

HUMANIZATION AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SUFFERING IN THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS: PERSONALITY INTEGRATION AND DISINTEGRATION

HUMANIZAÇÃO E SOFRIMENTO PSICOLÓGICO NO PROCESSO EDUCATIVO: INTEGRAÇÃO E DESINTEGRAÇÃO DA PERSONALIDADE¹

HUMANIZACIÓN Y SUFRIMIENTO PSICOLÓGICO EN EL PROCESO EDUCATIVO: INTEGRACIÓN Y DESINTEGRACIÓN DE LA PERSONALIDAD

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ABSTRACT: This article analyzes psychological suffering as a condition of the vital activity of individuals. It aims to understand its genesis in the educational activity. It is based on the idea that the psychological system is a synthesis of the biological systems of orientation that are incorporated by the educational system. This can be represented by the symbolic process of signification of social relations. We used the bibliographic method based on the Cultural-Historical Psychology and the theoretical conceptual analysis based on the historical and dialectical materialism. The results of the analysis led us to understand that the transition from the animal psychological system to the human social psychological system creates the contradictions that are the basis of psychological suffering. Suffering and illness are understood as forms of integration and disintegration of conscious activity. We understand that suffering is not encapsulated in the individual, but exists objectively in the material environment where vital activity takes place. We further understand that, since the psychological system is integrated into the social system, suffering and illness are socially referenced by the forms of social organization of the subjects' conscious activity.

KEYWORDS: Humanization. Education. Consciousness. Psychological suffering.

RESUMO: *Este artigo analisa o sofrimento psicológico como condição da atividade vital dos indivíduos. Objetiva compreender a sua gênese na atividade educativa. Tem como fundamento que o sistema psicológico é uma síntese dos sistemas biológicos de orientação que são incorporados pelo sistema educativo. Este, pode ser representado pelo processo simbólico de significação das relações sociais. Foi empregado o método bibliográfico com base na Psicologia Histórico-Cultural e a análise teórico conceitual com base no materialismo histórico e dialético. Os resultados da análise nos levaram a compreender que a transição do sistema psíquico animal para o sistema psicológico humano social cria as contradições que estão na base do sofrimento psicológico. O sofrimento e o adoecimento são compreendidos como formas de integração e desintegração da atividade consciente. Compreendemos que o sofrimento não está encapsulado no indivíduo, mas existe objetivamente no meio material onde a atividade vital se realiza. Compreendemos ainda que, sendo o sistema psicológico integrado*

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no sistema social, o sofrimento e adoecimento são socialmente referenciados pelas formas de organização social da atividade consciente dos sujeitos.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *Humanização. Educação. Consciência. Sofrimento psicológico.*

RESUMEN: *Este artículo analiza el sufrimiento psicológico como una condición de la actividad vital de los individuos. Su objetivo es comprender su génesis en la actividad educativa. Se basa en el hecho de que el sistema psicológico es una síntesis de los sistemas de orientación biológica que son incorporados por el sistema educativo. Esto puede ser representado por el proceso simbólico de significado de las relaciones sociales. Se utilizó el método bibliográfico basado en la Psicología Histórico-Cultural y el análisis teórico conceptual basado en el materialismo histórico y dialéctico. Los resultados del análisis nos llevaron a comprender que la transición del sistema psíquico animal al sistema psicológico humano social crea las contradicciones que son la base del sufrimiento psicológico. El sufrimiento y la enfermedad se entienden como formas de integración y desintegración de la actividad consciente. Entendemos que el sufrimiento no está encapsulado en el individuo, sino que existe objetivamente en el entorno material donde tiene lugar la actividad vital. También entendemos que, dado que el sistema psicológico está integrado en el sistema social, el sufrimiento y la enfermedad están socialmente referenciados por las formas de organización social de la actividad consciente de los sujetos.*

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Humanización. Educación. Conciencia. Sufrimiento psicológico.*

Introduction

Whatever the educational model in different cultures and societies, it has as its principle the transition from the organic psychic system to the cultural one. It is directly related to the forms of orientation in reality and its contradictions (LEONTIEV, 1978a). These will only be understood if we embrace the human vital activity, the formation of affective and emotional values, the development of consciousness, personality and worldview of the subjects, integrated in a system of subjective and objective relations.

The problem in focus is that suffering is a condition of living beings, has its own characteristics in the realm of nature, and acquires new characteristics and complexity when men start living in society. It is also compounded by the fact that education is correlated to the formation of personality, understood as a synthesis of cultural psychological development, which represents the particular history of meaning processes in each individual (BOZHÓVICH, 1987). Therefore, education has a marked influence on the ways individuals face suffering.

The theoretical and philosophical basis for the discussion is based on the foundations of Cultural-Historical Psychology, especially in the concepts of vital activity, consciousness,

meaning, and personality. We consider, through this theory, that the psychological system in the characteristics of the social being and its development are related to education and psychological suffering.

To carry out this discussion, we will briefly go from the psychic development to the cultural psychological system. The discussion about suffering is justified by the growing number of cases of psychological illness that we have seen in our society, in the educational system among teachers and students, and throughout the labor system, in the world of work.

Emergence of living activity and processes of activation and organization of the living being

I begin by considering movement as a form of existence of the phenomena we study. Therefore, it is necessary to point out that the analyses made here aim to understand the movements of interrelation between the components of vital activity, suffering, and human psychological illness, based on educational processes.

I want to point out that we have no means to affirm that the movement of the inorganic forms of nature has an a priori necessity and/or purpose, posited as the motor of their existence. As a consequence, this condition limits us to know them in their immediate objectivity.

When, however, we enter the sphere of knowledge of organic matter, of living beings, we can make statements about needs and purposes of their movements that, now organized by the principle of life, are characterized as an organism's activity directed to an object. As Leontiev (1978a, p. 68) states, "The basic, as they say, constitutive characteristic of activity is its objectivity. Strictly speaking, the very concept of activity is implicitly contained in the concept of object. Besides objectivity we are faced with the emergence of a new form, the subjectivity that results from the unity of the organism with the object outside itself, that is, an inner activity correlated to another one outside the organism.

The genesis of subjectivity occurs at the moment in which the living organism reflects inside itself processes that exist outside, in relationships. Leontiev (1978a, p. 47) explains that "[...] subjectivity at the level of sensory reflex should not be understood as subjectivism, but as its 'subjectuality,' that is, its belonging to the active subject." Another characteristic is that subjective movement as a reflection of objective reality happens, also, in the direct absence of the objectivity that produces it. Thus, a new activity arises within the organism that reproduces in different forms of ideation the relations.

Activity, therefore, is the form of existence of living beings, especially animals. Especially, because it is not possible to affirm the existence of a psychic system or subjectivity for vegetables, since they do not move in space in search of the object of their nutrition, but extract directly from the environment that which demands their survival (ILYENKOV, 2010).

In activity, organized movement responds to a need and the search for an object that is outside the body and that satisfies it, which forms the meaning for the activity. This is the most basic structure of activity, which develops by the principle of maintenance of existence and reproduction of the organic being.

Vital activity is that which has as its principle the production of life. Therefore, it is the explanatory principle of the meaning, structuring and functioning of the psychological system as its psychic reflex (LEONTIEV, 1978b; MARX, 2004). Thus, suffering and illness, to be understood, demand meaning from the vital activity as form and content of its existence, as unity between objectivity and subjectivity.

With the evolutionary transformation of vital activity and the transition to more complex forms, organisms developed sensibility. This is configured as a means for processes outside the body, on which the maintenance of life depends. Its emergence is based on "[...] irritability in relation to external agents that fulfill the function of a signal" (LEONTIEV 1978b, p. 20). The signal can be understood as the objective sense indicator of orientation in the space/time of activity execution.

At this stage of development, the objects that fulfill the function of a sign have a double form of existence. First, they take the place of the orientation field of the organized movement for the execution of the activity in space, and second, they become a psychic reflection of reality. The most relevant of our discussion here is that with this a biological sense of the activity in reality is formed in the same measure. As Leontiev (1978b, p. 22) explains,

Sense links also have another character, that of being "bilateral"; in effect, their formation does not only result in the action of the stimulant causing a determined reaction, a determined behavior, but also in the corresponding need being "recognized" in a certain way in the considered stimulant object, becoming concrete in it and causing an active search behavior towards it.

The importance of the appearance of the biological meaning of the object is that it is formed from its value for the maintenance of the organism's life. This is a fact of relevant importance, since this value is the result of affectation and, therefore, a means of explaining subjectivity in individuals. This explanation is important to understand the formation of affections, their generalization and transformation into a symbolic meaning of suffering and psychological illness in the social subject.

Tissue irritability and sensitivity are objectified in the form of sense organs. These are objective functional units of recognition of the object of activity, they are therefore organs of analysis of objective reality, means for the organization of the activity of seeking the specific object for a given need. The importance of this is that the psychism thus begins to constitute itself as a system of analysis of the unity of activity composed of the integration of need/object and meaning/value.

Such integration complexifies the vital activity present in the organism as a form of self-activity belonging to the complex movement of objectivity. This means that now the environment itself is the body of its singular existence, therefore it is an integral part of its life. In this sense the organism's singular being is its integrated unity with its surroundings. As Leontiev (1978b, p. 40, emphasis added) explains:

The birth and development of the perceptual psychism in animals are conditioned by *profound anatomical and physiological changes*. Chief among them is the development and transformation of the *role of the sense organs that act at a distance*, primarily vision. Their development is translated by a modification both of their importance in the general system of activity and of the form of their anatomical correlations with the central nervous system. If, in the preceding stage [*sensibility, MFA*], the differentiation of the sense organs led to the isolation of the dominant organs from among them, in the Vertebrates the *directing organs are increasingly organs which integrate the external stimuli*. This integration is made possible by a *reorganization of the central nervous system* with the formation of the forebrain, then the cerebral cortex (first in Reptiles).

The perceptual activity is analytical and has the function of abstracting the components of reality to identify what is vital and what is not. This occurs because the activity is guided by the object of its need and by the subjective sense of its satisfaction. With abstraction, processes of generalization of the diversity of reality are necessarily developed, of their function as means or obstacles to the execution of actions, therefore, of the vital value they represent. It is important to understand that perception will be mediated by this value and its function in the integrated subjectivity/objectivity system. Perception has the double function of relating the objective movement of the environment with the changes in the organism's subjective value.

In this way, signaling is developed as a means of triggering the organism's activity. The sign acquires the quality of a generalized orientation of vital value as a unity of the diversity of the organism's objective/subjective existence. The vital value of objects and their integrated existence is the means by which the organism analyzes, abstracts, and generalizes. Vital value is at the center of the affective processes and transformations of activity. This is why every time the environment is transformed, necessarily in order to avoid perishing, the organism itself is transformed as the new conditions of the environment acquire new and differentiated vital values.

It is an important statement made by A. Leontiev in the quote above when he talks about the profound anatomical and physiological changes and says that "Chief among them is the development and transformation of the role of the sense organs that act at a distance [...]". The expansion of the perceptive field, the perception of the diversity of objects and relations, the need for generalization, the unity of this with the affective and value-forming processes, greatly complicates vital activity. In view of this complexity, the need for preparation of the activity develops, the anticipation of operations, the identification of obstacles and means, the foreseeing of the consequences of the operations and their value, and therefore a process of analysis to select and choose among the different possibilities that which best fits the totality of the activity.

This process of anticipating and choosing the ways, means, and consequences is at the center of how the objective information that will become intellectual activity is processed, and at the center of how the subjectively represented activity is processed. The importance for understanding the development of the psychic system is that the integration of the totality of subjective/objective reality can now begin in the field of subjectivity, in the formation of a subjective image of the totality of the activity. As Leontiev (1978b, p. 56, our emphasis) explains

[...] the passage to the third stage of animal development manifests a new complexity in the structure of activity. Before, activity was based on a single process; now it is differentiated into two phases: *the preparatory phase and the realization phase*. It is the existence of a preparatory phase that constitutes the characteristic feature "of intellectual behavior. The intellect appears, therefore, for the first time, where a process appears that prepares the possibility of performing such and such an operation or habit. The essential sign of biphasic activity is that new conditions do not provoke in the animal simple movements of exploration, but attempts at different procedures, previously elaborated operations.

This revolutionary transformation in subjectivity, that is, "attempts at different procedures, previously elaborated operations," and which is expressed as anticipation of the activity in subjectivity, provides the emergence of a radical transformation in its development when men creatively transform the objective reality. This possibility is founded on the fact that, as Leontiev (1978b, p. 40) states, "[...] Henceforth the animal reflects the surrounding reality in the form of more or less segmentary images of individualized things."

Because images are segmentations of individualized things means that generalization needs to have the quality of integrating distinct components of reality into an articulated and meaning-constituted movement. This is the necessary basis for the organization of operations in the form of complete, purpose-directed actions. Thus, the possibility is given for the emergence of a complex activity made up of various actions toward an object/objective that is the anticipated representation of the final image of the transformations that men can make in objective reality.

Such condition marks, in the biological evolution of man, the transition process of hominization, that is, the natural history of formation of man's biological type, which leads to the possibility of humanization, that is, to the transformations in his singular being produced by himself from his subjectivity and in the transformation of the objectivity of the means of production and maintenance of his life. Thus, the possibility of work (MARX, 2004) is given as a social form of relationship of men among themselves that also changes, in subjectivity, the formation of the valuation of things, therefore, of affectations and creation of affective and emotional meanings, now as cultural production.

Transition from hominization to humanization: emergence of cooperative work activity

To understand the process of transition to humanization it is necessary to put the diversity of the forms of existence of men's relations into unity. This is necessary so that the new form of their existence can be understood as the unity of diversity, as the universe of the human world. Thus, at the same time that a slow transition occurs, essential qualities of humanization emerge. The fundamental landmark is cooperative work (LUKÁCS, 2004) mediated by instruments.

With this form of activity new phenomena arise in the lives of men that mark the emergence of a new nature for the psychic system. We refer to the new as psychological system in order to differentiate the biological nature from the cultural nature. This differentiation is important so that we can understand suffering and illness in its specificities of sociocultural life.

It is important to remember that they are not two separate things, but that the second represents the qualitative leap of the first, now integrated in the cultural system.

Let us consider just a few essential conditions for the structuring of the new system, which in reality are produced systematically, and at the same time, in unity. First, that in the production of instruments that will mediate the operations of action, anticipated by intellectual activity, a process of creative generalization occurs, therefore, it is necessary to raise the symbolic level of imagination. Second, with the creation of objects and, therefore, new relations with them, arises the related need to create new forms of communication, the creation of artificial signs for a nature also artificially produced and, with this, the development of new forms of language for everything that is new and created by man himself. Third, that the creation of instruments also mediates the relationship of men among themselves, changing their sociability, creating new forms of power relations and domination. Fourth, the material and symbolic products of these new relations accumulate in objects (LEONTIEV, 1978a) as human culture, and therefore are not hereditarily transmitted to new generations, which demands an activity specially developed for this purpose, education.

The most important aspect of the unity of these processes is that they always result in signification, that is, a process from which results the creation of signs, meanings and personal meanings for social activity. Signs and meanings occupy a central position in the organization of the psychological system. It is through them that the functions of orientation, execution and control of vital activity are now organized.

What used to be impulsivity given by the unity of affective and emotional value in the perception of reality, with signification is transformed into self-control of behavior, in the form of thought. This means that perception has become insufficient to meet the new conditions of men and will be overcome by incorporation into the more complex system of signification. Perception becomes organized by the use of signs and of activity oriented by signification, including all meaning-forming affections.

The vital activity that before had the quality of being the repetition of natural processes transmitted mainly by heredity is transformed into a social vital activity. The nodal point of this transformation is the development of consciousness as the form in which man perceives himself in the act of creating and transforming nature. In the act of creation man perceives himself as agent, as subject of and in the object he produces. From a distance, in the object of his production he can recognize himself and reflect on his actions and operations. The world and himself in the world with other men become objects of his thinking.

O most important of this social vital activity is that the alternatives that were apprehended by the perception of reality and were determined by the forces of nature, as transformations in subjectivity arising from the transformations of the environment, are now created by men themselves. The contradictions with nature were outside the domain of men. With the removal of the subject from his object, with his disintegration from nature through the creation of a new objective and objectified world by himself and the emergence of consciousness, the choices, the alternatives are also created by him. Man overcomes passive adaptation to nature and acts as a conscious being in the adaptation of nature to his needs, acting in the transformation of contradictions (VIGOTSKI, 2000).

Humanization is, therefore, the process of man's self-creation. This means that in creating a new environment in which to produce his life, he creates at the same time new conditions for the subjectivation of objective reality. That subjectivity reflects the interrelationships created by man means the possibility of creating it as well. This occurs in the subject's self-activity in the educational process. What occurs now is the contradictory unity of the creation of subjectivity that is at the same time and on the one hand a social production of the action of men among themselves, and on the other hand a personal production of man about himself with what others do to him.

In this sense, education is, in general, the activity of transformation of the nature of subjects, mediated by others and for a given socialization. The contradictions of this activity have as components, first, the fact that the nature of the psychism does not coincide with the psychological system created by men in the form of signification; second, that the educational act means at the same time a disintegration of the natural perceptual psychism as a function of the integration of the subject by means of signification as a conscious activity; third, that the activity of integrating consciousness into the socially created psychological system occurs through acceptance and conflicts, through affirmations and denials of being, in a constant struggle between personal and social meanings in the production of life. As Bozhóvich (1987, p. 20) clarifies, "Personality is examined as the higher integrative system which, in ontogenetic development, is characterized by the successive emergence of new psychic formations".

It is through these contradictions and neoformations that the development of personality begins as an expression of the alternative choices that the child subjected to social relations makes and creates as a way of seeking integration into social life. The personality results from this affective, emotional, and cognitive drama of the subject's development as a transformation of its biological singularity into a sociocultural individuality. According to Vygotsky (2000, p. 328), "[...] the correlative to personality is the relationship between primitive and higher

reactions[...]. Personality is the expression of the new formation in the modes of subjectivation of the social subject, in the educational process. As the same author and work states: (p. 303) "The development of the child can only be understood as a living process of development, of formation, of struggle [...]."

The core of the personality of this new form of subjectivation is the "I" system. This system is first the social manifestation of self-activity that is constituted with the meaningful activity of others. That is, the others place the subject, subject in a certain place in social relations, with certain values and functions, with a heteronomous valuation of his being. Second, the subject places himself in this place, but not without struggle, affirms his personal values and fights for them with an autonomous valuation.

The decisive moment in the development of the child's personality is the awareness of this "I". As Vygotsky (1997, p. 336-337) points out,

[...] J. Baldwin has rightly pointed out that the concept of "self" develops in the child through the concept of others. Thus, the concept of "personality" is social, it is a reflex concept that the child forms by applying to himself the procedures of adaptation that he applies to others. We can thus say that personality is the social in us.

An important question that now presents itself to us is the emergence of the will as an expression of the mastery of the means to wage this struggle, as one of the forms of expression of the personality. The mastery of behavior amid the contradictions of the educational process and social participation means the overcoming of impulsive, impersonal action by conscious action, articulated by the needs and motives of the personality. Will, therefore, does not mean an act of pure rationality, but of the affective, emotional, and cognitive articulation of the creation of alternatives and possibilities of the individual being. This means that it is a person who tells himself, in the condition of subject, what and how to perform an action. According to Leontiev (1978b, p. 154, emphasis added),

[...] the voluntary process of "performing an action" is initially mediated by an external sign, by which another man acts on the behavior of the subject who performs the action under consideration. At this stage of formation, the mediated structure does not characterize the process performed by the agent subject, but the corresponding "interpsychological" process, that is, the process as a whole, in which both the person reacting to the signal by performing the action and the person or persons giving the signal intervene. Only later, when in an analogous structure the starting signal begins to be given by the agent subject himself ("self-command"), does the process acquire a mediated "intrapyschological" character, that is, fully realized by one man; thus is born the elementary structure of voluntary action, the act of will.

It is from this focus of the formation of personality and volitional act that we consider in the next topic the structure of the activity and its relation to conscious activity as a process of integration of the person's social being. With this, we consider in the last topic the relations between educational activity, personality, and psychological suffering and/or illness.

Structure of human activity, integration and consciousness

The structure of the psychological system reflects the structure of social activity. This means that both the activity of men among themselves and the activity of an isolated subject are psychologically and socially structured by the same principle. When they create their activities they do so from subjective reality in confrontation with objective reality, so it is in the realm of the movement of these two spheres of reality that they objectify their life.

Consciousness, as we have seen, can be understood in the transition from nature to culture as disintegration/integration of being. The singular being of the biological species is transformed into a social human, author of his actions, recognizing himself in them and in the products of his activity in a creative way, that is, subjectivity as a psychic reflex is not a repetition of the forces given by nature, but its transformation. At the same time such disintegration of the singular being and its development creates a new need for integration in and for its social being, that is, in activity with other men.

Conscious activity as a search for integration has as its main path the reproduction of social activity already historically constituted. Each individual has to appropriate the forms of social being by means of the signification that occurs in all the activities in which he participates. Therefore, the participation in activities includes the whole constitution of subjectivity, in its affective and emotional aspects as well as in its cognitive. In social activity man develops as an integral being, as an individual, as a personality.

Such integration, however, does not mean an unrestricted adoption of social meanings, as we have seen. The consciousness, as a subjective expression of the personality, seeks a relation in which attending to the necessities of social activity attends, in the same measure, to those of the personality. Therefore, of the subject as an autonomous being, will and social self-realization as a person.

The general structure of human activity is understood by operations and actions that take place based on a need whose object of satisfaction becomes the reason that triggers the activity (LEONTIEV, 1978a). This is performed by individuals who exist in given situations, occupy a place in relations to which they must correspond and, on the other hand, have certain

conditions, that is, the power and mastery of signification, instruments, knowledge, etc., which are the means with which they can, or cannot, respond to the place they occupy as subjects. It is in this framework that by integrating themselves into social life individuals also structure in an integrated way their psychological system. This is not a copy of social activity. Although subjective activity is organized on the basis of needs and objectives, it has actions and operations of thought that reflect the structure of social activity, in it individuals create and anticipate for themselves a social being that does not yet exist in reality, but is always present as desire, aspiration, ambition, will, and satisfaction of strictly personal needs. In thought, individuals create alternatives for self-realization that need to be realized in reality. The harmonious development of personality needs this realization of the integration of subjectivity as possibility in reality.

Self-realization means having the power and the dominion to create alternatives to the contradictions posed by others, by other personalities that also seek the space of their self-realization, and by society as a symbolic means of the collective will. It is in the relationship self/other and society that the conflicts between social signification and personal meanings disintegrate the psychological guidance system (LURIA, 1976).

The participation in activities produces in the subjects an anticipation of this possibility of self-realization that is constituted in a general way with personality motives. The realization of these motives means the integration and the opposite, the disintegration of the psychological system in its particularity. This means, in this case, that the subjects do not find the personal meanings of orientation through the social meanings in that specific sphere of action. The disintegration is characterized, therefore, as frustration of the realization of the self as subjectivity in the objectivity of social life. This can be broadly understood as the concrete existence of an I/other conflict.

Psychological suffering, integration and disintegration of personal meanings and values

The meaning of suffering was taken here primarily as the activity of enduring a given condition in which the subject expends his material, physical, and psychological resources to ensure the continued existence of his situation. Therefore, the animal being, by supporting through its vital activity the conditions of its nutrition, shelter, and reproduction, for example, suffers. As Marx (2004, p.127, emphasis added) understands it

Man is immediately a natural being. As a natural being, and as a living natural being, he is, on the one hand, endowed with natural forces, with vital forces, he is an active natural being; these forces exist in him as possibilities and capacities (Anlagen und Fähigkeiten), as drives; on the other hand, as a natural, corporeal, sensitive, objective being, he is a suffering, dependent, and limited being, just like the animal and the plant, that is, the objects of his drives exist outside him, as objects independent of him. (author's emphasis)

In this sense, suffering is inherent to the being of men. As a condition for the production of life, men have no way to extinguish suffering, the expenditure of their strength, the confrontation of needs. Everyday they have to produce their life and consume it with that.

We can think, then, that at the level of the animal psyche suffering is configured as the adjustment of behavior to the set of signals that in subjectivity are reflected as the need to repeat the behavior that is adequate to reality as it is. At the level of the animal psychism there are no conscious creative alternatives.

From the point of view of the psychological system, the condition of suffering is quite different. The fact that man creatively produces the environment and the meanings with which he organizes his vital activity, the fact that this creation can be substituted by new alternatives created by himself, places suffering always in the possibility of being overcome. This possibility always appears in the projection of the personal becoming into reality and in the creation of means and instruments for this. Man projects himself as the possibility of overcoming suffering through the creation of new ways of being.

It is notorious that historically humanity has overcome and continues to overcome daily suffering in the production of its life through knowledge and technology. However, in individual life, when we consider subjectivity and personality we find the self-creation of affective and emotional alternatives to suffering. Thus, that which is vital from the point of view of the production of material life does not necessarily occupy the place of vital in the field of personal self-realization. A personal motivation can occupy the central place, the place of vital activity of the personality. It is in this field of human subjectivity that we consider psychological suffering. As much as material lack in the production of biological life, the lack of power and mastery over psychological life causes suffering.

Education appears in relation to this as the center of the development of a personality that has the power or not to face psychological suffering. I agree with Mészáros (2005, p. 44, emphasis added) when he states that,

[...] in the truly broad sense of the term education, it is a matter of the "internalization" by individuals [...] of the legitimacy of the position assigned

to them in the social hierarchy, together with its "proper" expectations and the "right" forms of conduct more or less explicitly stipulated on that ground.

The fact that education thus represents an act of force in social practice that determines, guides, regulates, and controls "the right forms of conduct" to be internalized by subjects places it as a field of conflict between social interests and the alternatives of the personality in overcoming them. Therefore, the contradictory character of education is that at the same time that it mediates humanization it provides the emergence of contradictions vital to the personality. It is in this sense that the drama of development is the expression of a dynamic game of changing the positional value of the subjects and their alternative possibilities of self-realization. These are resisted and impeded by the heterogeneous interests of formation, which can only be overcome, contradictorily, by education itself, in the formation of power and mastery of the movement of reality, as knowledge and self-control of actions, as will and consciousness in individuals.

Final considerations

Education is the activity that links man to society and culture. It is, therefore, the fundamental sphere of psychological development. The forms of its organization, its contents, the place that the subjects occupy in it, the objectives and social meanings that engender it, produce motives and meanings for the personality, this being understood as the most comprehensive expression of the social being of individuals.

Because education means the transition from the natural form of behavior to the cultural one, within it and under power relations, essential contradictions of personality formation are produced. These contradictions, when they refer to the meanings that have acquired a vital value for the individual, constitute the center of the subjective self-activity that sustains the integration of the psychological system. In this sense, they generate psychological suffering, and when the individual does not sustain the contradictions, then comes the psychological and/or organic illness.

In this article, therefore, it was considered important to think about education in its contradictions and not only in its positivity. The importance of this analysis lies in the fact that we produce concepts of what education is in reality, that is, how it actually happens, and that these are the tools that allow us to think about overcoming the current problems we face: if we do not take into account the contradictions we will not achieve a concept that helps us in the important task we have in this area.

The importance of dealing with the psychological suffering generated in education lies in the fact that the higher psychological functions, those that link us to culture, are fundamentally organized and operated by the personality. Thus, in any place or form in which it occurs, the functions correlated to such and such activity are constituted as personality functions, which has as its center the relation self/other, motivated by affections, emotions, and knowledge that are the result of the subjects' individual experiences. Therefore, this analysis is essential when we want to understand the role of education in the humanization of individuals and the social relations that we expect for their development.

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