

International Journal of Human Sciences Research

TO HUMANIZE THE HUMAN: CONTRIBUTIONS OF PAULO FREIRE'S PEDAGOGY TO THINK AUTHORITARIANISM IN CURRENT BRAZIL¹

Argus Romero Abreu de Moraes

He undertakes a senior postdoctoral internship at the institution's Interdisciplinary Graduate Program in Applied Linguistics: Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro (PDS-FAPERJ/PIPGLA-UFRJ)

All content in this magazine is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution License. Attribution-Non-Commercial-Non-Derivatives 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0).



¹ This text was originally published in Portuguese with the title “Pensar o humano com Paulo Freire: notas sobre a subjetividade crítica em tempos de autoritarismo”, in BOCCHI, Aline Fernandes de Azevedo, *As linguagens como prática de liberdade: uma homenagem a Paulo Freire*. Franca, SP: Focus Series Collection, 2022.

Indentations do not stop the transition.
Setbacks are not backward transit.

Paulo Freire

INITIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Among Paulo Freire's writings, one seems fundamental to us to pay tribute in the recent Brazilian context: Education as a practice of freedom, published in 1967. With a dialogic and fluid language, the theorist ponders about the human being, about the singularity of our species, on the relationship between massification and fanaticism, on national development in the 20th century and on the ways in which we can reach the fullness of our capacities – ethical, political and economic – as a nation.

The relevance of Paulo Freire's reflections is impressive for its theoretical rigor and for the perspicacity in the reading of Brazilian society, allowing us to understand the country even decades after they were written. Brazil in the 1960s was going through profound socio-political and economic changes. It advanced in the industrialization process and, with that, deepened its urbanization indexes. Increasingly, agrarian structures and their closed social relations became the past, giving rise to hope for the technical overcoming of natural limits and the continuous increase in the quality of life and social rights. The country seemed to be experiencing a process of transition towards the new, towards a more open and autonomous society, overcoming imported explanatory models and the low dialogue between social groups (WEFFORT, 2021 [1967]).

In the present text, we aim to produce a brief reflection on the authoritarian resurgence in the country, based on the relationship between “education”, “subjectivity” and “criticism” in Freire (2021[1967]). Therefore, in the first section, we will discuss the political

phenomenon known as bolsonarismo. In the second, we will evaluate some central aspects of the popular education movement championed by Paulo Freire. Finally, in the third, we will analyze, in an essayistic way, a statement by the Brazilian President against critical thinking in young people.

TO DEHUMANIZE THE HUMAN: BOLSONARISM AS A POLITICAL PROJECT

In recent years, Brazil has experienced different democratic setbacks. The return of the guidelines of the Military Dictatorship (1964 to 1985), for example, seems to have acquired naturalness in the Brazilian public sphere. We often find threats to the National Congress and the Federal Supreme Court (STF), attempts to censor media and scientific institutions, apology for torture and brutality in dealing with the country's different institutional and social sectors. Throughout the Bolsonaro government, the feeling of social chaos and the association between (anti) politics and death have become commonplace (AVRITZER, 2020; NOBRE, 2020).

In this context, one figure seems to be commonly rejected by extreme right groups in the country: Paulo Freire (1921-1997). Patron of Brazilian Education since 2012 (Law 12.612), the pedagogue seems to condense the meanings denied by national conservative groups; in particular, with regard to the influence of its pedagogical perspective on the Brazilian educational structure (PENNA, 2019).

One of the characteristics of the extreme right is the transformation of any ideological dissonance into a threat to its values, based on the model of war (NOBRE, 2020). Debates linked to the natural equality between human beings, the reduction of social inequalities and the legal aspects of human rights are often associated with the spectrum of the political

left. The Federal Constitution of 1988, the “Citizen Constitution”, due to its alignment with the Welfare State model, is treated as communist (YAHOO, 2021).

According to Miguel (2018), the current Brazilian extreme right can be defined from three political axes, which interact with each other, allowing the formation of new compositions within the same ideological spectrum, namely:

(1) the libertarian ideology: alignment with the “Austrian economic school”, which defends ultra-liberal values, preaching the minimal State, understanding that the market and its mechanisms would be constitutively fair and would mirror natural laws. This way, social relations must be completely defined by a contractual vision, guaranteeing the absolute inviolability of property rights and fostering individual competition in all sectors of social life to the detriment of solidarity ties. As a result, the bonds between individuals and the guarantee for the organization of collective interest associations, especially labor associations, are lost. For the ultra-liberals, freedom would be represented in the market and its main enemy/obstacle is equality, represented by the State;

(2) religious fundamentalism: organizing itself as a political force since the beginning of the 1990s, this form of interpretation and structuring of the religious world has its growth – mainly, but not exclusively – associated with the expansion of sectors of neopentecostal churches, the which are based on the “perception that there is a revealed truth that nullifies any possibility of debate” (MIGUEL, 2018, p. 21). Such groups are unreservedly opposed to the decriminalization and legalization of abortion, as well as to gender equality policies. Its strengthening is also related to the exponential growth of the economic and media power of the religious leaders of the main evangelical congregations

in the country, increasing their insertion in the state and business structure (MIGUEL, 2018). The moral agenda and the high capillarity of these churches on the outskirts of large cities, causing and taking advantage of the retreat of Catholic influence and the power vacuum of the State, have conquered a significant part of the traditional electorate of the Brazilian political left (BETTO, 2016);

(3) anti-communism: analogous to the period of the Cold War, in which Cuba received the status of the main international Latin American enemy, the recent development – and crisis – of Venezuelan “Bolivarianism” has fostered a new imaginary enemy in the region. Due to their historical relations with the Castro and Chavista regime, these groups have recently started to associate “petismo” – an expression linked to the Workers’ Party (PT), which ruled the country from 2003 to 2016 – with communism.

Gallego (2019), in turn, highlights the following aspects for the contemporary national extreme right: (I) rejection of politics, in which the concept of “corruption” emerges as a central argumentative aspect; (II) anti-petism and anti-leftism, as a denial of “communism”, an ideological movement seen as a defender of welfarism, State rigging, the LGBT agenda and Human Rights; (III) anti-intellectualism, given the engagement in the creation, reading and propagation of fraudulent news through digital tools such as WhatsApp; (IV) political dogmatism, since ideological positions work as dogmas or absolute truths, not distinguishing opinion from information, in order to promote a fundamentalist and hyperpersonalist logic of knowledge; (V) militarism, typical of the symbolization of the military as the organizers of public life in the face of the social chaos supposedly experienced today. Such an institution would represent values such as “hierarchy”, “discipline”, “authority”, “strength”,

“masculinity” and “charisma”; finally, (VI) the emotion of hate, a way in which they continually transform their opponents into enemies (GALLEGO, 2018).

In this sense, one can notice in these groups the metonymic relationship between the concepts of “left”, “petismo” and “communism”, in which the Workers’ Party tends to represent the entire national left and the national left seems completely encompassed in the ideology communist, eliminating any parameter that could relativize the positions or present nuances. Furthermore, they automatically associate any leftist group or social movement with “corruption”, “paternalism” and “clientelism”.

The “enemy” is, therefore, seen as a homogeneous category, without particularizations that allow the humanization of its members. There is, therefore, an absolutization of meaning: either one is communist, or one is not. Any link with governments prior to the current one betrays someone’s relationship with this ideology. Even more profoundly, as the 1988 Constitution itself would be ideologically embedded in this political spectrum, all governments of the New Republic, strictly speaking, could be considered communist (NOBRE, 2020).

For Pinheiro-Machado (2017), the parliamentary project known as “Escola sem Partido” and the intense reaction to the “Queermuseum Exhibition” by these groups demonstrate that the New Right would not be anti-intellectual, but anti-intellectual elite. Given its anti-democratic characteristics, its followers pursue any form of critical knowledge and historical justice against marginalized groups, aiming, in such a way, to produce new regimes of truth to legitimize authoritarian rhetoric on the public scene and transform the moral limits of the sayable.

Still according to the anthropologist, for the Nova Direita, it is not just a matter of sustaining

that the civilizational project would be noisy, but, in addition, that the supposed failure of this project would be the main responsible for the growth of inequality between social groups in the world. contemporary. Thus, it places itself as a defender of the interests of the “people”, which would be dominated by the belief in humanist knowledge, that is, in human equality and in their inalienable rights to dignity. In this bias, the main beneficiaries of this model of society would be the political establishment and intellectual elites (PINHEIRO-MACHADO, 2017).

More than a return to the Military Dictatorship established in the 1960s, therefore, the New Right would seek to destroy the conception of humanity forged in the context of the European Enlightenment. To this end, it intends to formulate a new conception of the human and a new direction for global society (PINHEIRO-MACHADO, 2017). As members of these groups usually claim, “Human rights for human rights” must be guaranteed (ESTADÃO, 2018).

RE-HUMANIZE THE HUMAN: PAULO FREIRE’S POLITICAL- PEDAGOGICAL TEACHINGS

Only in the permanent conviction of the unfinished can man and societies find the meaning of hope. Who thinks himself finished is dead.

Paulo Freire

The human is constituted in his process of separation from the natural world, objectifying himself as a being in the world and the world itself as the object of his actions. The biological is the locus of the finished, the repeatable, the instinctive, the inability of individuals to control their own destinies and collectively design the paths to be followed. “[...] For man, the world is an objective reality, independent of him, possible to be known”, summarizes Paulo

Freire (2021 [1967], p. 55). If our species were restricted to the logic of the biological world, similarly to the others, it would continue in a unique, unalterable temporality, without the possibility of becoming. By transforming the world, on the contrary, it transforms itself, moving from the biological condition to the cultural condition (FREIRE, 2021 [1967], p. 55).

Unfinished by essence, humans – always collectively – tend to seek the new, the change, the (re)invention of themselves and the world. By these means the historical overcomes the natural; the intellectual, the mechanical; the rational, the emotional; the contingent, the absolute. Human beings bring with them the ontological capacity to become a subject, allowing them to reflect on their relationships with others and their needs, adapting the world to their desires in society. “The concept of relationships, of the purely human sphere, holds within itself [...] connotations of plurality, transcendence, criticality, consequence and temporality”, asserts Paulo Freire (2021 [1967], p. 55).

If, by whatever means, his ability to reflect and create his own path is taken away from him, to understand his own existence giving it meaning, he will be left with a condition close to that of any animal, reacting by instinctive patterns to the outside world and establishing mere contacts – not relationships – with other individuals.

The naturalization of social inequality and violent relationships – physical, symbolic, structural and ontological, we add² – prevents the development of their power of action and transformation, they reduce it to the condition of being exploited, which, deprived

² Regarding the types of violence, we refer to Drawin (2011, p. 27-8), who, in addition to what he defines as bloody violence (the physical face of violence), proposes “systemic violence, which silently neutralizes political life by subjugating individuals to the logic of work (labor) to the detriment of action (ARENDT, 2010a, 2010b); the socio-symbolic violence that blocks the possibility of self-reflection and the common search for the meaning of life; ontological violence as an unpredictable and uncontrollable result of the self-reproduction of technoscientific and economic systems causing the destruction of nature in its phenomenal richness and in its integrity in itself (physis) and the destruction of culture in its moral expression and in its value for us (ethos), which are the two equioriginal experiences of the human being”.

of the fruits of their own work, is unable to subjectivize themselves. According to Paulo Freire (2021, p. 69-70): “Any relationship of domination, exploitation, oppression is, in itself, violent. It does not matter whether it is done through drastic means or not. It is, at the same time, lack of love and an obstacle to love”. And he adds: “An obstacle to love insofar as dominator and dominated, the first being dehumanized, by excess, and the second, by lack of power, things are done. And things don’t love each other.”

To speak of “humanizing the human”, therefore, goes far from being a pleonasm, since the condition of humanity is not given to us by mere existence, but by the ability to actively integrate ourselves in organic relationships with our peers and, through In addition, we develop conscious relationships with ourselves, with others and with the world. Once again with Paulo Freire (2021 [1967, p. 61): “Therefore, from now on, the need for a permanent critical attitude must be highlighted, the only way in which man will fulfill his natural vocation to integrate himself, overcoming the attitude of simple adjustment or accommodation”. Violence, and its practical consequence: oppression, dehumanizes not only those who receive it, but also those who execute it. We become less human when we practice and collude with any type of violence (FREIRE, 2021 [1967], p. 55).

If we look at Brazilian society in perspective, we can see the structural tendency towards the dehumanization of its members, as it is unable to universalize citizenship and human dignity. To focus on just one aspect, let’s look at the issue of poverty. In 1978, a year before Paulo Freire’s return from exile, the country had

about 22 million people in extreme poverty, approximately 21% of the population. In 1984, twenty years after the Military Coup and one year before the end of that period, Brazil had reached the mark of approximately 27 million in this situation, about 22% of the population (GAZETA DO POVO, 2018). Decades later, in 2020, there were around 24.7% of Brazilians – that is, around a quarter of the population – below the poverty line. This means 51.742 million people with a monthly income of R\$436. Of these, 13.689 million are extremely poor (NEDER, 2020).

The naturalization of poverty, associated with other faces of violence in the country and the denial of other human rights, such as education itself, produces, to use Freire's terms (2021 [1967], p. 65; 68), a society that tends to be anti-dialogue. Unable to guarantee “fundamental democratization” to its citizens, the country expresses the still strong presence of a perspective of submission (or immersion, in the pedagogue's terms) of the people in the eyes of national elites³. Instead of their integration (or emergence), efforts are made to ensure – especially with periodic democratic ruptures – their adaptation to the current model of society, with strong colonial heritages in the social distribution of wealth.

According to the thinker, Education can develop in citizens critical transitivity, that is, the ability to apprehend the causes of their own social situation and the central themes of their time, making it possible, from then on, to produce interpretations that help them to engage actively participate in the movement of history and work to overcome exclusion.

³ The Minister of Finance of the Bolsonaro government, Paulo Guedes, seems to express more clearly the way in which the “people” are seen by the government and by sectors of the national elites. On February 12, 2020, the minister declared: “There is no exchange business at R\$1.80. Let's import less, make import substitution, tourism. (It was) everybody going to Disneyland, maid going to Disneyland, one hell of a party.” On May 20, 2020, he states: “If we say there will be three more months, three more months, three more months, then nobody works. Nobody leaves the house and the isolation will last for eight years because life is good, everything is calm. And then we'll starve to death on the other side. It is my dread, the empty shelf.” More recently, on June 18, 2021, he suggests: “With food that was not used during the day in the restaurant, it is possible to feed fragile people, beggars, helpless people. It's better than letting this food spoil, which spoils daily on the table of the Brazilian upper classes, and also the waste along the entire production chain” (apud NOBLAT, 2021).

“His humanization or dehumanization, his affirmation as a subject or his minimization as an object, largely depend on whether or not he captures these themes” (FREIRE, 2021 [1967], p. 62. Emphasis by the author).

One of the most difficult issues to explain within the framework of a social theory is precisely the relationship of connivance of oppressed groups with their oppressors. Authoritarian societies cannot sustain themselves if they cannot spread their ideas to groups larger than those who benefit from the emergence of authoritarianism. It is necessary to create an identity between the dominant and the dominated so that an excluding country project can exist and reproduce itself.

The failure to develop a critical subjectivity is one of the main reasons for the alliances between oppressors and oppressed in favor of the idea of “order” in a reactionary sense in the country. In this bias, the oppressed themselves turned against attempts to overcome this scenario of inequality, calling their social actors subversive. They believe that subverting a violent order can be against them. Despite this, they forget that, “[from] a purely ethical point of view, for example, there was no order in the ‘closed’ society from which we started, since it was based on the exploitation of the many by the few” (FREIRE, 2021). [1967], p. 76).

The massification of society can be considered one of the main responsible for the accommodation of these individuals, as it deconstructs the bonds between them in favor of their reduction to the mere function of objects. As Freire explains to us (2021 [1967],

p. 86): “In massification there is a distortion of the power to capture that, even in naive transitivity, already sought its authenticity. Hence its mystical aspect”. In addition, “[if] the magical meaning of intransitivity implies a preponderance of alogicity, the mythic in which fanatical consciousness is involved implies a preponderance of irrationality” (FREIRE, 2021 [1967], p. 86).

The social production of a being that tends to be fragmented and finished, without collective life or historical dynamics, divided between the mystical and the irrational, finds its apex in a mass society. Massification encourages the opposite of creativity, ethical responsibility and the understanding of the role that these citizens play in a broader social system, alienating them from their own condition of subject.⁴

The fanatic is essentially a mass man⁵, endowed with a mass-consciousness, as a distortion in the process of transitivity of human consciousness by directing it to the false consciousness of freedom and the mythification of the social world, interpreting it for causes exogenous to historicity. In this process, it loses the ability to logically concatenate arguments and explanations, to creatively elaborate its own ideas, reproducing general formulas and prescriptions received “from above”. He continually talks about freedom, although he contributes to the maintenance of his condition of dominated and excluded (FREIRE, 2021 [1967], p. 86).

Removed from its practical function,

⁴ In this regard, Paulo Freire 2021 [1967], p. 118) points out: “Serial production, as an organization of human work, is possibly one of the most instrumental factors in the massification of man in today’s highly technical world. By demanding a mechanized behavior from him by the repetition of the same act, with which he performs only a part of the totality of the work, from which he detaches himself, he ‘tames’ him. It does not require a total critical attitude towards its production. Dehumanize him. It cuts your horizons with exaggerated specialization. It makes him passive. Fearful. Naive. Hence its great contradiction: the expansion of the spheres of participation and the danger of this expansion being distorted with the limitation of criticality, due to the exaggerated specialization in serial production”.

⁵ Here, it is worth making a parallel with Hannah Arendt’s definition of the masses in her “The origins of totalitarianism”. According to Canovan (2006, p. 31 apud PIREZ, 2020, p. 44): “Arendt maintains that most of the recruits of the totalitarian movements belonged to the ‘masses’: uprooted, disoriented people who no longer had a clear sense of belonging, reality or self-interest because the world they had inhabited had been destroyed by the disturbances of unemployment, inflation, war, and revolution. But his condition was only one facet of a more pervasive experience of ‘superfluity’.

of making oneself free in association with others in the search for a more just society, the category “freedom” loses its substance; it becomes an empty, idealized form, unrelated to the real conditions of those who use it and seek to define themselves through it. It is at this point that the classical liberal perspective seems to restrict freedom to a mere formal condition. Without engaging individuals in the construction of their own condition of liberation, there is no development of their social awareness and understanding of the systemic causes that allow them to live as excluded and adapted to the excluding order of which they are part (FREIRE, 2021 [1967]).

To conclude, in summary, according to Freire (2021[1967]), individuals have an ontological capacity to become subjects, so that only in an unequal, authoritarian and violent social system can this characteristic be minimized in someone. There is no subject or education without critical potential, since subjectivity and learning imply the exercise of interpreting the conditions of existence and action so that they can be collectively transformed.

The mass individual, separated from his peers, tends to lose his space-time roots in relation to the culture from which he arises. He returns to a tendentially organic, biological, vegetative state, so that his actions start to dispense with meaning and, consequently, with social function. It regresses to the level close to mere contact, to the absence of action and reflection on the practice itself. He returns,

finally, from a latent being with meanings to be constructed to a finished being, without movement, adapted to the conditions he inherits from reality, physical, biological or social.

AUTHORITARIANISM AS DESUBJECTIVATION OF THE HUMAN

“Nobody cares about young people with a critical sense”, said President Jair Bolsonaro, on July 31, 2018 (apud REZENDE, 2018). In that short sentence, he seems to condense his idea of country. The Brazilian Chief Executive is interested in what Paulo Freire defines as “adapted” individuals, incapable of producing social transformations for the development of a more just, humane and egalitarian society. A young person without critical sense has his learning process restricted to the mere absorption of technical content, accumulating information without involving himself in this process and without dimension of the whole of social knowledge.⁶

In this case, words do not generate other words, they are not associated with their culture, they are not incorporated as a reading of the world. This type of education prevents the dynamic process of forming a rich chain of understanding of the world in individuals, as well as their cognitive development as an active being, at the moment when they adapt the received models to the lived models. Without the critical relationship of the learner with the word, in a continuous exchange of

knowledge and experiences, it is not possible to generate the world of knowledge, but only to receive it ready (FREIRE, 2021[1967]).

The teacher must try to deconstruct the concept of hierarchy in the production of knowledge in order to put himself together with the students during the construction of learning between the parties. Horizontality is diametrically opposed to rigidity, verticality, submission and de-subjectivation of the other. “And what is dialogue? It is a horizontal relationship between A and B. It is born from a critical matrix and generates criticality (Jaspers). It feeds on love, humility, hope, faith, trust. Therefore, only dialogue communicates”, ponders Freire (2021 [1967], p. 141).

From the perspective of popular education, when the apprentice arrives at school, he brings his words with him, and with them the world of his life. When dialoguing with the other worlds with which he comes into contact in the school space, he must continue to build his universe of meanings. Therefore, it is based on respect for the other, on the diversity of positions and on the shared construction of knowledge. It is never reduced to the position of an object, of acceptance devoid of its own elaboration.

Proposing an education that is not critical is fundamental to an authoritarian, excluding and violent model of society, in which, instead of dialogue, there are orders to be followed. President Bolsonaro continually anchors his perspective of society on the example of military corporations, proposing not only the militarization of public schools⁷, but also

6 We refer here to the following passage in Freire (2021 [1967], p. 128. This stretch was highlighted by the authors): “‘If we agree that the animal is a specialist – Maritain tells us in *La educación en este crucial momento* (Bilbao: Desclée de Brouwer, 1950, p. 39) –, and a perfect specialist, since all his ability to know is limited to performing a very specific function, we must conclude that an education program that aspired only to train specialists every time more perfect in increasingly specialized domains, and incapable of giving a judgment on any subject that was outside the matter of their specialization, would undoubtedly lead to a progressive animalization of the spirit and of human life.

7 In this regard, the Brazilian president stated on December 17, 2018, during the inauguration of a Military Police college in Duque de Caxias: “No one achieves order and progress if there is no hierarchy and discipline”. On the same occasion, Senator Flávio Bolsonaro (PSL) declared: “‘President Jair Bolsonaro has not even taken office yet and he is already inaugurating a military college,’ he commented. According to him, the objective is to offer teaching based on values such as ‘discipline and order within the classroom, with children and adolescents learning what matters’” (apud ANDRADE, 2018).

the thoughtless repetition of the concepts of “order”, “progress”, “discipline” and “hierarchy”. It is about the quest to guarantee the status quo. In an unequal society like the Brazilian, to suggest a model of order in an uncritical way, as a form/formula devoid of ethics and existential bond, is to defend that social positions are already given and that human dignity must not be shared by all its members. Equally emptying the meanings related to military institutions, fundamental to democracy itself, it reduces its logic to the formality that inferiors must obey superiors.

Hierarchy presupposes an idea of order, either because it is anchored in distinct classifications of the topologically distributed groups, from top to bottom, or because it manifests itself as a form of language that requires agility in its execution. In this case, questioning and impediments of any kind must be dispensed with, in order to establish relationships between group members based on the pure acceptance of rules that precede them. In the linguistic sense, it demands an automatic, thoughtless compliance in order to supposedly guarantee the greater good for the group, without this good being debated. With it, individual positioning is taken to minimum power. The We must subsume the I. As a rule, it must cause a reaction without intending to change itself, as the first cause of this chain of executions.

At the time when Paulo Freire wrote his essay, the neoliberal political and economic model still did not present itself as socially institutionalized knowledge in contemporary molds, anchored in the values of unrestricted

competition between all individuals and in the perspective of destroying the idea of common.⁸ in societies.

In the case of competition, the aim is to destroy the bonds of solidarity in favor of the complete commodification of relations and the privatization of public services.

Individuals come to see themselves as potential adversaries or enemies in the struggle for survival in capitalist society. They break, then, with the understanding of reciprocal dependence, fundamental to the social integration of all.

In the case of the common, the neoliberal model of society seeks to derail any construction of an imaginary space that proposes the overcoming of market relations between groups, self-government as a practice of collective decision and the distribution of wealth as a form of social justice. In the Brazil of the Bolsonaro government, the ideal of freedom works as an attempt to affirm the ontological differences between individuals, as if they were naturally unequal. To legitimize such a world perspective, the metaphysical bias of religion has helped to spread this ideology among the impoverished classes.

If, for this ultraliberal perspective, the inequalities between social groups are anchored in the natural differences between humans, referring to an order of the biological, the finished, the fixed and the immutable by the laws of nature; for the ultra-reactionary religious perspectives, these differences refer to the metaphysical world, to the magical and mythical. Only the chosen and the faithful would possess the right to humanity and

8 For the definition of the neoliberal economic model, we base ourselves on Dardot & Laval (2016, p. 9): .] We must not ignore the subjective mutations caused by neoliberalism that operate in the sense of social selfishness, the denial of solidarity and redistribution and that can lead to reactionary or even neo-fascist movements”. We also consider the authors’ definition of the principle of the common, which is: “The principle of the common that emanates today from movements, struggles and experiences refers to a system of practices directly contrary to neoliberal rationality and capable of revolutionizing the set of social relationships. This new reason that emerges from practices makes common use prevail over exclusive private property, democratic self-government over hierarchical command and, above all, makes co-activity inseparable from codecision – there is no political obligation without participation in the same activity. (DARDOT; & LAVAL, 2016, p. 9. This stretch was highlighted by the authors).

dignity. The others would represent evil. The Christian ideal, in this case, migrates from the perspective of “humility”, “peace”, “solidarity” and “reception” to “arrogance”, “war”, “violence” and “exclusion”. This way, there is an authoritarian reorientation of Christian assumptions in contemporary Brazil (MORAIS, 2019).

The submission of politics to the field of particular morality of these groups, which submit their own constitutional precepts to a revealed truth found in the Bible, produces a growing process of sacralization of the public sphere, anchored in a supposed immutable order in the political world (the voice of the extreme right as the voice of the people), economic (wealth as an inalienable right and arising from the exclusive merits of individuals), military (social hierarchies as analogous to military hierarchies) and religious (the blessed are the chosen of God) (MORAIS, 2019).

In this context, Freire’s pedagogical philosophy remains current and urgent. More than ever, dialogue is necessary to face intolerance and hatred, which seem to have spread in a similar way to the context of the 1960s. Resuming dialogue means resuming the belief in the construction of a collective project, encouraging the tendency towards subjectivity, activity and reflexivity on the part of those involved. Joint action allows for greater integration between the points of view and the demands of different groups, which, in this process, will be able to develop critical – transitivity – capacity, giving meaning to the lived and shared world.

There is, however, the challenge of deconstructing the walls of fanatical positions. The Brazilian social fabric is frayed and it seems utopian to imagine that such emotionally inhuman positions can yield to rationality and solidarity (SAFATLE, 2017). Dialogue sometimes seems impossible.

Fear and frustrations, constant. But, as the Pernambuco educator warns us, as human beings, we are constitutively oriented towards openness to the other and towards the continuous, never linear, search to humanize the human.

These are the challenges of our times, to foster humanity in individuals who seem to have found in hatred and alienation the very meanings of existence. This certainly goes through the strengthening of institutions and a certain air of normality in relation to common life, in which the paradigm of war gives way to political rhetoric, turning enemies back into adversaries and the desire for the death of the other in respect for the life. In the case of a country with centuries of authoritarian and slave-holding tradition, the challenge seems unattainable in the short term. But as, once again, Paulo Freire teaches us: a retreat does not mean a transit backwards, it is a deviation, without a doubt, in relation to the movements of history – via organized social groups – towards the emergence of the new; if we think we are finished, we will be dead, incapable of hope and of transforming concrete reality.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

In times of authoritarianism, such as those we currently live in in Brazil, it is interesting to note how some aspects of society evaluated by Freire (2021 [1967]) in his essay remain present. According to the thinker, understanding the historical limits of each situation allows us to overcome hopelessness, typical of what he calls naive transitivity, restricted to dreams and idealizations. Therefore, incapable of building consistent and persistent paths towards more complex and more human relationships.

In this essay, we aimed to resume some theoretical contributions of the thinker to interpret the current Brazilian moment, strongly marked by democratic setbacks and the country’s fragmentation into right-wing

groups that tend to be sectarian. Therefore, at first, we seek to define what we mean by bolsonarismo. In a second, we evaluate the contributions of Paulo Freire, in his work *Education as a practice of freedom*, to the analysis of the relationship between education, subjectivity and criticism. Finally, in a third and final one, we evaluate a statement by the Brazilian President from the Freirean theoretical scope.

REFERENCES

- AVRITZER, Leonardo. *Política e antipolítica: a crise do governo Bolsonaro*. São Paulo: Todavia, 2020.
- DARDOT, Pierre; & LAVAL, Christian. *A nova razão do mundo: ensaio sobre a sociedade neoliberal*. São Paulo: Editora Boitempo, 2016.
- DRAWIN, Carlos Roberto. O paradoxo antropológico da violência. In: NETO, Fuad Kyrillos; ROSÁRIO, Ângela Buciano do (Orgs.). *Faces da violência na contemporaneidade: sociedade e clínica*. Barbacena, MG: EdUEMG, 2011.
- FREIRE, Paulo. *Educação como Prática de Liberdade*. 50ªed. São Paulo: Paz e Terra, 2021 [1967].
- GALLEGO, Ester Solano. (2019) “Eu voto no Bolsonaro porque ele vai mudar o Brasil”: escutando os eleitores de Bolsonaro. In: AVRITZER, L. [et al.] *Pensando a democracia, a república e o estado de direito no Brasil*. Belo Horizonte: Projeto República.
- PIRES, Felipe Augusto Mariano. Hannah Arendt e o totalitarismo como forma de governo apoiada na ralé e nas massas. *Investigação filosófica*, Macapá, v. 11, n. 1, p. 39-56, 2020. Disponível em: <https://periodicos.unifap.br/index.php/investigacaofilosofica/article/download/5547/pdf>. Acesso em: 17/10/2021.
- NOBRE, Marcos. *Ponto-Final: a guerra de Bolsonaro contra a democracia*. São Paulo: Todavia, 2020.
- MIGUEL, Luis Felipe. (2018) A reemergência da direita brasileira. In: GALLEGO, E. S. (Org). *O ódio como política: a reinvenção da direita no Brasil*. São Paulo: Boitempo.
- MORAIS, Argus. (2019) O discurso político da extrema-direita brasileira na atualidade. *Cadernos de Sociedade e Linguagem* (L&S Cadernos), Brasília-DF, Volume 20, número 1, 2019. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.26512/es.v20i1.12129>.
- PENNA, Fernando. “Educação Democrática: a luta constante pela democratização da escola” [Palestra]. Seminário Pensar a Educação, Pensar o Brasil, 28 de novembro de 2019. Disponível em: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ed9RjNSiBp8&t=2950s>. Acesso em: 27/10/2021.
- PINHEIRO-MACHADO, Rosana. Nova direita conservadora não é burra: ela ataca o legado iluminista e o cerne da modernidade: depoimento. Carta Campinas, 11 de outubro de 2017. Disponível em: <http://cartacampinas.com.br/2017/10/nova-direita-conservadora-nao-e-burra-ela-ataca-o-legado-iluminista-e-o-cerne-da-modernidade/>. Acesso em: 17 de outubro de 2021.
- WEFFORT, Francisco C. Educação e política: reflexões sociológicas sobre uma pedagogia da liberdade. In: FREIRE, Paulo. *Educação como Prática de Liberdade*. 50ªed. São Paulo: Paz e Terra, 2021 [1967].
- SAFATLE, Vladimir. É racional parar de argumentar. In: DUNKER, Christian et al. (Orgs). *Ética e pós-verdade*. Rio Grande do Sul: Porto Alegre, 2017.

Textos retirados de sítios da internet

ANDRADE, Hanrrikson. RJ: Bolsonaro defende disciplina e hierarquia ao inaugurar colégio militar. *Uol Política*. Rio de Janeiro: Duque de Caxias, 17 de dez. 2018. Disponível em: <https://noticias.uol.com.br/politica/ultimas-noticias/2018/12/17/rj-bolsonaro-defende-disciplina-e-hierarquia-ao-inaugurar-colegio-militar.html>. Acesso em: 17/10/2021.

BETTO, Frei. Por que fizemos opção pelos pobres (e eles pelo neopentecostalismo...)? *Le Monde Diplomatique*. Edição 113: 6 dezembro de 2016. Disponível em: <http://diplomatique.org.br/por-que-fizemos-opcao-pelos-pobres-e-eles-pelo-neopentecostalismo/>. Acesso em: 27/10/2021.

ESTADÃO. General Heleno defende direitos humanos para “humanos direitos”. *Estadão Conteúdo*. São Paulo, 11 de nov. 2018. Disponível em: <https://exame.com/brasil/general-heleno-defende-direitos-humanos-para-humanos-direitos/>. Acesso em: 17/10/2021.

GAZETA DO POVO. Como era o Brasil durante a Ditadura Militar. *Infográficos*. Paraná: Curitiba, 18 de jun. 2018. Disponível em: <https://infograficos.gazetadopovo.com.br/politica/numeros-do-brasil-na-ditadura-militar/>. Acesso em: 17/10/2021.

NEDER, Vinicius. Antes da pandemia, Brasil tinha 51,7 milhões abaixo da linha da pobreza, diz IBGE. *Estadão conteúdo*. Rio de Janeiro: Rio de Janeiro, 12 de nov. 2020. Disponível em: <https://economia.uol.com.br/noticias/estadao-conteudo/2020/11/12/antes-da-pandemia-brasil-tinha-517-milhoes-abaixo-da-linha-da-pobreza-diz-ibge.html>. Acesso em: 17/10/2021.

NOBLAT, Ricardo. Ministro Paulo Guedes sugere dar sobras de comida aos mais pobres. *Metrópoles*. Brasília, 18 de jun. 2021. Disponível em: <https://www.metropoles.com/blog-do-noblat/ricardo-noblat/ministro-paulo-guedes-sugere-dar-sobras-de-comida-aos-mais-pobres>. Acesso em: 17/10/2021.

YAHOO. Bolsonaro fala em “contragolpe” e chama apoiadores para manifestação em 7 de setembro. *Yahoo!Notícias*, 16 de ago. 2021. Disponível em: <https://br.noticias.yahoo.com/bolsonaro-fala-em-contragolpe-e-chama-apoiadores-para-manifestacao-em-7-de-setembro-113320520.html>. Acesso em: 17/10/2021.