

COMMUNICATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN A POSTMODERN ERA: RE-EVALUATING THE FREIREAN LEGACY

To begin with I should like to tell you that I am really very sorry about not being able to participate in the Conference. I should appreciate very much exchanging ideas with the participants, talking to you, learning and teaching, considering that it is impossible to learn without teaching.

Actually, I would really like being there, listening carefully to women and men from other parts of the world, from other cultures, to what they have to say about their dreams or against the very act of dreaming; about their utopias or their negation. Not only would I like to learn how the Conference participants have characterized modernity; it would be also necessary for me, for without that one cannot speak of post-modernity. What makes us think that an educator is post-modern or purely modern in his thinking. I should like to actively accompany the discussions around the issue whether post-modernity is a historic province for itself, kind of "sui generis" moment within history, inaugurating a new history, almost without continuity with what was and what will be, without ideology, without utopias, dreams, social classes, struggles. It would be "round times", "fat", "soft", without "rough edges", women and men discovering finally that their fundamental characteristic is neutrality. Without social classes, without struggles, dreams to quarrel for, without the need of option, and, as a consequence, rupture, without the conflict between opposed ideologies, it would be the empire of neutrality. It would be the negation of History itself. Or, on the contrary, if post-modernity, as well as modernity, as well as traditionality, despite its substantive complex of connotations, implies a necessary continuity which characterizes History itself as human experience, whose form of being flows from one period of time to another.

In that sense, each period is characterized by preponderance and not by the exclusiveness of its connotations. For me, post-modernity today, as well as modernity yesterday and traditional antiquity the day before yesterday, conditioning women and men involved in them and through them, does not kill nor did kill in them what we call their nature, which - as it is not an *a priori* of History - has been constituted socially. Maybe one can say, using my own argument, that history's force in whose experience human nature has been constituted and reconstituted, is sufficient to redo it completely in such a way that one day men and women do not recognize themselves, in general terms, as beings even similar to their ancestors.

(falta um parágrafo)... However, the different form in which they manifest themselves does not deny them.

Throughout History the need of having certainties about the world has been imposed upon women and men. Certainties contraposed by doubts.

That need has been imposed upon human beings to such extent that its absence is an obstacle to human companionship.

One of the characteristics of modernity, decurrent from the scientificity that has led to scientificism, was the mythification of certainty. Scientific thinking has dogmatically installed certainty too certain of certainty, such as previously religiousness had dogmatized its certainty.

Rigorous methods for approximation and apprehension of the object mythified certainty, in front of different quality, in the absence of methodologic rigorousness. It was that methodologic rigorousness or its mythification, or also the mythification of the highest preciseness of the discoveries of modernity which denied the importance of the senses, desires, emotions, passion in the proceedings or practice of learning.

On the other hand, I understand that in the same way there were progressive and retrogressive people in the antiquity, modernity, they are also in post-modernity. There is a reactionary form of being post-modern as well as there is a progressive form of being so.

Post-modernity is not free of conflicts and, as a consequence, of options, ruptures, decisions.

For me, the progressively post-modern education practice - the one I have been committed to since the 1950's - is the one which is based on democratic respect of the learner as one of the subjects of the process, the one which has in the act of teaching - learning a curious and creative moment in which the educators relearn and reconstruct knowledge already known and the learners acquire, produce the not yet known. It's the one which reveals the truth instead of hiding it. It's the one which encourages the beauty of purity as virtue and collides with puritanism as negation of virtue.

It's the one which modestly learns with the differences and rejects arrogance.

with my warmest regards

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