

THE DIALECTICS AND THE OPPOSITION AGAINST HEGEMONIC IN THE SCHOOL SPACE: CONFLUENCES BETWEEN MARX AND GRAMSCI

A DIALÉTICA E A LUTA CONTRA-HEGEMÔNICA NO ESPAÇO ESCOLAR: CONFLUÊNCIAS ENTRE MARX E GRAMSCI

LA DIALÉCTICA Y LA LUCHA CONTRA LA HEGEMÓNICA EN EL ESPACIO ESCOLAR: CONFLUENCIAS ENTRE MARX Y GRAMSCI



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ABSTRACT: Through a critical descriptive study, based on the works of Marx and Gramsci, the aim is to reflect on the evidence that corroborates the relevance of the dialectical movement, regarding the struggle against hegemonic in the school space. The text was constructed from qualitative bibliographic research. It is reflected that historical materialism recognized the existence of external reality independently of consciousness and that dialectics constitutes itself as a transforming and transitory force. It is inferred about the role of the school and the teacher, such that they are able to announce the contrasts between the type of society and culture it represents. It is understood that the studied presuppositions are intertwined to produce actions that aim to unveil reality, promoting social transformation, through the exercise of dialectics.

KEYWORDS: Historical and Dialectical Materialism. Dialectic. Social Transformation.

RESUMO: Por meio de um estudo descritivo crítico, embasado nas obras de Marx e Gramsci, tem-se como intuito refletir sobre as evidências que corroborem com a importância do movimento dialético, no que concerne a luta contra-hegemônica no espaço escolar. O texto foi constituído a partir de uma pesquisa qualitativa de cunho bibliográfico. Reflete-se que o materialismo histórico admitiu a existência da realidade exterior de maneira independente da consciência e que a dialética se constitui como força transformadora e transitória. Infere-se sobre o papel da escola e do professor, no sentido de que sejam capazes de anunciar as disparidades entre o tipo de sociedade e de cultura que ela representa. Compreende-se que os pressupostos estudados estão imbricados a produzir ações que visem desvelar a realidade promovendo a transformação social, pelo exercício da dialética.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Materialismo Histórico e Dialético. Dialética. Transformação social.

RESUMEN: Mediante un estudio descriptivo crítico, basado en los trabajos de Marx y Gramsci, se busca reflexionar sobre las evidencias que corroboran la relevancia del movimiento dialéctico, en torno a la lucha contra lo hegemónico en el espacio escolar. El texto se constituyó a partir de una investigación bibliográfica cualitativa. Se refleja que el materialismo histórico reconoció la existencia de la realidad externa independientemente de la conciencia y que la dialéctica se constituye como fuerza transformadora y transitoria. Se infiere sobre el papel de la escuela y el docente, de manera que son capaces de anunciar los contrastes entre el tipo de sociedad y la cultura que representa. Se entiende que los presupuestos estudiados se entrelazan para producir acciones que pretenden desvelar la realidad, promoviendo la transformación social, a través del ejercicio de la dialéctica.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Materialismo histórico y dialéctico. Dialéctico. Transformación Social.

Initial remarks

Marxism is a term constructed as a synonym for historical and dialectical materialism, as Karl Marx is considered the central author of the formulations that propose the concreteness of this philosophical conception, which is treated by many scholars as the philosophy of transformation, as its assumptions are directly committed to a ⁴revolutionary praxis.

It is worth noting that Marx did not dedicate himself to writing a specific text on the methodological issue and it is admitted that some systematized considerations can be found in the work *Gundrisse*, dated 1857. The study of his work makes it possible to realize that, more than explaining about the method, Marx operated from assumptions that were constituted as categories that gained centrality and gave shape to the methodological approach.

Driven by dissatisfaction with the societal model, Karl Marx sought to understand the reality in which he was inserted and, to this end, analyzed the main theoretical sources of his time: classical German philosophy, English political economy and French politics. In an investigative movement of reflective intensity, he revealed the limits of each theory, using these findings to establish the concreteness of his thinking. Thus, he developed a critique of Hegel's idealist philosophy, which had as its interpretative principle the world of ideas, in which the real is constituted from the consciousness of the human being, such that the full and concrete reality is of a spiritual nature.

This criticism occurred in a forceful way in the work *The German Ideology*, written by Marx and Engels (2007), being the theoretical moment in which the authors elevated historical materialism to its maturity. In a previous work, *Economic-Philosophical Manuscripts*, Marx (2010) had already dealt with the categories of work and alienation, but it is in the work *The German Ideology* that the thinkers developed in detail the criticisms of the Young Hegelians or left Hegelians, as they were nominated for opposing the German absolute monarchy. In this work, such categories were taken up and articulated in a movement that took shape from a theory about the historical conditions of production and reproduction of human life.

The reflections of Marx and Engels were constituting form and consistency to a materialist conception. Historical materialism, for Marx and Engels (s/d), is linked to the conception that the real precedes the social being and, consequently, the social being acts to transform this same real. With this, it is evident that man is a social being and that he is

⁴ Praxis is a founding category in historical and dialectical materialism, as it advocates generating conscious and critical transformative actions in reality, which promotes overcoming the dichotomy between theory and practice. For Marx and Engels (2007), it is in praxis that man has to prove truth, prove reality and power, manifesting the earthly character of his thinking.

constituted from the processes he experiences: economic, social, cultural and political, which determine him and, at the same time, are determined by him.

Based on these assumptions, dialectics took a central place in historical materialism, in such a way that it is not only a method for arriving at the truth, but constitutes itself as “[...] a conception of man, society and the relationship man-world” (Gadotti, 2012, p. 18). Thus, it is possible to affirm that Marx's method, which is based on materiality, historicity and dialectics, configures it as a philosophy of transformation, this proposition being ratified by Gramsci (1999), when referring to the understanding of history with the possibility of overcoming through action, since there is no separation between history and philosophy, but it makes men conscious and responsible for history and “[...] not the playthings of fatality, insofar as their principles, that is, its ideals, sparks that emerge from social struggles, are precisely stimuli to praxis that, through its action, is subverted” (Gramsci, 1999, p. 88).

According to Simionatto (2011), the theoretical reflection proposed by Gramsci, as a critique of politics, operates the real based on the categories that emerge from the abstract to the concrete, from the movement from appearance to essence, also, from the singular to the universal and vice versa. In this way, the proposal for categorical reflection found in Gramscian writings, according to Simionatto (2011), captures the movement of the social, understanding the game of relationships that allow reality to be revealed, ultimately revealing the contradictions that constitute the real.

Thus, initially, Gramsci set out to analyze how the hegemonic class is structured, not only with the aim of understanding how it was consolidated, but, above all, what mechanisms guaranteed its maintenance. However, the thinker's interest was not restricted to mere interpretation, after all he is a Marxist who does not consider the true philosopher to be a contemplator, but rather someone who is committed to transforming the world, in common with Marx and Engels (2007). Hence, in a movement of syncretism, analysis and synthesis, Gramsci sought strategies for the revolution of the proletariat, towards a new hegemony.

With this focus, the proposed article aims to correlate school spaces with the counter-hegemonic struggle, which has as its articulating axis the exercise of contradiction, in which the dialectical movement is considered as the transformative and revolutionary force. The aim is, based on the confluences between Marx and Gramsci, to reflect on the possibilities of social transformation.

The text is described as follows: **The constitution of historical materialism** – reflects on historical materialism, which recognized the existence of external reality in a way

dissociated from man's consciousness; **Dialectics and the exercise of contradiction** – it is argued that the propositions that led to debates about dialectics throughout history contributed to strengthening the conceptions of the world that have their ontological foundation in movement, including the materialism of Marx and Engels; **Dialectics based on considerations in Marx and Engels** – dialectics is understood as a transformative force which is characterized by transience, as well as by its critical and revolutionary essence; **The school and the unity between theory and practice** – we infer a school that is capable of announcing the discrepancies between the type of culture and society it represents; and **Confluences between Marx and Gramsci** – problematizes the possibilities of interfering in the reality of subjects. Afterwards, the **final considerations** are described and the **references follow**.

The constitution of historical materialism

As preliminarily discussed, the criticism of Hegelian idealist philosophy occurred in a fierce way in the work *The German Ideology*, written by Marx and Engels (2007). Inserted in this conception, the authors stated that contrary to German philosophy, which proposed the action of descending from heaven to earth, the proposal was, precisely, the opposite, that is, to rise from earth to heaven.

That is, we don't start from what men say, imagine or represent; nor of men thought, imagined and represented to, from there, reach men of flesh and blood; It starts with really active men and, based on their real-life process, also exposes the development of ideological reflections and echoes of this life process (Marx; Engels, 2007, p. 94, our translation).

Marx and Engels criticized the new Hegelians, who argued that they had surpassed Hegel, but they did so in certain aspects, demonstrating that they remained tied to idealism in the same way as the old Hegelians, confronting Hegelian thought from abstract thought, that is, from precepts split within the very theoretical basis on which they made the criticism.

Still for the authors, with the intention of justifying such a stance, the young Hegelians, who sought to shake the world with their formulations, stated that they only fought against the so-called phraseologies and, as a result, by forgetting that these phraseologies were not opposed to anything other than of themselves, they did not fight the real world.

Marx and Engels (2007) opposed this proposal from the Young Hegelians, justifying that such criticisms lacked consistency and were nothing more than flourishes with pretensions to great discoveries. Going further, they expressed: “None of these philosophers had the idea to

ask about the connection between German philosophy and German reality, about the connection of their criticism with their own material environment” (Marx; Engels, 2007, p. 84).

They also emphasized that for philosophers, thought was carried out through language and, remaining enchanted by thought, they made language its own place, which would not go beyond phraseology, and, therefore, did not reach life. In this context, the arduous activity was “[...] descending from the world of thought to the real world” (Marx; Engels, 2007, p. 429).

Descending into the real world is, from the Marxist perspective, understanding reality as something conceived by men in relationships with each other and in relationship with the world in which they live, producing their own existence. This difficulty is not limited to the idealist approaches based on Hegel, already mentioned, but is also present in Feuerbach's materialism, object of criticism by Marx and Engels in the work *The German Ideology*.

Feuerbach's materialism, despite being the focus of criticism, contributed significantly to the formulations of historical and dialectical materialism carried out by Marx and Engels, as can be seen in Marx's writings: “Feuerbach is the only one who has a similar relationship with Hegelian dialectics, critical behavior, and [the only one] who made true discoveries in this domain, [he is] in general the true triumphant (Überwinder) of old philosophy” (Marx, 2010, p. 117, emphasis added).

Feuerbach elaborated his criticism regarding religion, stating that God is a creation of man, to which he submits. In this way, God becomes the alienation of the human essence, insofar as man has granted him powers to control his own life. In this perspective, God ceased to be the center for man to assume such a position, taking into account the relationship between man/nature, placing emphasis on the real/concrete, which began to exist independently of men's consciousness.

This proposition was based on a vision opposed to Hegelian idealism, that is, on a materialist basis, enabling the creation of loopholes that were fundamental to Marx and Engels' conception of materialism. For the same authors, when Feuerbach conveyed that the religious world was an illusion of the earthly world, the concern arose as to how it would be possible for men to create these illusions, in the field of ideas. The questioning opened up a possibility for the constitution of a materialist view of the world, not free from assumptions, but, empirically, intertwined with material assumptions, thus characterizing itself as the first critical world view.

Feuerbach's contemplative materialism, Marx and Engels did not refrain from analyzing and criticizing it, such that the criticism fell on the fact that Feuerbach did not realize that man was inserted in a concrete reality, and that this reality is not something inert, but subject to

change. This feat expressed the deterministic and ahistorical character of this materialism, thus assuming as Feuerbach 's main inaccuracy that “[...] the object [Gegenstand], reality, the sensible, is only apprehended in the form of the object [Objekt], or contemplation, but not as a sensitive human activity, as a practice, not subjectively” (Marx; Engels, 2007, p. 533, authors’ emphasis).

Marx's reflections created consistency in a materialist conception, such that he managed to highlight that man is a social being that is constituted from the processes he experiences, such as the economic, social, cultural and political processes, which determine him and They are also determined by man himself.

From the above, it can be seen that historical materialism recognized the existence of external reality separately from man's consciousness, however, it is necessary to think about relative independence, since such external reality is constituted from the movement of man, through work, in favor of his survival, in which as a result of his own action “[...] drives, regulates and controls his material exchange with nature” (Marx, 2012, p. 211). This makes it possible to argue that reality, in its different dimensions, is a product of human activity, ultimately becoming a product of the movement of man and nature, thus assuming dialectics as one of its founding elements.

For Gadotti (2012), dialectics obtained a central space in the proposed foundation and can be considered not only as a method to reach the truth, but a conception of man and society, associated with the subject's relationships with and in the world. Therefore, it is of fundamental importance to dedicate a space to address it. However, this endeavor must be carried out with the awareness that the discussion about dialectics is not limited to Hegelian and Marxist assumptions, constructed as the new dialectic.

Dialectics and the exercise of contradiction

Ancient philosophy dealt with the dialectical movement with different understandings over time, such that Konder (1981) stated that, in Greece, the dialectical category was called the art of dialogue, evolving into the understanding that through dialogue is capable of developing arguments to the point of constructing the definition and distinction of the concepts involved. With this, we arrive at the formulation of a thesis, in the specific sense, with this dialogue going beyond disinterested conversation, but marked by a movement of different parties in search of understanding the world.

Later, still for Konder (1981), dialectics began to be used as a way for man to think about the contradictions inherent in reality itself and the condition of permanent transformation that is part of its essence. For Gadotti (2012), the greatest representative of this conception is Heraclitus who, denying the stability of being, through transformation, brought concern to the Greeks, who, for the most part, calmly welcomed the conception of Parmenides, who stated that movement was an illusion and that everything was immutable.

After being repressed by the metaphysical conception, dialectics lost strength, but remained alive in the thoughts of philosophers, as was the case with Aristotle. In the words of Gadotti (2012), “[...] Aristotle managed to reconcile Heraclitus and Parmenides with his theory on act and potency: changes exist, but they are only updates of potentialities that already existed, but had not yet blossomed” (Gadotti, 2012, p. 15).

Dialectics underwent new reformulations in the Middle Ages, a time of feudal societies, in which the idea of movement and transformation gave way to the constancy resulting from social stratification. At this time, the influence of theology was intense and determining, requiring dialectics for survival, as it was necessary to build a space for philosophy, which was attempted by some philosophers, but without success.

In the 14th century, the constancy present in feudalism was modified by the development of commerce, creating space for movement and reflection to provide a resurgence of dialectics. With the ever-increasing expansion of commerce, which gave rise to an effervescence of inferences, we arrived at the time of the Renaissance, a period of many changes, such that new airs were present at a time when understanding of the human being, gained contours, making the idea of a static being tied to theological questions increasingly distant. Here we can see a new moment in which, with the Renaissance, dialectics “[...] could leave the underground in which it had been forced to live for several centuries: it left its refuge and came into the light of day” (Konder, 1981, p. 14). Yet for the author, the various philosophers of the 17th century brought elements of dialectics into their thoughts, but they did so focused on understanding being, not considering social dynamics, such that they carried out their formulations in an environment closed to questions of social structures, demonstrating a view of history devoid of interest.

In the following century, philosophers, amidst the articulations preceding the French Revolution, understood that the feudal world was no longer capable of sustaining itself and accepted the emergence of a new world. This movement, however, was carried out without

reflection on its internal contradictions, not configuring itself as a movement that would fuel the development of dialectics.

Contrary to other Enlightenment philosophers, Diderot ⁵constructed the understanding that “[...] the individual was conditioned by a broader movement, by changes in the society in which he lived” (Konder, 1981, p. 16). Still in the 17th century, the figure of Rousseau contributed to the dialectic, because even though there were numerous divergences of conceptions with Diderot, both were not intimidated by the order's conservative ideology.

The political conflicts at the end of the 18th century and also those at the beginning of the 19th century became so intense that they ended up even reflecting on philosophy, so that in this scenario, three scholars assumed undeniably important roles in dialectics: Kant, Hegel and Marx.

The philosopher Kant gained relevance by placing knowledge at the center of his philosophy, turning his interest to pure reason, so much so that he stated that “[...] in 'pure reason' itself (prior to experience) certain contradictions existed – the 'antinomies' – which could never be expelled from thought by any logic” (Konder, 1981, p. 21-22, emphasis added). Thus, Kant considered dialectics as an illusion, since it had subjective aspects as a pass.

Friedrich Hegel opposed Kant regarding contradiction being constituted only as a dimension of consciousness. According to him, contradiction is present in objective reality. What brings the two together is the conception “[...] that the human subject is essentially active and is always interfering in reality” (Konder, 1981, p. 22).

Hegel's conceptions served as a basis for Marx, who, based on a materialist foundation, overcame Hegel's idealist conceptions. For Freitas (2014), detailing the course of dialectics made it possible to understand two distinct moments: that of ancient dialectics, from Heráclitus to Kant, in which despite the differences in formulations there was the principle in common that opposites cannot meet in the same proposition; and that of the new dialectic, with Hegel and Marx, who are contrary to this principle, as explained by Fouquié.

For Fouquié (1974), in ancient dialectics, contradiction constitutes an absolute law of both things and the spirit, such that a thing cannot be and not be simultaneously. Returning to Freitas (2014), when thought is induced to constitute the affirmation of two propositions that contradict each other, one of these propositions would necessarily become wrong.

In another way, the new dialectic accepted the contradiction in things that simultaneously are and are not and from the contradiction constructed the essential reason for

⁵ Denis Diderot (1713-1784) was considered a great philosopher of the Enlightenment.

man's activity. For Fouquié (1974), whenever one is led to formulate contrary propositions, it is necessary to overcome the contradiction, without rejecting the alternatives.

The recovery proposed here about dialectics over time made it possible to understand that approaching dialectics means discussing something that has taken on diverse and, at times, antagonistic connotations. The propositions that led to debates about dialectics throughout history contributed to strengthening the conceptions of the world that have their ontological foundation in movement, including the materialism of Marx and Engels.

Dialectics based on the considerations of Marx and Engels

In the work *The Dialectic of Nature*, Engels (2000) alluded to movement, as far as dialectics is concerned, when referring to the new conception of nature, stating that what was considered rigid had become flexible, such that “[...] everything that was fixed was set in motion; everything that was considered eternal became transitory; it had been proven that all of Nature moved in an eternal flux and permanent circulation” (Engels, 2000, p. 23). This movement was characterized by the dynamism that is intrinsic to man and constituted a basic element of historical materialism, which became dialectical.

In the work *Capital*, Marx (2013) in the afterword explained dialectics as a transformative force by stating that dialectics:

[...] in its rational configuration, it constitutes a scandal and a horror for the bourgeoisie and its doctrinal spokesmen, since, in the positive intellection of what exists, it includes, at the same time, the intellection of its negation, of its necessary perishing. Furthermore, it captures the entire form developed in the flow of movement, therefore, including its transitory side; because it does not allow itself to be intimidated by anything and it is, because ultimately, nothing allows itself to be imposed, and it is, in essence, critical and revolutionary (Marx, 2013, p. 91, our translation).

Dynamicity brought to social and historical reality the character of transience, in which nothing is permanent, such that everything is in a constant movement of transformation. According to Lowy (1991), there are no absolute ideas and categories, which are defined and finished, as everything that exists “[...] in human and social life is in perpetual transformation, everything is perishable, everything is subject to the flow of history” (Lowy, 1991, p. 14).

However, to understand human reality, it was necessary, in addition to understanding that reality is in permanent movement, to perceive it through the association of the principle of transience with the principles of totality, qualitative change and contradiction.

For Ciavatta (2001), the principle of totality is based on the understanding that reality is constituted as a coherent whole, so that it can be a set of related situations, the context of an object with its correlations or a structured whole developed and produced as human social action.

According to Freitas (2014), in Marx's proposition, when determining the object of research as a starting point, there is a chaotic representation of the whole and, through a more precise determination, it becomes possible to arrive at concepts each time simpler, considering the idealized concrete.

Thus, it is possible to reach fewer complex determinations and in possession of these determinations, it is necessary to take a reverse path, reaching the concept of the researched object, “[...] but this time not with a chaotic representation of a whole, but with a rich totality of diverse determinations and relationships” (Marx, 1978, p. 116, our translation).

Marx (1978) used the example of considering the concept of population, given the political economy of a country, thus starting by dividing this population. For Rosa (2017), in relation to this division, the author used classes such as the city, the countryside, the sea, as well as mentioning productive branches such as export and import, annual production and consumption, prices of goods and also several other elements.

In the sequence, it is possible to verify that although it seems appropriate to start with the real and concrete, for this case, considering the economy, the population constitutes the basis and the subject of the social action of production as a whole and if examined with precision, of According to Marx, this proves to be a false strategy, as the population becomes an abstraction the moment it does not consider the classes that make it up. Fundamentally, it is necessary to involve elements on which wage labor and capital are based, such that in relation to these, exchange, the division of wage labor, prices, etc. are assumed.

Based on Marx's lecture (1978), if initiated by the population it would be possible to have a chaotic representation of the whole, analytically arriving at simpler concepts. Reaching this point, it would be time to turn around, with the proposal of finding the population, not as a chaotic representation, on the contrary as a totality with countless determinations.

From the above, it is understood that the investigation process takes place having as its starting point an empirical fact, which must be understood as a totality, even if it is presented without clarity, still abstract, as a “[...] understanding the whole precedes the very possibility of deepening the knowledge of the parts” (Konder, 1981, p. 45, our translation). Thus, the process of analyzing the parts involves decomposing and recomposing knowledge.

When reflecting on totality, one is aware that this is just a moment in a process of totalization, because in the end, dialectics “[...] would deny itself, if it crystallized or coagulated its syntheses, refusing to review them, even in the face of changed situations” (Konder, 1981, p. 39, our translation).

For Gadotti (2012), with regard to modified situations, it is essential to keep in mind the principle of qualitative change, that is, the transformation of the totality is configured as a change that occurs through the set of quantitative elements that at a given moment produces the new, qualitatively new. It is noteworthy that the production of something qualitatively new is only effective when the parts that compose it reach a certain level of change, such that the modification of the whole “[...] is more complicated than the modification of each of the elements that make it up.” (Konder, 1981, p. 40, our translation).

This process of modification takes place based on the relationships that occur between the parts of a given totality. In these relationships, it is only possible to think of the whole without denying the parts and to think of the parts without denying the whole. In this movement between totality and partial totalities, there is the presence of mediation, as a reflective process, which allows the understanding of their links beyond the immediate dimension, providing the process of contradiction, recognized by dialectics, according to Konder (1981), as the fundamental principle of movement.

From this perspective, it is stated that the transformation of reality “[...] is only possible because opposing forces coexist within it, tending simultaneously to unity and opposition” (Gadotti, 2012, p. 27, our translation). Thus, according to Araújo (2003), the real is linked to the constant movement of construction of the new, which can only be glimpsed from the old, that is, from the contraction between the two, in which rupture and continuity are present.

The school and the unity between theory and practice

Gramsci reflected on the action of overcoming the historical capitalist bloc, which was linked to the process of cultural and moral elevation, in such a way that the revolution of the proletariat, through the war of position, ⁶would require subjects to take a critical and creative stance towards the world, and such a stance would only be effective through a dialectical relationship between social practices and constructed knowledge.

The same thinker invested in a decisive relationship between knowledge and politics, which made schools central to the counter-hegemonic strategy. Thus, the school, as an ideological arena, is configured as a locus of knowledge construction, being capable of promoting the fragmented and uncritical overcoming of the world, making the subaltern class become a class for itself.

Therefore, according to Freitas (2014), there was a need to occupy educational spaces, take possession of private institutions of hegemony that can serve as a means for revolution, bearing in mind the important role of the teacher, as an organic intellectual, linked to the class that lives of work, in a process of resistance and social transformation.

The school in the society in which we live was designed based on ideological principles and was organized, historically, as a space to reproduce the current system, constituting itself in favor of the interests of the dominant class. For Althusser (1974), the school is the agent in favor of social reproduction, as all students go through it, regardless of social class, who receive influence at different moments of life, influences constituted by the School State Apparatus and by the Family State Apparatus, both intertwined with the interests of the oppressing class.

For Barros, Freitas and Freitas (2021), the school contributes significantly to adapting these students, throughout the years of their schooling, to the current social structure and, in this way, tends to corroborate the maintenance of class society.

Still for the authors, this dichotomy, created by ideological apparatuses, which remains at the service of the dominant class, sustains the current production system, providing a relationship between those who are exploited and those who exploit, establishing which space each one occupies in society.

⁶ War of position is a concept that “[...] directly interacts with the main categories of Gramscian political thought, characterizing its essential moments and guiding its historical analysis, based on the concept of 'hegemony', the result of an intellectual action, morals and politics on those directed” (Cicarelli *in* Liguori e Voza, 2017, p. 360).

The school, in order to maintain acceptance by both classes, established the idea of neutrality, as something without an ideology and not linked to a social class. For Althusser (1974), the school tries, over the years, to instill an idea that there are teachers who speak out in favor of the conscience and freedom of the students who are entrusted to them by their parents or caregivers, establishing a conception that it will be a space in which students will find their freedom and be able to build a path to social advancement, through the knowledge studied and the examples worked on.

For Gramsci (1995), subalternity is something planned and that is internalized in the subjects, in such a way that these subjects treat this subalternity and the division of classes as something natural, so that they are linked, according to the author, to a common sense. This condition means that these subjects do not see beyond what they are subject to, thus not taking a critical look at the position they occupy, behaving in a way that supports the interests of the exploitative minority. On the other hand, Gramsci states that the school also has a transformative character, even though it is linked to the interests of the ruling class.

The transformative character of education mentioned by Gramsci (2000, p. 62) manifests itself when it is possible to recognize that it is not a natural process, but a cultural process, which will depend on the intellectuals who participate in it.

Returning to Barros, Freitas and Freitas (2021), an emancipatory education should not be imposed and organized by the bourgeoisie, but built in the search for a new civilization model, which requires the participation of those who are exploited by the production system, with the contribution of intellectuals linked to this class, requiring organization and systematization, thus being able to function in a coherent way with the needs of those who suffer so much in the society in which it is placed.

It should be noted that the school aimed at workers is generally found in professional education, which is seen as democratic, but which ends up training and inserting subjects into the logic of capital, accentuating social differences. Thus, for Gramsci (2000), school, due to cultural and life conception crises, ends up entering progressive degeneration, ultimately perpetuating differences.

Contrary to this idea of a professional school, with a formative nature for the demands of the ruling class, Gramsci proposes the unitary school. The unitary school aims to expand the general training of subjects, through a single initial school of general, humanistic and formative culture, which will balance “[...] fairly the development of the ability to work manually

(technically, industrially) and the development of intellectual capacity” (Gramsci, 2000, p. 33, our translation).

Gramsci's proposal was intended to reflect on a school that sought something more than the qualification of the workforce, but that promoted the guarantee of access to culture, which would ultimately enable and develop criticality and social autonomy, enabling the members of this society to take a position in the environment in which they are inserted, that is, building emancipation⁷.

In this way, the unitary school would have as its intention the cultural elevation of individuals, in search of a culture that has meaning and that places the subject as part of the historical process in which he is inserted, not being an adhesion to what is in place, ready and finished, but, according to Nosella (1992), it represents the construction of a culture whose purpose is to educate for concrete, historically determined freedom, as opposed to educating for external authoritarianism that defends partial and even individual freedom.

Returning to Freitas (2014), the unitary school focuses on access to culture, in such a way that it sees culture as something alive and that has a true meaning and relationship with life, making man an active part of this process.

Still for the author, Gramsci believed in a historical, dialectical and critical pedagogy, not accepting the facts that are stated, but criticizing and arguing in favor of a formative school. A historical pedagogy based on dialectics, on the principle of contradiction, because in this school at one moment it is in favor of reproducing the dominant ideology and, at another, this ideology is denied, due to the contrast between the first and the reality experienced by the subjects.

Under these conditions, considering the themes that are in dialectical contradiction, men take contradictory positions, often in favor of maintaining oppressive structures, on others, in struggle for transformation.

It is based on this thinker, in his vision of education focused on the action of overcoming common sense, in search of elevation to a superior form of culture and conception of the world, that the teacher will play, as an intellectual, the role of agent of transformation social.

⁷ The term emancipation used by Marx when dealing with the Jewish question leads us to reflect that “[...] human emancipation will only be fully realized when the real individual man has recovered the abstract citizen for himself and has become a *generic entity* in the quality of man individual, in his individual relationships, when man has recognized and organized his “*forces propres*” [own forces] as social forces and, consequently, no longer separates the social force from himself in the form of political force” (MARX, 2010, p. 54). In this perspective, human emancipation is conditioned on overcoming the capitalist civilizational model.

The teacher, when playing his role as an intellectual, organically linked to the subordinate classes, aware of his commitment to social change, needs to build counter-hegemonic pedagogies, so that he can strengthen students, through the knowledge mediated by him. Furthermore, it needs to provide a space that seeks the development of a social conscience that allows students to act in society as critical agents who seek social transformation.

Thus, according to Freitas (2014), it reflects on the important role that education plays in the process of transformation and improvement of society and, therefore, in the condition of allowing to expand the possibilities for individuals to live and coexist better. It is through this education that subjects acquire the existential conditions essential to the exercise and conscious participation in the universe of which they are part, that is, conditions to behave as citizens.

The role of the teacher becomes fundamental insofar as he is able to contribute to the cultural elevation of the population, as well as helping them to form a coherent representation of reality, achieving a degree of politicization, enabling them to carry out their passage, as a social class, coming from common sense, for a superior conception of life. This movement cannot happen in the individuality of men, it is a fundamental condition that it happens in the entire society, becoming hegemonic.

It is recognized that this education proposal is in contradiction at the moment when teachers, in search of social transformation, appropriate institutions whose purpose is to reproduce the dominant culture, since it is these institutions that provide them with the guarantee it gives material life and the conditions for liberation of the oppressed classes.

In order to overcome this conflict, the teacher, according to Gramsci (1999), must be aware of the discrepancies between the type of society and culture he represents and the type of society and culture demonstrated by the students, understanding that his objective is at the same time to enable the liberation and awareness of students, as well as fighting for their rights, seeking a dignified life.

For Gramsci (2000), this awareness is a primary task of education and involves, firstly, the act of denouncing the processes of oppression to which the subordinate classes are subjected, highlighting what men really are as products of the developed historical process.

Thus, for the teacher to be able to play this role, he must be aware of who he is and what he represents in the context in which he is inserted and, in the same way, he must review his practice, as a way of overcoming reproduction, in the search constant for an emancipatory school.

Therefore, in order for the teacher to be able to contribute to the construction of the critical consciousness of his students, he also needs to internally develop an awareness of the role he plays and what he really assumes, in the historical process in which he is inserted, as per Gramsci (1995) is a process of knowing oneself. However, this process of becoming an intellectual, moving from a fragmented worldview to a unitary vision, is not something that happens naturally and it is necessary to invest in the initial and continued training of teachers or future teachers.

The importance of these training processes being worked on dialectically and that, through the principle of contradiction, the subjects can get to know each other, building from this path a unitary vision of the world is emphasized once again.

The questions brought up here support the important ethical and political role that teacher training has, especially at this time when Brazilian public education is suffering setbacks. It becomes urgent to take a careful, and even suspicious, look at the proposals that have been announced and others that have already been implemented, with the aim of ensuring the space for Brazilian public education that has been achieved so far.

Confluences between Marx and Gramsci

Based on the assumptions of Marx and Gramsci, this writing was undertaken, seeking support to problematize a topic that makes it possible to interfere in the reality of subjects, in relation to school spaces, with the purpose of transforming these spaces and focusing on school in the counter-hegemonic struggle, in the challenge of accepting existing contradictions, made possible by the dialectical movement.

In order to clarify the proposition of this movement, we return to Marx (2011) in which the author addresses issues relating to the method of political economy. Marx warns that the population category is an abstraction and that the classes that make it up should not be neglected. Along this path, the elements that compose it must be known, such as wage labor, capital, etc.

For Freitas (2014), it is possible to infer, from Marx's words, that having the research object as a starting point, that is, a chaotic representation, it is necessary to start carrying out an analysis movement, seeking to reach simpler concepts, in order to understand that the movement does not end in this process, being necessary to follow the path back, until reaching the concept of the object, “[...] but this time not with a chaotic representation of a whole, but

with a rich totality of diverse determinations and relationships” (Marx, 1978, p. 116, our translation).

Thus, in line with the Marxist proposition, it is inferred about the relationship between theory and practice, which plays a central role in Gramsci's revolutionary praxis, as an indispensable premise for teacher training. For both authors, the focus is on the search for unity between theory and practice, which allows, based on dialectical movements, the understanding of reality, at different levels of coverage that converge to a critical and coherent vision of the world and so important to social transformation.

Under these conditions, for Marx and Gramsci, the dialectical movement that is established between theory and practice is fundamental and always constitutes a cyclical movement that does not find its end and that, at the same time, moves away from its point of origin. In this way, when thinking about the school space, the teacher, when carrying out this movement, understands himself as a being under construction and in constant formation, bearing in mind the search for knowledge that will enable him to carry out a coherent teaching practice as his conceptions become coherent of society, of man, of education, of school and of his own role.

These conceptions will guide teachers' daily pedagogical choices, which will never have political neutrality and, on the contrary, will prove to be more intense, when it comes to the unity between theory and practice. Assuming the school as a space of contradiction, as opposed to assuming the school as a space of neutrality, proposes, in the authors' view, understanding the school, at times, as transforming, at others, as reproducing the current social order. Every day, the understanding of reality becomes ethical and political, it becomes self-awareness. Based on the above, the movement that goes from syncretism to synthesis is constituted, through analysis, bearing in mind that the path is carried out in a dialectical manner, in which the interdependence of facts makes the whole more than the sum of its parts. Aligning Marx and Gramsci, we can see the action of unveiling reality, revealing the contradictions of reality.

For these movements to happen, Marx and Gramsci perceive reality not as being determined a priori, but as a continuous movement that is constituted from the action of concrete subjects, an action that is imperative, given the importance of positioning in relation to the world, because as Gramsci (2020) tells us when talking about indifference, this:

[...] operates as a force in history. It operates passively, but it operates. It is fatality, it is what cannot be counted; it is what interrupts programs, subverts the best plans; It is the raw matter that rebels against intelligence and suffocates it. What comes next is such that fatality becomes that which cannot

be counted, as that which interrupts programs and subverts plans, that is, it is matter that rebels against intelligence and suffocates it (Gramsci, 2020, p. 32, our translation).

Still for the author, the fatality that tries to dominate history is the illusory appearance of indifference, that is, the facts end up maturing under the manipulation of a few and not subject to any control, such that the history of collective life is constituted, and The people, because they are not concerned, end up ignoring it.

Both Marx and Gramsci support the conviction that men make their history and affirm the existence of determinations. However, even though they are aware of this dynamic, they argue that the more man constitutes himself as a social being, the more he develops class consciousness, the greater his role will be in the construction of a general ethical and political will, in which the collective establishes itself above the individual wishes.

In this way, the school space as one that privileges the dialectical relationship between social practices and constructed knowledge establishes the protagonism of subjects in modifying actions, in producing something new, with the aim of constituting overcoming through action.

With regard to teacher training, it becomes possible to think about the role of these teachers in the educational process, such that they must constantly position themselves as subjects of their own education, assuming the leading role in the construction of their human development and having the commitment to an education that seeks the cultural and moral elevation of students.

It is also necessary to consider the relationship between Marx and Gramsci in relation to the actions of making and remaking the world, as a task of social transformation, promoting, from this, a cultural renewal, which is not given at a specific moment, but it must be present in the existential situations of men.

This work encourages everyone in the school space to take a critical look at reality as it is revealed, with the aim of getting to know it. Thus, from a possible universe of themes that are in dialectical contradiction, subjects assume contradictory positions, sometimes in favor of maintaining structures and, at other times, fighting for their change.

Final remarks

With the conviction of the need to overcome the current civilizational model, we sought support from Karl Marx and Antonio Gramsci, so that the thoughts of both authors were addressed, initially with an analysis that focused on the principle of contradiction, through the study of dialectics.

In this sense, it is understood that the foundations studied are not restricted to the mere interpretation of the world, but are committed to transforming the world, especially when it comes to school spaces. Through the syncretism movement, analysis and synthesis, Marx and Gramsci sought strategies for revolution, towards a new hegemony. However, this new conception of the world does not imply the denial of the existing conception, but seeks, based on a movement of cultural and moral elevation, to make subjects understand the role they play in the face of the capitalist civilizational model, enabling the passage of a fragmented and uncritical conception of a unitary view of the world, knowing that this transformation happens through praxis.

With this thought, praxis is understood as an action of organization and political action, such that for Gramsci the philosophy of praxis is constituted as “[...] a polemical and critical attitude, as overcoming the previous way of thinking and of the existing concrete thought (or existing intellectual world)” (Gramsci, 1995, p. 18, our translation).

Thus, it is reflected that oppressed or subordinate subjects, those deprived of their rights, should not remain grounded in common sense, but guided by the philosophy of praxis to achieve a superior conception of life. Along this path, the process of consciousness-raising by the subaltern classes emerges, in such a way that these subjects can reach a higher elaboration of their own consciousness of reality, a critical consciousness that is necessary to set social transformation in motion.

Finally, it is believed that in schools, by enabling the principle of contradiction in a dialectical movement, it is possible to constitute it as an ideological trench, thus highlighting the role that the teacher plays as an organic intellectual who works within it.

In this way, this teacher, as an organic intellectual, to contribute to the process of becoming aware of the formation of students' critical consciousness, has to understand the place he occupies in the historical process in which he is inserted, knowing himself. However, this process of becoming an intellectual, moving from a fragmented worldview to a unitary vision, is not something that happens naturally, but built based on the unity between theory and practice.

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