of ties with the sea environment by the daily search of the barter good, by the capital. The reorganization of their world, according to Silva (2004), occurs upon the picture of socio-economic stagnation of the São Paulo coast as of the middle of the 19th century. The *caíçara*, before a participant of the rice, sugar and coffee economic cycles, in the end of the 19th century, moved to the small-scale farming and fishing directed almost totally toward subsistence. In the middle of the 20th century, the formation of fishing colonies was already imbued with the transformation of the *caíçaras* into exclusive fishermen, contributing toward disorganization of the farmer-fisherman who, according to Diegues (1983), are beach fishermen who use small nets and dragnets, castnet and handheld line as instruments.

⁴ The establishment of outlooks of the world delimited a set of dualities on the body (matter/spirit/ object/subject/ feelings/reason; body/mind) (LUZ, 1988). As of the 19th century, the idea of progress and developed linked to the positiv sciences (CHAUI, 1996) was imbued from the domain of Nature and human life. The body, as a territory to be conquered, was delivered to medical rationality (SILVA, 2001), reduced to organic terms, becoming object of intervention and had its movements redefined by the techniques. Medical knowledge, as of the 17th century, began to influence the way of conceiving physical exercises and the set of corporal practices (SOARES, 2001).

“correct use” through scientific parameters. Manner of conceiving and treating the body in modern western culture that, according to Silva (1999), walks in the opposite direction of perceiving it as base for an ecological perspective, much closer to domination and subjection, as is sought in all of Nature. Having defined the profile of the object, one must highlight that the focus of the analyses was the approach of both fields of production of knowledge and intervention called Physical Education and Collective Health. This meeting allowed overcoming the naturalized analysis of the life and body, instigating a closer view of the subjectivity of the Human Being in relation Nature.

2 METHODOLOGY

The academic review and field experimentation conducted through free interviews and direct observation were the manners of survey investigation (BRUYNE; HERMAN; SCHOUTHEETE, 1977) with eight fishermen and one fisherwoman (28 to 71 years, at least 10 years of experience) and six surfers residing in the São Paulo capital (23 to 41 years, 1 to 29 years of practice).

The works of Oliveira (1998, 1999) were the basis of the trajectory of the field survey, providing methodological lessons relevant to conduction of the survey instruments, relation and approaching of the researchers and the procedure for use of the data gathered. Essential directions to investigate the interactions with Nature of people that one had to learn how to approach, be understood, work the differences, “[...] people who are not mirrors of myself” (OLIVEIRA, 1999, p. 54). They are others that, together with the researcher, related as subjects and objects in the survey, “[...] both constituting reciprocally, alternating among themselves from the conditions of creator and creator.” (OLIVEIRA, 1999, p.55).

Therefore, for the gathering of data in the fishermen community⁵ in the fishing ports of Camaroeiros beach⁶ and Porto Novo beach⁷, in Caraguatatuba (São Paulo), the need to reduce the distance between researcher and researched led to an approaching mediated by intermediaries. Contact was made with the president of the Fishermen Association for survey in the first site, and with the staff of the Fishing Colony Z-8 “Benjamin Constant”⁸ for

⁵ At the time of the survey, 120 fishermen were listed in Camaroeiros beach and 60 fishermen in Porto Novo. All of them operate with shrimp trapnets and dragnets in 12-meter vessels.

⁶ Camaroeiros beach has tranquil waters and its name is due to the shrimp shoals that seek the sandbank protected by stone piers on the left side of the inlet, at the mouth of river Guaxinduva.

⁷ Porto Novo district is located 9 km from the center of Caraguatatuba. Along it, there is the river Juqueriquerê that is born in Serra do Mar and coils through the plain until it meets the sea at the point called Boca da Barra, which serves as entrance and exit for the fish.

⁸ The Colony, which assisted all fishermen from the study, works as an association of sea workers. The partner fishermen pay an annual fee to have access, extended to the families, to study allowances, dental care, general practitioner, pediatric and gynecologist. The Colony also organizes and provides fishing documentation, sending boat registrations to the Port Captaincy, paying the seguro-desemprego (required at the time when the fishing of fish was banned), providing social care and elaborating retirement applications. However, such attributions are

collection in the second site. These people helped in the introduction to the informers, reduced the embarrassment in an eventual refusal to take part in the survey and helped clarify the purposes.

White the contact for the survey with surfers in Itamambuca beach⁹, in Ubatuba (São Paulo), did not occur through mediators. Contact was made with the caution of approaching them after surfing practice, when they were alone. According to Oliveira (1999), the subject must feel free, ready to express himself and be owner of his testimony. This implies choosing the right time for the interview, learning to be patient, living according to the time of those interviewed, encouraging the conversations according to the receptiveness, avoiding the limits of inconvenience. These concerns minimized possible inconveniences caused by insistence to participate in the survey due to the anxiety of the participants to surf; and reduced the change of their being in any way importuned or manipulated by the presence of others, which would imply in unsatisfactory results.

The questions “what does Nature mean to you?”; “what does the sea mean to you?” and “what does surfing/fishing mean to you?” were analyzed. However, with the circumstances “[...] I learned to improve scripts, correct expressions that transmitted a double meaning, suppress improper questions... with these, I gradually became an interviewer.” (OLIVEIRA, 1999, p. 59-60), such that during the field survey, questions were reformulated in order to encourage answers. Note here that the interviews were conducted observing ethical aspects¹⁰ involving research with human beings.

The observation exercise was used as one more resource to learn elements that could not be recorded with the interview. Gestures, looks, inferences, silence and ways of relating were not only captured when approaching the subjects, but also in the scenes before and after the approach, in which both those interviewed and other members of these populations are the protagonists. The data was gathered in a field diary.

The directions of Minayo (1993) were the basis of the data analysis. After literal transcription of the interviews, the material was read with the concern of constructing a classification, with the aim of “[...] learning the structures of relevance of the social players,

not always complied with for administrative reasons, lack of incentives, bad financial conditions or difficulties in developing agregativo power (LEITE, 2001).

⁹ Itamambuca beach is located 12.6 km to the North from the center of Ubatuba city. On covering the access roads that start from the Rio-Santos (BR-101) highway, one notices the existence of a high standard condominium, resorts and campings. Famous for its waves that favor surfing, therefore being the stage of several national and international surfing championships, with its white and loose sands, sandbank vegetation and River Itamambuca, emptying on the right side of the beach. A stream empties on the left side, descending in rapids up to the sand. In the Itamambuca backlands, there is a villa of dwellers.

¹⁰ The survey received a favorable opinion – Opinion IRB No. 77, from the Institutional Review Board of Escola de Educação Física e Esporte of Universidade de São Paulo.

the central ideas they tried to transmit and the key moments of their existence on the subject.” (MINAYO, 1993, p.235). Next, the extent in which these structures were recurrent in the various narratives was verified, choosing the most relevant themes.

3 ANALYSIS

The construction of the text does not indicate an interaction between the surfers and fishermen analyzed. This does not mean that the relations of power and the conflicts experienced among surfers/fishermen or caiçaras/tourists are neglected.

We all know of the endeavor by the fishing communities to preserve their fishing areas from the significant changes due to the modernization process, among them increase in tourism and corporal practices like surfing, the discontentment of surfers with the restrictions to surfing and the danger posed by the fishing nets, sometimes with tragic results. These tensions are, for example, reported by Cunha (2000), where surfing enabled by the famous waves of Praia Grande (Arraial do Cabo, RJ), in the talk of the fishermen, disturbs the dynamics of the traditional method of net fishing¹¹, driving off the shoals; or still, found in certain beaches of Santa Catarina and Rio Grande do Sul, especially during the fishing season, mobilizing surfing and fishing federations, environmental institutions and policies to compare the issue.

Likewise, one does not disregard the problems existing in the relationship between caiçaras and tourists that mark, above all, changes¹² in the traditional way of life of the native population of the coast. However, these issues are not developed in this article, since the characteristics themselves and outlining of the field do not point to such focus. Itamambuca, for example, site of the survey with the surfers, is not a critical place when it comes to problems among surfers and fishermen. Besides the surfing and fishing activities competing for the sea, many native dwellers and their descendants are also surfers, likewise many residence owners or assiduous frequenters of the beach establish relationships of sociability with the caiçaras.

¹¹ Fence fishing with paddle canoe and manual net followed by pulling of the net or dragging to the shore.

¹² The migration of caiçaras to the suburban areas and subsequent occupancy of the poor districts, due to the decline of agriculture and eviction from their lands that began in the 60s has threatened the traditional way of life. In view of the difficulties in practicing fishing activities, in districts very far from the sea, part of these caiçaras began to perform activities different from the traditional ones, such as civil construction, urban services and underemployment (DIEGUES, 2004). Paes (2003), in an analysis on the socio-cultural impact brought about by tourism on the native population of the northern coast of São Paulo has two moments: the 60s and 70s, where there is a process of removal of the caiçara from sua way of life and involvement with Nature and the time as of the 80s where the caiçara culture seeks to adapt, transform, but also to reconstruct sua identity and reaffirm themselvesq.

Therefore, although the subtleties of the relationships interweaved between both populations can, in other occasions, enrich the discussions on the body/nature interface, the social practice of the subjects involved in the survey guided another path for elaboration of the analysis and discussion presented below.

3.1 OBSERVATIONS

The records made by the researcher who walked with the subjects, who followed them with his eye, who also talked to them in the backstage of the interviews, became rich material to better understand the ways of relating with Nature and with others. Part of these records will be presented with the aim of bringing the reader even closer to the world of these populations.

Some aspects called more attention than others. Paying attention on the corporal dimension, for example, emphasized social symbols, rules, norms, values like support of the culture of fishermen and surfers. In the fishermen, one saw the rattan clothes and signs of early aging, signs of hours beneath the sun and long stay in the waters in search of livelihood. The body itself emerged as an instrument of the market logic, through which it is worn out, subjugated, and oppressed before the relations of power that are imposed. However, this neither erases the will of going out in the waters, nor the smiles from their faces when narrating their lives and adventures in the sea. The surfers display colored and technologically designed clothes and equipments on their tattooed and sculptured bodies. They show anxiety and excitement before sliding through the waves and tranquility and satisfaction after doing so.

The rituals to promote an approach with the sea are also very different. Fishermen prepare the ice for the fish, check the boat, the oil and all details of the vessel. Surfers prepare the board, wax it, stretch before entering the sea and row up to the site where they wait for the waves; place where they talk and contemplate Nature without losing site of the horizon that denotes the entrance of the series of waves.

Surfers and fishermen live life and Nature their way. In the fishing community, it was possible to perceive solidarity as a dimension of the relationships that the people establish with other people and with the natural world. This was observed, for example, in the *caiçara* actions geared toward collecting waste on the beach, preserving river Juqueriquerê, the movements developed to affirm the *caiçara* identity and the relationships of cohabitation weaved in the community. In the population of surfers, this notion of relationship is also

present. The surfers often travel in groups, related with other groups of surfers and also with the caiçara population. Some of them take part in nongovernmental environmentalist organizations, where actions are also developed to preserve Itamambuca beach.

In this wise, observation can be an interesting exercise to interpret the ways of life and conceptions of Nature.

3.2 THE NARRATIVES

The meanings and values attributed to Nature and cohabitation in this environment will reveal the specificities, outline the differences and attest to the similarities shared between surfers and artisan fishermen. Some of these elements are brought through sections of narratives, made with data from the observations.

3.2.1 Fishermen

To the fishermen interviewed, Nature plays a central role in the propagation of life: “[...] the forest, Nature, is the heart of the world [...]” (D. S., Praia dos Camaroeiros, 2005). Nature is compared to the divine: “[...] Nature has no equal. It is God in heaven and Nature on earth. It has none like it, isn’t it true? Then it is! We are here because of Nature. If not for Nature [...]” (A. M. A, Porto Novo, 2005). Thus the need to preserve it: “Ah, it is everything, everything. It has no equal. It is like your eye, you can neither sell it nor give it. It is yours, for you to preserve. And who gives Nature to you? Only the One up there. Only God.” (A. M. A, Porto Novo, 2005). In this wise, the image of holy Nature marks the respect that must be given to it: “[...] and I believe the same thing. If God gave the production, then we are not going to argue, right? You don’t throw away. It is a sin, right. [...] Enjoy it for mankind? Yes, that’s alright. To kill to throw away is a sin.” (A. M. A, Porto Novo, 2005).

There is another relationship of the fisherman with time, not measured by the clock, but by the cycles of Nature, meteorological conditions, since he is determined to spend a great part of his days searching for the product of labor: “We depend on the merchandise. If nothing comes... we must remain in the sea. Sometimes I leave on Monday and only return on Saturday, Sunday.” (A.S., Praia dos Camaroeiros, 2005). Another way of dealing with the dimensions of time and space became evident in another interview with a man with 71 years of age and many years of fishing. This, in a first instance, was an obstacle to understanding the events narrated by the fisherman, since it remitted one to the past, to the present and to future events, not in chronological, linear fashion and, at the same time alternating references to

events from the physical and spiritual plane. When he talked about the changes in Nature, for example, he mentioned a flood: “[...] because Nature was like this at first. It threatened the way it threatens. Not anymore, now it does the following. [...] It changed, changed direction. And changed the other. In any moor you will find *caxeta*. Have you heard of *caxeta*? *Caxeta* is a tree trunk as big as this and there are small ones too. *Caxeta* is white wood. *Caxeta* with about a meter. In the time of the... of the flood, right.” On being asked about the flood, the answer was: “[...] I said the flood, of Noah’s ark, 2000 years ago. It is the shadow of the hill it left behind, everything in its right place. Because Nature was ready, right? But at the time nobody noticed. So it just kept getting bigger? It got bigger and bigger, like this. There was the *caxeta* in the moor.” (A. M. A., Porto Novo, 2005).

The work links the fisherman to the sea in such a way that the affinity with the environment transcends the objective dimension of existence. The talk below reveals the depth of the relation established between life, work and Nature: “I dream of fishing” (A. M. A., Porto Novo, 2005), part of the narration by this fisherman who, with tears in his eyes, suffers from being unable to go out to sea due to an ulcer in his leg after an incident with a dog.

The sea, to fishermen, is a free territory that emanates from other forms of thinking of life and feeling the body. The words below illustrate the comment: “[...] it is like this... I reflect a lot in the sea... thing... is... I have a feeling different from when working on land, see? [...] I’d rather be in the sea fishing... I’m in direct touch with Nature... my thoughts are other thoughts.” (V. J. M., Praia dos Camaroeiros, 2005).

The relationship between fisherman and Nature occurs integrated with the way of life in constant contact with the natural world. To exemplify: “[...] I was nudged by a menstruated stingray... I’m going to tell you something... it hurts for 13 hours nonstop. Look, this pain is different from everything.” (W. P., Porto Novo, 2005). The contact with the elements, forms and beings from Nature reveals not only other ways of feeling the body, but propagates a knowledge that is incorporated in the interventions in it:

Do you know what we used to do to know if our blood was good? We are stingray. Why? Because it is like this. It releases a lot of read things, like spheres. In the blood. I’ll tell you something, it would clean everything... our blood. You became as good as new. (W. P., Porto Novo, 2005).

The conception of health in the talk above goes against medical reasoning and reveals a care based on the knowledge of Nature:

[...] ah, nowadays, I only go to the doctor if there is no other way. But depending on this, we go here, by the side of the land here, there is medicine for everything. [...] But, otherwise, stomach ache, fever, these things... do we go to the doctor? Not at all. [...] you go to the doctor, you come back with a disease. You have none, but he will find you one. (W. P., Porto Novo, 2005).

The knowledge and practices accumulated through generations are valued:

[...] do you know how my grandmother would pull out a tooth? With tobacco. Did you know that? She would put tobacco in the gum here and there. It would soften, she would pull the tooth. Did you know that? Yes... yes... And she would say: doctor, what for. She would put the tobacco here, the tooth would fall. Nowadays, people will not believe this if we say it. (W. P., Porto Novo, 2005).

However, one notices changes due to the new values and interests that arrive with time, influencing the habits and attitudes related to the body.

In the daily life amidst Nature, in the fishing activities, when “[...] the boat does not pass, you must get down, make a great effort to take the path to the boat (...) You walk for more than one kilometer to remove the boat [...]”]; or in the other lessons learned in the work with Nature, perceived when hunting for the hair crab where “[...] in order not to sink in the mud, you must control your breathing [...] and only those who live by this really know the secret... it is in the breathing...” (W. P., Porto Novo, 2005); or from swimming in the river right from a young age, in which the fisherman states that:

[...] there was no shower, there was nothing, it was in the basin. I would go to the river. And I would swim, this is how I would do it. Alone. Look, I taught my sister, my cousin, to swim. You see, at first we play hide and seek in the river. So you weren't supposed to have anything on, because we swam like this. You had good breath swimming like this. Crossing the river diving. (W.P., Porto Novo, 2005)

It is Nature that guides the knowledge so that the body can express and “dialogue” in this environment.

3.2.2 Surfers

In the group of surfers, there is a type of relationship with Nature and with surfing that denotes a lack, a need for contact with the sea and practice of the modality, in view of the distance between the city and the waves: “[...] to me, surfing is everything. It is a medium

where I saw myself, therefore, it is a way of expressing myself to myself, therefore... If I stop surfing, I'll feel very bad, I will become depressed and... that is it! [...] It is a feeling of emptiness.” (G. F., Itamambuca, 2005);

Surfing stands out not as hobby in which one separates only a certain time to dedicate oneself to it, but as a way of life, reaching different dimensions and times: “Surfing is to me a lifestyle. Yes... when I become about 70, 80 years old, if God preserves my health, I can assure you that I will be on top of a surfboard. Not for the pleasure of it being a hobby but rather of it being a lifestyle, you see?” “[...] surfing is a culture, a lifestyle. It is not just a sport, it is much more than this [...]” (R. G. J., Itamambuca, 2005).

A lifestyle that encompasses the virtues molded by surfing and the teaching of Nature:

[...] once you start surfing, you start to enter a routine of coming to the beach always... of catching the wave, of understanding how the sea teaches you in the water, humility [...] the sea is treacherous, the sea teaches you a ton of lessons and what surfing preaches for your life of physical education like you being well with your body, you shouldn't keep drinking, smoking, none of that, you must always be ok. Surfing is to me essential thus... a physical and spiritual form, I would say that surfing is to me these two things together. (F. A. S., Itamambuca, 2005).

Surfing as a way of living interferes in professional activities. One of the surfers graduated in Hotel Business, in São Paulo, and chose to practice his profession in Florianópolis, since he could surf frequently. He recently returned to São Paulo, but he tries to perform his activities in such a way that he can reconcile surfing and work. Besides inspiring professional life, surfing also influences some who did not even have the opportunity of seeing the sea, or those whose closest contact with the practice is through magazines and TV programs. In the words of a surfer interviewed, who is also a surf wear designer: “[...] I have had the opportunities of making trips like this, of survey, even in stores, in Goiás, you know, in the interior, Minas Gerais and you see that those who use such clothes really have a passion for this sport. The distance from the sea, many do not even know the sea, drives them crazy.” (R.G.J., Itamambuca, 2005).

Surfing emerges as a link with Nature. It surfaces as a means of connecting with the infinite, with the “essence” of life: “[...] the sea... to me represents the infinite. In such opportunities, of surfing, fishing, of life. This is how everything comes about, isn't it? (W. K., Itamambuca, 2005). It is an experience that passes through the physical, subjective, spiritual dimension, even though from the talk of the interviewees one can identify the dualities – body/mind; physical/spiritual, which denote a fragmented conception:

[...] it makes you resolute. This is when I am most at peace, you see? Ah, we really become... there are no words. You get into a state, you become whole, because you exercised, you experienced the thrill, you had a... connection like this, you have to become one with the sea [...] (R. G. J., Itamambuca, 2005).

Body and sea, when they meet, can create experiences in the dimension of form and intensity, unique:

[...] you must become one with the sea, you must have that right moment to row, to enter the wave, to stand, to make the maneuvers, to explore the wave, be able to show that level of surfing skill you have, make some maneuvers allowed by the waves, it's awesome. (F. A. S., Itamambuca, 2005)

Surfing emphasizes elements like the challenge, contact with the different, with the risk, coming from an unpredictable, inconstant medium: “[...] surfing is awesome because no wave is like another.” (R. G. J., Itamambuca, 2005); “[...] there is the adrenaline from the big waves, of your possibility of falling or not.” (R. S. B., Itamambuca, 2005).

In short, calling attention to the values that motivate the relationship between the human being and Nature remits to issues still little explored by the field of knowledge called Physical Education, especially those that influence corporal culture.

4 PHYSICAL EDUCATION, BODY AND CULTURE

Among the survey results, first let me point out the fact that the meeting with the communities showed the need to avoid romanticized and reduced views – still prevalent in the specific area, with regard to the daily lives of those who are to Nature. It is essential not to polarize work and obligation, leisure and pleasure, exceed fragmented, individualistic and simplistic perceptions of the social interactions. It is not rare to imagine the organization of the fisherman's life as an integrated and harmonious whole that occurs in isolated and paradisiacal places; and, in the opposite pole, idealize surfers, reproducing the meaning of urban-industrial life in the space occupied by Nature, in the sense of mastering it through techniques, in order to guarantee moments of fulfillment through practices that instigate adventure, daring, courage and risk as a counterpoint to the gray, repetitive and oppressing day-to-day of the city.

Differences in the conceptions of life, Nature and ways of relating were predictable and very perceptible. However, at different levels, the results showed the constitutive processes of the experiences of surfers and fishermen, the effects of the dynamic operating that

continuously redesigns the societal structure with economic, political and cultural changes, above all begotten by capitalism and globalization.

Looking at the fishermen allowed us to notice what Diegues (2004) had already pointed out in relation to caiçara culture: although not a static set of meanings, values and behaviors that cannot suffer adaptations, in situations marked by modernity and globalization, its flexibility and adaptation becomes more difficult, threatening reproduction of the traditional way of life. However, despite the multiple forms of social oppression defining the life stories of the fishermen, the survey revealed the sea as domain of freedom, reflection, peace, pleasure and entertainment. The way of work can degrade them with early aging, fatigue and unsatisfactory life conditions, but there is also the recomposing of “energies”, revitalization that leads them to return to the sea the next day, and that makes them suffer from the desire and longing for life in this environment when far from it.

Looking at the practice of surfers, in turn, gives room to recognize the influences of capital over it. Mascarenhas (2005) considers surfing to be one of the forms of entertainment rooted in the characteristic styles and void of socially useful content, increasingly more in tune with excitement, adventure and consumption. However, the dimension of the experience of surfers obtained during the field work remitted to the search for meaning of life in thrill and adventure beyond the values and principles determined by science and by the market. One can see the experience in the sea potentizing the human dimension of the being. Surfing was observed as a “passport” to lose oneself in the dimension of time and space, disconnect from the urban pace and take on the pace of the sea, territory assumed to be infinite, delimited only by the sight of the surfer. In this wise, the surfer is mobilized, present and involved in the experience. In the sea, he exercises imagination and creation and is with himself and with Nature. An experience different from that which divides and isolates the individual from the totality he is part of.

Thus, the multiplicity of factors boosting expressions of particular modes of culture revealed the dynamics of life in progress and, consequently, showed the need to avoid or put into a comparative framework the modeling of the quality of what is done by classifying and stigmatizing groups. A valid orientation in Physical Education since in this area it is difficult to come across homogenous and standardized models of intervention, poor in content, where people are objects on which, in segments (by age range or pathologies, for example), one must work meticulously and discipline in order to optimize the functioning of the body, synonym of machine, upon reproduction of forms and conducts.

One must analyze the different forms of manifestation of human beings considering their social context with an outlook that recognizes the plurality and diversity of the culture of the ways of thinking and acting. After all, in a country like Brazil, is there a model of child, adult, aged individual to define a program of intervention as of each phase of life? Could it be the same survey “samples” that enabled stipulating the cause-effect relations in the physical activity and health relation are the same for people and groups that live in adverse work, education and health conditions? In view of the complexity, diversity of people and ways of life and the plurality of interests and needs, how to overcome the objectivity and simplification?

On considering the discomfort¹³ that affects great part of the population in the planet and the reduction of potencies and of the joy of living as the greatest health problem of mankind (TEIXEIRA, 2004), surfers and fishermen help regard ludic practices as affirmative ways of resisting the situations of vulnerability and fragility of life. One affirms the conception of health as a set of conditions that enable dignified existence, among which is the ludic universe that, according to Oliveira (2001), is inserted in the forms of social interaction and determine the quality of involvement of individuals and groups with their life projects.

Through investigation, it was possible to notice that the need of surfers for speed, adrenaline and obliteration of reason shows the need for feeling, experimenting and investing that also affects contents and forms of contemporary corporal practices, due to exaltation of materiality, presupposing the domination and intervention of techno-science over the corporal dimension and also the impossibility of exchanges and communication with the world done remotely through cybernetic experiences surrounded by technology, for example. However, in another sense, society seeks ways of escaping from the oppression, subjection and domination that incur over the body. It seeks other ways of feeling and perceiving life. Even though the influence of capital in “stating” what to do and consume through the body is still very present, there is the desire, the dream and manifestation of directions that lead to expression of corporeity.

While fishermen have views of the world and symbologies that work differently from rationality which, according to Silva (2001), aspires to govern, organize and exalt the body as a path to happiness through identification of the individual with his corporal dimension or as prototype to health in the physical dimension.

¹³ The fragility and vulnerability of life are converted into themes in debates in the field of Health, generally speaking, and of Physical Education, in particular, upon social exclusion, incidence of new and old diseases, violence, disintegration of rights, cultural and ethical values, solidarity and ways of cohabitation (CARVALHO, 2006).

Even with the globalized ways – of feeding, dressing and having fun, one recognizes a certain trend of fishermen to preserve values and customs that preserve the “harmony” and integrity in relation to Nature. Elements of the fisherman’s dealing with his body, evidenced by the survey, show the healthcares of past cultures. Some talks remind of the idea of health of Ancient Greece that, according to Sant’anna (2001), linked the balance of body humors to the correspondence with the natural elements, from a principle in which Nature conditioned human life and explained all things.

If the environmental concerns include thematize questions of life as a whole, such as human health (LUZ, 2005), it is a fact that medicine based on evidences as the only health reference is unable to problematize and build alternatives to the ruptures established: body/mind, soul/reason, matter/subjectivities, society/environment.

Therefore, the need is imposed, emphasized by Carvalho (2005) to expand interpretations related to the culture of health and body and to seek support in human and social sciences with the aim of furthering the discussions and qualifying the objects of investigation.

In the scope of education, graduation courses do not privilege epistemological issues – which are invariably linked to reflection on the human being and Nature, much less do they explore reflections on the values in relation to corporal practices and the body as production of body language, language beyond written and verbal expression. Therefore, intervention remains standardized and stereotyped, whether in the school, academia or in the public service.

“In the social survey, we are interested in how people spontaneously express and talk about what is important to them and how they think about their actions and those of others” (BAUER; GASKELL, 2007, p.21) aiming at displacing them from the secondary position to the center that guides thought (CARVALHO, 2001), so as not to lose sight of the various aspects that make up the lives of people and to value the multiplicity of knowledge produced and shared by communities (FREITAS; BRASIL; SILVA, 2006).

The field survey revealed Nature moving to other forms of perception of the body and life, showing that professional intervention could also potentize the surfacing of different ways of relating and expressing through body language. This implies going beyond the educational objectives that enhance, above all, physiological benefits and that, consequently, are unable to work disharmonies in socio-environmental relations, since the meanings and significances of the practices are devalued. With regard to the theme Nature, it instigates thought and action beyond the green. It can help understand the relations constituted in the

spaces in which one lives and with the people one lives with. In the dimension of public policies, this is a theme that dialogues transversally, whether with Physical Education, Sports, Leisure, Health, Education, even though effective participation of the professional in public acts (CARVALHO, 2005; FREITAS, 2003) has little incentive.

Finally, the relation between human being and Nature is an essential question to Physical Education. The conceptions around this relationship formed in the course of philosophical reflections guided the ways of thinking and dealing with the body. Much of what we see propagated by Physical Education results from this reflective movement. If the reflective action is continuous, it is possible to rethink values and meanings of the propositions and establish references that consider human expressions as significant social constructions, moving actions directed toward bringing qualitative changes to the relations with oneself, with others, and with Nature.

5 SOME FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

One does not intend to advocate a society where transcendent experiences and metaphysical contemplations are the main project of life, in order to recover values acclaimed in the past that are presently worn out. Much less does one intend to idealize ways of life guided by “perfect” cohabitation between Nature and the human being. However, there are alternatives to the introjection of the impositions of the capitalist way of thinking and living, presented by Martins (1986) that immobilize the capacity of individuals and groups to reinvent and create new discourses for human experiences.

Fishermen and surfers pointed out directions. The Nature they speak of and the different ways of cohabiting with it show that daily they invent times and spaces of freedom, awareness, construction of ties, fruition of the senses and exercise of the ludic, elements that give life quality.

With regard to Physical Education, one must think and propose an education directed toward creation of policies that contribute toward the professional valuing social production of knowledge, reorienting the contents considering the diversity and plurality of the life stories and corporal culture of the individuals and groups without losing sight of the ludic element of the practices, seeing them as possibilities of potentizing ways of living and positioning oneself in the world.

It is impossible to understand Brazil and the corporal culture of the Brazilian people without taking into account the contradictions and complexity of phenomena. Not always are

the “modern” the protagonists of changes in the ways of living. Not always are the “informed” those who transform present time and space into a determinant of the possible and the future.

In this wise, Physical Education can contribute greatly so that outlooks of the body are not fixed on the esthetic and superficial dimension, but invest in values, meanings and significances that people and groups attribute to the body, Nature, and especially to life. Therefore, there are several scenarios, contexts and people that can inspire elaborations. The open outlook can move the creative capacity to build knowledge and practices that meet the needs and overcome the challenges being imposed constantly with the aim of establishing more pertinent and responsible constructions directed toward improving the ways of being and living in the planet.

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