

**CONCEPTION OF CONTEMPORARY MAN BY THE DIALECTICAL  
MATERIALIST BIAS**

**CONCEPÇÃO DE HOMEM CONTEMPORÂNEO PELO VIÉS MATERIALISTA  
DIALÉTICO**

**CONCEPCIÓN DEL HOMBRE CONTEMPORÁNEO POR EL SESGO MATERIALISTA  
DIALÉCTICO**

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**ABSTRACT:** The purpose of this research is to present the conception of contemporary man by the dialectical historical materialist bias, in order to understand the representativeness as a human being that this subject exercises in today's society. Dialectical historical materialism believes in the human formation of the subject mediated by social relations at work, which interferes in his conception of the world and in the way of acting in the transformation of the society, thus, to know the conception of contemporary man allows the researcher to conceive which subjects are being formed to act in society, as well as to understand their actions through reality. Bibliographical research has its foundation in the historicity of the philosophy of education and in the most representative scholars of each historical period with an emphasis on scholars of dialectical historical materialism, because it is defend that social relations at work permeate and constitute the thinking of the men, interfering in the historical process of human development. The readings allow to conceive man as social being, and therefore influenced and influencer of changes in society. In this context, education can contribute to the cultural, social and political development of men and in this way constitutes a means of transforming reality.

**KEYWORDS:** Conception. Contemporary. Materialism.

**RESUMO:** O objetivo dessa pesquisa é apresentar a concepção de homem contemporâneo pelo viés materialista histórico dialético, de modo a compreender a representatividade enquanto ser humano que esse sujeito exerce na sociedade atual. O materialismo histórico dialético acredita na formação humana do sujeito mediada pelas relações sociais no trabalho, o que interfere em sua concepção de mundo e no modo de atuar na transformação da sociedade, sendo assim, conhecer a concepção de homem contemporâneo permite ao pesquisador conceber quais sujeitos estão sendo formados para atuar na sociedade, bem como compreender suas ações mediante a realidade. A pesquisa bibliográfica possui seu alicerce na historicidade da filosofia da educação e nos estudiosos mais representativos de cada período histórico com ênfase para os estudiosos do materialismo histórico dialético, pois defende-se a tese de que as relações sociais no trabalho permeiam e constituem o pensamento dos homens, de modo a interferir no processo histórico de desenvolvimento humano. As leituras permitem

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*conceber o homem como ser social, e por isso influenciado e influenciador das mudanças na sociedade. Nesse contexto, a educação pode contribuir para o desenvolvimento cultural, social e político dos homens, e dessa maneira se constitui como meio de transformação da realidade.*

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** *Concepção. Contemporâneo. Materialismo.*

**RESUMEN:** *El objetivo de esta investigación es presentar la concepción de hombre contemporáneo por el sesgo materialista histórico-dialéctico, de modo a comprender la representatividad como ser humano que ese sujeto ejerce en la sociedad actual. El materialismo histórico-dialéctico cree en la formación humana del sujeto mediada por las relaciones sociales en el trabajo, lo que interfiere en su concepción de mundo y en el modo de actuar en la transformación de la sociedad, siendo así, conocer la concepción de hombre contemporáneo permite al investigador concebir cuáles sujetos se están formando para actuar en la sociedad, así como comprender sus acciones mediante la realidad. La investigación bibliográfica tiene su base en la historicidad de la filosofía de la educación y en los estudiosos más representativos de cada período histórico con énfasis para los estudiosos del materialismo histórico dialéctico, pues se defiende la tesis de que las relaciones sociales en el trabajo permean y constituyen el pensamiento de los hombres, para interferir en el proceso histórico de desarrollo humano. Las lecturas permiten concebir al hombre como ser social, y por eso influenciado e influenciador de los cambios en la sociedad. En este contexto, la educación puede contribuir al desarrollo cultural, social y político de los hombres y de esa manera se constituye como medio de transformación de la realidad.*

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** *Concepción. Contemporâneo. Materialismo.*

## Introduction

In the philosophical trajectory of man, the search for timeless questions: "What is the meaning of life? What is the origin of the world and of the human being? What is being?", through the use of scientific basis, aiming to break with the knowledge acquired through mythological answers, grounded the philosophers of Antiquity, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, mainly, in the incessant search for truth. In the Middle Ages, St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas were the main philosophers who led the questioning, and this movement was based on the religious bias, in which God would be the ideal way to know the truth. In modernity, knowledge was constituted as the great question to be revealed to men, and, in short, the use of reason was the way to conquer it, according to the great philosophers of this period, among them Bacon and Kant.

In contemporary times, there are several theories and philosophical currents responsible for understanding man and tracing paths that point to possible answers to the questions of human existence and man's role in the meantime. Aiming at understanding contemporary man, this research sought to present the conception of contemporary man through dialectical

historical materialism, in order to understand the representation as a human being that this subject exerts in today's society.

To this end, the first section made a historical review of the main conceptions of man formulated by the main philosophers in each period of Philosophy of Education, from antiquity to the present day, in order to show the changes in thoughts and in the role of man in these societies. In the second section, the discussion started with the presentation of contemporary philosophical currents and focused on the considerations of materialist theorists about the role of man in the contemporary world, in order to constitute a conception of man.

### **Conception of Man in the Philosophy of Education**

When proposing the historical rescue of man it is necessary to consider, before making hasty evaluations, the historical context of each thinker, the needs experienced by society in each period, and the attempt of each scholar to understand that political, economic, and existential moment, as well as the thoughts developed by them to solve the concerns of a people, even if the reflections concern universal existential conditions to meet the needs of particular subjects.

In view of this complexity, the research sought to contribute to a broader vision of the human anxieties of each period, as well as to the development of thoughts that culminated in theories to solve them. In this research, only the most illustrative scholars and the most relevant approaches were presented, leaving to other researches the deepening in each selected period and its respective analysis.

Traditionally, the history of philosophy is divided into four periods: Antiquity, Middle Ages, Modern and Contemporary Ages; this division aims at the organization and understanding of the most relevant thoughts of each period. The classification of the periods represents the sagacity of some scholars in breaking with paradigms and establishing advances in the sciences. This process results in the emergence of new periods. To do this, thinkers need to perceive the needs of society, satisfy particular anxieties, and tie them to the general restlessness for knowledge.

It can be considered that this process translates a large part of human development, by advancing in the sense of humanizing man; however, it is historically noticeable that the opposite often occurs. In this research, to become human goes beyond the biological sense, as it encompasses the cultural sense that, in this research, surpasses the physiological one, so as to

characterize the human as the being who possesses empathy and the desire to carry out the movement of searching for improvements for the collective.

In ancient times, men, at first, were guided by mythological knowledge. Mythical narratives guided human actions, since they provided answers to man's questions. In the classical period of Greek philosophy, studies were based on ethical and political questions of human life. The democratic constitution of this period required thinkers to question what was just and unjust, and thus the most important question was the problem of truth. The discussions held by the Athenian thinkers resulted in differences of opinion, which led the sophists to imagine that truth did not exist, that it was relative, subjective and partial. For Socrates, human speech was so full of ambiguities and contradictions that it was impossible to know the truth, however, the conquest of truth was sought through the use of reason (VASCONCELOS, 2012).

Still in antiquity, Plato and Aristotle conceived the problem of truth in a different way. For Plato, the world is divided between things and ideas. Things are transitory and imperfect; ideas are eternal and perfect. In the case of man, for Plato there was the division between soul and body, the soul being eternal and the body being mortal. The soul, as the dominant being, should guide human actions, so reason prevails, being contrary to human impulses. Thus, for Plato, truth was in the world of ideas. For Aristotle, there was a division between body and soul, with the soul being more important; however, the Greek philosopher disagreed with the conception of the world of ideas. For Aristotle, reality is what we know through the senses and ideas are in the human mind. This position differs from Platonic idealism, the constitution of a separate world for the ideas. Aristotle considered that even though the ideas were particular, there was a universal essence, thus, to appropriate the ideas would be to know the essence of things, of what remains even with the changes that are in the field of appearances (VERNANT, 1972).

It can be seen that the Greek man sought the truth through the use of reason, so that the citizen could act in a meaningful way in life, discussing in a democratic way the issues that afflicted a society conducted by law, by politics "[...] it is on the political level that Reason, in Greece, was expressed, constituted and formed" (VERNANT, 1972, p. 103). Due to this way of acting, being public life considered by the Greeks the main activity, man as a subject was not separated from his role as a citizen. The development of the concepts of philosophy that emerged in this period was not based on experience, but on the construction of a logic for the phenomena. Language acted in this period as an instrument of the debates, speeches, and conducts of logic, and the main activity of the Greeks was the relations among themselves.

In the Middle Ages, Christianity influenced the thinking of society, often being responsible for preventing free philosophical reflection. While for the Greeks reason differentiated us from animals, and was therefore considered a superior stage of man, in Christianity truth came from someone, from a being superior to men, which would be God. For the medieval man, human sin made reason and, consequently, truth, impossible; therefore, it can only be known through faith. In this context, it is possible to find philosophers who give prestige to Aristotle's thoughts, making a mix between man's use of reason and faith as the intercessor of learning, as well as those who totally disregard the Greek philosopher's thought and believe in faith as the only means of learning. In this way, God is the provider of learning. In short, Thomas Aquinas followed the path of believing in the junction of Aristotle's teachings and the Christian faith and St. Augustine would be the representative of the exclusive teaching by faith; thus, the role of man was a passive being guided by faith, having as its main activity the search for truth through religious studies (OLIVEIRA, 2007).

The thought in the Modern Age turned to the knowledge of the truth through reason, however, this reason was characterized by being more investigative, far from the natural tendency of reason to the truth as believed by the Greeks, being this distrust the fruit of Christianity's questionings. One of the first movements of this period was naturalism, whose greatest representative was Jacques Rousseau. For this thinker, man is born good and society corrupts him; to avoid this situation, which could be irreversible, the philosopher suggested a return to the natural environment, away from the artificial world that is civilization. For Rousseau, it was necessary to promote the return to the human essence, to the development of the senses, after this period of education, of diverse experiences, man would be prepared to distance himself from the vices present in civilized society (DE PAIVA, 2007).

The passage from the Medieval to the Modern world is marked by the dispute for power between the church, the nobility and the bourgeoisie. In this context, there were several revolutionary movements, starting with the Enlightenment, which consisted of philosophers criticizing the absolutist monarchical regime. One of the main critics of this period was Voltaire. This philosopher supported French social reform, with criticism of the Catholic Church and the absolutist monarchy. In education, Voltaire was against traditional teaching, distant from reality, in defense of a more practical education. The more critical position of reason led to the emergence of two trends in the Modern Age, rationalism and empiricism. Rationalism believed in the movement of deduction to reach pure reason. Empiricism, on the other hand, used experience as the predominant factor of reason, through the inductive method. René Descartes is one of the philosophers representing this historical moment as a rationalist. For this

philosopher, ideas are born with man and manifest themselves as the individual develops, with thought being the essence of the human being; thus, material aspects would be disregarded in order to obtain the truth (RUSSEL, 2002).

As an opponent of rationalist thought, Francis Bacon stressed the importance of experience to constitute reason, which is why he was considered a positivist. What brings Bacon closer to his Christian predecessors is the fact that this philosopher considered the existence of obstacles to the attainment of reason, called prejudices, in the sense of preconceived ideas that drive away the reality of facts. However, prejudices are not insurmountable, they occur when we take as truth what the senses present us; when we believe in what is passed on by education; when we trust the authority of those who affirm something and when we do not understand the meaning of words. Therefore, the search for truth with the use of reason should be an exercise of investigation with the use of experience, which provides the data for the confirmation or refutation of phenomena (VASCONCELOS, 2012).

Other philosophers who marked positivist thought were Auguste Comte and Herbert Spencer. Comte was one of the first proponents of positivist thought. For this philosopher, constant human evolution occurs through three stages: theological, metaphysical, and positive. In the theological stage, the individual searches for supernatural explanations, which are gradually rejected, and become metaphysical situations, in other words, related to the nature of things themselves. The last stage would be the positive, embodied by scientific explanations arising from experiments that establish laws for observations. In Spencer's case, his contribution can be observed in the combination he made of Comte's ideals with Charles Darwin's theory of natural selection. The objective of this philosopher was to create a theory in which he could integrate the physical, mental, and social phenomena, and for this reason he joined to his thoughts, besides Comte and Darwin, the teachings of John Stuart Mill's psychology related to the association of ideas. The functionalist current, led by Émile Durkheim, can be considered a development of positivism. This current advocated that social facts should be studied as things, in the same way that one analyzes a phenomenon in other disciplines. Another contribution of Durkheim to this period was to consider the influence of the social environment in the individual's life, thus learning would come from the environment in which one lives (RIBEIRO, 2017).

In the Modern Age, reason sought to establish universal laws with the use of particular experiences, in the case of empiricism, and at the same time rationalism believed that pure reason would bring universality to knowledge; however, the two currents could not achieve universality in a coherent way. To try to remedy this need, Immanuel Kant, another modern

philosopher, analyzed both currents and pointed out their errors. For Kant, the first error of rationalism was in believing that truth was only in the subject, and of empiricism in believing only in the object. For the philosopher, knowledge involved two elements: the subject and the object in a combined action in which both act, the subject universalizing knowledge and the experience with the object renewing it (KANT, 2005).

For some critics, Kant comes close to denying the existence of the object, since he considers it known by the subject. This fact is attributed to the emergence of idealism by the philosophers Johann Gottlieb Fichte and Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel. For Hegel, knowledge was first idealized in thought and then acted upon in reality. Karl Marx opposes the idealists, because for him reality is what allows the development of thought; it is the concrete, the material that will transform consciousness. It can be seen that, for modern man, the search for truth is again based on reason; however, the search is divided into those who search by deduction and those who search by induction. Man's role in this period is marked by the search for knowledge. In the clash between the ideal and the concrete, the thought of contemporary man emerges, and its main representatives and theories are expressed in the next section.

### **Considerations of the philosophy of education for the contemporary man with emphasis on the dialectic materialist approach**

Dialectical Historical Materialism has as its object of study the real movement of bourgeois society. Karl Marx, the greatest representative of this theory, wanted to understand the process of formation of capitalist society. The investigations of this process culminate in the importance of work for human development, with social relations in the activity being the great driver of the transformations of human thought. The development of this theory, in the contemporary age, sought to respond to the yearnings of a society fragmented by the exploitation of work.

The movements of the Industrial Revolution removed man from the land and from craft activities, and he was faced with the need to seek survival through degrading work in factories. In this context, the search for answers by philosophers and scholars of the time culminated in several theoretical currents, namely: dialectical historical materialism, phenomenology, existentialism, structuralism, pragmatism, and analytical philosophy.

Dialectical historical materialism has Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels as its referential thinkers. For these philosophers, society was alienated by the capitalist system of production, by selling labor power in an attempt to survive. Alienation arises at the moment in which the

value of labor is lower than the value for the purchase of the objects produced, thus constituting a movement in which the worker is always in a situation dependent on the merchandise. In dialectical historical materialism, the intentionality is to recognize the contradictions present in the society divided into social classes, in order to transform alienated beings into citizens aware of their role as subjects, seeking the totality of knowledge and developing the human being. To this end, Marx and Engels believe that the capitalist system should collapse in favor of socialism, in which the State and the division of classes would end (MÉSZÁROS, 2007).

At the opposite of dialectical historical materialism, which believed in the incapacity of freedom due to the manipulation of the system by the bourgeois class, are phenomenology and existentialism. In phenomenology, mental acts are subjective, so an objective method of analysis is sought for the observation of phenomena. The description of the experiences would be a path to be followed by this current, for which the concept of intentionality of the subject is rescued, the one who wants to know the object for which the investigation occurs. Existentialism was born in the turn of the 19th to the 20th century, the human being desired freedom, and through his choices, to make himself, build his paths, the destiny of each subject depended on his actions. At the same time that existentialism shows itself to be liberating, it has a pessimistic view of existence, since its greatest representative, Jean Paul Sartre, considers that human life is not worth living. The disbelief in God or in any other entity that can interfere in human behavior makes the followers of this current believe that there is full freedom of choices. However, Sartre himself is wise to state that the figure of the other is a problem to free choice, affecting a certain disagreement with the principles of the liberating movement of being, i.e., to what extent are we really free to choose our paths? (VASCONCELOS, 2012).

In contemporary times, different thoughts coexisted, among them structuralism, pragmatism, and analytical philosophy. The structuralism that had its beginning in Ferdinand Saussure's studies in the field of linguistics was followed by other fields of science. In philosophy, Michel Foucault sought to analyze the structures of power, as well as the myth of progress. For this thinker, the evolutions that occurred were of concepts that were understood only by those who were part of that discursive formation. In the meantime, Foucault became known as a philosopher who sought the archeology of knowledge, studying the depth of concepts, as well as the structures related to the object, fact or phenomenon, by considering that truth is relative, and freedom minimal (PINTO, 2002).

In Pragmatism, philosophers believe that truth is not attainable by the human intellect, since it is impossible to place ourselves outside our context, that is, to detach ourselves from the reality in which we participate is an improbable act. In this way, when faced with the same



situation, values and beliefs interfere with human positioning in such a way that we take conflicting actions. For John Dewey, the main representative of this current, the problems of life should be treated scientifically, thus, at school, the investigation procedure starts from the principle of raising hypotheses for the solution and the search for experience to solve them without disconnecting the student from democratic education. In the case of analytic philosophy, the great emphasis is on questions of language. For Wittgenstein, thought and language are inseparable. The importance of speech, in this philosophical current, considers orality not only as a means to disseminate ideas, but as a way of acting in the world. Thus, the context in which the speech is made interferes with the meaning of words, so it deserves attention the contextualization for the interpretation of facts (VASCONCELOS, 2012).

It is perceived that contemporary man seeks to break with the dominant paradigms that surround knowledge, thus questioning the truth in order to meet the particular and universal needs. The complexity in which man is inserted makes it difficult to have a more accurate look at the adversities that surround him, which makes it impossible to determine absolute truths, and to believe in the relativization of being. Therefore, in the analysis of the contradictions present in reality, it is possible to realize that history and the activities carried out by men can indicate better ways to compose a conception of contemporary man.

The dynamics of contemporary society is considered by Vigotski (1930) to be divided into different social classes, composed of a heterogeneous set of people, their differences being influenced by the work they do.

[...] and not only the workers, but also the classes that exploit them - directly or indirectly - are enslaved by the instruments of their activities, as a result of the division of labor: the bourgeois, frightened by capital and greed for profits; the lawyer by the ossified legal ideas that govern him as if he were an independent force; "the educated classes," in general, by their local, particular and unilateral limitations, their physical deformities and their spiritual myopia. They are all mutilated by the education that trains them for a certain specialty, by lifelong slavery to that specialty, even if that specialty is to do absolutely nothing [the most absolute lassitude] (VIGOTSKI, 1930, p. 3).

In the excerpt cited, the Russian psychologist describes the division of labor in contemporary society and the degradation of beings enslaved by exhausting work, especially the proletariat, but also those who submit themselves to the slavery of capital, to the dependence on money, which is synonymous with life.

For Vigotski (1930), the division of labor, which at first sectioned the human being by disabling him from having access to the global dynamics of production, producing beings dissatisfied with their activities, with the development of the capitalist system produced changes

in the work, requiring from the subject greater mobility and multifunctionality. The worker doesn't need to know the process as a whole, but to master several reproductive activities that require speed in their execution, besides demonstrating agility in managing and interlacing the different needs, so that the capital gains are greater, as Vygotsky (1930, p. 5) alerts us when he says

[...] the end of the bourgeois epoch constitutes a remarkable antithesis to its beginning. If at the beginning the individual was transformed into a fraction, a performer of a fractional function, a living extension [appendix] of the machine, then, at the end, the demands of industry itself will require a fully developed person, with elastic plasticity, and who will be able to modify the social forms of labor, to modify the ordering of the social production process, and finally to control it.

The Russian psychologist's considerations about the transformations of capitalist society were confirmed in the current bourgeois society, when it is possible to observe the current knowledge requirements for the inclusion of man in the labor market.

Thus, the conception of contemporary man from the materialist perspective needs to take into account the influences of social relations since childhood, because the changes that take place in this throughout the subject's development directly affect consciousness, and consequently human behavior. The literary critic, philosopher, and sociologist Walter Benjamin, in his work *The Storyteller*, discusses the death of the culture of the narrator. In this work, Benjamin says that "people who know how to narrate properly are increasingly rare" (BENJAMIN, 1986, p. 197). The culture of telling and retelling stories to family members, of life passages, or even of legends permeated by the culture of a people, is practically extinct. The art of telling, for this author, is present in the wisdom of simple peoples, and for this reason the importance of orality, an essential action of the art of telling, as well as of the listener, since the memorization of those who listen to the story enables the reproduction of the fact, and this is an essential cycle for the maintenance of narrative. According to Benjamin, the written novel contributed to the narrator's annihilation process, just as the information text of immediate reproduction produces the death of characters, of the immediacy in which mankind finds itself today.

For the English historian Eric Hobsbawn, in his book *The Age of Extremes* (1995), the context of the 20th century went through three major transformations: the catastrophe, the golden age, and the collapse. In short, in the catastrophe, man is involved in the great wars, which were based on the interests between the great powers, on land and economic competition. The golden age, for the historian, represented the moment in which developed capitalist

countries invested in social welfare policies, in the public sector, focused on social issues, even if the objective was economic recovery, as in the case of the United States with the stock market crash in 1929: the investments were positive for society. In socialist countries, on the other hand, there were policies of income redistribution. The collapse came with the fall of the socialist system of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), which had internal problems and capitalist competition, largely due to the elasticity of capital, which was more present in the capitalist economy, that is, capital with greater adaptability to market contexts. According to the historian, after the third phase, the subjects started to live with the dominion of capital over human life.

In this context, Mészáros (2007) considers that education is the means through which the capital's self-alienation can be mitigated, because for the philosopher, learning is life itself, that is, it assumes the role of a guide to the human being throughout its development process. According to this author, through education it is possible to produce the social conscience that refutes the domination of capital, in order to break with the capitalist cycle of internalization. In the work *The Challenge and the Burden of Historical Time*, Mészáros (2007) defends a greater attention to the internalization process, in which the capitalist system seeks to instill in the subjects as essential to the maintenance of the capitalist system: the refutation work of this cycle seeks to overcome the worldview restricted to the capital to produce in man an emancipating vision of the subject, so that work fulfills its vital function, that of man's fulfilling activity.

Sánchez Vásquez (2011) recalls Marx's considerations for the definition of society, by recalling that society is a product of the reciprocal action of men, and, therefore, considers social relations essential in the formation of the conception of man. In this way, today's society cannot belittle social relationships as triggers of psychic development itself, as Duarte (2016) warns us in the work *The school contents and the resurrection of the dead*. When analyzing the influence of work, culture and school contents in favor of human development, the educator considers that “[...] the more he is able to rationally and freely conduct his psychological processes through incorporation, to the mental activity, of human psychic experience embodied and synthesized in culture. In this way, man is the producer and fruit of his activity.

In the same line of thought, Sánchez Vásquez (2011), in the work *Philosophy of praxis*, alerts to the fact that human relationships are objective and therefore mediated by man's desire, even if unconsciously sometimes, such as those produced through capital, hence the importance of relationships being between people, and not between objects, distancing the subject from learning, from the opportunity for transformation, to overcome adversities.

Because the individual is a social being, relationships between men are not reduced to intersubjective human relationships. Production relations are certainly objective, social relations between men, regardless of how they experience or know them. But men do not contract these relations as pure supports or effects, but as concrete individuals, endowed with conscience and will, even if a peculiar type of social relations such as capitalist relations of production tends to make them mere supports or effects, and to make human relationships simple relationships between things (SANCHEZ VÁSQUEZ, 2011, p. 344).

Sánchez Vásquez's concern with the conditions of human reproduction created in the social environment is evident, with the relations between the social being, and the role of work as a founding means of man, of the development of the subject. In this context, it is up to the researcher to analyze the current structures of demand in the labor market, in the same way, to observe the changes in social relations historically, in order to conceive possible analyzes of the conception of man and contribute to the improvement of the subjects' conception of the world. .

### **Final remarks**

Thus, man has always sought answers to his existence, naturalism, positivism, dialectical historical materialism, phenomenology, existentialism and structuralism are currents in the philosophy of education that have contributed and contribute to this process. However, in this walk, in the attempt to know himself, man is influenced by history and by the contexts that led him to distance himself from nature and from man himself. Understanding the influence of the Industrial Revolution, the culmination of wars and the behavior of man towards the Other, the yearning to conquer freedom, can demonstrate evidence of the formation of contemporary man. A subject who seeks to break paradigms, to question the different institutions that, until now, were his references in life, his ideals of history.

In this context, the philosophical currents mentioned above seek to satisfy the feeling of human anguish for freedom, preaching the break with old traditions, the turning to oneself. Such attitudes produced in man a feeling of power over their lives, their destinies, their bodies. It is noticed in the multiplicity of philosophical currents the absence of a guiding thread, in the meantime, man sought in "having" to the detriment of "being" reasons for human existence. For Campos (2018), between the real and the imaginary is what man really is and what is his projection. However, man first needs to know himself in order to establish the conditions for

transformation and overcoming. In this way, one way of understanding contemporary man would be to know who we really are, or even what has enabled us to be what we are.

The concept of contemporary man goes beyond individualized society, without utopias, without the reflective character in relation to society with individual pleasure as man's ultimate end, for an invisible man, by disregarding the real needs of subjects, of beings alienated by the current capitalist system, which universalizes the desires of the ruling class, disregarding particularities, historicity and the collective construction of knowledge.

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