

REVIEW ARTICLE

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SUMMARY

This article presents a reflection on the expressiveness of the work of the Italian sociologist Antônio Gramsci as well as reflects on Karl Marx's influence on his theory, which, among other aspects, focused on the educational scenario of the time. Through his writings, Gramsci proposes an egalitarian school and emphasizes intellectual and manual work with the objective of promoting the individual as a whole and obtaining, consequently, with this process, the transformation of society. Its concept of school understands that this environment should not be reduced to a simple place where knowledge is developed and acquired, thus encompassing a group of work market structures that help in the process of understanding this school. With this the article aims, therefore, to offer, in the general body of Marxist criticism, elements and categories that allow the reformulation of the Gramscian concept of school.

Keywords: Gramsci, intellectual, school, Karl Marx, social transformation.

INTRODUCTION

The contribution of sociologist Antônio Gramsci in the expansion of the Marxist theoretical framework focused on emerging problems at the beginning of the last century, including the educational and cultural problem. This study gave him the status of one of the most expressive and important thinkers of the 20th century, whose influence and notoriety on various areas of knowledge and political activity is present to this day. His theories and practice marked by the rupture with any type of dogmatism that engendered Marxist ideas, sought to regain the vigor of controversy with other conceptions of the world as a method of political criticism and knowledge production. Although they lived in different times, these two thinkers shared similar desires and visions of world, although each has their identity of thought well delimited by their works.

1. MARXIST INFLUENCES ON THE WORK OF ANTÔNIO GRAMSCI

Although he has never published any books in his life, Antônio Gramsci (1891-1937) wrote several articles in journals of political parties and in the press, in addition to several handwritten notebooks during his arrest, imposed by the Italian fascist regime, commanded by Mussolini. Such writings, known as "Cadernos do Cárcere", published posthumously represent, to this day, a rich source of philosophical, sociological and political reflection in relation to society.

The competence acquired by Gramsci to reformulate Marxist thought made it possible to adhere to an idea more consistent with the Marxist response to contemporary capitalism. With his perception, he managed to adapt his vision to the characteristics of European society that had advanced capitalism in the first half of the twentieth century. According to him, in order to come to power it is not enough to be elected or promote a coup d'état, it is essential that another battle obtain positive results: it is not physical, but intellectual, that is, in order to win this battle it is necessary to persuade and convince to obtain, in this way, social approval, the central scope of this battle. To do so, it is essential that the one who convinces is an intellectual. It is from this point that the school now represents a prominent role, since it is responsible for the intellectual training of individuals, through special access to culture, which is why it has awakened in Gramsci a concern with the configuration of the school system of your time.

After analyzing and observing that there was a conflict between the dimensions of the pedagogy of cultivation and training, Gramsci concluded and went on to argue that in the contemporary world science ended up dissimilar in everyday life from actions never before practiced, practical activities have become complex and specialized. Considering this context, Gramsci adhered to the ories that thought the superstructures (governing bodies of the social sphere) to rethink and reformulate the Marxist concept of state. In this sense, it began to understand the State as a mechanism of repression and violence that acts

mainly from politics to persuade and convince society to adhere to certain social conducts from its apparatus of repression and control.

The concepts of civil society and hegemony allow us to think about the problem of education from a new approach: allow to elaborate an emancipatory concept of education, in which a pedagogy of the oppressed can assume political strength, alongside the conceptualization of education as an instrument of domination and reproduction of capitalist production relations (GRAMSCI, 1999, p.31)

According to Gruppi (2000:03), the concept of hegemony was presented by Gramsci as something that operates not only on the economic structure and on the political organization of society, but also about the way of thinking, about ideological orientations and even about how to know.

Like Marx, Gramsci acted as an intellectual who focused, above all, on the concepts related to politics for the elaboration of criticisms. One of the meeting points between the two authors is that they sought to reflect, analyze and criticize the rules and norms that caused capitalism to take great proportions.

According to Coutinho, Marx's great "discovery" (and Engels) in the political sphere focused on defending that the configuration of social classes is a phenomenon essentially state. But Marx did not know capitalism developed years later in the Western world. Thus, it was unaware of some of the effects caused by this capitalism, such as the emergence of trade unions, the massive parties, the election of a parliamentary character as well as the conquest of universal suffrage. For this reason, Gramsci expands Marx's analysis by introducing as novelty the hegemony that now has both its own configuration and specificities and characteristics that cause it to manifest itself in various spheres. Thus, the State, from Gramsci's perspective, due to such expansion, is more subject to responding to the conflicts that take shape in the classes that form society.

For Marx, nature is all the appropriation that man makes of it, in addition to the society in which he lives. On the other hand, praxis is the mediation of this relationship between man and nature, materialized by the production process that defines the usefulness and expresses the power of transformation of the external environment by man, represented by nature and the social environment in which it is inserted. According to Marx, praxis should be understood as an exercise inherent to the human being and has as its main characteristic practice and criticism, thus, it is a sensitive activity, therefore subjective, that is perceived and moved, consciously, by man.

However, Gramsci conceptualizes praxis with a differentiated meaning: for him, the practice of human activity must be seen essentially as a process whose the history of the individual is constructed, that is, a process where identity takes shape. However, praxis, in turn, is based on human interference in nature, with the objective of achieving purposes and meeting needs. The author goes on to state that this is an

activity, of course, rational. However, for him, there is a new element that acts in this process of constitution of identity from the praxis: the struggle of classes. In this sense, Gramsci points out that the subject ceases to intervene, in a harmonious and healthy way, in the environment in which one lives. To the detriment of such factors, relationships become conflicted through class struggle.

Although Marx and Gramsci do not have the educational aspect as the focus of their writings, both understand and agree that the guidelines for obtaining a more humanized education should start, above all, from real aspects of the daily lives of these students, that is, the conditions of existence organized by human beings need to be considered in this process of teaching and learning. Thus, men wage certain types of social relations of production that play a dual transformative role: to humanize the environment in which social relations are lived and social relations at the same time.

2. THE INTELLECTUAL REFORM PROPOSED BY GRAMSCI

Before developing a concept/idea of intellectual reform, it is necessary and appropriate to mention important aspects for the understanding of such a definition, namely: the hegemony and the world in which it is lived. Thus, for Gramsci, hegemony must be seen as an idea of domination in the face of a given group. This process is essentially due to persuasion, aiming to reach a consensus. Arguments from the economic and political spheres are used, however, they also reveal conceptions of the world, since they act as cultural and moral factors that shape society.

Based on this assumption, Gramsci defended the idea that the superstructure (civil society and political society) exerted a huge influence on the structure (social relations). It is understood that the theories elaborated by the thinkers modify human thought, and, consequently, its actions as well as its relationship with other spheres, especially politics and with regard to means of production. Intellectuals and the ideas they disclose alter the way men relate to politics and means of production. In relation to the role of the proletariat, this, in turn, tried to gain space in this process of hegemonization of ideas. It should also be emphasized that the intellectual does not go against mechanistic and deterministic theories about hegemony, because, for him, it should not be seen as a unilateral superstructure, but as a space where reciprocal relations form the phenomenon through the conflict of voices that try to impose their hegemony on structures.

There lies the potential of Gramsci's concept: to recognize that authority and its different forms of coercion involve strategies much more sophisticated than violence. In this sense, the critic argues that the State contemplates all activities of a practical or theoretical character whose mastery class, at all times, justifies and, through devices, tries to keep the spaces under its domain. However, it obtains, in general, the consent of the population. Gramsci's proposed fight arises in response. However, it is a slow process that

requires patience as well as an interventional spirit. It should be understood that the

[...] initiative of collective political subjects and the ability to do politics, to involve large masses in solving their own problems, to fight on a daily basis for the conquest of spaces and positions, without losing sight of the ultimate objective, that is, to promote transformations of structures that put an end to capitalist economic-social formation (COUTINHO, C. N, p. 155).

In this sense, the theory developed by Gramsci made possible the methodical and systematic occupation of workers. To this end, the spaces expanded strategically for the expansion of civil society in the face of the political sphere that took shape, mainly, in the actions of intervention of the State. However, this movement made it possible to gain political power by the proletarian class. This achievement of political power can be described in gramsci's following words:

Creating a new culture does not just mean making individually 'original' discoveries; it also means and above all, critically spreading already discovered truths, 'socializing them' so to speak; and, therefore, transform them into the basis of vital actions, in an element of coordination and intellectual and moral order. The fact that a multitude of men are driven to think coherently and in a unitary way the present reality is a much more important and 'original' 'philosophical' fact than the discovery by a philosophical 'genius', of a new truth that remains as a heritage of small intellectual groups (GRAMSCI, 1999, p.95-96).

As Gramsci proposes, to build this critical, coherent and unitary conception of the world, new theories play a decisive role. Thus, the so-called organic intellectual is seen as responsible for mediating the will of social groups. Its objective is to reconstruct hegemony, and it is necessary, for this purpose, the use of persuasion, so that reconstruction appears actively in everyday life. Consensus, in this perspective, must take spontaneous proportions so that revolutionary power can be effectively maintained.

For Gramsci (1978), the historical dimension as well as the political variation that collapses the spheres of class-governed society makes it necessary to adhere to continuous search for the scope of a given position. In this context, it needs to be carried out, at first, in terms of ideas. Thus, it is necessary to culturally expand the popular classes. To this end, it is essential that this public go through a process of critical awareness so that the revolution is not a passive phenomenon but something massive, that is, for many people to be led to adhere to another hegemony as well as to feel instigated to participate in collective struggles so that there is a new configuration of the society in which one lives. Thus, society needs to be seen as an ever-in-transition space. In this perspective, Gramsci points out that this transition is scoped to build a qualitative society in all dimensions of life, and man should transition from prehistoric ideas to a new conception of social and human values. Such appreciation would result in a more humanized society as well as there would be a greater emancipation of humanity.

3. TRANSFORMATIVE SCHOOL

While most scholars of educational problems followers of Marxist guidance claim that the school has the function of reproducing social inequalities while reproducing the values of the superstructure, that is, those dominant. Gramsci has a distinct view of the school and its function: according to him, the school has the power to remodel, however, for this, it needs to give, to the dominated classes, the tools necessary for that after a constant awareness and struggle process, the overcome can reverse the situation and govern those who command them. In this context, the intellectual does not contrast the reproductive character of the school, because he argues that this, in many times, instigates the conformism and stability of ideas. However, because it has a thought engaged with the transformation of society, Gramsci defends the school should act as an environment capable of bringing clarification sands to the cultural rise of the masses.

Thus, the unitary school of humanist formation or general culture, defended by Gramsci, needs to be configured as the main responsible for the insertion of young people in all dimensions of social life. However, the process should be gradual, because it is necessary that these students reach maturity and criticality so that they can think and act more reflexively, and at the same time autonomously.

Gramsci has as main characteristic of its theoretical production, therefore, the very conceptualization of how society should characterize itself. Thus, its perspective always starts from the elaboration of concepts that should help the proletariat to consolidate power over the set of subaltern classes, in order, thus, to dispute the intellectual and moral direction of the whole society, actions that political power and the change in the domination situation.

In this sense, the unitary school proposed by Gramsci requires the State for support that financially guarantees the access and permanence of young people in school, especially through the provision of didactic and human resources capable of enabling the rise of this young person, thus representing itself in the context of the transformation of society as one of the main pillars of this achievement. And for him, the pedagogical relationship is conceived as a collective emancipation experience that goes far beyond the walls of the conventional school:

[...] the pedagogical relationship cannot be limited to the specifically "school" relationships, through which new generations come into contact with the old ones and absorb their experiences and their historically necessary values, "maturing" and developing a personality itself, historically and culturally superior. This relationship exists throughout society as a whole and in every individual with respect to other individuals, between intellectual and non-intellectual layers, between rulers and governed, between elites and followers, between leaders and directed, between avant-gardes and army bodies (GRAMSCI, 1975, p.1331).

However, it should be emphasized that, for Gramsci, the broad sense conferred on the activity and school organization should not minimize the particularities of the school environment, especially aspects related to time, space and the formation of new generations or it should make less important its role in the development of communication and in the acquisition of content on natural rules as well as on those produced in the social sphere by man. Gramsci understands and argues that the school as a apparatus for the conservation of hegemony may take a decisive role in the conquest of power by minority groups.

[...] it is the public, secular, compulsory and free school, open and guaranteed to children originating in all social classes, who study the same disciplines, by the same curriculum, by all grades or degrees preceding the university level, without distinction between humanistic training and vocational training (MOCHCOVITCH, 1990, 67).

In his writings, Gramsci does not rule out hegemony, but considers it essential to the struggle of "hegemonies": he always thinks about the transforming character of the social environment and not the mere reproduction of previous knowledge adopted socially. It proposes a reflection on how hegemony can be transformed through the action of the proletarian class and how this, in turn, can root its values on other classes hitherto dominant, because it starts from the principle that a coherent and coherent worldview can root its values on other classes hitherto dominant, because it starts from the principle that a coherent and coherent worldview homogeneous can be adhered through the realization of social alliances between groups. This movement is essential for the working class to gain expressiveness in the face of bourgeois hegemony and thus reiterate its values and be less passive to the dominant apparatus (MOCHCOVITCH, 1990, 24). Gramsci sees education as an essential instrument of struggle "to establish a new hegemonic relationship that allows to constitute a new historical bloc under the direction of the fundamental class dominated by capitalist society."

According to Gramsci, it is up to the school to perform the teaching action in a responsible manner and committed to the demands demanded by the human being as well as by society as a whole. In this sense, it acts as a necessary space for the development and expansion of knowledge. Thus, it cannot act in a limiting way but rather expansive. To this end, it is crucial to bring everyday reality into classrooms, because thus learning occurs more fluidly. Some strategies can be triggered as the elaboration of a curriculum that integrates social demands in the presentation of the contents, in order to contemplate the intrinsic and essential needs of the human being (holistic formation), because the projection expected of "human being" aspired contemplates specificities that appear as a model, that is, as a type of curriculum.

In this context, it is necessary that the school makes the citizen aware of all its potential characteristics, not subjugating ideas and offering enlightening knowledge in order to enable a critical vision and reading of the facts. According to Gramsci, for this to happen, it is necessary that ideology gives way to true knowledge, thus both the curriculum and society will truly be emancipated and liberated.

4. UTOPIA OR DREAM POSSIBLE?

Starting from Gramsci's reflections and notes, it is possible to conclude that he focused on thinking critically, mainly, about an ideal education model so that the values that shape society are effectively transformed. According to him, it is through the reflexive and critical pedagogical action that it is possible to reach the desired changes. It also points out that the State should be seen as the main agent responsible for mediating and improving education through the provision of resources and tools necessary for teaching action. To this end, it must act ethically as well as consider the social, political and economic conditions of the popular classes when developing intervention policies.

State ethics, in this context, is intertwined with the emancipation process of humanity. Thus, it starts from the idea that the State cannot act as an educator until it continues to be governed by bourgeois conceptions that do not give priority to the demands of the less favored classes, as it thus impairs the education of the popular masses. Gramsci points out, from this perspective, that it is essential to guarantee at least the most basic levels of education as well as the existence of a school of formative character, following, to this end, democratic ideals. The democratic school, in turn, must be assured to everyone by the State so that it can be regarded as ethical and educational.

It is, even in an abstract way, to transform the condition of the dominant citizen (MOCHCOVITCH, 1990, p.56). A school of freedom and free initiative cannot be characterized as a slave and mechanical environment. For these reasons and in view of the current world political landscape, it is increasingly urgent to rethink public policies so that they serve as a possibility of changes at their most diverse levels (social, cultural, economic and political), in order to continuously promote the need to build a fairer society for citizens.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

In view of all the material exhibited here, what can be observed in Gramsci's sociology is that he proposed a change from the dominant ideals to those proposed by the proletariat. That way, I thought and idealized an egalitarian school for everyone. For him, thought and practice should walk together and indissociately. It can be affirmed that Gramsci's ideal school is, for many, utopian, however, essential for the sanctioning of social inequalities as well as for the creation of a just society for all. In this sense, the school, for the intellectual, is the main means to reach change, and it is necessary, for this, to articulate it in a liberating way of conventional molds. He was regarded by many thinkers as the "modern prince", since he served as the main mentor and diffuser of this current of education.

The action of the school, however, needs to consolidate in a formative way, thus needs to be understood

as an integral part of a revolutionary project, thus assuming a fundamental importance in the struggle for the end of class society. In line with Marx's idea, contained in Hegel's critique of the philosophy of law, according to which theory becomes material force as soon as it takes over the masses, Gramsci considered it essential that the masses seize the philosophy of praxis (Marxism) as the main strategy to understand and transform social reality. The aim was mainly to resignify the role of the school institution in the elaboration of one against revolutionary ideology. Thus, one can conclude this study by stating that its performance is related, albeit immediately, with the various educational possibilities contained in the productive process itself in the social context.

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