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The Onto-Historical Nature of the Educational Principle: Gramsci and Lukács

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ABSTRACT – The Onto-Historical Nature of the Educational Principle: Gramsci and Lukács. This article addresses the distinctions and approximations between Gramsci and Lukács' elaborations about the educational principle. The possibility of work being or not an educational principle was questioned, as the basis of an emancipatory political-pedagogical project. For that, an immanent reading of the works was carried out: *The Ontology of the Social Being (TOSB)*, volume 14, by Georg Lukács; *Prison Notebooks*, volumes 11, 12 and 22, and some *Selections from Political Writings*, by Antonio Gramsci. As a result of the research, the educational principle, which aims to ground an educational system based on the integral development of social beings, was defended as a human formation.

Keywords: Work. Praxis. Educational Principle. Human Formation.

RESUMO – A Natureza Onto-Histórica do Princípio Educativo: Gramsci e Lukács. O presente artigo aborda as distinções e as aproximações entre as elaborações de Gramsci e Lukács acerca do princípio educativo. Problematicizou-se a possibilidade de o trabalho ser ou não um princípio educativo, como base de um projeto político-pedagógico emancipador. Para tanto, realizou-se uma leitura imanente das obras: *Para a Ontologia do Ser Social*, volume 14, de Georg Lukács; *Cadernos do Cárcere*, volumes 11, 12 e 22, e alguns *Escritos Políticos*, de Antônio Gramsci. Como resultados da pesquisa, o princípio educativo, que tenha como desígnio fundamentar um sistema educacional pautado no desenvolvimento integral dos seres sociais, foi defendido como formação humana.

Palavras-chave: Trabalho. Práxis. Princípio Educativo. Formação Humana.

Introduction

In this article¹, of a theoretical-bibliographic nature, we analyze the approximations and distances contained in the elaborations of Gramsci and Lukács about the educational principle. We seek to understand the limitations of an education proposal anchored in the premise of work as an educational principle of human emancipation. For this, we carried out an immanent reading of the following literary works: *The Ontology of the Social Being (TOSB)*, volume 14, by Georg Lukács, *Prison Notebooks*, volume 12, and some *Selections from Political Writings*, by Antonio Gramsci.

What justifies our research is the claim to offer a perspective that contributes to the discussion and advancement of the ways in which this subject, the educational principle, has so far been treated by theorists in the field of education, who refer to historical-dialectical materialism, with a Marxian-Lukácsian basis, namely: Lazarini (2015), Lessa (2007), Macário (2005), Sousa Júnior (2015), Titton (2017) and Tumolo (2005).

The text is written in the following integrated parts: Introduction, First Words, The Educational Principle of Work, Praxis and Human Formation, Work, Praxis and Human Formation as an Educational Principle, and Final Considerations. The articulation of these sections has only a didactic character, since they are connected by the need to prove the thesis defended here. By way of considerations, we understand, even without exhausting the debate, that work cannot figure alone as a premise for school education, since it is constituted as a dimension of the human being's formative process, but it is not exclusively.

First Words

Throughout the 1980s, in Brazil, the conception that work would be the educational principle spread and, for a certain period, there were no counterarguments. Among such educational theorists referenced in Marxism are Manacorda (1990), Saviani (1996) and Ciavatta (1990). From the following decade, in-depth studies of the literary work *The Ontology of the Social Being (TOSB)* by Lukács (2018a; 2018b) began, in which the ontological nature of Marxism is made explicit, demystifying reductionist readings, epistemological and gnosiological, which were unduly imposed on the Marxist tradition.

Lukacsian investigations are brought to Brazil by a group of theorists, such as: José Chasin, José Paulo Netto, Celso Frederico, Carlos Nelson Coutinho, Leandro Konder and others, whose commitment was accompanied with special dedication by Sérgio Lessa and Ivo Tonet, as well as as well as Professor Susana Jimenez, among other researchers. These last authors have contributed directly to the development of studies, dissertations and theses that take, each at its own term, the fundamental ontological principles posed by Marx and rescued by Lukács

(2018a; 2018b), who defend work as a founding category of being social.

Lukács (2018a; 2018b) when referring to the complex work and education, in their ontological relationship between founded and founding, gives us clues to understand the ontological function of the educational principle, that is, what is the educational principle inherent in the process of constitution of being social. The lack of differentiation between his philosophical elaborations and the more immediate political elaborations of Antonio Gramsci has been convenient to impede the debate around this polemic. The interest here is to shed light on this problem that involves human emancipation as a historical development.

The problematization around the relationship between work and education within the scope of Marxism begins to take shape with the thesis by Eptácio Macário (2005) – supervised by Sérgio Lessa –, which, in search of the role of education in the process of social reproduction, brings up a debate about the materiality of ideas, as well as about the distinction of the aforementioned complexes.

Then, Sérgio Lessa (2007) begins his theoretical critique of identifying the complexes of work and education and the consequences of this for the educational principle based on the text *Sobre a Natureza e Especificidade da Educação* (Saviani, 2003). This researcher problematizes that Saviani (2003), although recognizing work as a founding category of the social being, identifies work and education, thus diluting the founding/founded relationship, the consequence of which would be the loss of the centrality of the transformation of social relations of production as a *sine qua non* condition for the construction of a new educational organization. This identification is explicit when the author states that education is “[...] itself, a work process” (Saviani, 2003, p. 15).

Regarding the identification between work and education, it must be made clear that it consists in the fact that Saviani defends education as non-material work. In his words: “This is about the production of knowledge, ideas, concepts, values, symbols, attitudes, skills. Obviously, education falls into this category of non-material work [...]” (Saviani, 2003, p. 13).

However, we cannot lose sight of the fact that a social complex is defined by its specific function in the process of social reproduction, which guarantees its ontological weight in society. Therefore, work and education are distinguished in their functions: the first consists of the exchange of the social being with nature for the production of means of production and subsistence; the second “[...] consists, on the contrary, in qualifying them to react adequately to new unexpected events and situations that will occur later in their lives” (Lukács, 2018b, p. 133).

Lessa (2007, p. 116) understands that the sustainability of the thesis of work as an educational principle is only possible if Saviani considers work as a teleological activity, that is, an intentionally planned activity: “It is only based on the implicit, non-schematized adoption of this concept of work as ‘intentional action’ that the thesis that work is an ‘educational principle’ can be sustained”. In the eyes of this researcher,

the thesis of work as an educational principle is linked to the educational character of the work process, that is, work can only be the educational principle because it is an activity that involves teleology and transformation of nature, educating human beings in this work process.

Here it is necessary to open a parenthesis about the distinction between the educational principle of work and work as an educational principle. A relevant aspect, raised by Pistrak (2009) and reaffirmed by Titton (2017, p. 4), when considering the following:

[...] there is a fundamental difference between these two formulations, since in the first case it immediately refers to the broader process of education that takes place through work in the social form in which it assumes a determined mode of production of life, while in the second, we are referring to the use of socially useful material work as a basis for organizing an education system, with a view to training staff that allows for a transition that reunites teaching and education, which is only possible through the emancipation of the work.

For our part, we understand that, in relation to the educational principle of work, it is possible to state, in the light of Sousa Jr. (2015), that this educational character of work can and should be extended to praxis in general, since every form of human activity has an immanent educational character. On the other hand, work as an educational principle consists in the fact that work is *one* of the fundamental elements that determines the mode of organization of a type of education, in the *stricto sensu*, according to the degree of social development historically achieved.

In other words, the thesis of work as an educational principle expresses the following: what defines the educational process is found outside it (at work). This determinant relationship consists in the fact that transforming nature to satisfy human needs is something to be accomplished in any form of sociability. For this, we need to know the causal relationships of nature and of causalities posed (innumerable instruments, machines, work processes developed throughout history by the whole of humanity).

For Lessa (2007, p. 118), what Saviani seeks with the thesis of work as an educational principle is “[...] to demonstrate that the decisive reference of pedagogical practice is found outside itself, that it is a social complex founded by needs that have their origin fundamentally outside the educational sphere”. However, Lessa (2007, p. 118) states that “[...] this objective cannot be achieved from its own categories”, since Saviani (2003) identifies work and education.

Continuing to update the controversy, Ademir Lazarini (2015), when analyzing the relationship between capital and school education in the work of Dermeval Saviani, discusses the thesis of work as an educational principle exposed in the work of the Brazilian educator. Lazarini (2015, p. 55) begins his critique by alluding to what was previously

proposed by Lessa (2007): the issue of identification between education and work. Thus states Lazarini (2015, p. 55): “[...] it was from these definitions of work and education, not always consistent with each other, that the theoretical proposition of ‘work as an educational principle’ emerged in Saviani’s ideas”.

This assertion seems incorrect to us, since what makes such a proposition emerge in Saviani’s ideas is Gramsci’s reading of the Unitary School, which is based on work as an educational principle, exposed mostly in *Notebooks 12*. In the third chapter of his research, Lazarini (2015, p. 390) poses a question, which forms the title of subsection 3.6.4: “Can work be the educational principle of an educational theory aimed at overcoming current society?” An issue also raised by the advisor of his doctoral thesis, Paulo Sérgio Tumolo (2005). For us, firstly, it is not a matter of finding out whether work can be the educational principle, but recognizing, through the apprehension of reality, that it is an educational principle in any form of human sociability, regardless of our willpower.

Thus, there is the debate about the educational principle in its two dimensions: about its educational character expressed as a praxis that involves teleology and transformation of nature, and also as a central element that determines the way of organizing a type of education. Based on these contributions, on how the problem has been constituted, we will analyze, below, the first dimension of the problem.

The Educational Principle of Work, Praxis and Human Formation

We believe it is enlightening to draw a parallel between the educational character of work, elaborated by Gramsci in his *Political Writings*, and the educational character not only of work, but of all praxis and human formation, bequeathed by Lukács in TOSB. This step is necessary for us to find out what is fruitful and current, in the two theorists, that allows for a greater and deeper appropriation of the issue under debate.

Before starting this discussion, it is necessary to return to a distinction made by us in the introduction to this work, namely: between work as an educational principle and the educational principle of work. The educational principle of work, in fact, refers to the educational nature of work.

The educational principle of work appears in Gramsci, in his *Political Writings*, in the periodical *L’Ordine Nuovo*. During this period, the Italian revolutionary produced elaborations on the educational complex. Its intention is to create a basis for the self-education process of workers who, by managing the factory in Turin without their bosses, educate themselves technically and politically. In the meantime, the Sardinian intellectual claims that it is in the productive process that workers find the foundation of the process of self-education and self-emancipation.

Let us consider, by way of illustration, the production process under capitalism, in which the use value of products is subsumed under their exchange value. In this system, workers are stripped of all means of production and lose control over the process and product of work. Here, as well explained by Marx (2015), we have an inversion of the character of work – from a creative act to an alienated act. Now, how can we say, in this case, that the production process is the foundation of the worker's self-education?

In the first place, it is necessary to emphasize the following: although there is an inversion in the character of the work, there is no complete elimination of its creative and creator character. This is subsumed, but remains present. Secondly, as an essential condition for carrying out the production process, the act of producing human existence requires, under any type of sociability, a certain degree of knowledge about natural laws.

Gramsci considered that workers, inserted in the productive process of social wealth, were already endowed with specific knowledge, that is, work would have an educational character, despite its alienating form – specifically historical-social one. Thirdly, it means combining this technical knowledge with the worker's political education. In the analysis of the factory councils in Turin, for example: Gramsci (2004, p. 289) says that the "[...] council is the most suitable organ for reciprocal education and development of the new social spirit that the proletariat was able to generate from the living and fruitful experience of the community of work". It is a historic moment, which raised the possibility for workers to take the reins of the productive process, in order to start the implantation of new bases of production relations.

Let us now turn to Lukács.

According to Lukács (2018a; 2018b), work is a praxis that involves teleology and causality. Teleology is dialectically divided into two parts: search for means and position of ends. It requires a series of knowledge from the human being who performs it, in order to choose the correct means, which materialize the previously required purpose. Causality, on the other hand, can be given by nature, as raw material, or posed by the social being as an objectified result of the praxis carried out.

Work, as described above, is an educational process par excellence, because, by performing a teleological pose, the human agent is enriched with skills and knowledge. And this goes for any and all forms of praxis, whether productive or ideological, since work is the model of all social praxis.

Lukács (2018b), even isolating the work complex, due to a need for abstraction to understand a part of the whole in detail, draws attention several times to the fact that work founds, but does not exhaust the social being. Even on the first page of the chapter *The Work* (TOSB), the revolutionary Hungarian states that some complexes arise concomitantly, and that the ontological priority of work consists in that all other complexes have their emergence made possible by it.

The work makes the human subject jump from the organic sphere to a qualitatively different sphere of being: the social sphere. The importance of this discussion consists in understanding that considering only the educational principle of work imposes limits on the formation of human gender, given that it is not only the founding complex that holds the character of educating the social being.

In the dialectic between objectification/exteriorization, men and women educate themselves, becoming participants of the human race. In the words of Lukács (2018a, p. 38):

[...] praxis is, in its essence and in its spontaneous repercussions, the decisive factor of human self-education, that all conflicts that the human being is forced to master spiritually are always primarily based on and driven by the contradictions of praxis in his respective life, and thus on.

This movement of human intervention – either by transforming the given nature, or by individuals, or even acting on other consciences, in all its scope and complexity – constitutes the process of human formation. When dealing with the phenomenon of alienation² in his *Ontology*, Lukács (2018b) discusses this educational character of praxis at a higher level of concretion. Let's see.

In the first sub-item of the *Alienation* chapter, entitled *The General Ontological Traits of Alienation*, Lukács seeks to demonstrate the social genesis of alienation, that is, when the phenomenon of alienation appears in human history. In the meantime, it deals with how the process of individuation of the subject takes place, who, by objectifying a position of finality, develops, concomitantly, their human capacities and their personality.

It is in this development of human capacities, as a retroaction of all forms of praxis, that the educational character of all human activity becomes evident. In the process of objectification/exteriorization, the human being is formed, with technical skills, and appropriates the human genericity, the historical heritage, produced by the whole of humanity, also forming its personality.

The categories of objectification and externalization are already contemplated in Karl Marx (2015). However, the originality of Lukács (2018b) consists in dividing the process of externalization into two distinct moments, which complement each other, namely: the development of human capacities and the human personality – the latter as a private singular personality.

If, on the one hand, the categories of objectification and exteriorization have an ontological character, composing the essential nature of praxis – be it purely economic or ideological in any form of sociability –, alienation, on the other hand, consists of a phenomenon “[...] exclusively socio-historical, which emerges at certain levels of existing development, ever since taking historically different, ever more incisive forms” (Lukács, 2018b, p. 501).

Here we are particularly interested in the categories exteriorization and objectification, in order to assess the educational character of praxis in Lukács:

While objectification is clearly stipulated imperatively by the respective division of labor and it therefore necessarily develops the necessary capacities in human beings (that this, of course, only refers to an economically conditioned average, that this domination never completely extinguishes, in this sense, individual differences, does not change anything in the essence of the thing), the retroaction of exteriorization on the subject of work is, in principle, divergent (Lukács, 2018b, p. 506).

Objectification is something much more possible to be controlled, since in order to carry out a position of purpose, the subject who sets himself a purpose needs to correctly apprehend the causal relations, properties, laws of nature, to be able to accomplish what he wants, that he planned in his conscience. The moment of the subject's exteriorization, which consists in the formation of his capacities and personality, allows for a much greater divergence. In the words of Lukács (2018b, p. 506): "[...] in externalization, absolutely opposite modes of behavior can arise". It is worth remembering that it is in this field that education is situated, both in the *lato* and *stricto sensu*. Therefore, the educational praxis can form behaviors completely contrary to what was planned.

It is interesting to note that Lukács (2018a; 2018b) deals with this issue mostly from a purely philosophical point of view, without referring to a specific historical moment, nor how this reverberates in the class struggle and in the organization of the working class. On the other hand, Gramsci (2004) discusses the educational principle of work as self-education of workers. The fact that workers educate themselves in the work process itself allows them to build independence to manage the factory with autonomy, dispensing with the owners of the means of production: the bourgeoisie.

And since, as repeatedly discussed, we see in the singular human being a real ontological pole of every social process, since alienation is one of the most decidedly individual-centered social phenomena, it is important to remember again that this is not an individual-abstract 'freedom', to which, at the other pole, that of the social totality, an equally abstract need, this time socio-abstract, would be confronted, but that the alternative is not completely eliminable of any social process (Lukács, 2018b, p. 507).

Just as the Hungarian author states that alienation is one of the social phenomena most decidedly centered on the individual, we can say the same about externalization. Except for the difference that alienation is the result, ultimately, of class society and tends to end – even if it is just a possibility – with the overcoming of this form of sociability. Exteriorization is an ontological category, placed in any society, having

its form determined according to the mode of production of the existence of social beings.

Based on the following statement by Marx (2015, p. 352): “The formation of the five senses is a work of the entire history of the world so far”, Lukács (2018b, p. 514) teaches us about authentic genericity:

The development of the human being, therefore, to authentic humanity is by no means, as most religions and almost all idealist philosophies simply describe, a mere development of the so-called ‘higher’ capacities of human beings (thinking etc.) by the retreat of the ‘inferior’ sensibility, but must manifest itself in the complex as a whole of the human being, therefore also – immediately even: first of all – in his sensibility.

This author brings the formation of the senses, which has a high privilege in the complex of art, to exemplify that the formation of the social being takes place throughout the history of humanity. However, alienation enters as a mediation between the development of human capacities and the human personality. Overcoming this alienation is not possible only in the field of individuality, as singular subjects, what is possible is defetishization. Nor is it a matter of alienation exclusively in consciousness, it needs to be a dialectical process between alienation of production relations and in all reflections in consciousness.

The Hungarian author is concerned with distinguishing what is proper to the social being, which is expressed as a need, appears in history and becomes permanent. Needs of the social being that occur in any mode of production, even if they acquire different phenomenal forms in the different social formations in which they are inserted. In the words of Lukács (2018b, p. 354): “[...] a fundamental moment of the social being, and here we must look at something more detailed to its general character: the objectification of the object and the exteriorization of the subject that constitute, as a unitary process, the basis for human praxis and theory”.

We understand that the two elaborations – Gramsci and Lukács – have similarities and differences that complement each other and, above all, that there is no open and direct opposition; they are not opposed because they are elaborations with different purposes. While the author of the *Notebooks* elaborates for a historical particularity, faced with the possibility of establishing a period of revolutionary transition, in Italy in the second decade of the 20th century, Lukács (2018b) focuses his efforts on understanding human praxis, as a dialectical process of objectification and exteriorization, which are constituted as an educational process, formative in essence. Just as it is possible to extract from the Hungarian Marxist that the process of historical development itself is the process of human formation par excellence, because “[...] the composition of human formation is something broader. It encompasses, due to its omnilateral amplitude, in addition to education, other elements necessary to form the individual in connection with the gender in which he is a participant” (Santos, 2020, p. 67).

So far, we have discussed the educational immanence of work, as stated in Gramsci and Lukács. However, as Lukács advances in understanding work as the founding praxis and model of all social praxis, it becomes evident that every form of praxis has an immanent educational character. From which one can conclude the following: the entire historical development of humanity is constituted as a process of human formation.

Work, Praxis and Human Formation as an Educational Principle

Our intention, from now on, is to reflect on a specific historical-social moment of work as an educational principle in Gramsci and the essential nature of the educational principle based on Lukács. Here, a distinction is made between the theoretical elaborations of the aforementioned authors. The first focuses its elaboration on the historical function of the educational principle and does so by considering a possible transition phase from this form of sociability to another. The second focuses on the ontological function of the relationship between work and education, which helps us to think about the ontological function of the educational principle. The lack of distinction between these different theoretical abstractions has served to embarrass the debate around this issue.

Gramsci (1975, Q. 4, § 55, p. 498-499, our translation) understands work as an immanent educational principle and defines work as a practical human activity:

[...] primary education is ultimately based on the concept and fact of work, since the social order (set of rights and duties) is in the natural order. The concept of balance between social order and natural order based on work, on the practical activity of man [...]³.

He adds that an education based on work, on this practical activity of men and women “[...] creates the first elements of an intuition of the world freed from all magic or sorcery and provides the starting point for the subsequent development of a historical conception, dialectic, of the world [...]” (Gramsci, 1975, Q. 4, § 55, p. 499, own translation)⁴. Therefore, it places work as the first element of mediation, which contributes to the formation of a historical conception of the world.

Later, *Notebook 4* was revised, with much of its material rewritten in *Notebook 12*. In this part of the definition of work, the author re-edits it, adding work as “man’s theoretical-practical activity”, to the detriment of the previous definition, which contemplated only the practical dimension of work. Here it becomes clear from which conception of work Gramsci departs to consider it the “immanent principle of primary school”. His definition of work is close to that of Lukács. The Hungarian author takes work in the *stricto sensu* (human being/nature mediation), as an original social praxis that requires an inseparable dialectic between teleology and causality.

We are not saying that this is developed by Gramsci throughout his work. By correcting the definition of work, emphasizing its theoretical dimension, he approaches Lukács; and this is because both are based on the revolutionary theory of Marx and Engels.

In the wake of Marx, Gramsci (2006, C. 12, § 2, v. 2, p. 43) goes in the same direction, qualifying that work “[...] is the proper form through which man actively participates in life of nature, with a view to transforming and socializing it ever more profoundly and widely”. What he says in a very synthetic way, however, in order to think about his educational proposal as a political education program, Lukács (2018b) deals with it in a chapter, with a different level of concreteness and depth. What can be gauged in the teachings of the Hungarian Marxist about the process of becoming a social being through work.

Gramsci (2006) lived in the historical period in which the maturation of the capitalist mode of production in Italy was spreading, and the country was experiencing a phase of industrialization acceleration. The school was being reformulated to meet this demand from the social formation that was being consolidated. There was the possibility of the working class becoming a State, if the revolutionary wave, which passed through Russia, had reached the countries of advanced capitalism in Western Europe.

Therefore, in the midst of this scenario, Gramsci (2006) aims to think of an alternative school focused on the interests of the working class. Thus, in the elaboration of the proposal of the Unitary School, Gramsci (2006) starts from the diagnosis, criticizes the Gentile Reform and, therefore, elaborates an alternative project of school reform. For this, he debates the school, not in an abstract way, but as a mediation that, together with other educational institutions, linked to the workers’ State – whose implementation Gramsci believed –, would fulfill a function of forming the technician + leader (politician) capable of command the revolutionary process.

It is important to emphasize the following: even though Gramsci (2006, § 2, v. 2, p. 43) finds and defends that “[...] the concept and fact of work (of the theoretical-practical activity) is the educational principle immanent to primary school [...]”, there is no defense in that that the school is reduced to forming the individual exclusively for the labor market process. The educational proposal elaborated by him expresses this quite clearly. Since his defense consists of a “[...] single initial school of general culture, humanist, formative, that fairly balances the development of the ability to work manually (technically, industrially) and the development of capacities for intellectual work” (Gramsci, 2006, § 2, v. 2, p. 33).

This assertion is proven by Gramsci’s fervent debate, in this period, against the professionalizing school, which was immediately interested, that is, a school that trains the individual for an immediate practical function. In opposition to this, he defends the teaching of science as systematized knowledge.

Let us turn again to Lukács.

The discussion in TOSB takes place in the philosophical-ontological scope, as an exercise of thought, not as speculation, but based on a historical materiality that allows one to foresee where some movements of the real point to, as potency, a possibility that may or may not come to be confirmed. Although Lukács does not refer directly to the educational principle of a teaching system, we were able to deduce some questions from the relations between work and education, as well as other complexes, such as law and language, brought up by the author in his work.

In the chapter *The Reproduction* from TOSB, Lukács highlights three complexes that arise concomitantly with the work complex, namely: the division of labor, cooperation, language; we can also add to them education, in the broadest sense, as categories that come from the earliest stages. What is worth mentioning is that, in order to carry out the work, it is necessary to acquire knowledge of natural laws – as well as social ones –, learning skills, values and behaviors, in order to solve problems common to the group. The educational complex is essential to become a participant as a member of the human race (humanization) and not just as a member of the species (hominization).

Hominization is given by genetic inheritance, unlike humanization, which requires the annexation of the objectifications that make up the human race at a given historical moment, a continuous and unfinished process by nature. Social beings, unlike animals, are not born knowing how to guarantee their survival, nor how to continue the reproduction of their species. Therefore, we can say that each individual learns to be a human being (Leontiev, 1978). This learning requires education in the *lato* and *strict sensu*. Hence the historical need to universalize education in the *stricto sensu* so that all individuals can become truly human in their fullness.

Education, the human activity addressed by us in this investigation, is one of these complex enhancers of human development. It establishes with work a relationship of ontological dependence, relative autonomy and reciprocal determination, thus assuming a basic function in the process of social reproduction. Both in the broad and *stricto sensu* – which make up the same complex –, education is an ontological complex that is concerned with concretizing the appropriation, by individuals, of the objectifications that constitute the human race. For Lukács (2018b, p. 133), the essence of education consists in qualifying human beings to “[...] react adequately to new, unexpected events and situations that will occur later in their lives”.

And, more Lukács (2018b, p. 243) brings the following definition of human formation:

[...] the result of a complicated process of interactions in which, through which, emerges that inseparable, even if often full of contradiction, unity of psychic-corporal and social determinations in the singular human being,

which is the most profoundly characteristic of his being-human.

It is noticed that the author refers to the mediation of the educational complex in the formation of the singular being, as a participant of the human race. In the scope of education in the *lato sensu* “[...] as the totality of all influences that are directed at the new human being that is being formed” (Lukács, 2018b, p. 242). It is important to insist that the Hungarian author claims that there is no precise demarcation between education, in the broad and *stricto sensu*. Both constitute a single complex. Which makes us infer the following: within this training, as explained by the author, both education in the broad and *stricto sensu* fits.

Based on these considerations, we can conclude that in Lukács, human formation is the educational principle, which should guide education as a mediation of the reproduction of the social being, that is, we need a teaching system built from the need to form individuals in the its full human potential, which creates the possibilities for this formation to take effect for the whole of humanity. Making the reservation that Lukács did not elaborate an educational political proposal, nor a pedagogy for a historical particularity, one can extract from his work an immanent educational principle, from the ontological relationship between work and education, between praxis, as a conscious human activity, and the educational complex.

We understand, so far, that education needs to be built on the foundation of human formation, therefore, to develop men and women in all their potential. Even if, in a society divided into social classes based on private property, it is not possible to implement an emancipatory education, the new needs to start being built from the old. Such a construction takes place with all the limits and contradictions inherent to something that is ahead of its time, more advanced than the social structure that generates and supports it.

In any form of sociability, education will form individuals in different aspects, and this formation will be permeated with all the contradictions, problems and virtues of the degree of development of humanity and the totality that structures society, in which education is inserted. And, in class societies, it is worth remembering that this formation/deformation takes place with the mediation of the alienation that crosses all complexes, be it the structure (productive praxis) or the superstructure (ideological praxis).

To use Leontiev’s terms (1978, p. 263) about the dialectic of the educational principle of human formation:

[...] in the course of men’s activity, their aptitudes, their knowledge and their know-how crystallize in a certain way in their products (material, intellectual, ideals). That’s why all the progress in the improvement, for example, of work tools, can be considered, from this point of view, as marking a new stage of historical development in man’s motor skills; the complexification of the phonet-

ics of languages also embodies the progress made in the articulation of sounds and the verbal ear, the progress of works of art, an aesthetic development, etc.

Here we see how the social being, in this process of human formation, is being educated in various dimensions of his existence, not only his human capacities, focused on the productive process, but language, the arts, etc.

In this process of building a new form of sociability, education, as an ontological social reproduction complex, plays an essential role in mediating the formation of new human beings, as well as in overcoming the imbalance between manual and intellectual work, and in overcoming an alienated human personality.

When interpreting Lukács, Sousa Jr. (2015, p. 76) states that:

[...] he would not endorse any thesis that establishes the exclusivity of the work category as a determinant of the formation of the social being; more than that, the author emphatically highlights even greater influence of praxis than of work on the spiritual reproduction of subjects. Being more specific and directly debating with the foundation of research in work and education: the 'educational principle of work', insofar as it annuls or makes praxis secondary, cannot be the exclusive and definitive postulate of this field of research.

If this interpreter is right, the process of humanization, although it has its foundation in work, cannot be limited to it. Reality poses questions for humanity that can only be answered – even based on work – by other forms of ideological praxis. Thus, human formation, based on the work of the social being, will have its realization in all forms of praxis. It is in this sense that praxis is placed as an educational principle, that is, it is necessary to train women and men who practice conscious actions. Be it in the field of production, in the sphere of ideological praxis, or in the dialectic that moves this scope of maneuver. This is the meaning of union between body, mind and fantasy.

We know that this overcoming can only be considered as a possibility based on new ways of organizing production relations, based on freely associated work.

Final Considerations

Our article, by means of a theoretical and bibliographical investigation, can be understood if we should take the work as an educational principle of human formation. For this, we go through Gramsci and Lukács, in order to find elements that help us to think about an education aimed at the emancipation of all humanity, tied to a type of social organization. The realization that the construction of a new educational model requires, together, the construction of a new form of sociability, places the discussion on the need for a socialist revolution on the order of the day.

Starting from the educational principle of work, we ponder on the immanently educational character of work, as Gramsci postulated, as self-education of two workers organized in the factory, which, in turn, is a dimension of the education of the revolutionary subject. Also, we treat, post form in Lukács, that the social being is educated not only in the work process, as in all social praxis, whether it is productive or ideological in the dialectical unity between objectiveness and exteriorization. And, moreover, human formation, because it is a broader category and involves both the sphere of work and all social complexes, is the reason for which an educational system must be based on any mode of production.

About work as an educational principle in Gramsci, such a discussion is directly and historically situated. He affirms the work as an immanent educational principle. And, even though the description of the Unitary School does not express a formation exclusively for work and is a transition school, designed for a moment of transition from capitalism to communism, we need to take into account the existing limitation in the defense of placement or work as an educational principle. Although work is only one dimension of the humanization process, it also has fundamental ontological weight over the other dimensions.

In Lukács, it becomes necessary to assert that there is no rubric of work as an educational principle or a direct discussion on the subject, nor is there a description of a pedagogy. However, in the chapter on *The Work* of TOSB, it is possible to conclude that the work is an immanent educational principle, since any work process needs an education that is linked to teaching about that branch of production. Such assertiveness is exposed in fact that the connection between work and education is ontologically postulated in reality. Its existence is necessary in any form of human sociability: in any mode of production.

It is also essential to mention that in Lukács we find the assertion that work founds the social being. It is, therefore, ineliminable in guaranteeing its existence; but it does not exhaust it. The author places work as a model of all social praxis and, thus, allows us to infer that it is necessary to consider praxis as an educational principle, that is, an educational organization based on the premise of the union between body, mind and fantasy. That is, in short, the construction of a new type of human being who consciously acts in the same way in the production of his material conditions of existence, as well as in the field of ideas.

In summary, we can say that the educational principle of work and work as an educational principle was developed by both Gramsci and Lukács, except for their due divergences and similarities, pointed out throughout the text. The revolutionary Hungarian author, however, points to a philosophical level of concreteness about Gramsci's distinct educational principle. By pointing out both the educational principle of praxis and human formation, and praxis and human formation as an educational principle, Lukács arrives at conclusions close to those of the Sardinian author.

Therefore, we understand that we can infer, from TOSB, the following: work constitutes an educational principle within a qualitatively superior principle, which is human development. Therefore, we came to the conclusion that an educational system that has social emancipation as its horizon needs to be based on the formation of full human potential. In this way, it becomes more coherent to affirm human formation as an ontological educational principle, since the essential function of education, in any form of sociability, consists in the self-construction of the individual as a participant in the human race.

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Notes

- 1 This article consists of a reliable excerpt from the doctoral thesis of the author, Karine Martins Sobral (2021).
- 2 For a deeper understanding of the alienation category in Georg Lukács, see Lima (2020).
- 3 From the original: “L’educazione elementare si impernia in ultima analisi nel concetto e nel fatto del lavoro, poiché l’ordine sociale (insieme dei diritti e doveri) è dal lavoro innestato nell’ordine naturale. Il concetto dell’equilibrio tra ordine sociale e ordine naturale sulla base del lavoro, dell’attività pratica dell’uomo [...]”.
- 4 From the original: “[...] crea la visione del mondo elementare, liberata da ogni magia e da ogni stregoneria e dà l’appiglio allo sviluppo ulteriore in una concezione storica, di movimento, del mondo [...]”.

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