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THE INVENTION OF DEVELOPMENT IDEA: REFLECTIONS AND DIALOGIC PROPOSALS¹

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ABSTRACT. This article builds on the theoretical contributions of Pierre Bourdieu, Philippe Ariès and Michel Foucault aiming at examining concepts and central institutions crucial for Developmental Psychology. Using the feature of historical distance to shape the epistemological debate, this article examines how the notion of development has undergone shifts in meaning as a result of historical changes that leads to the formation of nation states forged in the ideal of progress. The notion of development is supported by educational institutions, which are engaged in formation of new citizens, and reinforced by the capitalist context. Finally, we discuss the way developmental psychology, heiress and collaborator of this ideal – with achievements, but also paradoxes and contradictions – could reflexively rethink the concept of development in dialogue with several areas, stressing the importance of collective welfare, as well as communal and ancestral relations. Therefore, a pluri-epistemic dialogical perspective is proposed here as a way of integrating Psychology into the contemporary world.

Keywords: Development; developmental psychology; epistemology of psychology.

A INVENÇÃO DA IDEIA DE DESENVOLVIMENTO: REFLEXÕES E PROPOSTAS DIALÓGICAS

RESUMO. Este artigo apoia-se nas contribuições teóricas de Pierre Bourdieu, Philippe Ariès e Michel Foucault com o objetivo de examinar conceitos e instituições centrais para a psicologia do desenvolvimento. Utilizando o recurso do distanciamento histórico para compor o debate epistemológico, observou-se que a noção de desenvolvimento sofre deslizamentos de significado em decorrência de transformações históricas que conduzem à formação dos Estados Nacionais, forjados no ideal de progresso. A noção de desenvolvimento recebe, assim, sustentação das instituições escolares, encarregadas da formação dos novos cidadãos, e se reforça com o contexto capitalista. Finalmente, debate-se como a psicologia do desenvolvimento, herdeira e colaboradora desse ideal – que alcançou conquistas, mas conhece paradoxos e contradições –, poderia reposicionar reflexivamente o conceito de desenvolvimento em diálogo com áreas diversas que sublinhem a importância do bem-viver coletivo, das relações comunitárias e ancestrais. Trata-se, portanto, de propor uma perspectiva dialógica pluriépistêmica como possibilidade de integração da psicologia ao mundo contemporâneo.

Palavras-chave: Desenvolvimento; psicologia do desenvolvimento; epistemologia da psicologia.

LA INVENCION DE LA IDEA DE DESARROLLO: REFLEXIONES Y PROPUESTAS DIALÓGICAS

RESUMEN. Este artículo se basa en los aportes teóricos de Pierre Bourdieu, Philippe Ariès y Michel Foucault, con la finalidad de examinar los conceptos y las instituciones centrales de la psicología del desarrollo. Por medio del

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distanciamiento histórico y del debate epistemológico, se observó cómo la noción de desarrollo sufre deslizamientos de significado como resultado de las transformaciones históricas que condujeron a la formación de los estados nacionales, forjados en el ideal de progreso. La noción de desarrollo recibe, así, apoyo de nuevas instituciones educativas, que participan de la formación de nuevos ciudadanos, y se ve reforzada por el contexto capitalista. Por último, se interroga cómo como la psicología del desarrollo, heredera y colaboradora de este ideal – que alcanzó logros, pero también paradojas y contradicciones –podría, reflexivamente, revisar el concepto de desarrollo tomando aportes de diferentes modelos en diálogo con otros campos. De esa forma se acentuaría la importancia del bienestar colectivo, de las relaciones comunitarias y ancestrales. La cuestión aquí es proponer una perspectiva dialógica pluri-epistémica como una manera de integrar la psicología en el mundo contemporáneo.

Palabras-clave: Desarrollo; psicología del desarrollo; epistemología de la psicología.

Introduction

For studying the human subject in aspects, abilities, and behavior throughout life, developmental psychology introduced the historic dimension in the science of Psychology (Foucault, 2011). The importance of broader studies, less concerned with traditional objects, such as those of historian Philippe Ariès, philosopher and social scientist Pierre Bourdieu, and philosopher-activist that resisted an disciplinary classification, Michel Foucault, is to offer the conditions for Psychology to be critically situated in a historic-epistemological context.

This paper highlights principles that are keystones to developmental psychology (DP). Although virtually unaddressed within a historic-epistemological framework, they uphold investigations, knowledge and practices in expressive amounts. The way of approaching childhood and other life-cycle markers is not an exclusive attribute of DP; nor is it free from the circumstances of the world. On the contrary, such conceptions and practices are still taken from social practices, among them scientific practice, which are intimately related to the socioeconomic structure and to projects of society and the human being.

Resorting to the historic-epistemological perspective implied by concepts such as “development”, “progress”, and “evolution” allows one to explore the construction of life-cycle or life stages markers based on the entanglement of institutions, discourses and practices formulated by the fields of education and of DP itself. Here we question concepts, institutions, and DP theses that have been naturalized. Bourdieu (2011) considers the analysis of pre-notions and presuppositions to be a difficult task to carry out, maybe an endless one; however, if coupled with historic reconstruction, such an analysis would build a potent pathway towards ruptures of “enlightened common sense” and towards the comprehension of *doxa* – a predominant and imperceptible view imposed upon others.

Various authors have pointed out the lack of reflexivity on the configuration and production of DP, which has contributed to the naturalization of concepts and practices (Lyra & Moura, 2000; Madureira & Uchoa, 2001; Mota, 2005, 2010; Oliveira, 2006; Ferreira & Araujo, 2009), as much as the inaccurate use of its own descriptors (Barros, 2013; Lopez, 2015). These characteristics mistake DP for Psychology itself (Barros, 2013; Lopez, 2015) and make the exam of its production a task even more delicate (Biaggio, 1989, 2011; Matos, 1992; Mota, 2005, 2010; Dessen & Guedea, 2005; Sifuentes, Dessen & Oliveira, 2007; Barros, 2013; Lopez, 2015), thereby generating multi-classifications in several subfields, psychology journals (Souza, Gauer, & Hutz, 2004), graduate programs, lines of research (Tourinho & Bastos, 2011) or research projects in Psychology (Matos, 1992).

According to Foucault (2011), such reflexive exercise is still an incomplete task for Psychology itself, at the heart of human sciences. This author points out the necessity to insist on the challenge of narrating, investigating and building different contemporary psychologies (Figueiredo, 1995; Jacó-Vilela, Ferreira, & Portugal, 2013) or “psychological sciences” (Bock, Furtado, & Teixeira, 2001). Such a challenge can, in fact, be considered a positive feature of the field (Figueiredo, 1995; Jacó-Vilela, Ferreira, & Portugal, 2013; Ferreira, 2013).

When one sets out to talk about “development”, the central notion for DP, which ideas of human being and society are therein implied? Would there be a final stage, ultimate step, or do we find ourselves ensnared by metaphorical traps, in which terms such as “progress”, “development” and

“evolution” evoke endless consequences, though nearly silent or silenced ones, from other fields? We shall start by questioning the notion of ‘progress’.

Epistemological drifts

The term progress, from the Latin term *progressus*, indicates forward motion, growth. Moving forward is to let things behind, to step into a new territory. “The etymologic spatial sense of ‘forward motion in space’ survived only in the military use of the word” (Rey, 1993, p. 1643). The geometric shape that better illustrates the idea of progress is an upward line. Lalande (1996, p. 871) observes two meanings: march toward a defined direction, and another one, value-driven and relative, of gradual change from “the less good to the better”.

According to Rey, the neutral meaning, connected to a series of military happenings, not connected to the idea of improvement, gives space, in the 17th and 18th centuries, to the generalized meaning of the word *evolution* (Rey, 1993). In the so-called Century of Lights (the 18th century), the term progress has to do with the ideal of ‘evolution of mankind’, in science, technics, and politics. The word ‘progress’ (and not ‘development’) could be essential for that era and the neutral idea of ‘change’ would express ‘evolution’: “Philosophers of progress, typical from the 18th century, and mainly from the 19th, clearly backed down on the 20th century, when scientific progress is frequently judged in a more nuanced tone” (Rey, 1993, p. 1644).

Differently from ‘development’ and ‘evolution’, the term ‘progress’ is not found in DP. In spite of their distinct uses, the first two words have a common origin. While ‘development’ has a broad use, hardly limited to a single theoretical field, ‘evolution’ is used in the evolutionist approach, with direct reference to Charles Darwin. Lalande (1996), discussing the term ‘evolution’, reminds us that it is not used in Darwin’s book, but in the works of Herbert Spencer.

Development comes from the verb *volvere* (to roll, to make something roll) and two prefixes: *des*, which frequently indicates opposition, and *en*, pointing to an inner position or to a movement inward. In the word *desarrollo*, we find the same idea: unroll, just as in *développement*, “action of unrolling what was enrolled in itself” (Rey, 1993, p. 594). The sense of unrolling is the most common since the 14th century, but in the 18th century it acquires new semantic values: “action of developing, or growing” (Bonnet, 2006, p. 61); the figurative meaning, “action of evolving” (Bonnet, 2006, p. 143). The use of ‘evolution’ would be more recent and we find it in the 18th century psychology and rhetoric to name the depth of a theme (Bonnet, 2006; Rey, 1993). Abbagnano (1996) observes that the more optimistic sense of *desarrollo* becomes more common in the philosophy of the 19th century in connection to ‘progress’; but its prior sense dates back to the Aristotelian concept of movement, as the passage of power in act.

The term ‘evolution’ is analyzed by Giddens (2009), interested in the influence of Darwinian evolutionary principles on social theories. According to the author, the term oscillates, with a momentum of high popularity and then decline. From the Latin *evolutia*, it is derived from *e-* (out of) and *volutus* (‘rolled’), related to the unrolling of parchment books. In the end of the 17th century, it acquires its current sense: ordered processes of change, observed in stages.

The terms ‘evolution’ and ‘development’ have a common origin, marked by the element of composition “*volv-*”, from the Indo-European stem “*wel/welw-*”, whose sense is againa to roll, with correspondents in various languages. In Greek, two terms: *elútron*, for a box, the case of a sword, peel of fruits, water tank, and, by extension, the body as the vessel for the soul; *hélikos*, *ikos*, spiral, circular movement. In Latin, *volvo*, *volvi*, *volutum*: to roll, to spin, to make time pass by, to mediate (Rey, 1993). We observe the maintenance of the notions of movement and unroll to form a hull. The example of the parchment (Giddens, 2009) seems appropriate and coherent with the older meaning of the term and in the appropriation and crystallization of the notion of childhood, to which we turn briefly.

Until the emergence of the press, the main material support for knowledge was parchment (Serres, 2013). ‘Development’, in Psychology, was used as the unrolling of an alleged essence. The term “infancy” (referring to early childhood) comes from the Latin *infans* (Rey, 1993), formed by *in* (negation

prefix) and *fari* (speak): one who does not speak. In turn, *fari* has to do with enlightening, like its successor “phenomenon” and aphasia. This notion is closely related to what Hall (2006) identifies in the “subject of Enlightenment”:

The Enlightenment subject was based on a conception of the human person as a fully centered, unified individual, endowed with the capacities of reason, consciousness, and action, whose “center” consisted of an inner core which first emerged when the subject was born, and unfolded with it, while remaining essentially the same continuous or “identical” with itself throughout the individual's existence. The essential center of the self was a person's identity. I shall say more about this in a moment, but you can see that this was a very “individualist” conception of the subject and “his” Enlightenment subjects were usually described as male) identity (Hall, 2006, pp.10-11).

This glossary refers to a historical placing. We will discuss the constitutive pathway of this conception of development consolidated in the Age of Enlightenment. At the end of the 18th century, according to Japiassu (2006, p. 30), “the success of physics allowed to conceive a deterministic universe totally intelligible to calculus”. In this sense, a hegemonic view is built, whose origins date back to rationalist philosophy. Japiassu (2006, p. 36) comments extensively on the reduction that in the 17th century was imposed on “ideal determinations”. A “paradigm of simplification” characterized by principles of disjunction, reduction, and abstraction was then established.

Then invention of childhood and school

According to Ariès (2012) the European child on the 14th and 15th centuries passes from a subordinate condition to the center of attention in the 19th century. In the Roman Empire, the father could cast away a child born from his wife and leave it to chance outside the house for a possible adoption or to feed some animal. Up until the end of the 17th century, children lived freely with adults, and this is how they learned life – what the author calls learning.

Ariès' (2012) assumption about the feeling toward childhood in bourgeois society does not refer to affective relationships between children and adults, but to the conception of childhood being different from other stages of life. Before the 17th century, the European child is considered to be a small adult, living in the same spaces, wearing similar clothes, and sharing the same school classes with older children.

According to Ariès (2012), “pampering” is the first feeling of particularity toward the bourgeois child. The second moment of distinction happens between the 16th and 17th centuries, initiated by the moralists, ecclesiastics and legislators, who considered children to be tender creatures from God that needed be preserved, watched and disciplined. The schooling institution will be the privileged space for the construction of a bourgeois discipline. European schools in the 18th century (Ariès, 2012) were asylums to poor children, supported by donors, and managed by monarchic rules. These institutions are characterized as teaching institutions only in the 15th century, with the increase of population (mainly laymen, nobles and bourgeois) and the adoption of a authoritarian and hierarchic discipline: “The final establishment of a code of discipline completed an evolution which led from the medieval school, a mere classroom, to the modern college, a complex institution, designed not only for the tuition but also for the supervision and care of youth.” (Ariès, 2012, p. 110).

Foucault (2011) points out military institutions, hospitals and schools as having their prime place in the institution of discipline as a political technology of the exercise of power, and its most important phase of development happened during the 18th century. Just as schools, as described by Ariès (2012), hospitals did not perform their roles that are currently supposed to, for they were dedicated to sheltering the poor. In the case of hospitals, for hosting dying poor people.

With the population growth, school becomes a precondition for the good bourgeois education. Ariès (2012) observes that the movement takes place both because of the preoccupation with moral and intellectual education of children – the need to “master” them, and of the analysis or fragmentation that takes over modern consciousness. Thus, the pedagogic formation is occupied with identical methods

and parameters, process that favored the distinction of the periods of teenagehood, previously inexistent or fairly fuzzy.

The discipline was regulated by groups of camaraderie of which children participated in “bands of fellows” (Ariès, 2012). These groups of various ages had the social approval, and were submitted to corporal punishments and humiliation. This condition remained until the 18th century as common practice in schools. The whip, which was used in small poor children, turned to be used in students up to the age of 20 years old. The change in this scenario comes with the suppression of punishment “The idea began to spread that childhood was not a servile age, and that it did not deserve to be methodically humiliated.” (Ariès, 2012, p. 118).

Ariès (2012) and Foucault (1998) present a new social disposition of the 18th century. Foucault makes a broad analysis of the passage from public tortures to a new economy of punishment, leading to a political reformulation on the right to punish. Punishment is no longer for the body as something privileged for subtle practices, less directly physical and less filled with ceremony, as in the case of torture in public squares. In this dislocation, new knowledge, techniques, scientific discourses are coopted, and they justify and assure the legitimacy of practices of punishment materialized in an enormous amount of paper organized by new regimen of truth applied not only to the punished people, but also to everyone that “watched, trained, and corrected, about crazy people, children, students, colonized, about the ones who are fixated to a device of production and controlled during their whole existence” (Foucault, 1998, p.28). According to Foucault (2011), the discipline comes as a technique of management of human being by means of a body of technology associated with each other, intertwined and complement: analysis of spaces and gestures, vigilance of individuals in a pyramidal system of looks, inspections, continuous register, exams as instruments of classification.

The disciplinary process (Foucault, 1998) is designed around the 18th century and establishes its practices concomitantly in the formation of the army, factories, and schools. The soldier is fabricated from an inapt body by means of tireless and constant discipline, arranged in a sequence of exercises with a growing degree of difficulty. These exercises have to do with thorough methods for controlling the body, making it more efficient and obedient. The construction of docile bodies happens in more heterogenic places, such as schools, quarters, where intimate and microphysical bio-power operates over the body in terms of individuality – because it distinguishes, separates, classifies –, and the large scale production transforming in disciplinary machines of big contingents of population.

Besides the examination techniques, vigil, and practice of exercises, the discipline is consolidated by means of the “art of distribution” and of the control individuals have over time and space. In the space operationalized in specialized institutions (quarters, factories, schools) there is the principle of immediate location or “scanning” of individuals: “Each individual has his place; for every place, an individual” (Foucault, 1998, p. 123). In school “class”, this principle places subjects according to the model of the Roman legion: disposition in lines, hierarchic and pyramidal vigilance. Gradually the attribution of places replicates internal classification, obligatory alignments that give to each subject, turned into a student, a position with respect to others according to different categories; age, income, behavior.

The pedagogic technology comes into operation for the training of useful, agile and productive gesture arranged in series, in linear time, individual, cumulative, guided by a terminal end, positive and stable (Foucault, 1998). It is build the idea of ‘evolution in terms of progress’. This “evolutionary historicity” is so profoundly engendered that to this day it is still taken as evidence and, consequently, connected to a hegemonic functioning of power.

The task of care given to educators finds supports in the etymology of “student”. “Aluno” derives from the verb *alère*, related to small child, disciple, whom should be cared, fed and supported. Student derives from the Latin *estud-*, which refers to active actions of carrying or watching over somebody. While the first is dependent of another, the second indicates positive action in the world.

Alain Coulon (2008) discusses with an abundance of examples from contemporary college life this passage in the threshold of adult life at the cost of an intense process of learning institutionalized rules and knowledge. Lopes (2011) asserts that this passage is made effective if and when there is an affective connection and one of time-and-space, that is, when the student manages to perform the emotional task of building new affective laces in university, at the same time when he repositions

himself in his origin group incorporating demands of college time and space, especially in changing cities.

The traditional notion of development in psychology does not contemplate, in general, the subject's creative action of the process nor does it contemplate the inseparable composition of the subject with the context. On a different line, Vigotski, an important theoretical landmark in DP since the beginning of the 20th century, offers an integral comprehension of the constitution of the subject in culture living with peers, placing emphasis in transformations, art and creation. However, in Brazil, Vigotski's studies did not appear in a significant fashion in scientific meetings of Psychology until early 21st century. Lopez (2015) observes that Vigotski is practically ignored in the first editions of the main conference in the area in Brazil, while in the latest editions he is made constant reference in papers. Besides, other authors such as the Russian Alexander Luria, Alexei Leontiev, and Mikhail Bakhtin, the German Walter Benjamin, the Cuban eradicated in Brazil Luis González Rey and Albertina Mitjáns Martínez, and Jaan Valsiner, born in Estonia and professor in the United States.

González-Rey (2013) relates this delay in Latin American, with the exception of Cuba, to the ideological vigilance present in these countries that considered subversive any scientific, cultural or artistic production from former USSR during the extent period of the Cold War. In the last few decades there has been an increase in investigations that depart from the constitution of childhood as a multi-determined phenomenon, from which are inseparable part their place and relation to the collective, that is, family, culture, support network, desire to belong to a group, social and physical conditions, senses and meaning attributed, or even the political and historic context. There remain, however, investigations that conceive the child as universal, comparable in age to any other in distant contexts, spatially and temporally.

The growing importance of context to the understanding of phenomena related to the subject appears in Hall's (2006) classificatory proposal of sociological subject and post-modern subject. The notion of sociological subject, with a "nucleus" or "inner essence", comprises it is from the relation between the subject and the social environment that identity comes about, through a mediation of values, meanings, and symbols. The "post-modern" subject, resulting from a non-metaphysic philosophy, is no longer an heir of their first essence. If the notion of identity was associated with immutability, it is now incorporated in the dialogue with context. At best investigation, not only in psychology, which appear ideas of continuous formation and transformation marked by transience and by the concept of multiple identities, and often contradictory: "The fully unified, complete, secure, and coherent identity is a fantasy" (Hall, 2006, p. 13).

In Bourdieu's (2005, 2009, 2011) reflective sociology the understanding of a life or of a work is inseparable from its conditions of realization, circumscribed to the "space of possible". In this perspective, the researcher's understanding must turn to the field in which life happened, and, primarily, to their own life, according to the reflective movement Bourdieu (2005) defended and performed. To this author, in the prior tenet it is implicit the idea of life being a coherent whole, a linear unitary expression of an intention or project that goes in chronologic and logic order, with an origin and an end. Trying to understand life with these characteristics would be an absurd just as is analyzing a subway's pathway without considering its structure, conditions and objective relations, and the passage by *those* trails.

According to Bourdieu (2011), this narrative characteristic finds parallel in the traditional structure of the literary romance, in which, by illusion of rhetoric, are established connections and coherence to the successive happening, making life coherent, progressive, whole, and linear. This biographic formulation is worried with attributing senses, finding logic of connection between past events and future ones, in a succession of steps of necessary development. Bourdieu (2011) states that the social world is organized through social mechanisms that privilege and incentivize the understanding of life as unity and totality in rituals more or less institutionalized of "talking about the self", of confidence, of social identity through the proper name and of constancy in time and space, the institutional rites of attribution, the "social presentations of the self", as an ID, curriculum vitae. As an alternative, Bourdieu (2011) proposes the notion of journey to put in evidence a series of positions occupied by the agent, or by the group, in a field that is, just like the subject, constantly submitted to pressures, changes, and ruptures. Happenings are understood as dislocations through social space, from the circulation and accumulation of different capitals, submerged in different forces and game strategies, and in a specific

space of possible. The space of the possible “to the manner of each language, or of a musical instrument, is offered (...) as an infinite universe of possibilities contained in a potential state of a finite system of impositions” (Bourdieu, 1996, p. 125).

Development as the key word of capitalism

After the disastrous experience of World War II, development became the banner of forums and international organizations. In Brazil, even though the positivist idea of progress keeps shaking the national flag, development is the key word that incites big national public agencies. Rebuild and develop are two goals of numerous organizations: International Bank of Development (IBD), International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), Program of the United Nations for Development (PUND), Policy Committee on Developing Countries (PCDC), and various NGOs and public agencies.

With respect to the academic field, even before the 20th century, the notion of progress constituted the basis for policies and practices in education, permeating discourses that sustain it, such as psychology, in the production of knowledge and interventions, both the public and private spheres. Both psychology and education contributed to the maintenance and legitimization of privileges in a regimen of practices.

The profound social transformations (Ariès, 2012; Foucault, 1998; Bourdieu, 2005, 2009, 2011) intensified between the 17th and 18th centuries, with the intervention of the bourgeois state. Besides the ascension of the bourgeois and the endowing of the state with concepts and institutions that support it, we must mention school institutions, which are intimately related to the reproduction of the hegemonic elite. Using the logic specific from school, operation of the “infernal machine” were put into practice and sustain the preexisting order of unbalance among uneven amounts of cultural capital among students (Bourdieu, 2011).

More generally, the school system acts as the reproducer of the preexistent order in imposing operations of selection and triage that acknowledge and reward the heirs of cultural capital specific to privileged classes. Cultural capital according to Bourdieu (2011) is any type of capital – economic, cultural, educational, social, academic – perceived according to principles of vision, division and classification (*habitus*), shared in a specific field with others. The mark of the educational institution is the “act of ordinance”, just as the handling of the diploma can be compared to the investment of the knight in medieval orders, in which the elected were marked definitely and, thus considered to be legitimate to exert power and dominate over others.

In his draft of Self-Analysis (2005), Bourdieu observes that, in the schooling process of evaluating and selecting are implicated different contents that surpass limits of content. The author presents concepts he has developed from his own experience, for having been born in a small countryside city in France. He reports how some teachers were impressed at how the cultural capital of Parisians dressed in elegant clothes, showing pretensions, seeing and awarding this disposition, indicators of intellectual property, moral and material.

Besides reproduce and consecrate, the educational institution is an important means of reproduction of manners, ideologies and practices from the dominant elite, contributing to discipline and civilize bodies or places (Foucault, 1988). More generally, these were the intentions of the Jesuits that came to Brazil in the second half of the 16th century. According to Massimi (2013), the creation of Jesuit schools was one of the mains goals in the missionary plan that, clothed in a Aristotelian humanistic medieval pedagogic spirit, understood formal education as a privileged instrument to create a new man in the Land of Santa Cruz: “Such task entailed the need to reformulate knowledge and practices that, in our current language, we would call as pedagogues and psychologists” (p. 86).

As we have pointed out, based on Foucault’s (1998) contributions, it is this empty discursive space and of practices of new knowledge that came into operation. According to Ferreira and Araújo (2009),

there is along path of invention of infancy and of school as privileged and “natural” places in psychology, mainly in DP and school psychology, with their legitimate knowledge, therefore, power.

Foucault (2011) asserts that the constitution of psychology is found in the effort of understanding the “abnormal” in order to dominate human contradictions. In doing so, the author warns, as a consequence, it comes about a psychology of the “normal”. Being set like this, psychology establishes relations with educational practice, mental medicine, organization of groups, and deals with difficulties imposed by practice, to which Foucault calls temporary failures. The author sees in this point the come about of new specialties in psychology, including DP, taken to deal with flaws in development.

The concept of development, operated and naturalized by DP, holds procedures of comprehension and regulation of the normal and of the pathologic, of the deviant of the expected, of the soon-comer and of the latecomer. Lyra and Moura (2000) understand that the study of development displaces its interest from processes of change to distinctions between steps and stages marked by indexes of abilities: “... as a response to the need of a psychology of differences in which the goal is to classify mainly disturbs of development, or to separate the more competent ones from the less competent ones” (p. 218). In a similar fashion, Ferreria (2010) points out how different theories provide the basis for DP and create practices of adaptation and adjustment, separating human groups into categories, and being interested in the “adjusted” and “maladjusted”, in the “adapted” and the “miss fitted”. The role of DP in this process is only one of the many variants that the term ‘development’ experimented.

Some of the effects of the notion of development

The ideas of progress, development and evolution had a long history in the field of human sciences. The North-American social scientist Robert Nisbet (1986) discussed the term ‘progress’ and points out that this notion comes from ancient people. He asserts, however, that only in Western civilization is the concept applied to history, and is taken as the advance and perfecting of humanity. The ideas of progress, perfecting and advance are related to collective aspects such as wealth, knowledge, civilization, and war techniques. Although the author foresees in Seneca the common principles for Darwinian evolutionism, it is in Saint Augustine that the formulation of individual growth supported by the ascetic-Christian ideal. Here the etymologic reference of ‘development’ as unrolling that starts in infancy is foregrounded. The human being is seen as the carrier, in his ‘essence’, of the potentiality of perfection, accessible through the movement of unrolling that the term comprises.

The idea of progress, however, would only gain strength in Europe much later, in the 18th century, and would come to know its vigor in the beginning of the 19th century (Nisbet, 1986). Later on, it is discredited by a number of authors, even before the more serious historic oppositions, such as the great wars, military dictatorships, holocaust, and the break of the stock market in New York, that contest the principles of unlimited economic growth and legal reordering (in terms of equality among peoples and people).

A demonstration of the more obscure side of these terms, according to Nisbet (1986), was the relation established in some cultures among the idea of progress and the existence of alleged “superior races”, as happened in Nazi Germany, but not there only. There was a conception that necessary and irreparable advance of humanity toward perfection supports totalitarian ideas and dictatorships, says the author.

Ignacy Sachs (2009), one of the main contemporary thinkers about sustainable development, understands that the development inspired in modern ideals of progress has granted racist conceptions and totalitarian viewpoints, in which people more advanced economically were called to decide the fate of others considered delayed – the ones that have not ‘evolved’, and, thus, have imposed the paths through which those should go toward their future to approximate from “universal goals” of civilizations. Although these facets of the notion are enough to warn us, we can still analyze the unfolding. As has been pointed out previously, the genesis of the notion of development is related to Christianity, with the work about the self and the full realization of the essence would lead, by meritocracy, to a happy future life, inevitable, in an environment saturated with grace and contentment. It is likely that the common origin has kept the sense of value of the future step, ideally perfect and full, and the disqualification of

current moment: imperfect, incomplete, filled with embarrassments that should be undone and overcome.

The field of Education, with its technologies and discourses, is placed where Psychology has started and from which it progressively draws away, in standardizing methods, exams, triages, tests of efficiency and competence, in minutely compartmentalized described steps that should be observed and overcome by the individual, creates instruments and discourses that demand measuring, classifying, comparing. Classificatory indexes gain ample circulation and are easily available for everyday operations of measurement and exam. Shortly after the first prenatal consultation parents are already in a developmental race – some of them even before labor – with endless parameters to consider, such as the size of tibia, diameter of the crane, development of speech, walking, etc.

Studies in DP display methodologically their choices and beliefs: many of them consist of a single meeting with a child for test and task performances to be examined. This developmental approach, besides incentivizing individualism and competition, can approximate to a developmental determinism that permeates those who have better performance in exams, while disqualifies and embarrasses “late comers”, “deficient” (as opposed to efficient), and “disobedient” (as opposed to docile), and all others, flawed people that fall outside the curve (Ferreira & Araujo, 2009; Ferreira, 2010; Lyra & Moura, 2000; Lopez, 2015). Besides these characteristics, DP receives critics that characterize how operating little reflection (Barros, 2013; Souza, Branco, & Oliveira, 2008; Mota, 2010, 2005; Madureira & Branco, 2001; Lyra & Moura, 2000). Lopez (2015) observe that, in their main scientific progress, studies that take DP as the focus of debate or reflection do not reach 4%.

In favor of different developments

The idea of sustainable development comes about with the Cocoyoc Declaration in 1974, and with the *WhatNow* report in 1975. In the first document, poverty and inequality would be the major causes of the environmental crisis, while in the second document, abuse of power is placed as the determining factor of the planetary crisis. In both we see the need to come up with limits for disorderly growth, consumption and production, as well as suggestions for inequality and other environment-related urgent matters. The ideal growth at any cost demonstrated its accelerated potential of destruction: species in extinction, contamination of water fountains, desertification, climate change, dumps, etc. Ignacy Sachs (2009) criticizes the development model thought as a homogeneous growth and proposes a viewpoint centered in each society, their particularities, possibilities, potential, desires, values, and projects, etc. Sustainability, as defended by the author, integrates the ethical, political, geographic, economic, social, psychological and ecological components. We add furthermore that it also comprises the aesthetic dimension, presented by Sachs as cultural sustainability. The integration – which presupposes obligations, duties, and compromises – is the result of a laborious articulation that requires free and well-informed participation of the society, but it also comprises autonomy, freedom and proactiveness of the subjects. This line of reasoning does not belong to sustainable development, but it is shared by worldwide movements. In Latin America and in Africa, the culture of caring about the environment and the respect to Mother Earth and its elements are a part of an ancestral legacy that, even though has been suppressed and silenced, still resists and is currently renewed.

Andean well-being aims at an ethic of sufficiency for the whole community, not just for the individual. It presupposes a holistic and integrating vision of the human being in the great earthly community which includes, besides the human being, air, water, soils, mountains, trees and animals, the Sun, the Moon and the stars. And it seeks a pathway of balance and deep communion with Pacha (universal energy) that focuses on Pachamama (Earth) (Boff, 2013, p.62).

There is in some capitalist countries a strong positivized investment in the term ‘development for beyond the individual spheres reverberating in politics, culture, society and ethics. The capitalist faith in progress, limited by technical hindrances, in the alleged everlasting abundance of mineral resources, just as in the equation in which the sum of economic and scientific growth are translated into human

growth is no longer convincing. The idea of development as the unrolling of an essence from a stable center does not stick anymore. Besides, the term 'development' underwent hard blows in its ideal formulation that projected well-being for all, as a consequence of scientific progress. The context, then, is fully recognized as being a constitutive part of the subject who rebuilds himself and the world around him. At the planetary level we start to understand that the rhythm and the model of economic progress are of difficult conciliation with values related to quality of life and protection of natural resources.

The idea of development reproduces practices and conceptions that go beyond the individual sphere. Values such as productivity, conscientiousness, discipline, obedience, and competition are fairly common in industrial corporations and in institutional schools, just as practices of triage, classification and selection among the more and less apt. It is not by chance that competence and competition carry the same etymologic stem. On the other hand, planetary movements revise the model of development that there is as metrics at the financial-economic level. Practices and discourses about sustainability expose characteristics of the current model: ecological instability, ethical, social and moral uncompromised with the places of the Earth and its population.

In a context where countries define their roles considering both regionalization and globalization, and where different projects of development compete to ensure the necessary environmental sustainability, if the reasoning is not unified and aimed at embracing plural and complex necessities, development, too, cannot be unique and universal.

The concept of human development implies the ethical imperative of not sacrificing the well-being of others in the name of self growth, progress and evolution. This imperative is based on ideas of justice and fraternity, in feelings like solidarity and compassion, and in cooperative practices and care, tasks that cannot be assumed by subjects whose formation is contained in a restricted field of knowledge, as is the case of Psychology taught in Brazil today. Considering the historic formation of the discipline of Psychology, it is important to ask what will be the stance of this science from now on. Studies on performance, with single meetings and broad generalizations, displacing or misplacing the subject and the context, favor the construction of efficient technology, instant and uncompromised with the human journey. Without a more broad formation, the includes at least environmental psychology, and without paths of formation that foresee the dialog with politics, education, social sciences and collective health, hardly will we overcome the developmental notion of development. This has to do, therefore, with a proposal of a plural-epistemic dialogic perspective as a possibility of integrating Psychology to the world.

The task of reconstructing psychology, mainly that of following the human journey, includes the challenge of disconnecting from notions of progress, evolution, and development restricted to capitalist framing that gathers individuals, efficiency and competition as elements capable of overcoming droughts and insecurities. Thus, we can advance in other developments or possible cycles that shelter collectivities and human differences, with creativity, critical thinking, artistic, ecologic, in sharing networks socially framed.

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