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## ARTICLE

# Education of will and pedagogical renovation in Spanish and Brazilian contexts, during the first decades of the 20<sup>TH</sup> century

Marcus Aurélio Taborda de Oliveira<sup>1</sup> 

### ABSTRACT

During the final years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century it is clear in the pedagogical press of different countries the emphasis on the education of will. Privileged ways of education of sensibilities, the rhetoric on the education of will used a set of principles and practices, among which the intuitive method, physical education, aesthetic education, and life in nature, so as to consign what can be called as a moral laic education that, at least rhetorically, is based in the idea of freedom. Thus, rites, practices, and subjects were developed to reach this objective, which appeared transversally in school curriculum and touched other social education dimensions. Researching Spanish and Brazilian pedagogical magazines, I searched to understand the fundamentals of the education of will present in the rhetoric of the renovators in the press of both countries, as evidences of a wider process of renovation of costumes through pedagogical renovation in the period.

### KEYWORDS

history of education; education of the senses and sensibilities; education of the will; pedagogical reform.

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## ***EDUCAÇÃO DA VONTADE E RENOVAÇÃO PEDAGÓGICA NOS CONTEXTOS ESPANHOL E BRASILEIRO NAS DÉCADAS INICIAIS DO SÉCULO XX***

### **RESUMO**

Nos finais do século XIX e nas primeiras décadas do século XX é patente na imprensa pedagógica de distintos países a ênfase sobre a educação da vontade. Formas privilegiadas de educação das sensibilidade, as retóricas sobre a educação da vontade recorriam a um conjunto de princípios e práticas, tais como o método intuitivo, a educação física e estética, a vida na natureza, para consignar aquilo que se pode chamar de uma educação moral de caráter laico que, ao menos retoricamente, se baseava na ideia de liberdade. Ritos, práticas, disciplinas eram desenvolvidos para consignar aquele objetivo que aparecia de modo transversal no currículo escolar e afetava outras dimensões da educação social. Explorando revistas pedagógicas espanholas e brasileiras, busquei compreender os fundamentos da educação da vontade nas retóricas de renovadores dos dois países presentes na imprensa periódica, como baliza de um amplo processo de renovação dos costumes pela via da renovação pedagógica no período.

### **PALAVRAS-CHAVE**

história da educação; educação dos sentidos e das sensibilidade; educação da vontade; renovação pedagógica.

## ***EDUCACIÓN DE LA VOLUNTAD Y RENOVACIÓN PEDAGÓGICA EN LOS CONTEXTOS ESPAÑOL Y BRASILEÑO, EN LAS DÉCADAS INICIALES DEL SIGLO XX***

### **RESUMEN**

Em los finales del siglo XIX y en las primeras décadas del siglo XX es patente en la prensa pedagógica de distintos países el énfasis en la educación de la voluntad. Las formas privilegiadas de educación de las sensibilidade, las retóricas sobre la educación de la voluntad recurrían a un conjunto de principios y prácticas, tales como el método intuitivo, la educación física y estética, la vida en la naturaleza, para consignar aquello que se puede llamar una educación moral de carácter laico que, al menos retoricamente, se basaba en la idea de libertad. Ritos, prácticas, disciplinas eran desarrollados para consignar aquel objetivo que aparecía de modo transversal en el currículo escolar y afectaba a otras dimensiones de la educación social. En las revistas pedagógicas españolas y brasileñas, busqué comprender los fundamentos de la educación de la voluntad en las retóricas de renovadores de los dos países presentes en la prensa periódica, como baliza de un amplio proceso de renovación de las costumbres por la vía de la renovación pedagógica, en el período.

### **PALABRAS CLAVE**

historia de la educación; educación de los sentidos y de las sensibilidade; educación de la voluntad; reformas educativas.

What then is human wisdom? Where is the path of true happiness? The mere limitation of our desires is not enough, for if they were less than our powers, part of our faculties would be idle, and we should not enjoy our whole being; neither is the mere extension of our powers enough, for if our desires were also increased we should only be the more miserable. True happiness consists in decreasing the difference between our desires and our powers, in establishing a perfect equilibrium between the power and the will. (Rousseau, 2004, p. 74)

## THE EDUCATION OF WILL AS A HORIZON FOR MEN'S FULL EDUCATION

In one of the great marks of western thought on education, *Emilie, or on Education*, by Jean Jacques Rousseau, the Genevan author proposes, from Book II, an ample path to the complete development of all men's faculties, exploring intensely all the power of nature captured by senses. According to him, men's wills meant that they would be enough to themselves, contrary to a child constrained by fantasy. Fantasies, "all the desires that are not true necessities", could only be satisfied with the help of others, what makes children stay under tutelage, *in fans*" (Rousseau, 2004, p. 80).

Based on his theorization Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi and Friedrich Fröebel, besides other great pedagogues, would formulate theories that definitely impacted the pedagogical thought since the 19<sup>TH</sup> century. In *Mis investigaciones sobre el curso de la naturaleza en la evolución de la humanidad* (Enquiries into the Course of Nature in the Development of the Human Race, written in 1797, Pestalozzi affirmed that "Men in this state (natural) is the pure child of instinct, which leads him simply and innocently to all the joys of senses" (Pestalozzi, 2003). This was the starting point of the education of men which would be completed by the social and moral states, comprising the set of faculties that would define a cultivated man. In what we can now consider a tradition, the seizing of nature — all the world around — is a fundamental element to develop intelligence and moral, and is reached through the body. More precisely, it happens through the mobilization of senses to capture the world, or nature, which will initiate, especially in children, a process of elaboration that will result in an educated man. That is, in this perspective, there is a tension between man and nature, but it is one that integrates man to the physical world, as it considers that man himself is a development of nature and its senses. All his potential is its biggest expression. Thus, senses can be taught so that man can be taught, as the world does not show itself completely without mediation. This allows education or the development of sensibilities. By capturing the physical world through the sense, the child would capture the world in a gradual "natural" way, as it would be part of his own constitution the impulse to know, allowing to establish a difference toward the physical world.

But what is sensibility? In a sense, the capacity to decode the entanglement of nature what would allow the refining of men aiming his humanization, producing

a *second nature*. Thus, the educated, cultivated man is able to develop high moral feelings, as he feels and sees himself as part of a great organism — humanity — that would share the same trajectory of self-affirmation regarding the natural state. According to this tradition, which would last until at least the first decades of the 20<sup>TH</sup> century, man would become human through education.

However, we should not forget that, already in the 19<sup>TH</sup> century with the development of revolutionary utopias, education would become only one of the conditions to overcome capitalistic society or, in a more romantic tone, civilization (Thompson, 1976). A *historical education of the desire* would be key to fully reach that objective. Thus, between the illuminist utopia of Rousseau and its criticism on authors such as William Morris, for example — not by chance two of the greatest exponents of the modern political thinking — will and its education appear as one of the fundamental elements of humanization of man and society, in registries that cannot be reduced to a purely schooling dimension, neither discarded as simply ideological. The education of will was a condition to freedom. But what would be the substrate of the education of will?

## MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES, THE SAME END

When starting his entry *Volonté* to the *Dictionnaire de pédagogie et d'instruction publique primaire*, organized by Ferdinand Buisson, Gabriel Compayré claimed: “The education of will is, certainly, one of the most delicate problems of pedagogy. How to form the will, that is, the personality, the free self-control, in a time in which the rule is to obey, in school life, in which all is dependence, or even servitude?” (Buisson, 1911, s/p.).<sup>1</sup> But what was the content and fundament of this education and how was it treated in a period of pedagogical renovation in Spain and Brazil?<sup>2</sup>

In the Spanish case, I focused on the analysis of some texts published in the *Boletín de la Libre Institución de Enseñanza (BILE)* one of the main Spanish pedagogical publications between the end of the 19th century and the first three decades of the 20<sup>TH</sup> century. In the Brazilian case, faced by the difficulty to analyze integrally such a regional diversity, I privileged the analysis of fragments of the pedagogical journal *A Escola* (1906-1921), in the state of Paraná, and group of works published in the government official gazette *Minas Geraes*, in the state of Minas Gerais, in the first two decades of the 20<sup>TH</sup> century, remembering that the theme is recurrent still in the magazine *The Teaching*, this also Paraná.

Much can be said about said choices. The Spanish journal was a private, and unique, initiative, by the *Institución Libre de Enseñanza*, stimulated by Francisco

1 Ferdinand Buisson, *The Dictionnaire de pédagogie et d'instruction publique primaire*. The *Dictionnaire...* was first published in 1880. I use here the edition of 1911, available in: <http://www.inrp.fr/edition-electronique/lodel/dictionnaire-ferdinand-buisson/document.php?id=3807>. The translation to Portuguese was done by Daniel Teixeira Costa.

2 I thank Professor Paolo Bianchini for calling my attention to the theme *education of will* in the work of Vincenzo Gioberti, in Itália, but the examination of it would not be in the scope of this article. The option for Spanish documentation, duly matched with Brazilian documentation, is not accidental or arbitrary.

Giner de los Rios. In *Minas Geraes*, it is a public official governmental gazette, not a pedagogical initiative. *A Escola* was published by the Association of Public Teachers of the State of Paraná, subsidized by the government of the state, and was headed by Sebastião Paraná and Dario Velozzo. Some of these authors-directors were the main intellectuals of the time on the topic of pedagogical renovation, while the collaborators of *Minas Geraes* were diverse and cannot be always considered as renovators. Despite the methodological problems that could arise, this work's purpose was to try to understand the senses given to the education of will in different educational realities that evoked pedagogical renovation, as well as the different meanings to its understanding circulated. However, the intention is not to outline a comparison of those contexts. The interest here is to understand how the theme appeared in the pedagogical debate of the time, considered of great importance in popular education, or masses education, and the apparent paradox as the education of will would focus on the individual searching for autonomy. In all those sources, there are clear references to the work of Rousseau, as well as formulations from Buisson on the education of will, besides authors such as Pestalozzi and Fröebel; even though most of those references were related to school education, there was space to what we call social education. This recurrence, in a way, gives a certain unity to those documents.

Thus, remembering that the “moral and intellectual education of the masses” was an ideal preached by the clergy and the liberals, as well as by the renovators, revolutionaries, and free-thinkers, it is worthwhile to try to understand the meaning of the education of will in different registers, from catholic priests, to anti clericals, reformists, and revolutionaries of various degrees. For some, the antidote against rationalism or the intellectualism; for others, the most important expression of human's capacity to act; and for all of them, the basic condition of a moral formation that would allow an autonomous action faced by the imperatives of society.

As an example, it is important to remember that the will was used by intellectuals such as Antonio Gramsci to combat the pessimism of reason that would obliterate the revolutionary march. On the other hand, according to the integrist priest Francisco Ozamis, from Minas Gerais, the will would be a counterpoint to the accelerated march of modernity that would overshadow tradition. But, after all, what was the education of will in the transition of the 19<sup>TH</sup> to the 20<sup>TH</sup> century?

## DIFFERENT MEANINGS FOR THE EDUCATION OF WILL

Perusing *A Escola*, from its beginning in 1906, until its closing in 1921, it is impressive to notice how will is portrayed as one of the conditions for education in articles about geography, agriculture, *object lessons*, physical education, moral and civics education, mother language, and geometry, crossing the teaching justifications of different subjects. Focus is given to the ten first numbers of the journal, with strong emphasis on the reforming endeavor. The word “will” figures in at least 85 registers. In a certain moment, they even allude to the free-thinker Dario Velozzo as “the Compayré from the tropics”, a clear allusion to the author of the entry *Volonté* in the Buisson's dictionary. But what made the education of will appear in

the justification list of so many different types of knowledge and in such different pedagogical perspectives, as the journal was extremely plural?

An aspect that unites the rhetoric of all authors examined here is the defense of modern science. In general terms, education was no longer in the domain of “abstract intellectualism”, but instead became a vector of a pedagogy based on action, on activity, on free initiative. Physiology and anthropology — natural sciences, in general — were invoked as a mark of pedagogical renovation that advocated the possibility of a new man. As an example of this emphasis in the supremacy of science, in the scope of the 18<sup>TH</sup> century Psychology, we can see in the Spanish *BILE*, in 1885, a work published in a sequence of different issues, as it was common at the time, entitled “Psicología de la infancia” (Childhood Psychology) written by a *Dr. Sikorski*. The first of the four parts of the work (Sikorski, 1885a, p. 152) was entitled “La sensibilidad (The sensibility). The third part, entitled “La Voluntad” (The Will), was published two issues later, in the same year (Sikorski, 1885c, p. 179). Clearly articulating the two perspectives, the author defended that the education of will would be the climax point of a process through which man (the child) would overcome the state of nature, dominating his instincts in favor of a satisfaction controlled by his senses. The properly appeased senses would be responsible for the intellectual and moral development. The latter was the expected result of a process that would give the individual the capacity of choice and action, meaning the development of his autonomy to properly act in society, through the adequate mobilization of his intellectual capacity. Thus, the author defended “the precocious development of will, guided to control the movements of anger and other passions” (Sikorski, 1885c, p. 179). In this registry, the will clearly assumed the function of soothing instincts, which would enhance the controls imposed by society on the individual.

The same *BILE* also published in issues 464 and 475, in 1899, the text by Ferdinand Buisson entitled “La educación de la voluntad” (The education of will). It was the “final lesson of the Pedagogy course which the author taught in the Sorbonne, summing up the classes of the course” (Buisson, 1899a, p. 257). This text broadens the author’s reflections expressed in the entry *Educación de la voluntad* (Education of will), also quoted in *A Escola*, from Paraná, in 1906.

Published in the *Dictionnaire* and dialoguing with the entry *Volonté*, by Gabriel Compayré, which affirms that “[...] the education of will starts in the first years and the age of obedience is also the age of preparation for freedom” (Buisson, 1911, n/p.), the entry *Educación de la voluntad* affirmed that

When we observe carefully the different forms of human activity, we can distinguish different degrees in each one. They are, in a way, the steps of will. The first manifestations can hardly be called voluntary, because they are uncertain, fleeting, capricious. Others will succeed it, those are more firm in consciousness and continuity and end up fixing themselves, sometimes even acquire the aspect of real permanence: the *habít*, by repeating the same acts, molds the personality. (Buisson, 1911, n/p., highlights of mine)

Basing his arguments in Psychology, the author defended that the will could be distinguished in three phases of the formation process: physical activity, which included sensorial activity, intellectual activity, and moral activity. About sensorial activity, the text affirms the importance of sensations and feelings, the two last ones, in an evolutionary line, would mean something “[...] that became permanent, inherent to the person, becoming like a second nature. It is the same rhythm in the same process that goes from instinct to effort and from effort to habit” (Buisson, 1911, n/p.). This habit, on its turn, would be the foundation to the moral activity, the ultimate objective of the education of will:

Here, finally, everyone has always observed the same progression that goes from some moral instincts, first very confusing, weak, and vague, to *an effort that fixates them* and, when this has gone for a long time, to a constant state in which the acts that costed more are now done *through themselves and as if through the insensible and irresistible effect of habit*. Pedagogy should inspire itself in these purely schematic indications, which would be up to psychology to develop. (Buisson, 1911, n/p., highlights of mine)

Moving the center of interests from psychology to pedagogy, the author developed a set of reflections that allows us to appraise the strength of rhetoric on the education of will in that period, which would be also used in the Brazilian context.

For example, in a report published in *A Escola*, the teacher Julia Wanderley Petrich defended that

After physical and intellectual education the teacher would be responsible for the moral education because it is in this order that one can observe the human progress. In the extremely vast moral field, which having as an object the human actions studies and guides the faculties that preside them (*sic!*) - the sensibility and the will - the preceptor will play a preponderant role developing the character and the heart of his students because, as it is known, the moral feeling, unifying education, elevates the teacher and dignifies the school. In lessons, as well as in school outings, despite any occurrences, it is up to the teacher the duty of awaken in the students a moral consciousness, instilling in their hearts the ideas of duty and good; the feelings of dignity and honor. (Petrich, 1906, p. 19)

The teacher finishes the text claiming that teachers should be an example of “moral in action” through practice and behavior in a “model life”. In her registry, the education of will mixed itself with moral education, which was the highest expression of a civilized nation and the ultimate goal of all formation processes.<sup>3</sup>

“Curso de Pedagogia” (Pedagogy Course) was published in the same year and publication. It defined moral, among other teachers’ obligations, in the following way: “The teacher guides the child to the practice of duty, maintaining and guaranteeing

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3 The trajectory of Julia Wanderley Petrich can be seen in the study by Araújo (2013).

the freedom of consciousness” (Pereira, 1906, p. 123). Among the “principles related to students” one reads: “*Desire to instruct themselves* — the will is the base of moral education”. In the end of the course, the author considers moral to be the main branch amongst the four pillars of education: “Moral has as a base the experience, reasoning and will” (Pereira, 1906, p. 126). Thus, will would assume a prominent place even in methodological prescriptions, as parameters would be established to its development, such as exercising the body and games. The general idea that a higher moral would represent an educated man was invoked from the newest scientific knowledge that affected *modern pedagogy*, even if the author’s interlocutors are not identified in the text.

We can go back approximately 20 years and recover some considerations by Dr. Sikorski, published in *BILE*, in Spain in 1885.<sup>4</sup> Firstly, when characterizing the neuropsychic organization of the child, the author defended that it would progressively merge into feelings, will, and reason. Thus, the education of will, a necessary complement of the education of senses and sensibilities, would be a basic condition for intellectual development. Therefore, we can see a difference in the tonic presented in the registry of Paraná’s teachers, which had will as the basic condition of moral education, ultimate end of general education. Actually, on this topic, a long translator’s note on the work of Dr. Sikorski, non-identified, was extremely critical to his assumptions, as he would overrate intelligence over feelings and emotions. Even with this critical tone, the author of the note highlights the importance of empirical studies to the development of anthropology “[...] and its profound transcendence towards pedagogical problems” (Sikorski, 1885a, p. 152). Thus, it seems to be at stakes the prevalence of metaphysical forms of thinking children education and, consequently, the will, as the power of science to unveil the mental processes patented in the registry.<sup>5</sup>

4 I could not find further details on Dr. Sikorski, non-identified in the journal. Edouard Claparède, in the first chapter of his book *Psicología del niño y pedagogía experimental*, entitled *reseña histórica*, observes that the studies on the mental development of children stated in 1787, with Tiedemann. However, the work of Preyer, *El alma del niño* (1881) the one which propelled parents to write down in a diary the developments reached by children. Preyer is the most quoted author in the work of Dr. Sikorski, in *BILE*, which makes us think that it is the author quoted by the Swiss, even though there are also references to Galeno, Darwin, Spencer, Bain, Soltmann and even Rousseau. Still, according to Claparède: “In Kiev pedagogy has Sikorsky as its champion, the precursor of experimental pedagogy on his famous study on the way to measure intellectual fatigue in students, appeared in 1879 in the *Annales d’hygiène publique* (de Paris)” (Claparède, 1910, p. 52). I thank Professors Regina Helena Freitas and Paula Cristina David Guimarães for using their contacts to try to find more about the author. Apparently, he was Ivan Alekseevich Sikorsky (1842-1919), a psychiatrist and professor in the University of Kiev, as well as one of the founders of the Institute of Children with Mental Handicaps. The work published in *BILE* makes references to fatigue, including a fatigue of will, and constantly reminds the reader to the importance of hygiene in education. In a note presenting the work to editors, there is an observation that it is an extract of a work entitled *La evolución psíquica del niño*, published by the author (Sikorski, 1885a, p. 152).

5 We should remember the work of William James, *What is an emotion?* (1884), which also makes reference to the education of the will (Nascimento, 2013).

However, even though the text referred to a number of authors and studies, the science advocated in it was methodologically based in daily and careful observations of children's behaviors; in the case of Sikorski, basically the observation of his own children. But what was the content of his reflection? When dealing with early childhood, the author defended the need of constant care towards the children, so that they could "[...] dominate the insipid emotional excitation" (Sikorski, 1885a, p. 152), having the necessary tranquility to a good development. The fundamental role of education in this phase would be to "[...] wash away bad sensations and allow all pleasures that one can instinctively take a liking" (Sikorski, 1885a, p. 154). According to the author, "From the third and fourth month of life we have the beginning of the first seeds of consciousness and will" (Sikorski, 1885a, p. 154). These, founded in the physiological relation between mother and child, would allow "[...] the future feelings of human solidarity and altruism" (Sikorski, 1885a, p. 154).

Basically, the role of the education of will meant the development of a sensibility with which the child could control their primary emotions, repress fear and anger, learning how to dominate them and appease their instinctive impulses. The progress of men's education would tend to subjugate "[...] the instincts and emotions to reason, to conscious demands" (Sikorski, 1885a, p. 156). As children were "capricious" it was up to adults to teach them how to suddenly repress their emotions, opposing a weak will, still used to instincts, to a purposeful will, a result of the educator's intervention. The control of emotions "is not more than an *emotional selection*, an elaboration of rigorous feelings through the suppression of all weak elements" (Sikorski, 1885a, p. 157, original highlight from the text). This process would allow the education of *vigorous wills*.

Considering that the newborn had no will, the author defined it as a motor principle that would only appear around the fourth and fifth month of life, meaning the suppression or reduction of the reflex movement through the excitation of one of the senses. This process would develop the action of the conscious and voluntary action as the main propellant of man, which would come from will "[...] a quality of action more and more developed" (Sikorski, 1885c, p. 179).

Drawing a sort of natural history of will, it would be, according to Sikorski, a propellant as well as a repressive principle of movements, thus the importance of gymnastics and games to education. In this point, there is a clear similarity with the academic works published in *A Escola*, from Paraná, as it gives a strong emphasis in the need of body education to develop will, even if the final goal was, as seen, moral education. Also, in the journal of *Minas Geraes* body (or physical) education would be a fundamental condition of the education of will.

Sikorski explains that there was a *fatigue of will*, which makes one believe that it was a faculty of men himself, therefore, capable to be educated. To combat this fatigue, educators invested in children's freedom and independence so as to transform them into active and industrious beings, capable of creating and reacting, "combating the hard work and organizing coordinated impulses" (Sikorski, 1885c, p. 180), as children's work was as fragile as their convictions. Educators would act in this point:

This weakness in children's will, this elasticity, this plasticity of sensations and movements can be successfully used by educators. If this education starts early, when will is still very flexible, and it is systematically continued, one can guarantee the affirmation and development of this faculty and of character. (Sikorski, 1885c, p. 180)

Thus, the author thinks that will is a faculty that can be shaped according to the final ends of education — in this case, the intellectual development — based on scientific precepts that united Psychology, Anthropology, Hygiene, and Pedagogy. It would represent a step beyond the biophysical apparatus of men, as it would also represent the possibility to control passional and instinctive impulses toward an individual capable to act creatively — autonomously —, contributing to the improvement of society.

The ways to accomplish the education of will were centered in three basic actions of the educator: the example of adults; the communication with children, with kindness and resolution, in those states in which nature overlaps will; and, finally, the displaying of reasons that make men act in a certain way and not in another. So, will is an act of self-consciousness, guided by men's intellectual capacity. Following these guidelines, the educator would be able to develop in children their "repressive capacities" toward fear, hunger, and hatred, for example, as the child would be the carrier of both good and bad natural tendencies.<sup>6</sup>

The education of body, the disposition of the spirit, and the necessary attention to reproduce ideas were the path to a "disciplined rationality", the adult "should not hinder the creative work of children" (Sikorski, 1885c, p. 183). The attention would then imply "the formation of work habit", but one should remember that "the *rigid and severe* education oppresses the will and the feelings [...] a servile character indicates a weak will (Sikorski, 1885c, p. 179, original highlight). The author ends his arguments invoking Rousseau and criticizing what he calls a *careless education* which would compromise the whole process of individual and social development of the child. In this work, the education of will would begin in the sensitive system, but the feelings were also an important part in the formation process.

Buisson, on his turn, considered will as a broad domain that would be confounded with education. According to the entry *Educación de la voluntad* in the *Dictionnaire de pédagogie et d'instruction publique primaire*, "[...] the education of will is not a chapter in education, it is the convergence of all chapters, or better, it is the whole human formation" (Buisson, 1911, n/p.). Criticizing the excessive presence of educators in the process of children's formation, the author affirmed:

6 In a translator's note, there is another critique of the text: "[...] tendencies, including the instincts, are the result of the system of relations of the individual with the world and dependent on them [...]" (Sikorski, 1885c, p. 182). In several footnotes, *BILE* opposes arguments to the considerations of the author, showing that they did not accept *in toto* his claims. Even so, they highlight the contribution of the empirical studies (scientific, experimental...) to the redefinition of pedagogy and the role of education in a world considered "modern".

To think, feel, and want for others is not the role of the educator, at least not if it is laic. It has only one ambition: disappear. It is horrifying what the pride of some teachers have done in the past: to mold students into their own image. Contrariwise, they want that the students can, as much as possible, shape themselves, ideally, with an ideal that the teacher would have helped them discover and made them love. To act from the outside or to act from the inside: these are the two systems of moral ruling in children, at first, and in man latter. If we start from this principle, the laic morality, we have nothing left to do than applying it to the three phases which we have distinguished in the education of will. (Buisson, 1911, n/p., highlights of mine)<sup>7</sup>

For him, education was divided into phases that would follow the pace of human development: the period of initial education — the instincts; the period of active education — the effort; and the period of final education or result confirmation — the habit. Those would be the phases of the evolution of will which should be gradually enhanced by educators, resulting in a man who would be morally correct, free, conscious, autonomous, and independent from external judgment (would it be social?). Buisson writes about modesty, virtue, and honesty. Quoting Aristotle he affirms that “The true virtue is a habit; I understand by these words, a disposition acquired through successive efforts so many and so energetic that they make it, in a way, impossible to have a solution other than the good one”. The will would be, then, educated to produce these lasting, stable habits of a “calm and secure” man.

Thereby, affirming that “summing up, the pedagogy of will is closed related to the psychology of will”, Buisson (1911, n/p.) finishes:

Psychology teaches us that will is not a special power, different from other parallel powers in the human soul. It is the own strength of the human soul in its unity and variety, it is the spiritual life in all its degrees, since the rudimentary spontaneity of instinct until the full and clear ownership of oneself in a conscious, free, and rational activity. From that, psychology will conclude: there is no special education of will. Every education is an education of will or it is nothing. We form will by learning to think, to feel, and act normally.

Quoting William James, he concludes: “will is forged by effort. There are many measurements to measure human will. The most exact and safe is the one expressed in this question: ‘How much effort are you able to do?’” (Buisson, 1911, n/p.). Will is “training, it results from habit that insensibly bends us to ways of act, feel, and think that constitute a second nature, an acquired nature, a personality” (Buisson, 1911, n/p.). To the author, the modern pedagogical perspective, regarding the education of will, would conciliate three main theories of moral education: the optimistic theory of Rousseau and his “emphasis in men’s natural good will”,

7 It does not seem abusive to suggest that Buisson moved in a similar perspective to that of Joseph Jacotot, a great critic of the “pedagogical world order” and diffusing the need to educate the will of those who want to learn. On the trajectory and the ideas of Jacotot, to see Rancière (2005).

the stoic and kantian theory “that makes an incessant call to effort and freedom”, and the Christian theory that “values the effect of habits, of accepted authority, of established practices”. According to him, each of these theories would correspond to the phases of men’s development of one of the instincts, the one of effort, and the one of habit. In this sense, “pedagogy concludes that the good education is the one that tends more and that can better form the person, giving control to oneself, finally creating the moral autonomy that Kant opposed to heteronomy as the movements of a live organism would be opposed to the one of the most perfect automaton” (Buisson, 1911, n/p.).

One can observe that Rousseau is present in all references to the education of will. Even if in a negative tone, as is the case of the Spanish integrist Francisco Ozamis, who wrote a collection of articles in *Minas Geraes* in the second decade of the 20<sup>TH</sup> century.<sup>8</sup> According to him,

Using modern Psychology terms, there are in men two psyches, inferior and superior. They are the two laws preached by Saint Paul, representing the members law in positive and frank defiance against reason. We can distinguish, as part of the inferior psyche, the senses, feelings, and fantasy. The superior psyche encompasses the acts of intelligence and will. [...] The traces of addition, that, not rarely, mark the members of youth enter through senses, feelings, and fantasy [...]. (Ozamis, 1913, p. 7)

The priest also grounded his arguments in science, especially psychology and hygiene. By developing a collection of reflections on the need for physical education in the formation process, he testified that it should potentiate the will and allow the inhibition of passions:

The world of images, feelings, and passions needs to be submitted to the criteria of enlightened reason. Passions are the forces that the will uses when they are subordinated to it. The sovereign of will has these enemies when they are not beaten, slaves that become dominators. It is one of the main points of educational work: to give will reserves of virtue and energy for the moments in which duty seems to be hard. It is the grange of the great characters, resistance of evil, and the victory of freedom over bad instinct. (Ozamis, 1915, p. 256-258)

On sensibility, to be beaten by will, he affirmed:

Sensibility is another enemy of free will. A man needs to watch for the unfolding of feeling. Because almost all initiatives of our acts find secret impulses in sensibility. The pure enjoyments of virtue, wrote a famous philosopher, are the prize of the triumph of reason over sensibility. It is essential to make all the

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8 Many of the works published by Father Francisco Ozamis in the gazette Minas Gerais were republished in a book in 1915. Here I used both sets of articles. For more details on the Spanish priest, as well as his ideas on education, especially moral and physical education, see the dissertation of Vieira (2013).

efforts to reinforce physical sensibility, because the excess of sensibility leads to suicide through boredom, or a premature death. Among the practical means we can point to self-knowledge, work, and the guidance of an educator. [...] A general mean that many pagan philosophers recommended is an exam of consciousness or a regressive reflection on the day. An exam of consciousness gives us the knowledge of our particular psychology, prepares us for the future, and increases our pride for new struggles. (Ozamis, 1915, p. 256-258)

Even though the ends were different — intellectual formation to Sikorski, moral formation to Ozamis —, as well as the understanding of the importance of senses and sensibilities, one can observe that Ozamis, in a way, approaches the arguments of Sikorski on the conscious act of enlightenment based on modern psychology. According to him, the end of education was the moral education of the individual. Habit and sacrifice were safe paths to fully reach it and will was primordial to its complete development. But it was not any moral, or even an abstract one: “Education has to serve practical life. [...] nowadays the nation needs practical men, useful professions, and social works” (Ozamis, 1915, p. 102). The education of will would presuppose the development of individuals with character:

The character is a sort of pyramid whose base is the passions and the vertex forms the acts of will, tending to create a habit through repetitive action. [...] A man of character does not back off unless he is faced by the imperative mandate of a consciousness enlightened by the incorruptible reflections of moral. Civilization is not the work of great talents, but ideas that were put into the service of energetic will that, moreover, were the expression of vigorous characters. The man of character is the sculptor of his soul and the carver of the civilizing sculpture of society. What is the background, the shadow, and the substratum of character? Certainly it is the moral order, as all its applications and consequences are moral, and aim the firm direction of will [...] Moral does not muffle the individual character, it affirms it, guides it, ennobles it, sanctifies it, uses it, for its own good, for the good of others, and the glory of the Nation. (Ozamis, 1915, p. 225-226)

In this sense, to all those authors, the education of will presupposes effort, habit, and the control of passions so as to try to produce an individual capable of living freely. These elements give the necessary amalgam to different expressions of the education of will, together with the constant invocation of modern science, expressed in psychology as well as experimental pedagogy. Education and pedagogy, even when originated in religious discourses, combated “abstract intellectualism” and memorization to preach the “natural” power of men to manage their own destiny, men and their will were taught to act according to their consciousness in favor of their happiness and social peace. One difference was the role given to the educator in this process. To Buisson, Sikorski and most authors here discussed, the actions centered in teachers should give space to students’ initiatives, as will relates to self-determination. To Ozamis, on the other hand, teachers’ will should guide

students' will. Despite this difference, it was an ample set of ideas that aimed the moral and intellectual elevation of all individuals, which did not forget the power of the environment in the process of formation of the "strong desires", but that, in many cases (not all) created a blank slate on social, cultural, and economical cleavages.

It is known that in each of these beings there are instincts, inclinations, aptitudes, a whole heritage, sometimes well-thought, and that will have to favor or repress. From the set of ideas that one has, which should be transmitted so that, by instructing the student, one can simultaneously guide his inclinations, wake latent aptitudes, make him guide himself, but also acting a social being? Should one wake in this childish soul its self-consciousness, develop a strong will, an elevated idea of its duty? In a word, who should teach him, educate him? (Moreau, 1906, p. 155)

These reflections were done by Alicia Moreau, English socialist and feminist, who lived in Argentina, translated by *El Tiempo*, Buenos Aires, issue of September 25<sup>TH</sup>, 1906. According to the editors' note, it was a conference given in one of the sessions of *Congreso del Libre Pensamiento* (Free Thinking Congress), in Buenos Aires. It was published by the journal *A Escola* with the title *A pedagogia e a escola* (Pedagogy and school). The text quotes Fröebel, Bebel, Le Bon, and Pestalozzi, and follows, in general lines, the evolutionary sequence: sensations, instruction, will, education, as a process of affirmation of a free and autonomous individual. Here it also appears prominently the contribution of natural sciences against "babbling and the cultivation of memory". Criticizing traditional education, the author commented:

[...] education is a social action: the educational ideal of a time reflects its character, aspirations, tendencies and is based in the concept one has of the *individual*. If one intends to make a strong handsome man, of subtle spirit, with a lively feeling of beauty and own independence, and they build gymnasiums, temples of figure, the Greek boy, pulled from his home, is a future soldier whose education consists in giving him strong muscles and energetic will.

If they see in man an impure being, decayed, a melancholic soul trapped in a paltry prison, and prepare the individual to a future imaginary life, they intend to form ascetics, man that lived in a perpetual horror of themselves. (Moreau, 1906, p. 156)

Against those tendencies, the author highlighted that

The educational ideal changes, therefore, with society; and the modern concept that looks at a certain class with total oblivion of others, free of dreams and morbid illusions of times in which religious power drowned any presumption of independence; the modern concept, based on the scientific knowledge of man, is the broad and concrete development of all functional aptitudes, of all

inclinations of the individual that allow him to look for happiness, contributing to the happiness of all, regardless of sex or caste. (Moreau, 1906, p. 156)

The idea of an active life was evident in the reflections of the author, that encouraged civilization, science, and freedom: "Give them confidence by their own effort and one tempers the will, because, as told by Berthelot, they will know that happiness and well-being will not come with vain words, a purely contemplative life, nor mystical practices" (Moreau, 1906, p. 160). Will and its education represented the recognition of another era in which "science has woken man and help him in the conquering of his freedom, gave a brain to those that were only arms, and gave them the mean to solve the formula- to each one according to their needs- and reach their most beautiful ideals" (Moreau, 1906, p. 161). The author concluded her libel inviting educators to:

Offer education as a base and with Sergi we say: we work for a new phase of civilization; through the emancipation of thought we will reach the emancipation of all slavery; we work free man from religious ghosts and to free him from the greatest curse: the war; let's proclaim universal peace and love to the full emancipation and respect to human life. (Moreau, 1906, p. 161)

Still in this journal, Ermelino de Leão, talking about the *Compêndio de pedagogia* (Pedagogy Compendium) by Dario Velozzo, also highlights that author's emphasis on *modern psychology*, demanding that the educational work should be based on the "exercise of intelligence, will, memory, imagination, and consciousness" (Leão, 1906, p. 75). Modern education would demand teachers capable of persuading students, without imposing rules and doctrines "enlightening the brain with the light of Truth, Goodness, Beauty, and Justice".

In the words of the socialist and feminist Alicia Moreau, published in Paraná, we have an expression of will that would mean the creation of a new world. In Minas Gerais, a priest, completely connected to the modernity represented by science, said:

[...] there is no social greatness without the direction of individual energies. It is the reason why so many love the country and feel towards humanity the altruistic fervor can never forgive instruction, and mainly the education of individuals, because these bees, the honey makers, form the social beehive. Education, and its daughter instruction, makes man a perfect entity, useful for himself and for society. (Ozamis, 1915, p. 3)

The same priest highlights the importance of a pedagogy of will based in a "psychological technique". In his explanations on the education of the body, there was a place for the gymnastic of will, very close to what we see in other documents, highlighting the fact that the catholic religion would counterbalance the effects of modernity:

The crucial point of this pedagogy of will is the psychology technique through which one acquires this faculty, the complete domain over his acts and existen-

ce. The gymnastics of will has to: go from the easiest to the hardest, it has to contradict itself, beat itself, and mortify itself. Remember the English axiom: where there is a will, there is a way, but to know the will one needs to repeat the efforts, to resist the assaults, to form habits, and to acquire energy reserves through the accumulation of practical coefficients of individual acting [...] this will power will not have the hardness of steel in the difficult cases and the perfect morality, if it is not followed by the supernatural power of Jesus Christ's religion. (Ozamis, 1913, p. 7)

To the author, "It is the moral then that operates this transformation in the individual" (Ozamis, 1915, p. 223).

Thus, the education of will, at least in the turn of the 19<sup>TH</sup> to the 20<sup>TH</sup> century, highlighted man's formation — and instruction — as a basic condition to the uplifting of a modern, civilized, active, industrial society, through the investment in the individual. The individual would be the possibility of a society built in other bases. Maybe this seems a bit or completely outdated nowadays. But we cannot forget that the wish for a free and enlightened individual with a will to transform the world was a mark in the revolutionary utopias in the end of the 19<sup>TH</sup> century, beginning of the 20<sup>TH</sup>, as well as in the liberal-republican rhetoric in countries strongly marked by monarchic traditions, such as Brazil and Spain.

Besides this, the emphasis on the usefulness of the individual, the knowledge, and the intelligence — thus education — suffered from strong influxes of utilitarianism. It was also stressed as a condition for a new social organization, against the parasitism, inaction and even the idleness that marked the elites on the 19<sup>TH</sup> century (and, in many registers, the "people"). Thus, the education of will, more than a simple ideological operation or a simple form of "moralism", was configured from the belief in the potential of man and the possibilities of transformation of the world, in a clear example of the search to build a new moral, strongly based, in some cases, in the scientific rhetoric, in others, in tradition, as in the literary works of William Morris (Thompson, 1976). The education of will was not bourgeois, romantic, or proletarian, but it was transversally present in different projects to develop humanity, expecting the overcoming of a natural state and its perfectibility, in addition to the belief in an inflection toward the individual would be the condition to reach the utopia of a better world for all.

Having the notions of effort, habit, and action as its main fundamentals, the education of will marked the pedagogical debate in a period of political, cultural, and educational renovation. Research is needed on its development in the diverse expressions of what is called renewed education anchored in different political and social doctrines — liberalism, pragmatism, anarchism, socialism, and positivism — in a period of strong political cleavages, in which revolutionary utopia started to shake the bases of western capitalistic societies. Although this is the theme of future works, it is important to highlight the education of will seemed to be founded in the utopia that men can master their formation process and therefore be the author of social transformation, without the guidance of others.

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