

THE OTHERNESS AND FREEDOM IN PAULO FREIRE IN THE LIGHT OF THE
BRAZILIAN CONTEXT

*A OUTREDADE E A LIBERDADE EM PAULO FREIRE À LUZ DO CONTEXTO
BRASILEIRO*

*LA OLTREDADE Y LA LIBERTAD EN PAULO FREIRE A LA LUZ DEL CONTEXTO
BRASILEÑO*



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ABSTRACT: This paper analyzed the concepts of otherness and freedom from Paulo Freire's perspective, to ground an ethical education of human valorization, opposing the selfish, individualistic, and hateful speeches and practices in the fascist-authoritarian Brazilian context. It aims at analyzing Freire's works in search of the concepts of otherness and freedom to find the basis for a humanizing education which promotes autonomous cooperation. It is bibliographic research, based on Paulo Freire's works to understand Freirian ethical concepts of otherness and liberation. This conceptual framework allowed us to reflect critically on the hate discourses and practices of our pandemic and social context, under the sieve of humanizing ethics, which makes these concepts inseparable and dependent on each other. We conclude that these Freirean concepts offer an important basis for thinking about the Brazilian social context, rescuing the praxis of a liberating teaching that consists in valuing otherness and humanization.

KEYWORDS: Fascist authoritarianism. Paulo Freire. Dialogue. Ethics of the other. Liberating education.

RESUMO: Este artigo analisou os conceitos de outredade e liberdade na perspectiva de Paulo Freire, para embasar uma educação ética de valorização humana, contrapondo-se aos discursos e práticas egoístas, individualistas e odiosas no contexto fascista-autoritário brasileiro. O objetivo foi analisar as obras freirianas em busca dos conceitos de outredade e liberdade, a fim de encontrar bases para uma educação humanizadora que promova a cooperação autônoma. A pesquisa é bibliográfica, de caráter qualitativo, fundamentada nas obras de Paulo Freire para compreender os conceitos éticos freirianos de outro e libertação. Este arcabouço conceitual proporcionou refletir criticamente sobre os discursos e práticas de ódio de nosso contexto pandêmico e social, sob o crivo da ética humanizadora, que torna estes conceitos indissociáveis e dependentes um do outro. Concluímos que esses conceitos freirianos oferecem uma importante base para pensar o contexto social brasileiro, resgatando a práxis de um ensino libertador que consiste em valorizar a outredade e humanização.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Autoritarismo fascista. Paulo Freire. Diálogo. Ética do outro. Educação libertadora.

RESUMEN: Este artículo analizó los conceptos de oltredad y de libertad desde la perspectiva de Paulo Freire, para fundamentar una educación ética de valorización humana, oponiéndose a los discursos y prácticas egoístas, individualistas y de odio en el contexto brasileño fascista-autoritario. El objetivo fue analizar la obra de Freire en busca de los conceptos de alteridad y libertad para encontrar las bases de una educación humanizadora que promueva la cooperación autónoma. La investigación es bibliográfica, de carácter cualitativo, basada en las obras de Paulo Freire para comprender los conceptos éticos freirianos de oltredad y liberación. Este marco conceptual nos permitió reflexionar críticamente sobre los discursos y prácticas de odio de nuestro contexto pandémico y social, bajo el tamiz de la ética humanizadora, que hace que estos conceptos sean inseparables y dependientes entre sí. Concluimos que estos conceptos freirianos ofrecen una base importante para pensar el contexto social brasileño, rescatando la praxis de una enseñanza liberadora que consiste en valorar la oltredad y la humanización.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Autoritarismo fascista. Paulo Freire. Diálogo. Ética del otro. Educación liberadora.

Introduction

In recent years, the philosophy of education has focused on the themes of alterity/otherness⁴ and freedom⁵ from the perspective of Paulo Freire (1921-1997) as a way of confronting the political-social polarization that characterizes social relations in the context in which we live. The hegemonic and authoritarian speeches of the Bolsonaro government and its network of supporters, even during the 2018 electoral campaign, in the service of the neoliberal capitalist system, have adopted a fascist character and use freedom to justify radical individualism and hate as an ideology (CATTANI, 2022⁶; DÓRIA, 2020; CARVALHO, PAIVA, 2022; GOLPE..., 2021). On the other hand, we seek to investigate Freire's conception of freedom, which points to a practice of freedom as a community action focused on cooperation that allows for joint personal and social growth.

This is a bibliographical study, of a qualitative nature, based on the following works by Freire: *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (1987); *Pedagogy of autonomy: Necessary knowledge to educational practice* (2011); *Brazilian education and current affairs* (2002); *Education as a practice of freedom* (2006). In addition to these works, we made use of our master's studies, carried out two years ago, on otherness and freedom in Paulo Freire, to help us with this discussion. The purpose of the study is to develop three main questions: what is the other? What is freedom? What education do these concepts advocate? Firstly, we analyze the concept of otherness and freedom from the perspective of Paulo Freire, looking for conceptual references, to analyze the current Brazilian context around the discourse appealing to freedom with a fascist tendency. Secondly, we seek to understand, through this analysis, the educational proposal that these ethical concepts advocate. The article is based on the conceptual framework developed in academic research at master's level, and partially at doctorate level, to support the analysis of this social fact around the argument of individual freedom.

⁴ This article brings some reflections from the master's thesis "Alterity and Education: a contribution by Paulo Freire and the ubuntu philosophy for a humanizing education" (DJU, 2021, our translation), carried out in the Postgraduate Program in Education at the State University of Londrina (PPEDU /UEL).

⁵The text brings some reflections from the master's thesis "The formation of moral conscience from the perspective of Paulo Freire" (FUCUHARA, 2021, our translation), carried out in the Postgraduate Program in Education at the State University of Londrina (PPEDU/UEL).

⁶ Cattani, for example, talking about "fascists" and "fascism", being a relationship between the ruler and the masses through nationalism, which emerged in some European countries in the 1920s and 1930s, states that they are characteristics that have been attributed to Bolsonaro and its supporters in Brazil because they are in favor of dictatorship, torture and the discretionary elimination of part of the population in the name of a "liberal economy", authoritarianism, intolerance, hatred, racism and other dehumanized forms of sociability. Despite this, Cattani himself argues that the ideal characteristics for these people in Brazil should be "bad" and "malignancy", attributes promoted by powerful economic elites endowed with unlimited greed.

The analysis seeks to understand the presupposition of this hate speech, uncover its interests and expose its contradictions. Structured in the form of a right-wing movement, this group makes a categorical defense of the freedom to spread hate speech defending traditional conservative values, opposing science, especially the human sciences, human and labor rights and minorities who demand their rights. This hate speech justifies policies aimed at the interests of elites and social actions that cause serious harm to others. Such an attitude transforms the other into an object of speech use. Thus, they defend the freedom not to be vaccinated against Covid-19; freedom to have as many firearms as they want; freedom to gather thousands of people in a closed space in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic without respecting health standards such as social distancing and the use of masks (CAVALCANTE, 2021), freedom to explore natural resources (ore, wood, animals, etc.) above any legal parameter. (SOUZA, 2020).

The discourse of religious fundamentalism and the nationalist ideology of a homogeneous homeland expressed in the slogan: “Brazil above all. God above all”⁷, as stated by Arruda, Costa and Magalhães (2020) and Cavalcanti and Azevedo (2022), would not be presuppositions for universal freedom, assumed as a traditional value for the individual to follow and to which everyone should submit, justifying intolerance and violence in relationships with others? The defense of the motto “God, country, family and freedom” by Bolsonaro and his supporters shows how the discourse of religious fundamentalism and appeal to nationalism supports the conception of freedom that they defend (CASTILHO, 2022). We understand that this notion of freedom promotes competitiveness to profit and win, in which it is worth using all techniques to silence and exclude what is different and contradictory, such as the appeal to *fake news*, denialism, the defense of the use of weapons, the elimination of social and labor rights, the reduction of the social role of the State in subsidizing social services. In this way, as the conditions of individualistic and competitive freedom serve the privileges of the elites, it generates the concentration of income, subjects the masses to impoverishment and victimizes them for it.

From Freire's perspective, we seek to understand the postulation of the use of words as a practice of freedom that implies a problematizing dialogical relationship of otherness, which creates the condition of subjects with different readings of the world who are willing to think,

⁷Remembering that this fascist slogan has been part of Bolsonaro's campaign since the 2018 elections. It is in a way an imitation of Hitler's slogan, “Germany above all”. According to Cavalcanti and Azevedo (2022, p. 57, our translation), analyzing this slogan, “the expression above, which suggests an upward movement, upwards, refers to the idea of superiority, a higher position, which is the ideology of utopian nationalism. In this sense, the slogan Brazil above... and God above... played a symbolic role in the collective dream of the current president's followers, in the same way it did in the German era, with Hitler”.

based on readings of the word, a historical construction in communion. Thus, freedom is shared, supportive and democratic praxis. The conceptual questions we seek help in understanding and deepening liberating education, always based on dialogue with others from a popular democratic perspective and opposed to the authoritarianism of the elites.

The conception of otherness and ethical action in Freire

Otherness is one of the themes discussed in recent years to think about the relationship of identity and difference (self/other(s)/us) in the face of disregard for the other(s). This idea is well expressed by Muñoz, Labrador and Ávila (2020), when they state that thinking in the current context is characterized by an excess of individualism as a logic of competitiveness, the consequence of which is precisely indifference towards others, present in social relations and institutions. And the other constructed by this tendency, in the view of these authors, is simply infamous, because his speech 'egomaniac' closes himself in his own individuality, the result of which revolves around the denial of the other's identity. It is because of this tendency that Dju and Muraro (2021) and Téllez (2015) argue that otherness should not be taken in the sense of *alter ego* (other self), because this becomes a representation of the self and, thus, the discourse does not overcome 'eucentrism', but it continues to revolve around the self.

In the Brazilian context of the pandemic, caused by Covid-19, this discussion has become even more relevant in the face of fallacious and denialist speeches with selfish tendencies. One of these speeches is the repeated speech of the former President of the Republic (Jair Bolsonaro) and his supporters in constant defense of the effectiveness of the drug hydroxychloroquine for preventing and combating Covid-19 (GAZETA DO POVO, 2020; BOLSONARO..., 2020a). It is worth remembering that many scientific studies prove the ineffectiveness of this medicine in preventing and combating Covid-19 (ESTUDO..., 2021). This practice put the lives of many people at risk because they believed this speech and took this medicine. According to Petry (2021), Bolsonaro's speeches showed that he was not in the interest of the other(s), due to the fact that he transformed the role of president as a public ruler, which requires dialogue with institutions and social organizations, into an activity of a strictly personal nature. In this way, he asserted the interests of a private individual whose intentions are not completely transparent, overriding the interests of society in the administration of public office. And this shows how he lives in a 'bubble', depriving himself of the reality that is created in the interdependence of human beings, in dialogue and in correcting their perceptions among themselves.

To understand Freire's concept of otherness, it is important to first understand this term. According to Dju and Muraro (2022), the term *outredade* is generally translated from the English *otherness* – *Other* (outro) and *ness* (dade) – whose connotation leads to the quality or condition of being something or someone. For example, these names: *carefulness* (care), *hardness* (hardness), *candidness* (candor), *womaness* (woman), *brazilianess* (Brazilian), denote the quality or condition of being careful, hard, candor, being a woman and being Brazilian. The name *otherness*, therefore, in the view of the authors mentioned above, means the quality, condition or state of being other. It denotes the other as a 'to be-being', a process of becoming another, an idea contemplated by Freire in his works.

Otherhood in Freire refers to the exercise of identity, in which subjects (I-you/other) create dialogical relationships of interdependence and inter-constitution. Thus, the other appears as a you and a non-self, used by Freire as synonyms, which is inter-constituted in the dialogue. Freire (1987, p. 165-166, our translation) says:

The dialogical I, on the contrary, knows that it is exactly the you that constitutes it. He also knows that, constituted by a you – a non-self –, the you that constitutes him constitutes himself, in turn, as me, by having a you in his self. In this way, the I and the you become, in the dialectic of these constitutive relationships, two you that become two I.

Based on interdependence and inter-constitution, otherness takes the other as a non-self with whom one acts and acts to transform reality, the world. There is an authentic dialogical relationship here regarding the ethical action of the subjects, because they do not exclude themselves in their conception and intention of transforming the world. This means that the assumption of oneself as a subject of relationship, of thought, of freedom, only finds meaning when they are also recognized in the other. The understanding and transformation of the world and the search for the subject's own development do not occur in isolation, but with others. According to Freire (2011, p. 42, our translation), “it is the otherness of the non-self, or the you, that makes the radicality of myself assume”. Radicality is the subject's possibility of choice and option, always made in dialogue with that of the other subject(s). This is equivalent to saying that I can only affirm my radicality if, but only if, I do not alienate, do not oppress, do not dominate, do not silence others or myself.

The otherness, then, enables the human being of the subjects. In the view of Soares (2020, p. 199, our translation), as an exercise of identity, it “becomes fundamental to understanding how individuals become subjects, becoming a subject is making the human being become human, that is, the exercise of identity is a process of humanization”, which occurs

with others. Humanization is not a privilege for some, but it is a thought process as a right for everyone. It is a process that I-you/other constantly seeks to “become more fully human as a social, historical, thinking, communicating, transformative, creative person, who participates in the world and with the world” (SALAZAR, 2013, p. 126, our translation). This means that the subjects (I-you/other) become human beings at every moment.

And as an ethical act, it presupposes the freedom of the other to also participate, dialogue, communicate and decide, that is, to contradict one another. This should not be done *by* and *for* him, but *with* him. The Freirean ethical notion denotes the search for coherence between thinking and conscious and intentional action, with the liberation of the oppressed as a process. According to Freire (2001, p. 65, our deletion, our translation),

[...] it is not just knowing a theory of the oppressed with its various and multiple identities; It is also necessary to know how to position oneself - ethically - face to face with the multiple and stratified identities generated by the history of oppression.

Ethical action makes it possible to recognize the other as a subject dedicated to being more, with the perspective of humanizing themselves in communion, a subject that is constructed in the dialogical relationship with peers in a historical and social way in the world, using words. This implies living together and respecting those who are different, immersed in reality to transform it “from any form of silencing or oppression that nullifies the Other, that tries to condition it to an object” (BENTES; MERCÊS; LOUREIRO, 2020, p. 14, our translation). Freirean humanization leads to otherness and this is the process for the first. Freire's proposal is that humanization is a procedure that human beings acquire as a way of life in the face of its opposite, which is dehumanization.

Thus, the otherness, as a non-self and as a you/other, refers to the other who wants to assume his ontological vocation in the process of humanization as a subject of thought, of freedom who knows his interdependent and inter-constituent identity. We will address this discussion of freedom in the face of ethical action in relation to others in the following item. Her freedom and consciousness have support and meaning in the existence of others. And this entire process requires a liberating and humanizing educational action from the other (DJU, 2021). The relationship between identity and difference, which occurs with and for the world, is the foundation for the educational process.

Freedom in Freire as an ethics of otherness

In recent years, the discussion about freedom has become recurrent, specifically in Brazil, mainly in the context of the pandemic, caused by Covid-19, and politics. In fact, there are not two contexts, but one, because they are summarized in speeches with a political-economic purpose. This discussion is valid, because we understand that freedom is one of the fundamental values of human beings and complementary to others, such as life, justice, solidarity. The problem is that it has been capitalized on from a fascist-fundamentalist interpretation in the Brazilian context to impose the worldview of some on others, in an authoritarian way (PY, 2020).

Freedom appears in Freire as a radicality of love, dialogue, humility and sympathy always with others, opposing oppression, false generosity and mere assistance, which do not aim at social transformation (FREIRE, 1987). This means that it should not be thought of in isolation from the other. Therefore, your search should not be based on selfish and alienating individual interests, but rather on meeting the other, at the service of the other's existential experience. Freedom is characteristic of the human being, that is, it makes him constantly human. In other words, it allows him to discern, as a subject of his existence, to seek knowledge increasingly as a possibility for his humanization. This is the historical and natural vocation of the human being. Through freedom, the individual integrates into their context to transform it; lives its vocation to decide, choose, recreate and be more. Without this mark of freedom in humans, according to Freire (2006, p. 50, our translation), this “remains a merely adjusted or accommodated being”. In oppression, there is no such human characteristic. Therefore, the other cannot exercise his action as also a subject of the process.

The idea of freedom as radicalization from the perspective of Freire's ethical action implies the rootedness and critical and communicative choice that human beings make. This means that freedom leads the individual to dialogue with others. Freire (2006, p. 58, our translation) says:

The radical man in his choice does not deny the other's right to choose. You do not intend to impose your choice. Talk about it. He is convinced of his rightness, but respects the other person's right to also believe that he is right. Try to convince and convert, not crush your opponent. However, he has a duty, as a matter of love, to react to the violence of those who seek to impose silence on him.

This thought by Freire leads us to analyze some fallacious speeches in the current pandemic and political context about freedom, made by some individuals. We characterize them

as 'fallacious' due to the fact that they maximize despotic wills over those of the other(s). Examples of these speeches are given by the former president of the republic, Jair Bolsonaro, and shared on digital networks by his supporters (politicians, businesspeople, digital influencers). Faced with the restriction on coming and going as a measure to contain the contamination of Covid-19, the former president said in a speech about the delivery of swords to midshipmen at the Naval Academy, dated 12/12/2020, opposing this measure health: "Our freedom is priceless, it is worth more than life itself" (BOLSONARO..., 2020b). And at the beginning of June 2022, he called on his supporters to wage war against what he called "thieves of our freedom" (SOARES, 2022). And more recently, in his speech during the Summit of the Americas, dated 06/10/2022, the president said that "In Brazil, it is already understood that freedom is a greater good than life itself" (TUVUCA, 2022). It is good to remember that this type of speech is part of the former president's *modus operandi* with his group of supporters. These speeches are quickly posted on the networks, tendentiously, by their supporters, apparent "new opinion leaders in bringing together ideas and arguments around messages that have great reaching power" (CARREIRO; SILVA; FREIRE, 2022, p. 55, our translation).

In these speeches, it is important to analyze two ideas to understand the conception we have of freedom: what the president refers to as 'our freedom' and what "is understood". "Our" is a possessive pronoun with the characteristics of an adjective, as it accompanies the name "freedom". This pronoun indicates possession between the person of the speech (in this case Bolsonaro) and the thing possessed (freedom). Speaking on behalf of Brazilians, being president of the republic, "ours" would designate all Brazilians, that is, the freedom of all Brazilians. However, in the analysis made by Azevedo (2022), the president's 'our freedom' refers to his freedom, that of his group, that of his allies, supporters, of those who think like him. With regard to "if understood", it is a pronominal verb preceded by place 'in Brazil', giving the idea that this is the common conception of freedom that we have in Brazil. Wouldn't it just be him and his groups? Thus, 'our freedom' is not that of those he and his supporters classify as 'enemies', labeled 'communists'. In other words, they deny the freedom of those who do not share their thoughts, interests and values. Therefore, it is a fallacy to state that "in Brazil, freedom is understood as a good greater than life", since this understanding belongs to him and those who share his way of thinking.

This reflects Petry's (2021) idea about Bolsonaro's speeches, that such speeches defend the private interests of the president and the groups that support him. Freedom here, referred to as 'ours' and 'understood in Brazil', is so privatizing that it becomes despotic, excluding that of

the other(s). This is unlimited individual freedom, that is, above any limit that serves to fulfill selfish and alienating desires and maintain oppressive privileges. It refuses dialogue and imposes its practice without considering evidence that contradicts it. Authoritarianism and sectarianization are characteristics of this *modus operandi*, which Freire (1987) understands to be emasculating due to the fanaticism on which it is nourished; mythical, alienating, as it transforms reality into an apparent reality, which, therefore, cannot be changed.

Freire criticizes this individual freedom, in terms of imposing, carrying out and maintaining the will of the oppressors, when he says that the “unlimited will is the despotic will, denying other wills and, strictly speaking, of itself. It is the illicit will of the 'owners of the world'” (FREIRE, 2000, p. 18, our translation). The freedom we defend does not give the individual/ruler the right to override their despotic wills and subjugate the wills of others. From the Freirean ethical perspective, freedom can be spoken of, authentically, in the actions of subjects who assume their limits and who propose constant maturation in the face of the freedom of the other(s). In Freire's understanding (2011, p. 103, our translation), “Freedom matures in confrontation with other freedoms, in the defense of one's rights in the face of the authority of parents, teachers, and the State”. The freedom of the individual dialogues with the freedom of others for the transformation of society. In other words, the freedom of one is realized in the freedom of the other. And it is not achieved individually, but “collectively and socially. This does not mean that the singularities of experiencing freedom are not respected, but that, as an effectively generating word, freedom is realized on social bases” (MOREIRA; PULINO, 2021, p. 8-9, our translation).

Freire understands that every human being is a historical and social subject. The constitution of each subject occurs due to sociability. In this sense, human action is social, in such a way that the actions of some reflect on the way of life of others. Freire took a critical position in the face of normative ethics embodied in legalism, which can degenerate into hypocrisy or pharisaism. For the author, the notion of “universal human ethics” constitutes a principle of action in the world and laws and rules must be conditioned to it. In this reasoning, the author recognizes the need for social organization supported by laws and norms and criticizes the transgression of ethics, as a transgression of the universal ethics of human beings. Freire is not opposed to punishing transgression, as long as it is ensured that the punishment itself does not transgress the humanity of the human being.

We emphasize that, from a historical point of view, the transgression of human ethics was endorsed by legislation and encouraged by political leaders, to the point that the population

tolerated and reinforced dehumanizing practices in the name of patriotism and obedience to tradition and laws, persecuting those who they wanted to preserve life, as occurred in slavery, Nazism and dictatorship, and in conservative movements such as the *Ku Klux Klan*, which suppressed the dignity of human freedom and justified violence. And, we are concerned to think that these tragedies that convinced nations to tolerate killings in favor of patriotic freedom, began with similar defamatory speeches and media resources, in which specific groups were blamed for the economy and social problems, accusing them of overriding human rights of traditional national families (ALMEIDA, 2016; NOBREGA, 2018). Thus, in the name of a freedom that favors some, legalized injustices are installed to the detriment of others. In Brazil, to maintain their privileges and oppression of indigenous people, according to Alves-Melo (2022), Brazilian elites circumvented, with fallacious speeches about freedom, the existing laws that defended the freedom of indigenous people to continue to enslave them through authoritarianism, that is, they resist giving up their privileges. In Virginio's opinion (2021, p. 13), "such groups, in the past and present, struggle to prevent the majority of the population from overcoming the effects of authoritarian and unequal social relations that have separated them from the people"

Authoritarianism and the practice of violence are ingrained in social behavior to the point where parents themselves hit their children as a corrective to their behavior. In this sense, the appeal to traditional values refers, in the popular sense, to a regression to authoritarianism with roots in patriarchalism (SANTOS, 2022). We consider it important, based on Freire's postulate, to think about the orientation of human actions by humanizing and liberating principles of moral conscience, as opposed to legalistic action based on punishment, bargaining, social or existential adequacy, to enter into a conscience for practice cooperative, supportive, dialogical and focused on the face of others (FUCUHARA, 2021). For Freire (1997), immorality lies in the silenced voice, in banned bodies, in the voice that falsifies the truth to lie, deceive, deform, and in the fact of thinking that one has an unlimited right to say what one wants about the world and others. The author criticizes the irresponsible voice that lies without feeling bad and still expects favorable results for the lying plans.

Thus, it is relevant to think about an education that forms an ethical awareness, which considers the universality of human appreciation and dignity of all people (FREIRE, 2011, 2002). In other words, Freire's otherness and freedom require a formation of conscience that guides humanizing actions, not to a moralistic obedience for mere fear of being punished or for desiring adequacy and personal prestige, but to praise social justice, based on autonomy and

freedom to guide one's own moral principles (FUCUHARA, 2021). Our argument is based on the importance of an ethical education that is guided by the appreciation of others, that trains people to act with empathy even when no one is looking⁸, that educates them to a conscience that chooses to consider the freedom of others even if they have the freedom to act as you wish, as this is the moral conscience that would survive the possession of a Gyges ring, an autonomous and conscious mind that considers the intrinsic freedom of human nature and its dialogical capacity, respecting the place of speech in society. If the desire for freedom is our vocation, then it must imply "a change of paradigms, in which education is carried out, reflecting and acting consciously, in everyday pedagogical practice, to transform it" (SANTOS; VALENTE; CORTEZ; ASSAD; VOGAS, 2021, p. 2748, our translation).

Freire's concepts of otherness and freedom, seen above, provoke an education that takes reality as an object of study to transform it with others. And this requires a transcendence of subjects to be more. Liberating education makes it possible to problematize reality with the aim of knowing it more and transforming it. In other words, it provides space for critical, dialogic thinking and participation for all subjects in the educational process. The transformation of reality implies the possibility of transforming the individual and the other through dialogue, freeing oneself from the authoritarian educational system, whose content and values are imposed and serve as a mechanism to continue the domination and privileges of the elites.

Freire calls this last educational system 'banking education', which he contrasts with liberating or problematizing education. In the first, pedagogical action involves a vertical relationship between the educator and the students, in which the educator is the holder of knowledge and thought and prescribes and transmits them to the students. And these are nothing more than the objects that peacefully receive the knowledge thought by the educator, and act in accordance with this prescription. This idea does justice to people who use fallacious speeches about freedom to prescribe their thoughts and beliefs to others, without the possibility of contradiction, of problematization. It is no surprise that these people defend an education system that has this pedagogical action, whose purpose is to form individuals who are comfortable with the situation of silencing words, who do not problematize speech, and thus

⁸In ancient Greece, mythological teaching predominated that orally passed down generations, reinforcing obedience out of fear of punishment from the gods and destiny, using cause and consequence discourses attributed according to attitudes. In this context, Plato (2002) gave new meaning to mythology and contrasted its moralizing function by narrating the Myth of Gyges, in which he highlighted the importance of a morality that transcends the mere act of appearance and fear of punishment. Gyges was an example of conduct and a good citizen for the city, until he found a ring that had the power to make him invisible and considered the possibility of not being seen as a guarantee of impunity, and thus gave vent to his evil, to his own desire to achieve everything he wanted without worrying about the people he harmed while achieving his goals.

easily submit to the current oppressive and authoritarian power. This is what Freire (1987, p. 60) says: “In truth, what the oppressors intend 'is to transform the mentality of the oppressed and not the situation that oppresses them', and this so that, by better adapting them to this situation, the better dominate them.” Just to mention one example, without intending to explore this discussion, we bring the case of the civic-military education model that the nation's current rulers are obsessed with implementing in Brazilian schools. Contrary to the possibility of liberating education, they align themselves “with 'traditional', 'conservative' practices in the line of so-called 'banking' education, in which, being one of the marks of oppression, the act of 'depositing' information/knowledge by the (a) teacher in students is the keynote” (PEREIRA; SARTORI, 2020, p. 652, our translation).

Education, for Paulo Freire (2006), must be the process for liberation and, therefore, it is liberating through dialogue, because it enables critical, rigorous and loving knowledge to educational subjects, in which no knowledge overlaps the other. Interpreting this Freirean understanding, Machado (2012, p. 27, our translation) says:

From the perspective of liberating education, education has a political character, aims to awaken critical consciousness and promote dialogue with the subjects involved in the process. This means understanding that subjects are beings of relationship and capable of constantly intervening in the world, that is, they are not just beings in the world, but with the world. This presupposes understanding the plurality of knowledge that is generated in these relationships established with the world, through dialogue that problematizes this being with the world.

In liberating education, dialogue indicates ethical action that respects the reading of the other's world and considers educational subjects as beings in permanent construction. In other words, ethical action enables a horizontal relationship, with dialogicity as a center of permanent learning to transform reality. And it makes it possible to deal with the adversities that make up the scenario of education as a process of liberation.

In Freire (1987, 2000), the human dimension is understood as being dialogical and for freedom, therefore, all educational training should be for “man's dialogue with man and his circumstances” (FREIRE, 2002, p. 36, our translation), and not for a massification of thought, a dissociation of ideas, a 'mental prison'. The concept of otherness is intertwined with that of freedom, when Freire understands that education should be an act of love, and love is commitment, it is engaging in the fight for freedom, it is liberating and not manipulating, not tolerating any act of sadism and authoritarianism. There is no love and freedom where there is no dialogue, where human nature is not respected, where the right to speak is not granted, where

the other is not considered and included in relationships that involve the common world. Human nature is expressed in the dialogic act, which is why education is dialoguing together, it is experiencing freedom together with others as a possibility of 'being more' and preparing oneself for a courageous stance “in the face of the problems of one's time and space”. (FREIRE, 1967, p. 93, our translation).

Ethical freedom preserves the other(s). And in the face of mistakes, domination and injustices that oppress and hinder our reciprocal existence towards freedom, a liberating, humanizing education is of fundamental importance, as it is in the liberating process that we find possibilities to build bases to support the praxis of a humanizing and democratic, which starts from the formation of a dialogical and social moral conscience for an ethical world that preserves the human life of everyone above all else.

Final remarks

Faced with misconceptions in which social freedom is understood as individual or group freedom, and that human life is considered secondary to the detriment of economic power, it was possible to rescue Paulo Freire's philosophy of education to think about the importance of ethics of the “universal appreciation of the human being” and the importance of an education that enhances life, so that it can be expressed in social humanization, which involves not only the individual, but their other people.

Freedom, which is authoritarian and, at the same time, licentious in nature, involves the ethical responsibility of understanding it as a social freedom, which is not only yours, but involves others aiming at a continuous process of liberation from social oppression. Authoritarianism and licentiousness consider freedom unilaterally and exclude others from their scope as subjects of conscience and rights, leaving it up to them to create a process of liberation from this oppression, avoiding reproducing it. Based on the ethics of otherness, centered on consideration for the other, in a scenario marked by oppression and the pandemic, the search for liberation implies the collective awareness of people dedicated to preserving health, the environment and social well-being. They are committed to practices aimed at mitigating hunger, exploitation, containing the spread of the virus, which could result in shorter periods of social isolation, reducing economic impacts and preserving lives that have been lost. This aims to avoid leaving widespread sadness for family and friends. This perception at such a recent past highlights human fragility in resisting fascist ideologies and regimes, pandemics,

wars and other possible atrocities that could take hold in our society. But it reveals the need for a liberating education that is guided by the awareness of otherness, which we believe is a possible way to counter these barbarities.

In contrast to the notion of individualistic, competitive and exclusionary freedom as an oppressive ideology, otherness considers the humanity in oneself and in others. Freire understood oppression as dehumanization, as the denial of otherness, in which one class is constructed to the detriment of another, creating mechanisms of alienation, silencing and making men and women mere spectators and not active subjects of their history. Only the awareness-raising dialogue between these beings that coexist could bring understanding of the context, the dimension of oppression and the historical notion in which they find themselves inserted, so that together they can become aware in search of their liberation. The Other does not exist alone, but socially, as beings responsible for the liberation of their world. Otherness involves both seeing oneself in others in a supportive and humanizing way and dialoguing with them, to together problematize and transform their stories and their shared world.

Freedom for Freire is a transformative process in society. He does not restrict it to a personal achievement, which subjugates or rises above others, on the contrary, it rescues the very human essence of freedom, considering that dialogue is also an existential condition and this involves the other. Thus, social engagement in search of a liberation process is a humanizing process, as it restores the essential potential for an emancipatory stance in society. Hence the importance of teaching that aims to engage young people, men and women, in search of their humanization, their liberation.

An education along these lines would enable a society that understands itself as a community, in which the tragedy of one is understood as the general tragedy, and the search for security and emancipation is a common good, to be achieved by everyone. An ethical education that affirms the appreciation of others, counteracts selfish, individualistic, classist and hateful discourses to be a humanizing education, which promotes autonomous cooperation, rescuing the principles of otherness and human freedom. Thus, the possibility of an ethical society would come closer, which adopts measures to preserve life, which dialogues about risks and seeks to reduce damage, valuing humanity, be it in any person.

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