

MARX AND THE SCHOOL – THE PLACE OF THE SCHOOL IN THE MARXIST PERSPECTIVE OF EDUCATION



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ABSTRACT

It is known that Karl Marx never wrote a specific work dedicated to education and, consequently, to the school space. However, by analyzing his reflections on the human being and his reproduction in the capitalist production system, several theorists have extracted fundamental contributions to the understanding of the Marxian vision of education, especially with regard to the formation of the working class. In this context, the present study aims to investigate the Marxian conception of education from the interpretation of classical authors of Marxism who have focused on this theme. Through the analysis of works by thinkers such as Mario Alighiero Manacorda (2017), Gaudêncio Frigotto (2001), Mariano Fernández Enguita (1993), Demerval Saviani (1991), among others, we sought to clarify how Marx understood the function of the school and the educational process within capitalist society. The research adopts a qualitative approach, based on the perspective of Minayo (2016), being predominantly bibliographic, as proposed by Gil (2008). In addition, it adopts an analytical-comprehensive bias anchored in the Weberian perspective. The results of the research indicate that, for Marx, the school should not be a mere instrument for the reproduction of relations of domination, but rather a potential space for the critical and emancipatory formation of workers. However, within capitalist society, the school institution tends to be co-opted by the interests of the bourgeoisie, serving as a means of ideological conformation and maintenance of the class structure. With regard to the content of education, Marx emphasized the need for polytechnic education, integrating theory and practice, as a way to overcome the alienation of work and ensure an education that was not merely instrumental, but that enabled social transformation.

Keywords: Education and Capitalism. School and Social Reproduction. Polytechnic Training. Emancipation of the Working Class.

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EDUCATION FROM A MARXIST PERSPECTIVE: BETWEEN THE REPRODUCTION OF CAPITAL AND THE EMANCIPATION OF THE WORKING CLASS

The Marxian conception of education is based on the principle that the school system is inserted in the economic and social structure of capitalism, being historically determined by the relations of production. Although Karl Marx did not write a specific work on education, his reflections on the social division of labor¹⁶ and the reproduction of the relations of production provided fundamental bases for the Marxist interpretation of the school. According to Manacorda (2017), "[...] Marx understands that education, in the capitalist mode of production, does not present itself as a neutral phenomenon, but rather as a mechanism that contributes to the consolidation of class differences" (p. 95). This means that the school, instead of being a space of emancipation, is structured to maintain the subordination of the working class, limiting access to critical knowledge and instrumentalizing teaching to meet the demands of capital.

Education is a field of human activity and education professionals did not build this field according to their own ideas, but in accordance with material and objective conditions, corresponding to the productive forces and relations of production appropriate to the different modes and organizations of production, historically constructed by men and particularly consolidated in the most different social formations. The discussion of education from its articulation with the capitalist mode of production, in Marxian and Engelsian work, expresses three articulated (or indissociated) movements: 1st. It enables a profound critique of bourgeois education; 2nd. It brings to light how, under the contradictory conditions of this mode of production, the education of the proletariat takes place, opening perspectives for a differentiated education, still under bourgeois hegemony (Lombardi & Saviani, 2005, p. 41).

Marx's critique of education is also based on the relationship between teaching and work, defending the need for an omnilateral education¹⁷, which integrates theory and practice, overcoming the traditional dichotomy between manual and intellectual work.

¹⁶ The social division of labor, in Karl Marx's perspective, is one of the foundations of the capitalist structure, as it organizes production in an unequal way, determining the alienation of workers and the reproduction of social classes. In education, this division is reflected in the training of individuals to occupy different roles in society, often restricting access to critical knowledge and preparing the workforce to meet market demands. In this way, the school, in its traditional organization, contributes to the maintenance of the dominant ideology by inculcating values that naturalize this social and economic segmentation, limiting the possibility of a truly emancipatory education (Marx, 2013). See: MARX, Karl. *Capital: critique of political economy*. Book I. Translation by Rubens Enderle. São Paulo: Boitempo, 2013.

¹⁷ Omnilateral education, in Karl Marx's conception, refers to the integral development of the human being, encompassing not only technical and intellectual skills, but also critical and emancipatory capacity. For Marx, education should make it possible to overcome alienation and the social division of labor, allowing individuals to develop fully in different dimensions of life, instead of being molded exclusively to meet the demands of capital. In this sense, omnilateral education is opposed to the fragmented and specialized education imposed by the capitalist mode of production, as it seeks the emancipation of the worker and the construction of a society in which work is freely associated and not a mere economic imposition (Marx; Engels, 2007). See: MARX, Karl; ENGELS, Friedrich. *The German ideology*. Translated by Rubens Enderle and Nélio Schneider. São Paulo: Boitempo, 2007.

According to Marx and Engels (2011), "[...] an education that combines theoretical instruction with productive work not only develops intellectual capacities, but also forms individuals capable of understanding and transforming the material conditions of their existence" (p. 41). This perspective is opposed to the capitalist school organization, which restricts the training of workers to the learning of specific technical skills, reinforcing alienation and limiting their political and social action. As Enguita (1993: 208) states:

The separation between manual and intellectual labor, between conception and execution, between those who direct and those who execute, constitutes one of the fundamental characteristics of capitalism. Overcoming this divide is not a spontaneous process, but requires a radical transformation of the educational system. Marx proposes that education combines theoretical teaching with productive work, so that individuals not only acquire technical skills, but also critically understand the social relations of production in which they are inserted. This model of polytechnic education aims to provide comprehensive training, developing not only technical competence, but also the ability to understand and transform society.

Thus, the classical Marxist authors who studied Marx's work deepened their view of the school and the function of education in capitalist society. Frigotto (2001) argues that "[...] the school, instead of being a space of contestation, assumes a functional role within the logic of capital, by forming individuals fit for the labor market, but without conditions to question it" (p. 56). This analysis demonstrates that the school not only reproduces the current productive model, but also perpetuates the dominant ideology, shaping subjectivities and naturalizing the exploitation of the working class (Santos, *et. al.*, 2024). This ideological function of the school, which manifests itself in the standardization of content and the devaluation of critical thinking, is one of the great challenges for those who defend an emancipatory education.

However, the writings of Marx and Engels themselves indicate that the school can also be a space of resistance and transformation. The proposal of a polytechnic education, which articulates theory and practice, emerges as an alternative to break with the logic of alienation. As Lombardi (2010) points out, "[...] by conceiving education as an integral part of the mode of production, Marx and Engels point out that the transformation of society necessarily involves the transformation of the educational system" (p. 20). Thus, thinking about the school from a Marxist perspective does not only mean denouncing its role in the reproduction of inequality, but also identifying the internal contradictions that allow the development of a critical pedagogy, capable of forming conscious and active historical subjects in the struggle to overcome capitalism (Santos, *et. al.*, 2024).

Education must provide men with an integral development. All the needs of man must emerge in the educational process, such as the search for survival, pleasure, creation and enjoyment of culture, participation in social life, interaction with other men, self-realization and self-creation. This profound transformation of educational objectives requires, among other aspects, also a profound transformation of the social division of labor which, with the abolition of the division between intellectual and manual labor, leads to a rapprochement between science and production (Marx & Engels, 1983, p. 60).

The Marxist analysis of the school is based on the understanding that education is not an isolated phenomenon, but rather a reflection of the relations of production that structure society. Although Marx did not elaborate a systematic theory on education, his writings indicate that the formation of the individual occurs within the contradictions of capitalism. As Manacorda (2017) states, "[...] Marx understands that education, in the capitalist mode of production, does not present itself as a neutral phenomenon, but rather as a mechanism that contributes to the consolidation of class differences" (p. 95). This perspective shows that the school plays a fundamental role in the reproduction of social relations, while, at the same time, it can be a space of resistance and transformation. Similarly, Frigotto (2001) reinforces that "[...] the school, instead of being a space of contestation, assumes a functional role within the logic of capital, by forming individuals fit for the labor market, but without conditions to question it" (p. 56).

Marx's concern with overcoming the alienation of the worker necessarily involves education. For him, knowledge cannot be fragmented or restricted to a technicist formation, but must encompass the totality of social life, enabling the individual to understand his position within the relations of production. As Enguita (1993) points out, "[...] the Marxian theory of alienation offers precisely a genealogy of consciousness, a materialist foundation of the process of social construction of reality as representation" (p. 135). This analysis demonstrates that the school can be an instrument of both domination and liberation, depending on the way teaching is structured. In the same sense, Marx and Engels (1983) state that "[...] the education of young people should include general training and scientific training necessary to understand the entire production process and, at the same time, initiate children and young people in the handling of the tools of the various branches of industry" (p. 60).

The education of young people should include general training and scientific training necessary to understand the entire production process and, at the same time, initiate children and young people in the handling of the tools of the various branches of industry. This combination of paid productive labor with mental education, bodily exercises, and polytechnic learning will raise the working class

well above the level of the bourgeois and aristocratic classes (Marx & Engels, 1983, p.

The omnilateral training proposed by Marx emphasizes the need to integrate theory and practice, breaking with the traditional division between intellectual and manual labor. Polytechnic education emerges, then, as a means of ensuring that workers fully develop their potential, understanding not only the functioning of the productive system, but also the mechanisms of exploitation that subordinate them. According to Frigotto (2001), "[...] the union of teaching with productive work and polytechnic education is, therefore, an organic conception implied in the movement of the creation of the historical conditions of a society where the total man and every man is humanized through work" (p. 188). This proposal is articulated with the criticism of Lombardi (2010), for whom "[...] the transformation of society necessarily involves the transformation of the educational system, since technical and scientific knowledge, when critically appropriated by workers, can serve as a tool in the fight against exploitation" (p. 20).

Thus, thinking about the school from a Marxist perspective does not only mean pointing out its contradictions, but also highlighting its possibilities as a space for the formation of conscious historical subjects. Overcoming the alienation and fragmentation of knowledge requires an education aimed at emancipation, where the school ceases to be an instrument for the reproduction of the dominant ideology and becomes a space for the production of critical thinking. As Marx (1983) points out, "[...] This combination of paid productive labour with mental education, bodily exercises and polytechnic learning, will raise the working class well above the level of the bourgeois and aristocratic classes" (p. 60). This understanding is in line with that of Gramsci, who, when dealing with the role of the school in the class struggle, states that "[...] the school receives an active and relevant dimension in the revolutionary task of the working class" (p. 130). In this sense, education becomes a strategic field in the struggle against bourgeois hegemony, enabling the construction of a new sociability based on collectivity and social justice.

The present study seeks to deepen the understanding of the Marxian conception of education, exploring the relationship between school, work and the formation of workers' critical consciousness. Although Karl Marx did not produce a specific work on education, his analyses of the reproduction of the relations of production allowed Marxist theorists to unveil the role of the school in the context of capitalist society. For Marx and Engels, education should not be an instrument of the bourgeoisie for the perpetuation of

exploitation, but a means for the emancipation of the working class. As Frigotto (2001) points out, "[...] the school, as an institution whose specificity is the development of general knowledge, at the same time that it articulates the hegemonic interests of the dominant classes, is also a space for dispute and struggle for knowledge" (p. 188). This understanding reinforces the need to investigate education from a Marxist perspective, understanding it as a field of contradictions that can both reinforce the dominant ideology and foster processes of social transformation.

Thus, the relevance of the present study lies in the need to rescue the Marxian conception of education and to analyze how the school can contribute to the formation of workers' critical consciousness. As Frigotto (2010) observes, "[...] knowledge and its democratization are unequivocal demands of the social groups that constitute the working class" (p. 182).

DIALECTICAL-CRITICAL METHOD IN THE ANALYSIS OF EDUCATION

Qualitative research, according to Minayo (2007) is characterized by "[...] work with the universe of meanings, motives, aspirations, beliefs, values and attitudes" (p. 22), being, therefore, an essential method for understanding complex social phenomena. In the context of this research, which analyzed the Marxian conception of education and school, the qualitative approach allowed us to explore the contradictions of the capitalist school and its possibilities of transformation. As Gil (2008) states, "[...] qualitative research is particularly relevant when one seeks to understand phenomena in their totality, considering their subjective and contextual dimensions" (p. 27).

Qualitative research answers very particular questions. In the social sciences, it is concerned with a level of reality that cannot or should not be quantified. That is, it works with the universe of meanings, motives, aspirations, beliefs, values and attitudes. This set of human phenomena is understood here as part of social reality, as the human being is distinguished not only by acting, but by thinking about what he does and by interpreting his actions within and from the reality lived and shared with his fellow human beings. The universe of human production, which can be summarized in the world of relationships, representations and intentionality and is the object of qualitative research, can hardly be translated into quantitative numbers and indicators (Minayo, 2007, p. 21).

The option for qualitative research in this investigation is justified by the need to deepen the critical analysis of the role of the school in the reproduction of capitalist production relations and in the construction of an emancipatory education. According to Minayo (2007), "[...] qualitative research is not concerned with quantification, but rather with the understanding of social processes in their dynamics" (p. 33). This perspective allows us

to analyze how education, instead of being neutral, reflects and reinforces the structural inequalities of society. Lombardi and Saviani (2005) point out that "[...] The Marxist critique of education points to the need for a new methodological approach that goes beyond the simple measurement of data, privileging the understanding of the power relations that permeate the educational system" (p. 41).

The qualitative methodology also made it possible to deepen the relationship between theory and practice, one of the foundations of the Marxian conception of education. As Gil (2008) argues, "[...] qualitative research seeks not only to describe phenomena, but also to understand the meanings that the subjects attribute to their experiences" (p. 50). In the case of this research, this approach allowed us to explore how the principles of polytechnic and omnilateral education are discussed in the literature and how they can be applied in the educational reality. As Frigotto (2010) reinforces, "[...] the unitary school, in overcoming the separation between manual and intellectual work, requires a methodological approach that takes into account the contradictions and concrete possibilities of transformation" (p. 182).

The knowledge produced by qualitative research is not a simple reflection of empirical reality, but results from a process of interpretation that takes into account the meanings attributed by the subjects to their experiences. [...] Qualitative research is distinguished by its processual approach, which allows a dynamic and contextualized understanding of social phenomena. Unlike quantitative methods, which seek generalization based on representative samples, qualitative research is concerned with the depth and uniqueness of human experiences, emphasizing the contradictions and conflicts present in the object of study (Minayo, 2007, p. 45).

In addition, qualitative research allows a dialogue between different theoretical perspectives, which is fundamental for understanding the contradictions of the capitalist school. As Minayo (2007) explains, "[...] qualitative social research does not seek only a portrait of reality, but a critical analysis of its multiple determinations" (p. 45). This aligns with the Marxist approach, which understands education as a field of ideological dispute. In this sense, Manacorda (1989) points out that "[...] Polytechnic education leads to the formation of the omnilateral man, covering three aspects: mental, physical and technical, appropriate to the age of children, young people and adults" (p. 296), indicating that qualitative research allows us to understand how these principles can be implemented in the school environment.

Thus, this perspective adopted in this research is not limited to theoretical analysis, but also seeks to highlight the concrete contradictions of education in capitalist society. As

Minayo (2007) argues, "[...] qualitative research is essential to understand social processes in their entirety, enabling the construction of critical and transformative knowledge" (p. 57). Thus, by investigating the Marxian conception of education and its relationship with work, this research seeks not only to understand the theoretical bases of the proposal, but also to explore the possibilities of building an emancipatory education.

Qualitative research is a field in constant evolution, which requires from the researcher a critical and sensitive look at the multiple determinations of the phenomenon studied. [...] Qualitative social research does not only seek a portrait of reality, but also to understand its processes and contradictions, analyzing the interactions between subjects and the context in which they are inserted. Qualitative research, therefore, must be conducted with theoretical and methodological rigor, allowing the researcher not only to describe, but to interpret and criticize social relations and their forms of reproduction (Minayo, 2007, p. 99).

In view of the path taken, the bibliographic research constituted one of the main methodological outlines for the construction of scientific knowledge, being fundamental for the understanding of the theoretical bases that supported this investigation. As Gil (2008) points out, "[...] bibliographic research is developed from material already prepared, consisting mainly of books and scientific articles" (p. 50). In the context of this study, which analyzed the relationship between Marxian education and the reproduction of social relations, this approach allowed mapping the theoretical contributions of several authors, enabling a critical dialogue between different perspectives. Minayo (2007) reinforces this idea by stating that "[...] qualitative social research does not seek only a portrait of reality, but a critical analysis of its multiple determinations" (p. 45), which highlights the relevance of bibliographic research to understand the school as a space for reproduction and contestation of the dominant ideology.

The choice of bibliographic research as a method of investigation is justified by the need to critically understand the role of the school in the formation of class consciousness. According to Gil (2008), "[...] the main advantage of bibliographic research lies in the fact that it allows the researcher to cover a much wider range of phenomena than that which he could research directly" (p. 51). In the case of this research, this approach enabled the analysis of the Marxian conception of education in different works, allowing a theoretical deepening of the relationship between teaching and human emancipation. For Frigotto (2010), "[...] the unitary school, by overcoming the separation between manual and intellectual labor, requires a methodological approach that takes into account the contradictions and concrete possibilities of transformation" (p. 182), evidencing the

importance of a robust theoretical framework to interpret education within the logic of capital.

The bibliographic research is developed from material already prepared, consisting mainly of books and scientific articles. Although in almost all studies some type of work of this nature is required, there are studies developed exclusively from bibliographic sources. Part of the exploratory studies can be defined as bibliographic research, as well as a certain number of researches developed from the technique of content analysis. The main advantage of literature search lies in the fact that it allows the researcher to cover a much wider range of phenomena than he could research directly. This advantage becomes particularly important when the research problem requires data that is widely dispersed throughout the space [...] Thus, a work based on these sources will tend to reproduce or even amplify their errors. To reduce this possibility, it is convenient for researchers to be sure of the conditions under which the data were obtained, to analyze each piece of information in depth to discover possible inconsistencies or contradictions, and to use different sources, carefully collating themselves (Gil, 2008, p. 51).

The process of obtaining the empirical material in this research followed methodological steps that ensured the systematization and critical analysis of the sources. As Minayo (2007) explains, "[...] bibliographic research requires the researcher to take a close look at the quality of the sources, and it is necessary to evaluate their reliability and relevance to the investigation" (p. 57). Thus, classic and contemporary works that address the Marxian conception of education were selected, such as the writings of Marx and Engels, as well as studies by Frigotto, Manacorda, Lombardi and Saviani. The bibliographic survey followed criteria of theoretical relevance and topicality, allowing a critical analysis of the relations between education and ideology. As Gil (2008) points out, "[...] bibliographic research must guarantee the diversity of sources, comparing different perspectives to avoid interpretative biases" (p. 72).

Thus, this methodological perspective enabled not only the theoretical construction of the object of study, but also its interpretation in the light of Marxian categories. As Minayo (2007) emphasizes, "[...] social research must go beyond the description of phenomena, seeking to interpret them critically within their historical and social context" (p. 99). In this sense, the analysis of the selected sources allowed us to understand the school as a space of ideological disputes, where the formation of critical consciousness can take place in the midst of the contradictions of the capitalist educational system. This perspective is in line with the analysis of Lombardi and Saviani (2005), for whom "[...] The Marxist critique of education points to the need for a methodological approach that goes beyond the simple measurement of data, favoring the understanding of the power relations that permeate the educational system" (p. 41). Thus, the bibliographic research was

essential to highlight the place of education in the reproduction and transformation of social relations, allowing a broader view of the school as a space of both domination and resistance.

Qualitative social research is not reduced to an exercise in collecting and organizing information. It implies a critical and interpretative attitude, seeking to understand the object in its complexity and historicity. As Minayo (2006) points out, interpretation consists of 'relating the semantic structures (signifiers) with sociological structures (meanings) of the utterances present in the message' (p. 90). In this way, bibliographic research not only allows the collection of data and concepts, but also requires an effort of theoretical articulation that situates the investigated problem within a field of epistemological and political disputes (Minayo, 2006, p. 90).

Added to this, Max Weber's comprehensive analytical perspective is very relevant to qualitative research, as it enables the interpretation of social phenomena based on the meaning attributed by the agents themselves. According to Weber (1969), "[...] all human behavior is included as the actor attributes subjective meaning to it" (p. 110). This comprehensive approach allows the researcher to go beyond the simple description of the facts, seeking to interpret their multiple dimensions and meanings. In the context of this research, which analyzed the Marxian conception of education, the Weberian perspective helped to understand the contradictions inherent to the educational system, considering the school as a space of ideological disputes.

The application of comprehensive sociology in qualitative research allows one to analyze not only the objective structures and relationships, but also the representations and motivations of the individuals who participate in these processes. Weber distinguishes between "actual understanding" and "explanatory understanding", the first being related to the immediate meaning of an action and the second focused on the factors that lead individuals to act in a certain way (Weber, 1969, p. 110). In the case of education, this distinction is essential to investigate how teachers, students and managers understand and reproduce the capitalist logic within the school. As Minayo (2007) states, "[...] qualitative research does not seek only a portrait of reality, but a critical analysis of its multiple determinations" (p. 45).

Weber also distinguishes between actual comprehension and explanatory comprehension. One understands in the first way, for example, the meaning of the behavior of a hunter who aims his rifle. In the second way, for example, the sense of the behavior of the hunter who indulges in this sport for health reasons. Both forms of understanding can be rational or irrational. It is rational, for example, to understand the meaning of an arithmetic operation or the behavior of a hunter who shoots at a game. It is irrational, for example, to understand the motives of a person

who uses a shotgun with the aim of revenge. However, all these forms of understanding imply capturing the evidence of the meaning of an activity (Gil, 2008, p.110).

In addition, the comprehensive approach makes it possible to use the concept of "ideal type", a theoretical construction that synthesizes fundamental characteristics of a social phenomenon. Weber (1949) explains that the ideal type "[...] it is formed by the unilateral accentuation of one or more points of view and by the synthesis of a large number of individual concrete phenomena" (p. 90). In the analysis of Marxian education, this tool allowed the construction of a typology of the capitalist school and contrasted it with the proposal of omnilateral and polytechnic education defended by Marx. For Gil (2008), "[...] qualitative research seeks not only to describe phenomena, but also to understand the meanings that the subjects attribute to their experiences" (p. 50), which reinforces the importance of this approach in the interpretation of the school as a space of reproduction and resistance.

Thus, the combination of comprehensive sociology with the Marxist analysis of education allows for a more in-depth reading of the role of the school in the formation of class consciousness. As Minayo (2007) observes, "[...] social research must go beyond the description of phenomena, seeking to interpret them critically within their historical and social context" (p. 99). The comprehensive interpretation of the meaning of education for different social actors makes it possible to identify the limits and possibilities of transformation of the school system. In fact, Weber's comprehensive sociology contributed to the construction of a more dynamic and contextualized look, allowing the research to go beyond objective structures and considering the subjectivity of individuals in their relationship with education.

PAXIS, EDUCATION AND EMANCIPATION: THE PLACE OF THE SCHOOL IN THE MARXIST PERSPECTIVE OF EDUCATION

The Marxian conception of praxis¹⁸ as an educational principle is intrinsically linked to the idea that the human being is formed in concrete action on the world. For Marx,

¹⁸ The Marxian conception of praxis is based on the dialectical unity between theory and practice, understood as human activity that transforms social reality. For Karl Marx, praxis is not limited to the contemplation of the world, but implies a concrete and revolutionary action that modifies the material conditions of existence. In this sense, praxis is essential for overcoming alienation and for the construction of an emancipated society, in which individuals can fully develop their potentialities. The transformation of reality does not occur only through thought, but requires the active intervention of historical subjects in the struggle against capitalist structures of domination (Marx; Engels, 2007). See: MARX, Karl;

education is not limited to the school space, but takes place at work, in social struggle and in culture, elements that make up the development of critical consciousness. As stated by Caldart *et al.* (2012), "[...] praxis has been understood, since Marx, as 'the concrete activity by which human subjects assert themselves in the world, modifying objective reality and, in order to be able to alter it, transforming themselves'" (p. 552). In this sense, Marxist pedagogy cannot be dissociated from the social and historical contradictions that shape the relations between individuals and power structures. Manacorda (2017) complements this view by stating that "[...] an educational praxis that is linked to the real development of society must seek the non-separation of men into alien and contrasting spheres, promoting a collective and associative way of being" (p. 83).

The school, therefore, will have a revolutionary role to the extent that it builds – through a dialectical historical materialist method, starting from the concrete subjects, with their culture, knowledge and common sense, and critically dialoguing with the existing heritage of knowledge – the scientific bases that allow us to understand how the phenomena of nature and social relations are produced. These will be the basis for a revolutionary praxis in all spheres of life, on the horizon of abolishing forever the division of humanity into social classes. It is in this praxis and in the concrete political struggle that class identity and consciousness are forged (Caldart *et al.*, 2012, p. 552).

The centrality of praxis in human formation implies understanding that education cannot be reduced to an instrument of social reproduction, but must be a means of transformation. Work, understood as a creative and historical activity, occupies a fundamental role in this process. As Frigotto (2001) observes, "[...] the mode of production of material life conditions the process of social, political and spiritual life in general" (p. 24), demonstrating that the alienation of labor imposed by capitalism not only limits the autonomy of workers, but restricts their ability to understand and modify reality. Complementing this view, Marx and Engels (1983) argue that "[...] the education of young people should include general training and scientific training necessary to understand the entire production process and, at the same time, initiate children and young people in the handling of the tools of the various branches of industry" (p. 60). Thus, Marxist educational praxis proposes to overcome the fragmentation of knowledge and integrate theory and practice as a path to emancipation.

ENGELS, Friedrich. *Theses on Feuerbach*. In: MARX, Karl; ENGELS, Friedrich. *The German ideology*. Translated by Rubens Enderle and Nélio Schneider. São Paulo: Boitempo, 2007.

In this way, by articulating praxis and education, Marxist pedagogy challenges the liberal conception that knowledge is a neutral good accessible to all. On the contrary, education is an arena of political and ideological dispute, in which struggles for cultural and social hegemony are waged. As stated by Caldart *et al.* (2012), "[...] to affirm that the human being is formed in the social struggle is to reaffirm that he is constituted as human in praxis, that he is educated in the dialectic between transformation of circumstances and self-transformation" (p. 552). This view is echoed in the analysis of Enguita (1993), who highlights that "[...] the relationship between consciousness and existence, between social being¹⁹ and conscious being²⁰, is mediated by education, becoming a strategic field of resistance and transformation" (p. 135). Thus, by recognizing the immanent educational character of praxis, Marxist theory points to the need for a revolutionary pedagogy, which not only reveals the contradictions of capitalism, but also drives the subjects to concrete action to overcome them.

Since the school is a historically determined institution, as a human construction that is articulated with the process of production of the material conditions of its existence, as a dimension of human reality, beyond the mere reproduction of bourgeois society, education can be fully articulated in the construction of a classless society. In this sense, the educator needs to break with the school pedagogies that articulate the interests of the bourgeoisie and link his conception and practice to a revolutionary perspective of man and the world. It is not simply a matter of adhering to a scientific conception of the world and its power to unveil reality, but of assuming in theory and practice, that is, in praxis, a transformative conception of life, of man and of the world (Saviani, 1991, p. 105).

The relationship between the immanent educational character of human praxis and the immanent and contradictory educational character of the estranged relations in Marx shows that the alienation of the worker is reproduced in educational processes. The school, instead of being a space of emancipation, ends up reflecting the contradictions of the

¹⁹For Karl Marx, the social being is determined by the material conditions of existence and by the relations of production in which individuals are inserted. In his materialist conception of history, Marx states that "it is not consciousness that determines life, but life that determines consciousness", that is, the social existence of individuals defines their thought and ideas. The social being, therefore, cannot be understood in isolation, since its constitution is intrinsically linked to the mode of production and to the economic and political structures that shape society. The transformation of the social being occurs as material conditions change, evidencing the centrality of the class struggle as the engine of history and human emancipation (Marx, 2011). See: MARX, Karl. *To the critique of political economy*. Translated by Flávio R. Kothe. São Paulo: Expressão Popular, 2011.

²⁰For Karl Marx, the conscious being is not an abstract entity, but a product of the material conditions of existence and of the social relations in which individuals are inserted. Human consciousness does not develop in isolation, but rather in interaction with the world and with others, being shaped by work and the economic structure of society. In this sense, education plays a central role in the formation of consciousness, as it can both reinforce the dominant ideology, naturalizing social inequalities, and act as an instrument of emancipation, by developing a critical consciousness capable of questioning and transforming reality. For Marx, a truly liberating education must overcome alienation and allow individuals to understand the historical determinations of their existence, enabling their conscious action in social transformation (Marx; Engels, 2007). See: MARX, Karl; ENGELS, Friedrich. *The German ideology*. Translated by Rubens Enderle and Nélio Schneider. São Paulo: Boitempo, 2007.

productive system, restricting the integral formation of the subjects. As Enguita (1993) points out, "[...] the Marxian theory of alienation offers precisely a genealogy of consciousness, a materialist foundation of the process of social construction of reality as representation" (p. 135). This alienation manifests itself in the way education is instrumentalized to meet the demands of capital, depriving workers of mastery over knowledge and its practical application. Frigotto (2001) complements this analysis by stating that "[...] the most serious thing about the relationship between school and the formation of the working class in Brazil is that everything was done so that the worker was not educated, did not master the language, did not know its history, did not have at his disposal instruments to elaborate and explain his knowledge, his science and his conscience" (p. 161).

That said, in the context of estranged relationships, education assumes a paradoxical role: at the same time that it can be an instrument of domination, it also carries the possibility of revealing the contradictions of the system. For Marx, the alienation of the worker in relation to the product of his labor is reproduced in school, where "[...] the student does not determine how he will acquire the knowledge available to him, he does not decide on the form of learning" (Enguita, 1993, p. 235). This structure imposes a passive logic of learning, in which the contents are transmitted in a dogmatic way, distancing individuals from the possibility of developing a critical consciousness. However, as Manacorda (2017) points out, "[...] an educational praxis that is linked to the real development of society must seek the non-separation of men into alien and contrasting spheres, promoting a collective and associative way of being" (p. 83). In this way, teaching can be re-signified as a way to overcome alienation, as long as it is linked to a critical and transformative educational project.

To say that the social struggle educates people means to affirm that the human being is formed not only by processes of social conformation, but, on the contrary, that there are traces of his humanity built in attitudes of nonconformity and social contestation, and in the search for the transformation of the 'current state of things'. [...] And in this attitude of confronting or resisting against what dehumanizes lies the main formative potential of the struggle, precisely because it builds objective conditions for the formation of the subjects of a revolutionary praxis (Caldart *et al.*, 2012, p. 553).

The Marxian critique of alienation in education is not restricted to the school structure, but extends to the social function of knowledge within capitalist society. For Marx and Engels (1983), "[...] the education of young people should include general training and

scientific training necessary to understand the entire production process and, at the same time, initiate children and young people in the handling of the tools of the various branches of industry" (p. 60). This proposal, which integrates theory and practice, aims to break with the fragmentation imposed by the capitalist system and ensure training that allows workers to understand and transform their reality. Complementing this perspective, Caldart *et al.* (2012) state that "[...] the school, as an institution whose specificity is the development of general knowledge, at the same time that it articulates the hegemonic interests of the dominant classes, is also a space for dispute and struggle for knowledge" (p. 188). Thus, overcoming estranged relationships in education involves the construction of a teaching aimed at emancipation, in which subjects are able to understand their position in the social structure and act to transform it.

The union between work and education, in the Marxist perspective, is a fundamental principle for overcoming alienation and the formation of historical subjects capable of transforming society. For Marx and Engels, education must integrate theory and practice, providing workers with mastery of the productive processes and the understanding of the social relations that structure them. As Marx and Engels (1983) state, "[...] This combination of paid productive labour with mental education, bodily exercises and polytechnic learning will raise the working class well above the level of the bourgeois and aristocratic classes" (p. 60). This perspective is reinforced by Frigotto (2001), who highlights that "[...] the polytechnic school, whose basic organization involves intellectual and physical development, scientific and technological training and the inseparability of teaching from productive work, is posited as the school of the future society" (p. 188). Thus, the relationship between education and work should not be reduced to a technicist instrumentalization, but rather conceived as part of an emancipatory process.

However, the implementation of this conception faces contradictions in the capitalist mode of production, where education is shaped to meet the demands of the market and reproduce the social division of labor. As Manacorda (2017) points out, "[...] the union of instruction and factory work [...] already proclaimed and practiced by the utopians, especially by Robert Owen²¹, indicates two moments in the educational process: the one

²¹ Robert Owen (1771-1858) was an industrialist, social reformer, and one of the precursors of utopian socialism, standing out for his ideas on the organization of labor and the improvement of the living conditions of the working class. He argued that the environment and education were fundamental in the formation of human character, which led him to implement pioneering reforms in his factory in New Lanark, Scotland, where he reduced the working day, prohibited child labor and invested in the education of workers and their children. Owen also proposed the creation of cooperative communities based on collective ownership and social equality, seeking to demonstrate that a more just and humanized economic system was possible. His ideas influenced the development of cooperativism and served as the basis for later

that begins as soon as children can do without maternal care, and then the one that is associated with work" (p. 35). This idea, however, has been distorted by capitalism, which fragments teaching and restricts access to critical knowledge. As Saviani (1991) states, "[...] the school, as an institution whose specificity is the development of general knowledge, at the same time that it articulates the hegemonic interests of the dominant classes, is also a space for dispute and struggle for knowledge" (p. 105). In this way, the union between education and work can only be fully realized in a society that has overcome capitalist exploitation.

It should be noted, however, that if the expansion of access to school and the prolongation of schooling itself represent, at the same time, an economic and political way of managing the needs of capital and a response to the pressure of the working class for more schooling, it carries with it the tendency to raise school standards far beyond what is convenient (economically and politically) for the functionality of the capitalist mode of production. This is a permanent tension, whose origin is located in the contradictory and antagonistic character of the social relations of this mode of production (Frigotto, 2001, p. 163).

Marx's defense of polytechnic education seeks to break with the split between intellectual and manual labor, allowing an omnilateral formation of the individual. As Caldart *et al.* (2012), "[...] work as an educational principle [...] implies producing, with other human beings, their means of subsistence and not living from the expropriation of the work of their fellow men" (p. 277). This conception is central to the formation of a working class that is aware of its position and its ability to organize. According to Enguita (1993), "[...] the relationship between consciousness and existence, between social being and conscious being, is mediated by education, becoming a strategic field of resistance and transformation" (p. 135). In this way, the school must provide not only technical qualification, but also political and social training that enables workers to question and transform reality.

That said, the union between work and education must be understood as an instrument of liberation for the working class, and not as a mere adaptation to the needs of capital. As Marx (1868) states, "[...] the education of young people should include general training and scientific training necessary to understand the entire production process and, at the same time, initiate children and young people in the handling of the tools of the various branches of industry" (p. 60). This educational model opposes the fragmented logic

discussions on socialism and the organization of labor (Owen, 1991). See: OWEN, Robert. *A new view of society and other writings*. Introduction by G. D. H. Cole. London: Routledge, 1991.

of bourgeois education and points to the need for a school committed to human emancipation. As Frigotto (2010) points out, "[...] knowledge and its democratization are unequivocal demands of the social groups that constitute the working class" (p. 182). In this way, education, when articulated with work in a critical way, can become a central element in the construction of a new sociability, aimed at overcoming inequalities and capitalist exploitation.

Liberation can only be achieved by proletarians excluded from any and all conditions of freedom and autonomy to guarantee a dignified survival. And this liberation – here taken in the sense of emancipation – consists in the appropriation of the totality of the productive forces, which will allow men and women to develop, as well, the totality of their capacities for work as expression and creation. Thus this conquest presupposes the abolition of all kinds of classes. However, in the same way that the revolutionary class is not ready, but in the process of being made, the emancipation that embraces all of humanity is only a project, the horizon towards which popular social movements – among them, the peasant movement – are moving (Caldart *et. al.*, 2012, p. 306).

The relationship between work, praxis and the programmatic conception of education in Marx is based on the principle that education cannot be dissociated from the material conditions of society and, therefore, must be conceived as an instrument of social transformation. As Manacorda (2017: 93) points out: "[...] in reality, Marx perceived the appearance of a new type of school, as an expression of a new process in progress – the polytechnic and agronomy schools, the *écoles d'enseignement professionnel* – but he never thought that they would satisfy the real demand of man. On the contrary, it emphasized the need to offer, also in the workers' schools, a technological education that was both theoretical and practical." This approach aims to overcome the fragmentation imposed by capitalism, which separates intellectual labor²² from manual labor²³ and

²² For Karl Marx, intellectual labor is inserted in the social division of labor and, in the capitalist mode of production, it is often separated from manual labor, reflecting and reinforcing alienation and social inequality. Marx argues that this separation is not natural, but historically constructed to serve the interests of the ruling class, which monopolizes knowledge and intellectual production as forms of social control. Under capitalism, intellectual labor often becomes a commodity, being appropriated by capital in the same way as manual labor, contributing to the reproduction of existing relations of production. However, Marx envisions the possibility of overcoming this dichotomy through the emancipation of labor, where the omnilateral development of individuals would allow the integration between intellectual and manual labor, promoting a society in which knowledge is not an instrument of domination, but a means of human liberation (Marx; Engels, 2007). See: MARX, Karl; ENGELS, Friedrich. *The German ideology*. Translated by Rubens Enderle and Nélio Schneider. São Paulo: Boitempo, 2007.

²³ For Karl Marx, manual labor is the basis of society's material production and, in the capitalist mode of production, it is directly related to the alienation of the worker. He argues that under capitalism, the manual worker is separated from the means of production and control over his own labor, transforming himself into a commodity whose labor power is exploited for the generation of surplus value. In addition, the social division of labor imposes a separation between manual and intellectual labor, reserving productive activities to the working class while the bourgeoisie holds control over the knowledge and organization of work. For Marx, overcoming this dichotomy is essential for the emancipation of workers and for the construction of a communist society, in which work is not an alienating imposition, but a free and

submits education to the interests of the market. As Frigotto (2001) points out, "[...] this reading of the contradictory character of educational practice within capitalist relations imposes on us, as an immediate and permanent task, what is, within the Marxist tradition, a programmatic element since the draft of the Manifesto²⁴ written by Engels – the struggle for a single, universal, public and free school" (p. 206). In this way, the Marxist conception of education points to a formative model that integrates theory and practice, allowing workers to understand and transform their reality.

In this way, education from the Marxist perspective is also a field of ideological dispute, in which the struggle between the reproduction of relations of domination and the construction of a critical consciousness is waged. Saviani (1991) points out that "[...] Education, being referred to the historical development of society, fulfills a fundamentally political function. Articulating the Marxian elaboration with the teachings of Gramsci, it is understood that the main political function of education is the socialization of knowledge" (p. 105). This understanding reinforces the need to overcome the educational alienation imposed by capitalism and build a pedagogy that favors the emancipation of the working class. According to Enguita (1993), "[...] the relationship between consciousness and existence, between social being and conscious being, is mediated by education, becoming a strategic field of resistance and transformation" (p. 135). Thus, by integrating work and teaching in a revolutionary educational project, one breaks with the reproducivist logic and advances towards the formation of active historical subjects.

Circulation, in short, is constituted, Marx said, a veil that hides the world of production. Almost all the theory - the ideology - of the economists is based on this concealment, which makes it possible to explain - justify - the reality of monopolies starting from the small transactions between two castaways. The theme of equal educational opportunities, that is, the level of formal equality of education, also tends to hide its productive aspects, its functions of socialization and differential socialization, as well as the prevailing power relations within the school. It is no coincidence that most sociological investigations focus on the school as an institution of selection and certification, that is, as an educational market. But it is not only for sociologists, but also and especially for students - and for teachers,

creative activity that develops all human potentialities (Marx; Engels, 2007). See: MARX, Karl; ENGELS, Friedrich. *The German ideology*. Translated by Rubens Enderle and Nélio Schneider. São Paulo: Boitempo, 2007.

²⁴ The *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, written by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in 1848, is one of the fundamental texts of socialist and communist thought, establishing a systematic critique of the capitalist mode of production and defending the necessity of class struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat. In the manifesto, Marx and Engels argue that the history of humanity is the history of class struggles and that capitalism, by concentrating wealth and exploiting labor power, creates its own contradictions, inevitably leading to its overcoming by communism. The document proposes the organization of the proletariat as a revolutionary class, the abolition of private ownership of the means of production and the construction of a classless society. In addition to its theoretical importance, the manifesto has had a significant impact on workers' movements and socialist revolutions throughout history (Marx; Engels, 2010). See: MARX, Karl; ENGELS, Friedrich. *Manifesto of the Communist Party*. Translated by Nélio Schneider. São Paulo: Boitempo, 2010.

parents, etc. - for whom the school's selection functions hide its production functions (production of skills, consciences and, primarily, behaviors) (Enguita, 1993, p. 248).

Praxis, in Marxist theory, is the element that links knowledge to concrete action, enabling the transformation of social relations. As Caldart *et al.* (2012), "[...] This revolutionary praxis is not effective on the terrain or on the ideal plane, but on the concrete plane of the adverse reality of the social relations of expropriation and alienation, currently under capitalism" (p. 277). This means that education must be conceived as a dialectical process²⁵, in which subjects critically appropriate knowledge and, based on this, intervene in social reality. For Manacorda (2017), "[...] the educational praxis that is linked to the real development of society must seek the non-separation of men into alien and contrasting spheres, promoting a collective and associative way of being" (p. 83). Thus, the training of workers cannot be merely technical or instrumental, but must encompass a broad understanding of society and its structural conflicts.

Thus, Marx's programmatic conception of education requires overcoming the mercantilist vision of teaching, replacing it with a model aimed at human emancipation. As Marx and Engels (1983) state, "[...] the rescue of the concepts of unitary school²⁶, omnilateral and/or polytechnic²⁷, technological-industrial education produced within the conception of man and the process of 'human emancipation' in Marx and Engels and later in Gramsci [...] is based on the same historical-social materiality of the social relations of

²⁵ The dialectical process for Karl Marx is a method of analyzing reality based on the materialist conception of history, in which the internal contradictions of a social structure drive its transformation. Unlike the Hegelian dialectic, which starts from ideas, the Marxist dialectic is materialist and emphasizes that social changes occur from the concrete relations of production and class struggles. For Marx, historical development occurs through the contradiction between productive forces and relations of production, resulting in moments of rupture and synthesis, which lead to the overcoming of old social forms and the emergence of new ones. Thus, the Marxist dialectic is essential to understand the dynamics of capitalism and the possibilities of its revolutionary overcoming, highlighting that social transformation does not occur in a linear way, but through conflicts and structural changes (Marx, 2013). See: MARX, Karl. *Capital: critique of political economy*. Book I. Translation by Rubens Enderle. São Paulo: Boitempo, 2013.

²⁶ The unitary school, for Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, is an educational model that seeks to integrate manual and intellectual work, providing an omnilateral education to individuals. In contrast to the fragmented and hierarchical education of capitalism, which prepares workers for specific functions and reinforces the social division of labor, the unitary school aims to offer a universal education, which develops both intellectual capacities and practical skills. This model of education aims to overcome alienation and build an egalitarian society, in which knowledge is not a privilege of a dominant class, but a right of all. The proposal of the unitary school is, therefore, a form of resistance against the capitalist logic of restrictive specialization and a tool for the emancipation of the working class (Marx; Engels, 2011). See: MARX, Karl; ENGELS, Friedrich. *On education, teaching and communism*. São Paulo: Expressão Popular, 2011.

²⁷ For Karl Marx, polytechnic training is an educational model that integrates intellectual and manual work, providing an omnilateral development of individuals. Unlike capitalist education, which fragments knowledge and specializes workers for specific productive functions, polytechnic training seeks to articulate theory and practice, allowing individuals to understand the productive processes in their entirety and not just perform alienated tasks. This type of training is essential for overcoming the social division of labor, as it enables workers not only to operate machines, but to understand and transform the relations of production. Thus, Marx proposes an education that is not subordinated to the needs of capital, but that contributes to human emancipation and the construction of a communist society (Marx; Engels, 2011). See: MARX, Karl; ENGELS, Friedrich. *On education, teaching and communism*. São Paulo: Expressão Popular, 2011.

production" (Frigotto, 2010, p. 260). This educational model is opposed to the traditional bourgeois school, which seeks to form alienated individuals adapted to the needs of the market. According to Frigotto (2001), "[...] knowledge and its democratization are unequivocal demands of the social groups that constitute the working class" (p. 182). In this way, by articulating work and education in a critical way, Marxist pedagogy constitutes one of the main instruments of struggle for the construction of a society with fewer injustices.

If the hegemonic struggle develops under the same historical, complex, conflicting and antagonistic materiality, the alternatives at stake in the field of educational processes differ both in the process and in the human and technical-scientific content. Education or more broadly human formation or even the specific qualification processes to face economic tasks, from a democratic socialist perspective, have as a permanent horizon unequivocal ethical-political dimensions: 'socialists are here to remind the world that people must come first and not production' (Hobsbawm, 1992b, p. 268 apud Frigotto, 2010, p. 185).

In fact, the Marxist conception of education emphasizes the integral formation of the individual, as opposed to the fragmentation of capitalist education. The idea of polytechnics, in this context, does not refer only to technical instruction, but to the mastery of the scientific foundations of the production processes, allowing a broad understanding of the social and economic reality. As Saviani (2003, p. 140) states, "[...] polytechnic refers to the mastery of the scientific foundations of the different techniques that characterize the modern work process". This conception is directly related to the notion of omnilaterality²⁸, which, according to Manacorda (1989, p. 87), is expressed in the demand for a "[...] total, complete, multilateral development, in all senses, of the faculties and productive forces".

In this sense, the omnilateral education advocated by Marx and Engels seeks to overcome the division between manual and intellectual labor, characteristic of capitalist society. This division, according to Marx (1952, p. 262), "[...] it creates one-sidedness, and under the sign of one-sidedness, all negative determinations are gathered, while under the opposite sign, that of omnilaterality, all the positive perspectives of the person are

²⁸ For Karl Marx, omnilaterality refers to the limited and unilateral formation of individuals within the capitalist mode of production, in which work is fragmented and workers are reduced to specific functions, preventing their integral development. This extreme specialization leads to alienation, as individuals do not understand the production process as a whole and are restricted to repetitive and mechanical activities. Marx criticizes this condition and proposes, in contrast, the omnilateral education, which seeks to develop all human potentialities by integrating manual and intellectual labor, promoting the emancipation of workers and the overcoming of the social division of labor. Omnilaterality, therefore, is one of the mechanisms by which capitalism maintains the exploitation of the working class and perpetuates its domination (Marx; Engels, 2011). See: MARX, Karl; ENGELS, Friedrich. *On education, teaching and communism*. São Paulo: Expressão Popular, 2011.

gathered." Frigotto (2010, p. 19-46) emphasizes that omnilateral education is associated with overcoming the alienation of labor, being a fundamental condition for human emancipation.

In Marxist thought, polytechnics and omnilaterality are intrinsically linked to the critique of the bourgeois school²⁹, which, instead of promoting integral education, fragments knowledge to meet the demands of capital. As Enguita (1993, p. 351) points out, "[...] formal education is not neutral, but an instrument for the reproduction of the relations of production". From this perspective, polytechnic education seeks to prepare workers not only to perform specific tasks, but to critically understand the totality of the production process, ensuring their intellectual and political autonomy.

The omnilateral development of the capacities of all the members of society, through the elimination of the hitherto existing division of labor, through industrial education (industrielle), through the alternation of activities [...] Education, as industrial education, that is, the union of teaching and productive work or *Fabrikation*, which has as its method a fully developed stage in the system of production, will seek to achieve the educational goal of avoiding all one-sidedness in young people and stimulating them to omnilaterality, with the practical result of making them available to alternate their activity, so as to satisfy both the demands of society and their personal inclinations (Manacorda, 1989, p. 37).

For Marx and Engels, the articulation between work and education should not be restricted to an adaptation to the market, but rather to the formation of critical and emancipated subjects. In his Instructions to the Delegates of the Provisional Central Council of the IWA³⁰, Marx (1866) argued that "[...] polytechnic instruction must convey the general scientific foundations of all production processes." This perspective is reaffirmed by

²⁹ For Karl Marx, the bourgeois school is an ideological instrument of capitalism that reproduces the social division of labor and perpetuates the domination of the ruling class over the proletariat. This educational model does not aim at the integral and emancipatory formation of individuals, but rather the preparation of workers for specific functions within the productive system, ensuring the reproduction of capitalist logic. The bourgeois school inculcates values and ideologies that naturalize exploitation and social inequality, presenting the current economic structure as something immutable. In addition, by separating intellectual work from manual labor, bourgeois education restricts access to critical and scientific knowledge to the elites, preventing the working class from understanding the contradictions of the system and acting for its transformation (Marx; Engels, 2011). See: MARX, Karl; ENGELS, Friedrich. *On education, teaching and communism*. São Paulo: Expressão Popular, 2011.

³⁰ The *Instructions to the Delegates of the Provisional Central Council of the International Working Men's Association (IWA)*, written by Karl Marx in 1866, are a fundamental document for the formulation of the political and organizational bases of the international workers' movement. In this text, Marx presents guidelines for the struggle of the working class, highlighting the need for universal education, the reduction of the working day and the political organization of the proletariat to overcome capitalism. He defends polytechnic training as a means of emancipation of workers, allowing them to understand and master the productive processes in their entirety. In addition, Marx emphasizes that the trade union struggle, although essential, must be linked to the political struggle, since only the conquest of power by the workers can abolish capitalist exploitation. The document represents a milestone in the socialist strategy for the organization of the working class and the construction of a classless society (Marx, 2012). See: MARX, Karl. *Instructions to the Delegates of the Provisional Central Council of the International Working Men's Association*. In: MARX, Karl; ENGELS, Friedrich. *Texts on education and teaching*. Translated by Nélío Schneider. São Paulo: Expressão Popular, 2012.

Frigotto (2001, p. 182), when he states that "[...] knowledge and its democratization are unequivocal demands of the social groups that constitute the working class."

In this way, the Marxist proposal of education, based on polytechnics and omnilaterality, seeks to break with the alienating logic of the social division of labor and build a formative model that enables human emancipation. This conception goes beyond the mere transmission of technical content, being a political proposal for social transformation. As Manacorda (1989, p. 296) summarizes, "[...] Polytechnic education leads to the formation of the omnilateral man, covering three aspects: mental, physical and technical, appropriate to the age of children, young people and adults". Thus, the school should be a space for the construction of knowledge and critical awareness, allowing the overcoming of exploitation and the creation of a new social order.

The philosophical and historical foundations of the omnilateral development of the human being and of the education or human formation that is linked to it, in its deepest and most radical form (which goes to the root), are found in the analyses of Marx, Engels and other Marxists, especially Gramsci and Lukács. In these analyses, it is explicit that up to the present moment human beings have lived their prehistory because the development of human senses and potentialities has been obstructed by the split into antagonistic social classes and by the exploitation of one class over the others. [...] The possibilities of omnilateral human development and omnilateral education are therefore inscribed in the dispute of a new societal project – a socialist project – that frees work, knowledge, science, technology, culture and human relations as a whole from the shackles of capitalist society; a system that submits the set of relations of production and social relations, education, health, culture, leisure, love, affection and even a large part of religious beliefs to the mercantile logic (Frigotto, 2012, p. 269).

The fundamental pedagogical principle in Marx is based on the dialectical relationship between work and education, conceiving teaching as an instrument for human emancipation. Marx and Engels point out that "[...] the free public education of all children, the abolition of children's labour in factories as it is practised today, and the combination of education and material production" (Marx & Engels, 1848, p. 39). These are essential conditions for overcoming class alienation and exploitation. This conception is materialized in the proposal of a polytechnic education, which not only transmits scientific knowledge, but develops a critical understanding of the production process.

In this way, the polytechnic education defended by Marx and Engels is directly related to omnilateral education, that is, to the integral development of human capacities. As Frigotto (2012, p. 269) explains, "[...] The possibilities of omnilateral human development and omnilateral education are therefore inscribed in the dispute of a new

societal project – a socialist project – that frees work, knowledge, science, technology, culture and human relations as a whole from the shackles of capitalist society". Thus, training should not be reduced to an alienated technical qualification, but should enable the worker to understand and transform society.

Omnilateral is a term that comes from Latin and whose literal translation means 'all sides or dimensions'. Omnilateral education means, therefore, the conception of education or human formation that seeks to take into account all the dimensions that constitute the specificity of the human being and the real objective and subjective conditions for its full historical development. These dimensions involve their material corporeal life and their intellectual, cultural, educational, psychosocial, affective, aesthetic and playful development. In summary, omnilateral education encompasses the education and emancipation of all human senses, as they are not simply given by nature. What is specifically human in them is their creation by man himself (Frigotto, 2012, p. 267).

The Marxist critique of the bourgeois school maintains that the traditional educational model fragments knowledge and submits education to the interests of capital. Enguita (1993, p. 351) observes that "[...] formal education is not neutral, but an instrument for the reproduction of the relations of production". Along the same lines, Manacorda (1989, p. 37) emphasizes that polytechnic education should avoid "[...] all unilaterality and stimulate omnilaterality, making individuals capable of alternating their activity, so as to satisfy both the demands of society and their personal inclinations". In this way, the school should be a space for the construction of critical awareness and overcoming the barriers imposed by the social division of labor.

In addition, another central aspect in the Marxist pedagogical conception is the need for articulation between teaching and productive work. As defended by Marx in the *Resolution of the First Congress of the IWA*, "[...] this combination of paid productive labor with mental education, bodily exercises, and polytechnic learning will raise the working class well above the level of the bourgeois and aristocratic classes" (Marx, 1868, p. 60). For Marx, education should provide workers with the mastery of the scientific foundations of the production process, allowing them to control and transform labor relations, rather than just adapting to them.

Marx and Engels insisted, in practically all their works, on the necessary articulation between productive work and intellectual formation, understanding that this relationship should be open to all students, and not only to the children of workers. It was not a question of a mere technical education, of the apprenticeship of a trade, but of a conception of education based on the articulation between teaching and paid productive work. The articulation between work and education has been exhaustively researched and theoretically debated. There seems to be a relative

consensus that this Marxist analysis expresses that 'work and education are specifically human activities', in the sense that 'only the human being works and educates' (Saviani, 2007, p. 152).

Marxist education, therefore, is not restricted to the transmission of content or technical training, but is a revolutionary process of building the intellectual and political autonomy of the working class. Frigotto (2010, p. 182) argues that "[...] knowledge and its democratization are unequivocal demands of the social groups that constitute the working class." This process requires a unitary school, which overcomes the separation between theory and practice, between manual and intellectual work, forming individuals capable of actively intervening in society.

Thus, the Marxist pedagogical principle is based on the conception that education should be a means to overcome alienation and exploitation, preparing individuals for the construction of a new social order. As Manacorda (1989, p. 296) summarizes, "[...] Polytechnic education leads to the formation of the omnilateral man, covering three aspects: mental, physical and technical, appropriate to the age of children, young people and adults". In this sense, Marxist education is not limited to a school project, but to a political project of structural transformation of society.

The Marxian conception of instruction is outlined in an explicit and detailed way in the *Instructions to the Delegates of the Provisional Central Council of the IWA*, where it is stated that communist education must articulate manual labor and intellectual activity in order to overcome the one-sidedness imposed by the division of labor in bourgeois society. Thus, 'education must combine intellectual education with material production, instruction with physical exercises, and the latter with productive work. Such a measure aims to eliminate the difference between manual work and intellectual work, between conception and execution, in order to ensure that all men have an integral understanding of the production process (Marx & Engels, 1983, p. 37).

CONCLUSION

From the analysis developed throughout this research, it is evident that education, in the Marxian perspective, cannot be understood in isolation from the relations of production that structure capitalist society. The school, far from being a neutral space, constitutes a fundamental ideological instrument for the reproduction of the social division of labor and class inequalities. However, at the same time that the school plays a role in conforming to the current order, it also presents fissures and contradictions that can be exploited for the construction of a critical and emancipatory teaching. Polytechnic and omnilateral training, proposed by Marx and Engels, appears as an alternative to break with the alienation

imposed by the traditional educational system, promoting an integral formation of individuals, capable of integrating intellectual and manual work in a revolutionary perspective.

The Marxist conception of education is based on the assumption that the capitalist school not only prepares individuals for the labor market, but also shapes subjectivities, inculcating values and ideologies that sustain bourgeois domination. As demonstrated by the authors analyzed, this function of the school is materialized in the separation between intellectual and manual work, in the fragmentation of knowledge and in the instrumentalization of teaching as a mechanism of adaptation to the capitalist productive logic. However, by rescuing the proposal of polytechnic education and the unitary school, the Marxist perspective proposes a radical reorganization of teaching, which enables a critical understanding of the social relations of production and the overcoming of alienation.

Educational praxis, in the Marxian context, stands out as a central element for the formation of historical subjects capable of intervening in reality. Education should not be reduced to a process of transmission of abstract contents, but should be articulated with the concrete experience of workers, enabling them to understand their position in the social structure and develop a critical consciousness capable of driving the struggle for transformation. This articulation between theory and practice, a fundamental characteristic of Marxist pedagogy, points to the need for a school that not only informs, but that forms politically active individuals engaged in the construction of a new society.

However, the implementation of an emancipatory educational proposal faces structural challenges, since the school system is historically linked to the interests of the dominant class. The resistance to any attempt at transformation in the field of education reveals the strategic importance of this field in the class struggle. In this way, the struggle for a critical and liberating education cannot be restricted to the school space, but must be inserted in a broader movement to confront the capitalist order. Overcoming the traditional bourgeois school requires the construction of a new educational project that is aligned with the struggle for the emancipation of the working class.

The research demonstrated that education, from the Marxist perspective, should be understood as a field of ideological dispute, in which forces that seek to maintain the status quo and those that fight to overcome it confront each other. In this context, the school can be a space of resistance, as long as it is linked to a political project that points to the construction of a society without exploitation. The formation of a critical consciousness

necessarily involves the development of a pedagogy that not only unveils the contradictions of the system, but also enables workers to appropriate the means of knowledge production.

In this way, the Marxist analysis of education offers fundamental subsidies to understand the challenges and possibilities of teaching committed to social transformation. The defense of the unitary school, polytechnic training and omnilateral education points to an educational horizon in which knowledge is not a privilege of the elites, but a universal right. By recovering the thought of Marx and his interpreters, this research reinforces the need for an education focused not on the reproduction of the current order, but on the construction of a new sociability, in which work and knowledge are at the service of human emancipation.

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