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Sustainability: The Utopia of Utopias

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Sustainability: The Utopia of Utopias

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I. INTRODUCTORY NOTES

This communication is based on the text I presented in VIIe Congress of Association Francophone Internationale de Recherche Scientifique en Education (AFIRSE), held at the University of Salento, Lecce, Italy, in May 21, 2015. This Colloquium had as central theme “Cultures et Education - Recherches, Utopies et Projets” and proposed to discuss major current issues that move the education in a complex context.

Utopia is an universal category. In certain cultural contexts, it can be a reactionary counterpoint to the historical praxis which proposes to change the “world”, in a critical way and in the perspective to liberty the man from alienation and capitalist exploitation. It, too, can be considered as a reference for the solution of problems of universal nature, or as a virtual structure that moves idealistic intellectual abstractions.

In this communication, utopia is used as a methodological strategy for the construction of a consistent analytical text. In this context, several utopias associated with relevant issues of modernity are analyzed (Freitas & Freitas, 2014).

II. POLITICAL UTOPIA; A NEW WORLDWIDE POLITICAL CONTRACT

The conceptions and the current political regimes are diverse and complex, in quantity and quality. At this conjuncture, the West-East political confrontation has been emphasized. Pragmatism, rationalism, technical and exacerbated western privatization, as well as religious and political fundamentalism from the Eastern countries deny the materialization of a Republican State committed to an integrated and multicultural humanity. These issues conspire against the construction of peace and world solidarity.

The political utopia that moves a new world political contract proposes to decentralize the economic

and political powers of the developed countries. This will generate waves of instabilities in the national and international economic processes. These issues presuppose to construct a new political centrality and a new time metric for the economic and social processes. A political centrality to be radiated from the “regions” and a temporal metric seated, both, in the brief time of human needs, and in the long time of the preservation of planet. This conjuncture requires the reinterpretation of the concepts of citizenship and economic development (Freitas & Freitas, 2013a). The structural conditions to a new framework that incorporates the sustainability to foundation of the Western civilizing processes are being constructs.

The asymmetric insertion of China, United States, North Korea, Iran and Israel in a world political dialogue contributes to the formulation of a political utopia in the 21st century (Delpech, 2002). This utopia proposes to establish the democracy as an universal political system, with the economic processes and the legal framework being permeated by the news juridical regulations and political determinations of the capitalist system. It also proposes the construction of a new world economic and political order focused on elimination of the cult of racism and the anthropocentrism. In this new conjuncture is put the possibility of each culture to have values and plural perspectives: love, religious belief, art, oral communication, technical knowledge, and social, economic and political organization, in different intensities and gradations.

III. THE ENVIRONMENTAL UTOPIA; A NEW WORLDWIDE NATURAL CONTRACT

The environmental issue is an unfolding of ecology's emblem while production process, development and reproduction of life. At this conjuncture, the environmental utopia is based principally in the “nature × culture” confrontation. This utopia presupposes the conception focused on enlightenment thought from the 18th century that virtually takes care to become eternal and invincible “man-nature-culture” in a world marked by great social inequality and an exacerbated consumer market.

The rupture of the climate, chemistry and thermodynamics stabilities of planet puts at risk the future of the mankind constitutes a real possibility. The mitigating of the greenhouse effect and of climatic changes is the main ecological challenge this century (Freitas & Freitas, 2013b).

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The incompatibility of environmental utopia with the capitalist system constitutes a structural contradiction of modernity. The capitalist process of accumulation, reproduction and circulation of capital has no theoretical and empirical reach to safeguard the environmental preservation of the planet, present and future. The possibility of the total loss of the control of mankind destiny because of the environmental degradation has potentially the implantation of the worldwide programs for the preservation and conservation of natural resources, including soils, waters and the terrestrial atmosphere (IPCC, 2013). This requires to construct a new symbolic and material base to move this utopia; a base seated on the principles of responsibility and precaution, interlaced in network of global integration through mobile structures.

A new worldwide natural contract will result in new forms of organization of cities, industrial matrices, professions and societies. It has been evidenced the need of the sustainable development.

IV. THE SOCIAL UTOPIA: A NEW WORLDWIDE SOCIAL CONTRACT

The implantation of the multicultural programs, and the urgency in to combat the growing social inequality are the main assumptions of social utopia. The disintegration of the world social base reaffirms the need to construct the operational mechanisms of this "redemptive utopia" that intends to value the social processes.

The tendency of the market and the nation state create new instruments to the increasing of the social inequality, incorporating it to the public policies have to be reversed. This enterprise requires the synchronization of the marches of state, market and the society in the perspective from the society (Vivien, 2001).

This worldwide contract should to prioritize the fight against the eight "pests" of postmodernity: the racism, poverty, war, structural unemployment, ecological destruction, child labor, endemic and epidemic diseases especially AIDS, and the moral crisis. The global integration of the basic public policies - health, education, culture -, and the mobilization of world public opinion constitute the main challenge of the operational mechanisms of this utopia.

The increase of the migratory movements; the resurgence of violence and the world economic asymmetry reaffirm the importance of this utopia. Also reaffirm the need to change the fundamentals of education as agent of the production and reproduction processes of capitalist society. The intertwining of social and natural contracts will mitigate the world social tensions aggravated in the 21st century.

V. THE ETHICAL UTOPIA; A PLURICULTURAL ETHICAL CONTRACT

Self-determination of peoples, political and religious tolerance and respect toward differences and to human dignity are the foundations of ethics utopia. Its operational mechanisms are settled in the collective responsibility to construct a generous, fraternal, solidary and perennial world, of multiple features and multicultural coexistences.

Its material base has as assumptions a new market regulation and restructuring of the State's role in the implementation and management of public policies. Its symbolic representation has the arts and the education as its main references.

It can be stated that the sustainability principle has as presupposition the central idea of building an "ethical modernity" that will stop the destruction of the self-affirmation and mankind perpetuity process on Earth. In a perspective in which has an ethical modernity and not just a technical modernity. This ethics can be constructed as a radical critical to the notion of destiny, intertwining intelligence and freedom in a virtuous link with the good. However, such universal ethics is articulated to the globalization of the technical and the scientific culture. The modern science methodologically supposes the distinction between fact and value, physical reality and value, remaining in a strictly extrinsic relationship with the sphere of the good (Ospina, 2000).

A new society more intertwined with each other and to the destiny of mankind, constitutes an immediate deployment of this utopia. This will mean to rupture with the moral foundations and the capitalist tradition of Western culture.

VI. THE FUTURE; THE SUSTAINABILITY OF UTOPIAS

Thus, the consolidation of the sustainability of a worldwide political contract, the crystallization of the sustainability of participative democracy in a universal political system, the implementation of the sustainability of a new natural contract, the emergence of the sustainability for an adequate social contract, and the affirmation of the sustainability for an ethical contract between the diverse peoples, constitute paradigmatic references for the twenty-first century. These contracts will move the redefinition of the concepts of citizenship and economic development in this century (Freitas et al., 2015).

The sustainability of utopias requires to construct an ecumenical consensus that welds in the hearts and minds of all peoples, the institutional agendas, the national projects, the international forums, the multilateral institutions, the transnational agreements, and in the sects and religions, the need to institute a philosophical and social conception centered

in the multicultural and solidarity coexistence between all peoples. A completing principle includes all exclusions, mutual or not, and reformulates the disjunctive and restrictive processes having the dialectic character of human nature and the complexity of the social and historical processes as references. From these references, the sustainability of the people, at physical, psychic and spiritual levels, as well as the sustainability of the places, cities, regions, nations, continents, planets and cosmos (Schellnhuber et al., 2011), and, also, the sustainability of utopias would leave to be a utopia; and why not say, it would leave to be an illusion.

The science and humanistic education have a key role in the reinvention of these utopias. This is our understanding.

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