

PROSPECTS FOR DEWEYAN DEMOCRACY IN BRAZIL: THE OBSTACLES TO DEVELOPMENT IN THE SOCIO-POLITICAL DIMENSION

*PERSPECTIVAS DA DEMOCRACIA DE DEWEY
NO BRASIL: OS OBSTÁCULOS AO DESENVOLVIMENTO
NA DIMENSÃO SOCIO-POLÍTICA*

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Abstract

The purpose of the present work is to discuss how democracy on Dewey's perspective could contribute to the development of countries like Brazil. In order to question this, we need first to understand the background discussion of development in the Latin American context. Therefore, we will present the course and main ideas about the development of the so-called "Dependency Theories" in the Latin American continent.

Keywords

Dewey. Democracy. Educational rights.

Resumo

O objetivo do presente trabalho é discutir como a democracia, na perspectiva de Dewey, poderia contribuir para o desenvolvimento de países como o Brasil. Para questionar isso, precisamos primeiro entender a discussão de fundo do desenvolvimento no contexto latino-americano. Portanto, apresentaremos o curso e as principais idéias sobre o desenvolvimento das chamadas "Teorias da Dependência" no continente latino-americano.

Palavras-chave

Dewey. Democracia. Direitos educacionais.

INTRODUCTION

The theoretical framework to be adopted in the present analysis is based on the postulates of pragmatic philosophy, namely

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the way it was conceived by the American philosopher and educator John Dewey and with a special emphasis on his concept of democracy, which he considered the ideal model of community life.

As a starting point, we will try to shed more light on the controversial interpretations and criticisms about the concept of pragmatism, especially regarding its methodological assumptions, considering the affirmation of one of the great pragmatist philosopher William James, who claimed that Pragmatism was a method for assessing the consequences and outcomes of an action. An idea that had previously been espoused by the great father of Pragmatism, Charles Sanders Peirce, in his well-known paper, “How to Make Our Ideas Clear”³:

It appears, then, that the rule for attaining the third grade of clearness of apprehension is as follows: consider what effects, which might conceivably have practical bearings, we conceive the object of our conception to have. Then, our conception of these effects is the whole of our conception of the object⁴.

This analysis wants to point out that the development should not be thinking only in a financial economical way, but it is a broader socio-political and educational concept that needs to be reflected upon certain premises to be able to exceed the dependency spectrum.

In order to demonstrate that, this paper will take the following path: 1] to set the fundamentals of pragmatist methodology, as a theoretical framework for this paper; 2] to discuss the evolution of the theories of dependency, with its essential ideas; 3] to connect the issues of dependency with pragmatism, democracy and law; 4] to explain how all of this it's a matter of Education; and,

³ PEIRCE, Charles. How to make our ideas clear. Revista Filosofia UIS, v. 15, n. 2, p. 287-303, 2016.

⁴ PEIRCE, Charles. Selected Writings, New York: Dover Pu. Inc., 1966. P.124

finally, 5] to distinguish Marxism (as the framework of the theories of dependency), Democracy and Education, in a pragmatic perspective, especially in the philosophy of John Dewey. In the end, we hope to shed light on the problem of development in a socio-political and educational dimension.

1. PRAGMATIST METHODOLOGY

The term “Pragmatism”⁵ still causes some strangeness in academia, both as a result of the prejudice brought about by being an eminently American-flagged philosophical current, and the misunderstanding of what is the primary object of this field. As Angel Manuel Faerna warns: “In recent times the terms ‘pragmatism’ and ‘pragmatist’ appear relatively frequently in the philosophical literature, but it is quite probable that their meaning today is diffused to many readers - it is one of those ideas that suggest more than say”.⁶ In this tune, Richard Posner will say that it is impossible to define Pragmatism⁷.

It is important to point out that, despite this strong identification of the origin of Pragmatism with American philosophical culture, it is possible to find its roots in much older tradi-

⁵“The term ‘pragmatic’, contrary to those who regard pragmatism as an exclusively American conception, was suggested by Peirce because of his studies of Kant. In ‘Metaphysics of Morals’, Kant establishes a distinction between pragmatic and practice. The last one is applicable to the morals’ law which Kant considers as the *a priori*, and the first one is applicable to the rules of art and of the technique that are based on experience and applicable to it. Peirce, which was an empiricist, with mental habits of laboratory, as he used to say, refused to call his system as ‘practicalism’, as suggested by some of his friends”. DEWEY, John. The development of American pragmatism. *Scientiae Studia*, v. 5, n. 2, p. 227-243, 2007.

⁶ FAERNA, A. M. Introducción a la teoría pragmatista del conocimiento. México: Siglo Veintiuno Editores, 1996. Pg. XI.

⁷ POSNER, R. A. *Law, Pragmatism and Democracy*. Londres: Harvard University Press, 2003. Pg. 24.

tions, like the Greeks and Romans and other moments in the history of our philosophy.

From this plurality of ideas (which results that some authors deny to the pragmatism the quality of theory or philosophical school), supported by an essential nucleus composed of anti-foundationalism, consequentialism, and contextualism, pragmatism eventually became diluted in other currents of thought. Its influence can be observed in fields that go far beyond the legal world⁸. Since Pragmatism is difficult to individualize, it is not needless to understand when one says that “there are as many pragmatism as there are pragmatist philosophers,”⁹ but it is also necessary to point out that there is a central link connecting the “family” of pragmatic philosophers. According to Faerna:

(the Pragmatism) seeks a conceptual synthesis between the interpretation of man as a being who thinks, judges, and understands, and the interpretation of man as a being who acts, plans, decides and evaluates¹⁰.

At its core, Pragmatism seeks to overcome the philosophical dichotomies between theory and practice, between humanistic and scientific culture, between the objective logic of knowledge and the subjective logic of values. This is why it is strange that some authors insist on the dichotomous approach to Pragmatism¹¹, when its foundations are completely opposed to divisions. It is precisely this detachment from the classical divisions

⁸ Em LOVEJOY, A. O. The Thirteen Pragmatisms. I. The Journal of Philosophy, Psychology and Scientific Methods, v. 5, n. 1, p. 5–12, 1908. e LOVEJOY, A. O. The Thirteen Pragmatisms. II. The Journal of Philosophy, Psychology and Scientific Methods, v. 5, n. 2, p. 29–39, 1908.

⁹ BARZUN, C. L. Three Forms of Legal Pragmatism. 2018.

¹⁰FAERNA, A. M. Introduccion a la teoria pragmatista del conocimiento. Mexico: Siglo Veintiuno Editores, 1996. Pg. 7. (tradução livre).

¹¹See item 1.2.4 de MENDONÇA, José Vicente Santos de. Direito Constitucional econômico: a intervenção do Estado na economia à luz da razão pública e do pragmatismo. 2 ed. Belo Horizonte: Fórum, 2018. Pg. 39.

of philosophy that will allow much more prospective behavior of the pragmatist, based on this prospecting human intelligence itself. It is, according to Dewey, a continuous process of formation and its conservation requires constant awareness in observing the consequences. Pogrebinschi tells us:

Intelligent (or creative) action is, therefore, that action which intelligence has released from a mechanically instrumental character. Thus, intelligence is instrumental through action, as it will determine the qualities of future experience. In other words, intelligence's primary preoccupation is with the future, with what has not yet been accomplished: intelligence directs its gaze to the future (it is inherently forward-looking). In this sense, smart action is liberating, Dewey believes¹²

2. DEPENDENCY THEORIES

Although Luiz Toledo¹³ tells us that “there is no theory of dependence, but simply dependence within the international system of power and power relations” and Bresser-Pereira¹⁴ claims that “in the intellectual history of Latin America, few topics have been dealt with more confusion and inaccuracy than the 'theory of dependence', because it is not a theory or strategy of development, but a sociological and political interpretation of Latin America [...]”; It is a well-documented fact ¹⁵ that Brazil produced, after World

¹²Thamy Pogrebinschi calls “pragmatist set”. POGREBINSCHI. Pragmatismo: teoria social e política. Rio de Janeiro: Relume Dumará, 2005. Pg. 23.

¹³ MACHADO, L. T. A teoria da dependência na América Latina. Estudos Avançados, v. 13, n. 35, p. 199–215, 1999. Pg. 199. Ver também outros, como: BATISTA JR., P. N. Dependência: da teoria à prática. Estudos Avançados, v. 13, n. 37, p. 215–224, 1999.

¹⁴ BRESSER-PEREIRA, L. C. As três interpretações da dependência. Perspectivas, v. 38, p. 17–48, 2010. Pg. 31.

¹⁵ See BRESSER-PEREIRA, L. C. As três interpretações da dependência. Perspectivas, v. 38, p. 17–48, 2010. e FERNANDO HENRIQUE CARDOSO.

War II, a heated debate centered on the underdevelopment of peripheral countries, the attempt to create models of economic growth that were consistent with the reality of the country and the creation of a theory that could explain the historical course of Latin America. This important debate occurred in a context in which two rather disparate views on economic development were beginning to compete for space in the academy's marketplace of ideas: nationalism and the interpretation of associated dependence. As exponents of this time we have Celso Furtado, Ruy Mauro, Marini, Theotônio dos Santos, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, Enzo Faletto and Gunder Frank.¹⁶

In this context, appears in Brazil the Superior Institute of Brazilian Studies (ISEB),¹⁷ with an important role in the reflection of the industrial revolution that was occurring in the country, bringing to the debate a nationalist view of the phenomenon¹⁸ and with important connotations for the leading of national economy in the 1950s. On the other hand, we have the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (CEPAL), which had economic foundations focused on the critique of the comparative advantage law and a economic position much more structuralist and concerned with the relational aspects of development¹⁹. Despite having antagonistic points in their analysis, the two groups had in common a disbelief in the economic liberalism, especially after the Great Depression of 1929, and a defense of

Consumption Theory in the of Dependency United. *Latin American Research Review*, v. 12, n. 3, p. 7–24, 1977.

¹⁶ MILANI, A. M. R. A dependência revisitada: a inserção internacional comparada entre América Latina e China na década de 2000-2010. *Cadernos do Desenvolvimento*, v. 12, n. 21, p. 11–42, 2017.

¹⁷ WANDERLEY, S. ISEB, uma escola de governo: Desenvolvimentismo e a formação de técnicos e dirigentes. *Revista de Administração Pública*, v. 50, n. 6, p. 913–936, 2016.3,

¹⁸ OLIVEIRA, M. DE. O ISEB e a construção de Brasília: correspondências míticas. *Sociedade e Estado*, v. 21, n. 2, p. 487–512, 2006.

¹⁹ For a more prospective vision of the work of CEPAL, including the impact of its ideas, see: CORAZZA, G. O “regionalismo aberto” da CEPAL e a inserção da América Latina na globalização. *Ensaio FEE*, v. 27, n. 1, p. 135–15, 2006.

the more assiduous presence of the state in the economy, as a driving force for growth²⁰.

As a third way, which emerged after the military coups in the Southern Cone, there was a current that, despite initially having merely academic pretensions, eventually influenced public policies throughout Latin America: the “School of Sociology of São Paulo”.²¹ This movement turns out to be an important counterpoint to ISEB's nationalist ideas and a bridge to the creation of a new vision of economic development, oriented to the idea of associated dependency and the vision of globalization. Bresser-Pereira²² tells us that the São Paulo School, given its critical attitude on dictatorship, to the extinction of the ISEB and the claim that they spoke on behalf of the best scientific methods, eventually generated a “complete academic victory”.

Despite this supposed academic victory, there were few criticisms directed at dependency theories, among them those that, for example, “would be based on categories of bourgeois analysis, the class struggle would be absent, would be too economist, could not overcome the very problem of underdevelopment, etc.”.²³ Other criticisms came, especially after the election of Fernando Henrique Cardoso to the Presidency of the Republic in 1994.

We can find the birth of dependency's interpretation in the thought of André Gunder Frank²⁴, which brought to sociology important concepts that would be widely used in works on political and economic development in Latin America. The fundamental

²⁰ BRESSER-PEREIRA, L. C. Do ISEB e da CEPAL à Teoria da Dependência. *Intelectuais e Política no Brasil*, p. 201–232, 2005. Pg. 2.

²¹ BRESSER-PEREIRA, L. C. Do ISEB e da CEPAL à Teoria da Dependência. *Intelectuais e Política no Brasil*, p. 201–232, 2005. Pg.5.

²² BRESSER-PEREIRA, L. C. As três interpretações da dependência. *Perspectivas*, v. 38, p. 17–48, 2010. Pg. 30.

²³ Interests answers to this criticisms: BAMBIRRA, V. *Teoría de la dependencia: Una anticritica*. Santiago: Ediciones Era, 1978.

²⁴ About the life and work of Andre Gunder Frank: KAY, C. André Gunder Frank (1929-2005): pionero de la teoría de la dependencia y de la mundialización. *Revista mexicana de sociología*, v. 68, n. 1, p. 181–190, 2006.

idea of Frank's theory was the attempt to break with the classical explanations of the social sciences about the economic situation of the Latin American countries, in other words, the transmutation of the term “imperialism”, applied to the center, in “dependency”, concerning the periphery²⁵. In Frank's words: ²⁶

Given that the historical experience of colonized and underdeveloped countries was obviously very different, the theories at our disposal are insufficient to fully understand the past of the underdeveloped part of the world and only partially reflect the past of the world in its entirety. More importantly, our ignorance of the history of underdeveloped countries leads us to assume that their past, and therefore their present, resembles the earlier states of history in now developed countries. This ignorance and presumption lead us to grave errors about contemporary underdevelopment and development.

With this influence of Frank and the direct collision with ISEB's ²⁷ public intellectuals, the “School of Sociology of São Paulo”, led by Florestan Fernandes, tried to bring to the academic and political field important reflections that will become known as

²⁵ BRESSER-PEREIRA, L. C. As três interpretações da dependência. *Perspectivas*, v. 38, p. 17–48, 2010. Pg. 32.

²⁶ FRANK, A. G. O desenvolvimento do subdesenvolvimento. Sinal, 1968. Pg. 1.

²⁷ There are authors, as Bresser-Pereira e Theotonio dos Santos, that defend the position that says that the CEPAL – Comissão Econômica para a América-Latina das Nações Unidas was spared of severe criticisms from São Paulo School, that focused on criticizing the Works of the ISEB. Theotonio tells us that was an interest on the ideas of the CEPAL. More: DOS SANTOS, T. O Desenvolvimento Latino-americano: Passado, Presente e Futuro Uma homenagem a André Gunder Frank. *The Underdevelopment of Development - Essays for André Gunder Frank*. Chicago: SAGE Publications, 1981. v. 3. p. 1–26.

dependency theories. One of the turning points of dependentists²⁸ is precisely to recognize the inexistence of economic determinism that would inevitably lead countries to stages of development, considering the interaction between the various national economies of foreign countries, in a constant flow that highlights the relationship between the national bourgeoisie and the proletariat. In the words of Weffort:

The existence of the nation-state, with its political attributes of autonomy and sovereignty, is not sufficient reason to think that a nation-market contradiction is in place in the country that is part of the international economic system. On the contrary, under given internal social and political conditions (which can only be resolved by a class analysis), the groups that hold hegemony, that is, which gives substance to the idea of the nation, can use political autonomy for international economic integration²⁹

Another important point is the interdisciplinary character brought by the theories of dependence, which sought to break the growing isolationism that Economic Science upbrought to the analysis of the situation in Latin America.³⁰ In this analysis, people with a wide range of academic backgrounds were involved, ranging from Gunder Frank's structural-functionalism to Weffort's Weberianism, and to Fernando Henrique Cardoso's Marxism, giving to the discussions on dependence theory an extremely plural character.³¹

²⁸ Term used by FRANK, A. G. A theoretical introduction to 5000 years of world system history. Review (Binghamton, NY), v. 13, n. 2, p. 155–248, 1990.; KOLING, P. J. Teorías da dependência: abordagens sobre o desenvolvimento Latino-Americano. *Diálogos*, v. 11, n. 1e2, 2007.

²⁹ WEFFORT, F. C. *O Populismo na Política Brasileira*. Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 1978. Pg. 13.

³⁰ KOLING, P. J. Teorías da dependência: abordagens sobre o desenvolvimento Latino-Americano. *Diálogos*, v. 11, n. 1e2, 2007. Pg. 139.

³¹ BAMBIRRA, V. *Teoría de la dependencia: Una anticritica*. Santiago: Ediciones Era, 1978. Pg. 35.

It is noteworthy that at the time, there was no consensus on the use of the terminology dependency among authors who subscribed to this type of interpretation. As Weffort³² draws attention, several authors have devoted themselves to solving the ambiguity of the concept without much success, with results that were, at best, dichotomizations of the term.³³ This is because the authors' starting points are diverse, which ultimately generates what Bresser-Pereira calls “different interpretations” of dependence,³⁴ such as the interpretation of overexploitation, the associated dependency version, and the “national-dependent” interpretation.

The version that derives directly from the School of Sociology of São Paulo is that of associated dependency, which ended up having great success inside and outside Brazil.³⁵ It can be summarized as follows: They have no choice but to associate themselves with the dominant system and take advantage of the cracks it offers for its development”.³⁶

Thus, the theories of dependence, especially in its version of *Associated Dependence*, eventually brought to the public debate aspects and versions relevant for understanding the phenomenon of underdevelopment in Latin America, opening new avenues for the formulation of public policies aimed at creating an environment with infrastructure focused on the economic development of a region historically punished by a secular backwardness.

³² WEFFORT, F. C. *O Populismo na Política Brasileira*. Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 1978. Pg. 193.

³³ MANTEGA, G. *Teoria da dependência revisitada: um balanço crítico*. Fgv, v. 27, p. 1–84, 1997.

³⁴ BRESSER-PEREIRA, L. C. *As três interpretações da dependência*. *Perspectivas*, v. 38, p. 17–48, 2010.

³⁵ On the international range, see: FERNANDO HENRIQUE CARDOSO. *Consumption Theory in the of Dependency United States*. *Latin American Research Review*, v. 12, n. 3, p. 7–24, 1977.

³⁶ BRESSER-PEREIRA, L. C. *As três interpretações da dependência*. *Perspectivas*, v. 38, p. 17–48, 2010. Pg. 37.

3. PRAGMATISM, DEMOCRACY AND LAW

John Dewey was the great theorist and craftsman of organic democracy. Philosophical-legal pragmatism seeks continuity and interaction as indispensable for an interdisciplinary analysis of human experience. Fernando Cardoso's idea of development from dependence implies restriction of individual freedom.

Pragmatism is grounded in the assumption that genuine experience is social, transcending individual interests. Freedom of action is genuine only when associated with the capacity to think reflectively. While preserving respect for the individual, it demands fraternal responsibility, with the corollary that gives meaning and strength to the exercise of democracy and education.

Since a democratic society repudiates the principle of external authority, it must find a substitute in voluntary disposition and interest; these can be created only by education and legal ordering rooted in a dynamic, therapeutic philosophy. A democracy is more than a form of government, it is primarily a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience. The extension in space of individuals who participate in an interest requires that each refer his own action to that of others to give point and direction to his own. As Dewey emphasized, this is equivalent to the breaking down of barriers of class, race, and national territory, which kept men from perceiving the full import and value of their activities.

Although separated by almost a century, we find an interesting parallel between Fernando Cardoso's formulation of dependency theory and John Dewey's pragmatic philosophy. If, on the one hand, the Brazilian sociologist formulated a theory that attempts to explain underdevelopment beyond classic Marxist and determinist perspectives, the American philosopher tried, in the field of education, to find within experience a middle ground between traditional and progressive education. Dependency theory tried to extrapolate a common post-war thinking, which consisted in believing that development would depend mainly on the capacity of each country and that they would be able to achieve such a situa-

tion in a constant and linear way, not only with minimal state intervention, but with minimal influence from foreign countries; the theory also tried to move away, on the other hand, from a sociological argument that there would be a “stagnationism” among underdeveloped economies, generated by the reflections of attitudes that would go back to the beginning of the colonialist period and that it would be impossible to be disengaged without institutional ruptures.

We can find in Fernando Cardoso's version of the dependency theory an attempt to consider the evolution of the social structure of each country such that a broad understanding of the most recent phenomena is possible, explaining the failure of public policies and models of government that were transplanted from central to peripheral countries without any respect for the principle of continuity. The principle of integration is linked to a dynamic balance between objective and subjective factors of experience, in a constant contest between these conditions.

With this, we can see that all aspects must be considered for the progress of education and its social, economic and political effects, avoiding the zero-sum trope of ‘all or nothing’ that evaluates evidence one factor to the detriment of the other.

In Cardoso's and Falletto's theory this principle gains prominence under the justification that the social phenomenon is always multifaceted and the analysis of only one of its aspects is impossible to bring truly relevant answers to the researcher; to combat this we suggest an "integrated analysis of development", breaking the dichotomy between "modern" and "traditional" society brought in the context of more orthodox economic and sociological perspectives. In sum, it is pertinent to warn that the solution of the problem situations with which man is constantly confronted cannot be equated at the expense of a binary logic, which is reduced to the confrontation mentioned above between either vs or. This is all the more true when it comes to the so-called ideographic sciences, within which sociology, politics, economics and law are included. In this sense it is opportune to bring up the aphorism of

the father of American legal pragmatism, Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr.: "The life of law is not logic, but experience."

4. EDUCATION

Dewey in *Experience and Education* tried to balance the theory of education between proposals that understand the process of learning as development from inside out, and formation from the outside in; proposals that understand education as a set of obstacles that must be overcome by the natural gifts of the subject, overcoming their own inclinations. This dichotomy was seen in the clash between traditional and progressive education and ended up bringing serious consequences both for pedagogical growth and for the health of democracy itself. This dispute even brought pernicious influences that, until today, still persist for the development of democratic ideals that inspired the Brazilian Constitution of 1946. For Dewey, it is not by abandoning the old that it will be possible to solve the problems of education, much less by rejecting the novelties; it will be necessary to find an ideal point in which the paradigms no longer fight for space, trying to supplant one another, but work in a complementary way, generating a balance that will enhance practical experience within education.

The point of contact between these two apparently distinct theories is the detachment from the game of this or that, in Dewey's language, the dialectic overcoming of the antithetical confrontation between either vs. or, with a view to the construction of a more tangible synthesis, which would result from the overcoming of the mentioned extreme categories. Both Dewey and

Cardoso make use of two important principles: continuity and integration to overcome exclusivist paradigms, and Dewey understands that the principle of continuity is linked to a necessary communication between the past and the present, and that any analysis must take this continuum into account, so that previous experiences are not simply discarded because they are old.

Cardoso came to power at a time when, even more than in earlier decades, observers questioned whether reform would be possible in Brazil. The pervasive corruption that dominated Brazilian society and politics throughout history had been reinforced by Collor's disastrous presidency and impeachment. Cardoso worried about this image in discussing the role of *jeitinho*, the Brazilian approach to obstacles (from the Portuguese 'jeito,' meaning "way").

"*Jeitinho*" has a double meaning. One meaning is good, that you try to solve problems rather than to put up obstacles; which is not bad, it's an attitude, 'Let's try to solve this, let's try to help you.' That's positive. But there is another meaning, which is to disregard the law, the rules. Not to effect rules. And when I say, 'hopefully,' it's not yet clear if the Brazilian civic culture is strong enough 'in the democratic sense' to respect the rule of law. It's not possible to have democracy without the rule of law.

According to Cardoso, although "*jeitinho*" can be an impediment, the belief that Brazil cannot change is neither productive nor universal. It's a matter of attitude; more traditional people prefer not to change anything. And they are always accusing the 'reformers' of being self-serving and the poor will suffer the consequences. It's not necessarily true, but they use this as an excuse not to change.

While the long-term effects of Cardoso's policies will not become evident for a number of years, it is already clear that he was able to effect significant changes in Brazil. His greatest reforms remain his wide-reaching social initiatives. He knew how to operate successfully within Brazilian society and within the Brazilian political process. Cardoso took major strides in helping Brazil to realize its potential as a 'country of tomorrow' and helped transform the country into the emerging world power that it is today. But Cardoso's formative model has proved insufficient to address the complexity of contemporary Latin America. What is needed now is a path forward *without* unitary modeling, a problem-solving path addressing the many individual needs of society,

engaging insights from across the educational spectrum: science, law, communication, engineering, and reconstructed philosophy.

The history of pragmatism illustrates key characteristics of therapeutically deconstructing the barrier that has been serving to create frontiers that separate and dualize knowledge, whether it be scientific, or social and humanistic. By establishing the bases that give sustainability to influential dualism, gaps are naturally created that, at the same time that separate different areas of knowledge, also contribute, and to a considerable extent, to simultaneously develop theoretically and functionally relevant areas of human knowledge.

5. MARXISM, DEMOCRACY AND EDUCATION

The presence of Marxism in the genesis and development of Dependency Theories is notorious¹, and this influence can be seen in all the authors who have addressed the theme. It is noteworthy that the great influences of Dependency Theories, notably André Gunder Frank, Rui Mauro Marini and Theotônio dos Santos, are recognized for their contributions to the Marxist².

The context in the world was extremely conducive to the diffusion of the ideas of class struggle, proletarian revolution, among other themes of Marxism. There was social upheaval as a result of the erupting popular revolutions, the Soviet Union was advanced in its postwar expansion, creating an environment of

¹ PRADO, F. C. História de um não-debate: a trajetória da teoria marxista da dependência. *Comunicação e Política*, v. 29, n. 2, p. 68–94, 2010.

² MANTEGA, G. Teoria da dependência revisitada: um balanço crítico. *Fgv*, v. 27, p. 1–84, 1997. Pg. 25.

incentives for the academy to be increasingly receptive to Marxism and related theories.

About the Marxism influence in the Dependence Theory, tell us Bambirra³:

Son pues sus antecedentes teóricos y políticos los análisis de Marx y Engels sobre la situación colonial; la polémica de los socialdemócratas rusos y de Lenin en particular en contra de los narodniko-populistas; la teoría del imperialismo y sus alcances en la situación colonial elaborada por Hilferding, Bujarin, Rosa Luxemburgo y particularmente por Lenin; la polémica sobre la revolución colonial llevada a cabo en el II Congreso de la Comintern que culmina con la elaboración de las tesis sobre las cuestiones nacional y colonial por Lenin; las consideraciones posteriores hechas por Lenin mismo, de carácter disperso pero de todos modos muy significativas; la aplicación creadora del marxismo-leninismo expuesta por Mao Tse-tung en varias de sus obras; y, finalmente, el intento de aplicación del método de análisis marxista para la comprensión del fenómeno del ‘subdesarrollo’ realizado por Paul Baran en los años cincuenta.

It turns out that the focus on the economy eventually led to some “deliberate blindness” of Dependency Theories in building solutions for Latin American growth, causing important elements such as education and culture to be set aside in the analysis. Regardless of the current approach adopted in the interpretation of dependency, there would be a focus on micro and macroeconomic analysis, which was the motto for the succession of criticism⁴. Marxism's notion of revolution, division of labor, and class struggle, when incorporated into dependentist ideas, ultimately

³ BAMBIRRA, V. *Teoría de la dependencia: Una anticritica*. Santiago: Ediciones Era, 1978. Pg. 16.

⁴ MILANI, A. M. R. *A dependência revisitada: a inserção internacional comparada entre América Latina e China na década de 2000-2010*. Cadernos do Desenvolvimento, v. 12, n. 21, p. 11–42, 2017.

brings reductionist responses and often ineffective concrete solutions, since it leaves important structures within the context of economic development in the background.

It is worth remembering that the approach to Marxism is not only characteristic of interpretations of dependence, Pragmatism also has connections with Marx's theory, generating political and philosophical consequences. Firstly, it is worth noting that the birth of Pragmatism in the first decade of the twentieth century coincides with the first major philosophical discussions about Marxism in Europe. As an example, there is a clear approximation of George Sorel's Theory with James's thinking and Antonio Gramsci's ideas with the critique of positivism by Pragmatist Papini in Italy⁵.

The two theories have similarities, both starting from epistemological assumptions that unite theory with practice, rejecting idealistic or too closely related conceptions of the practical world; both identify the unraveling of the meaning of social reality in human activity; Both identify a “problematic” or “contradictory” character of human action as part of the existential situation⁶.

Pragmatism's foundations carry elements for a critical program in political and moral philosophy⁷, departing from the well-known argument against Pragmatism that this current would seek to depart from social issues given its eminently liberal essence. This type of argument carries two misconceptions: first, it places pragmatism within a theoretical framework that contradicts its em-

⁵ RENAULT, E. Dewey, Hook, and Mao: on some affinities between marxism and pragmatism. *Actuel Marx*, v. 2, n. 54, p. 138–157, 2013. Pg. 1.

⁶ Ver DAMICO, J.; MARX, K. Dewey and Marx : On Partisanship and the Reconstruction of Society. *The American Political Science Review*, v. 75, n. 3, p. 654–666, 2015, ENGERMAN, D. C. John dewey and the soviet union: Pragmatism meets revolution. *Modern Intellectual History*, v. 3, n. 1, p. 33–63, 2006.

⁷ FREGA, Roberto. Um conto sobre duas filosofias sociais. in ARAÚJO, Clarice von Oertzen. SPÍNDOLA, Pedro. (orgs.) *Reflexões sobre o Pragmatismo Filosófico e Jurídico. Escritos do Professor George Browne*. Curitiba: CRV, 2019. Pg. 311.

inently anti-fundamentalist proposal; then disregards the social appeals of the authors of classical liberalism, such as Adam Smith⁸.

The similarity of ideas eventually created a peculiar proximity. Dewey exerted an invaluable influence on Chinese politics and academic culture, even being cited many times by Mao Tse-tung in his writings, as you tell us Sun Youzhong⁹:

A more typical example would be the influence of pragmatic methodology on Mao Tse-tung. Mao began to learn about Dewey and his pragmatism while he was working as a librarian's assistant in Beijing University from August, 1918 to the spring of 1919. He attended Hu Shih's courses and had private talks with Hu asking for Hu's advice on whether he should go abroad or do 'on-site investigation and research' in China.

There was a very important impact of Pragmatism's ideas on the conduct of revolutionary thinking in China and the Soviet Union. Unfortunately, the political conjuncture and the influence of Marxism eventually put Dewey's important ideas in the shadows, such as the educational system, the ideal of democracy, among others. The growing radicalism of socialist regimes and the end of democratic ideals led to a departure from Dewey that became a critic of these regimes¹⁰.

Despite the enormous proximity between Dewey's thought and Marxism, there are deep divergences, which will be definitive to understand why this work uses pragmatism as a complement to Dependency Theories.

⁸ EVENSKY, J. The two voices of Adam Smith : moral philosopher and social critic. *History of Political Economy*, v. 3, n. 19, 1987.

⁹ YOUZHONG, S. John Dewey in China: Yesterday and Today. *Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society*, v. 35, n. 1, p. 69–88, 1999.

¹⁰ ENGERMAN, D. C. John dewey and the soviet union: Pragmatism meets revolution. *Modern Intellectual History*, v. 3, n. 1, p. 33–63, 2006.

The main divergence is in the role of education as a prime factor for the development of a country and the very notion of democracy which, for Dewey, is impossible to achieve without the real appreciation of the educational process. There is no democracy without education, hence there is no possibility for a nation to develop economically and socially without an educational revolution.

Dewey's conception of democracy is both broad and peculiar; however, it is sufficient to a better comprehension of the reasons which led the philosopher to keep himself away from those authoritarian interpretations.

It can be seen that dependence theories and pragmatism depart from the Marxist foundations in different measures, not only because of the divergence of ideas, but because of the divergence, in Dewey's case, from the very conduct of the political process. This differentiated measure of remoteness helps us understand how Pragmatic theory can be an important support for Dependency Theories today, correcting errors long pointed out by many scholars and inserting important features in the debate.

As a complement to the solutions brought by the interpretations of dependence, it is important to reflect on the role of education in the context of the economic and social development of the region. The poor educational quality of the peripheral countries cannot be seen merely as a consequence of insufficient economic evolution, but as a true cause of this sluggish development of capitalism. Pragmatics' proposal, more specifically John Dewey's Pragmatism, comes to complement some important notions of dependency theory by bringing essential and very expensive elements to the American philosopher.

The strictly economic character of interpretations of dependence can be weighed against the importance John Dewey attaches to education, not only as a means of promoting the economic growth of a society, but as a means of enabling true cultural and social emancipation. The real escape from dependence is unlikely to occur exclusively through revolutions of the means of production, especially at a time when the globalized economy car-

ries with it the last remnants of justification for the idea of class struggle. The real way out of dependency will only be possible through a revolution that must be centered on education, creating notions of emancipation and democracy.

According to Dewey's reflections on the close relationship between democracy, education, culture and development, it would be pertinent, finally, to refer to his well-known work "Democracy and Education". In it, says Dewey¹¹:

Upon the educational side, we note first that the realization of a form of social life in which interests are mutually interpenetrating, and where progress, or readjustment, is an important consideration, makes a democratic community more interested than other communities have cause to be in deliberate and systematic education. The devotion of democracy to education is a familiar fact. (...) A democracy is more than a form of government; it is primarily a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience. The extension in space of the number of individuals who participate in an interest so that each has to refer his own action to that of others, and to consider the action of others to give point and direction to his own, is equivalent to the breaking down of those barriers of class, race, and national territory which kept men from perceiving the full import of their activity.

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¹¹ DEWEY, John. Democracy and education. Middle Works Bd, v. 9, 1966. Pg. 87.

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