

O PAPEL DO PROFESSOR COMO INTELECTUAL ORGÂNICO À LUZ DE GRAMSCI

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THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER AS AN ORGANIC INTELLECTUAL IN THE LIGHT OF GRAMSCI

Rogério de MORAIS¹
Arlindo Lins de MELO JÚNIOR²
Tiago Cesar DOMINGUES³

RESUMO: o papel do professor como intelectual orgânico se dá num campo de batalha, que é a própria escola. Essa disputa refere-se à produção de uma concepção de mundo que seja coerente, articulado e orgânico de acordo com a vontade popular, a partir das relações pedagógicas entre todos os indivíduos que constituem o trabalho educativo vivo. Objetivamos compreender o papel do professor enquanto intelectual orgânico vinculado à escola envolvida no contexto de questões sociais, políticas e econômicas. Desenvolve-se o conceito de intelectual orgânico para a filosofia de Antônio Gramsci relacionando com a função do professor na sociedade capitalista. Neste texto, utiliza-se o ensaio científico como estratégia metodológica. Ademais, entende-se que quando houver a unidade entre teoria e prática no trabalho do professor, a práxis, o mesmo exercerá a função de intelectual orgânico vinculado às necessidades materiais e imateriais do grupo social na qual se faz parte, desta forma, o professor poderá ter sucesso no seu engajamento científico-filosófico, educativo-cultural e ético-político.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Professor. Intelectual orgânico. Antônio Gramsci.

RESUMEN: *el papel del profesor como intelectual orgánico se da en un campo de batalla, que es la propia escuela. Esta disputa se refiere a la producción de una concepción de mundo que sea coherente, articulada y orgánica de acuerdo con la voluntad popular, a partir de las relaciones pedagógicas entre todos los individuos que constituyen el trabajo educativo vivo. Objetivamos comprender el papel del profesor como intelectual orgánico vinculado a la escuela involucrada en el contexto de cuestiones sociales, políticas y económicas. Se desarrolla el concepto de intelectual orgánico para la filosofía de Antônio Gramsci relacionando con la función del profesor en la sociedad capitalista. En este texto, se utiliza el*

¹Universidade Federal de São Carlos (UFSC), Sorocaba - SP - Brasil. Mestrando em Educação. ORCID: <<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2068-7677>>. E-mail: rogeriomorais98@gmail.com.br

²Universidade Federal de São Carlos (UFSC), Sorocaba - SP - Brasil. Mestrando em Educação. Bolsista financiado pela Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior (CAPES) - Código de Financiamento: 001. ORCID: <<http://orcid.org/0000-0003-2391-4772>>. E-mail: arlindolins@yahoo.com.br.

³Universidade Federal de São Carlos (UFSC), Sorocaba - SP - Brasil. Mestre em Educação. ORCID: <<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1373-5343>>. E-mail: tiagocesar4000@yahoo.com.br

ensayo científico como estrategia metodológica. Además, se entiende que cuando haya la unidad entre teoría y práctica en el trabajo del profesor, la praxis, el mismo ejercerá la función de intelectual orgánico vinculado a las necesidades materiales e inmateriales del grupo social en que se forma parte, de esta forma, el profesor puede tener éxito en su compromiso científico-filosófico, educativo-cultural y ético-político.

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Maestro. Intelectual orgánico. Antônio Gramsci.*

ABSTRACT: *the teacher's role as an organic intellectual takes place on a battlefield, which is the school itself. This dispute refers to the production of a conception of the world that is coherent, articulated and organic according to the popular will, starting from the pedagogical relations between all the individuals that constitute the living educational work. We aim to understand the role of the teacher as an organic intellectual linked to the school involved in the context of social, political and economic issues. The concept of organic intellectual for the philosophy of Antônio Gramsci is developed, relating to the role of the teacher in capitalist society. In this text, the scientific essay is used as a methodological strategy. In addition, it is understood that when there is a unity between theory and practice in the teacher's work, praxis, the same will exercise the function of organic intellectual linked to the material and immaterial needs of the social group in which the teacher can succeed in its scientific-philosophical, educational-cultural and ethical-political engagement.*

KEYWORDS: *Teacher. Organic Intellectual. Antônio Gramsci.*

Introduction

To think of the role of the teacher as an organic intellectual is to conceive of the school built up in pedagogical relationships among all the individuals that constitute the living educational work. Thus, the role of the teacher should refer to an awareness of the contrasts between the type of society and culture that he/she represents for him/herself and his/her students, this is to accelerate, direct and discipline a humanizing formation (GRAMSCI, 2004). Therefore,

Gramsci's pedagogical proposals ... began to take on more concrete forms as he [Gramsci] organized his cultural political practice in the light of the political-economic events of northern Italy, along with the struggles unfolding in impoverished southern Italy and also of the news about the events that took place in Russia (Bolshevik Revolution) and which came to him censored⁴. (MIGUEL, 2002, p. 03-04)

⁴ Original text: as propostas pedagógicas gramscianas [...] começam a tomar formas mais concretas enquanto ele [Gramsci] organizava a sua prática política cultural sob a luz dos acontecimentos político-econômicos da Itália setentrional, em conjunto com as lutas que se desenvolviam na empobrecida Itália meridional e, ainda, das notícias sobre os fatos que ocorriam na Rússia (Revolução bolchevista) e que lhe chegavam censuradas.

Gramsci's pedagogical proposal was concretely linked to a politics socialist proposal, that is, a project to improve society in its totality by increasing the quality of social life of the subaltern class, especially in the face of the "accusations that the bourgeois school privileged children of this class that were already present, especially in Marx" (MIGUEL, 2002, p. 4).

Miguel (2002) emphasizes that the influence of the historical context that the Sardinian author lived implied directly in the elaboration of a concrete proposal of organization of the proletarian culture. Their living conditions and political practices stimulated by the workers' struggles, inspired by the Soviet experiences, contributed to elaborate a theoretical construct that intended to be the bases of a new socialist society.

Education is a social phenomenon that presents itself in the form of interaction between people in different degrees of human maturation, in a determined historical situation, being the men themselves the meaning of this interaction with regard to human elevation. Thus, men are able to educate in a systematized way when they become aware of the structural concreteness that involves social and political issues (SAVIANI, 2012). That is, the teacher as an organic intellectual should capture the social problems reflecting on them in order to formulate and achieve concrete objectives, and later, to establish from this reflection, a practice that changes their context of life. For this, the dialectical action-reflection-action movement or the philosophy of praxis should be constant (SAVIANI, 2012).

Miranda (2007) points out that class interests predominate in the scenario of Brazilian education, determined by the State, will be defined based on the interaction of political forces at stake in society. In this context, the role of the teacher in the counter-hegemonic struggle is placed. The current hegemony involves the different social interests of a capitalist minority that imposes the accomplishment of several projects unfamiliar to the popular interests. If the popular strata get social consensus around their project, the configuration of the State will result from this particular situation, that is, from the capacity of civil society to establish itself as part of the State, guiding public policies. There lies the genesis of Gramsci's expanded state theory, in which power is characterized by two elements: strength and consensus (MIRANDA, 2007, p. 04).

Martins (2008) explains that the organic intellectual can be "at the service" of political, social and economic hegemony or against it. Thus, references are made to conceptualize the function of the school in maintaining the dominant, generally oppressive structure and, at the same time, to point out germs of revolutionary possibilities through

historical-dialectical materialism, that is, of knowledge of reality through concrete analysis of concrete situations (MARTINS, 2008).

To consider the teacher as an organic intellectual is to think of the backbone of school pedagogical relationships. According to Gramsci, it refers to the living labor “[...] because the teacher is aware of the contrasts between the type of society and culture he represents and the type of society represented by the students” (GRAMSCI, 2001, p. 1544). The educational work carried out by the teacher possesses the potential, if exercised as an organic intellectual to the subaltern class, to connect school education with social totality, to lead the student through pedagogical processes that make them realize their fundamental bond with the historically produced human race, and to emancipate them from the logic of the current mode of production.

Nosella and Azevedo (2012) highlight concerns regarding compliance with legal security arising from public policies related to education and school. From a Gramscian perspective on education: “The world can be transformed and education, culture can be causes of this transformation, as spaces of formation, information, reflection and consensus building in society” (NOSELLA, AZEVEDO, 2012, p. 2). Thus, in designing educational processes (for teachers and students) one should consider a type of human formation referenced in the concept of organic intellectual in Gramsci so that conscious individuals are formed of the path traveled by “... humanity produced historically and collectively by the ensembles of men” (SAVIANI, 2013, p.427), which will enable them to conceive new forms of sociability, that is, new relations of production and reproduction of social life.

Regarding the methodological aspects, in this text, we will use the scientific essay as a methodological strategy. Severino (2011) points out that the scientific essay is a well-developed, formal, discursive and conclusive study that consists of a logical and reflexive exposition and rigorous argumentation with a high level of interpretation and judgment of the author; in the essay, the author holds greater freedom to defend a certain position, it is used a problematization and an objective for a better textual delimitation, in addition it uses empirical and bibliographic documentation, aspects used in other types of scientific work of the human sciences and consequently education.

In the investigative process for the production of this essay, the following question emerged as the central: do teachers play or do not play the role of intellectuals from Gramsci’s conception? From this, we aim to understand the role of the teacher as an organic intellectual linked to the school involved in the social, political and economic issues of hir/her

context. It is hoped to understand, in the first moment, the meaning of the concept of organic intellectual for the philosophy of Antônio Gramsci. From this discussion, we will reflect on the condition of the teacher, verifying if he/she can be considered an organic intellectual in the Gramscian conception in his/her professional performance.

The teacher as an organic intellectual

The role of the teacher as an organic intellectual can be understood sensitively if we consider the processes of the individual identity formation according Gramscian. The processes initiated at the moment of the individual's entry into the world are influenced by the active human relationships and the cultural elements shared by the groups in which one takes part. According to Gramsci (2005), cultural elements are infused mechanically, from the outside to the interior of the individual, forming a composite unit. It is the formation of a conception of the World inherited in the context of cultural traditions. Humanity is reflected in individuality. Relationships occur dialectically between a) individuality, b) other men and c) nature (GRAMSCI, 2001).

Individuality is constituted within the social organism in which one is allocated and is the product of historical processes. By conscious rationality one can carry out the analysis of these elements and the historical process, that is, an act of freedom itself. It is the possibility of forging a new conception of the World from the one that already exists, and this can be according to the actual existential collective needs, that is, the production of a conception of the World that is realized in a concrete reality in the form of political, cultural and economic systems that are in accordance with the popular will. Here the role of the organic intellectual, especially that of the teacher, comes in such a way that pedagogical processes are directed towards the formation of a critical awareness of what we have received as a social heritage from all historical periods (GRAMSCI, 2005, p.1).

The teacher as an organic intellectual, in the Gramscian conception, has the function of homogenizing the conception of the World characterized by common sense. This means that the cultural elements present in the individual's worldview are disaggregated, fragmented and largely incoherent, that is, a conflicting whole (dialogic) (GRAMSCI, 2004). The traditional intellectual was a fundamental element in the organization of the predominantly peasant and artisan society, as well as the clerics. In the Modern State, the dominant class trains a specific type of intellectual to maintain homogeneity, which is the "industry

introduced a new type of intellectual: the technical organizer, the specialist of applied science” (GRAMSCI, 2004, p. 424).

In a Gramscian perspective there are two categories of intellectuals, the traditional intellectuals and the organic ones. The first category represents a historical continuity in the midst of social and political changes, just as ecclesiastics seek to preserve the characteristics of their tradition. The second category is that of the organic intellectuals, which refers to:

[...] every social group, born on the grounds of an essential function in the world of economic production, creates organically one or more layers of intellectuals that give it homogeneity and an awareness of its own function, not only in the field economic, but also in the social and political field⁵. (GRAMSCI, 2001, p. 15)

The function of the teacher as an organic intellectual is intrinsic to Gramscian philosophy which presents itself in a unitary way. The different concepts are articulated in a theoretical organicity that reveal society and school education as fields for social integration. The teacher in the school must exercise the function of the organic intellectual, that is, of raising the intellectual level of the masses, developing a conception of the World that is coherent, articulate and organic so that it becomes hegemonic.

The whole process of raising mass culture takes place in a pedagogical relationship. This process, in detail, can “pass through the family and the school and in the latter it happens in the teacher-student pedagogical relation, when concretely the educational principle of work is realized” (MIGUEL, 2002, p. 09).

With the advent of capitalism, according to Gramsci (2005), the stratum of the intellectuals was radically changed in all countries. The commodification of culture has brought strong structural resonances to cultural identity, since a tax process of one culture, which is totally foreign to the other, is strengthened by the great navigations. Since the medieval period, traditional intellectuals, such as clergymen, promoted evangelization by linking up with the monarchical social organism, later in the twentieth century; mass media stand out as occupying this function, and in the twenty-first century social networks through channels of world-view dissemination, through videos, etc. The function exercised by these traditional intellectual and organic intellectuals through the media, without dwelling within

⁵ Original text: todo grupo social, nascendo sobre o terreno originário de uma função essencial no mundo da produção econômica, cria junto a si, organicamente, uma ou mais camadas de intelectuais que lhe dão homogeneidade e consciência da própria função não apenas no campo econômico, mas também no campo social e político.

the limits of territorial boundaries, strengthen the formation of social groups from the dissemination of worldviews. Thus, in the processes of globalization, capitalist hegemony has advanced to all the recesses of the planet, serving, above all, to legitimize domination (MARTINS, 2013).

In this sense, the revolution dreamed of by Gramsci must be carried out procedurally “in the minds and hearts of men and women, in the family, in the public square, in the fields, in the media and, obviously, in the schools” (AZEVEDO; NOSELLA, 2012, p. 27). Semeraro (2000) emphasizes that modernity is surrounded by organic intellectuals linked to the dominant class, in a strictly technological-utilitarian and non-ethical-political sense, indulging in the flow of words and novels. They are watchdogs of the bosses, incapable of creating a self-criticism of the group they represent, moving away diametrically from a striking feature of Gramscian thought: popular knowledge, collective and democratic construction of a new social project (SEMERARO, 2000).

The organic intellectual teacher involved in a dialogical education is one that teaches using the curricular contents beyond the traditional sayings, but uses the knowledge historically inherited by humanity referring to the production of a critical reflection on such contents. Thus, this teacher is linked to the vicissitudes of a given society, in a concrete historical period, connected to the world of work, politics and culture, can also be classified as organic, since education mediates between material and cultural reality (MARTINS, p. 138, 2011).

Also, the teacher as an organic intellectual educating the working class must critically recognize the ideologies present in the cultural elements contained in his/her conception of the World. Whether explicitly or implicitly, his/hers wishes, idiosyncrasies, values and ideas end up being taught concomitantly with the syllabus of the various disciplines throughout the school year. This is because the teacher's work as an organic intellectual cannot distinguish between the conception of the hegemonic and counter-hegemonic world without having a critical conscience (MARTINS, 2013).

The dominant class finds in school and in teachers, whether in the process of formal curricular creation, a profitable field to disseminate their worldview and annihilate any other view that effectively threatens their political project. Considering the school as one of these private apparatuses of hegemony and space necessary for the formation of the new intellectual and moral order, on a Gramscian look “opens the way for the reflection of the school's role

today in the construction of a transforming and liberating praxis” (MIRANDA, 2007, p. 4).
This because,

In a dialectical relationship between determined and determinant, the school is able to elaborate, together with the less favored elements of society, the necessary instruments for the conquest of citizenship. Thus, the transformation of the present support structures finds in school, in access to scientific knowledge and in the critical reading of reality, important aspects of the organization of social practice⁶. (MIRANDA, 2017, p. 4)

Thus, one should be aware of how the formal curriculum is organized in time and space, because instead of promoting social equity, they often contribute to excluding, separating, segregating the working class through mechanisms such as: non-learning, because it is not significant, due to the separation of theory and practice, causing an immeasurable gap between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie (MARTINS, 2013).

It is understood that the teacher in the function of organic intellectual belonging to the subaltern class, will be able to carry out revolutionary struggles from the interweaving between scientific and popular knowledge, in a cultural elevation, from common sense to common sense. In this sense,

Organic intellectuals, [...] are the intellectuals who are part of a living and expanding organism. Therefore, they are at the same time connected to the world of work, to the most advanced political and cultural organizations that their social group develops to direct society. By being an active part of this plot, "organic" intellectuals intertwine with a global project of society and with a type of state able to operate the "conformation of the masses in the material and cultural level of production" demanded by the class in power⁷. (SEMERARO, 2006. p. 185)

A teacher's work as an organic intellectual should be revolutionary, not neutral, because a neutrality would indirectly benefit only the dominant class because there is no coherent, articulate and organic counter-hegemonic project. For the revolutionary process to take place in and out of schools, it is fundamental that there be many transgressions in the form of the teacher educating his students, because, although limited, there is power in his

⁶ Original text: Em uma relação dialética entre determinada e determinante, a escola tem condições de elaborar, junto aos elementos menos favorecidos da sociedade, instrumentos necessários à conquista da cidadania. Logo, a transformação das estruturas sustentadoras atuais encontra na escola, no acesso ao saber científico e na leitura crítica da realidade, aspectos importantes da organização da prática social.

⁷ Original text: Os intelectuais orgânicos, [...] são os intelectuais que fazem parte de um organismo vivo e em expansão. Por isso, estão ao mesmo tempo conectados ao mundo do trabalho, às organizações políticas e culturais mais avançadas que o seu grupo social desenvolve para dirigir a sociedade. Ao fazer parte ativa dessa trama, os intelectuais “orgânicos” se interligam a um projeto global de sociedade e a um tipo de Estado capaz de operar a “conformação das massas no nível de produção” material e cultural exigido pela classe no poder.

hands. Power to engender pedagogical processes that produce critical consciousness resistant to the hegemonic culture of the bourgeois class. It is about the possibility of a revolutionary education, even in a social context fascist or reactionary (NOSELLA; AZEVEDO, 2012).

The main transgression occurs in the production of a new curricular conception, accompanied by the democratization of the relations between the members of the school community, rising against the prescriptive educational models that benefit specific groups, that is, the curriculum being determined by higher instances that transforms the subjects of education in peaceful objects. On the contrary, a revolutionary curriculum must emerge in a personalized way, referenced in historically accumulated knowledge, dialoguing with the cultural context, starting from the common sense, from the social contradictions that, every day, at all times are exposed, aiming to overcome the sense fragmentation, incoherence, domination, exploitation and alienation in order to promote the cultural elevation and consequently the emancipation of all.

The historically accumulated cultural, philosophical, scientific and technological heritage fundamentally characterizes the being of humanity. A teacher as an organic intellectual should appropriate the most advanced knowledge produced historically by men so that a cathartic educational process of understanding of the natural and cultural reality itself takes place.

In understanding the concrete reality from the accumulation of historical knowledge, it should also consider the processes of production of social reality from the work of men and their dialectical implications in what man himself is. With this, it becomes necessary to know in order to transform. As Karl Marx stated in 1845 in the Theses on Feuerbach: “Philosophers have only interpreted the world in different ways; the question, however, is to transform it”. However, a teacher as an organic intellectual should be ethical-political in order to produce cathartic pedagogical processes that direct his/her students to understand the natural and social reality. Such as planning educational processes that produce the “moral and intellectual reform” (GRAMSCI, 2007, p. 18) of the masses with the goal of transforming and sustaining an effectively ethical social organization.

Teacher’s roles as an organic intellectual: scientific-philosophical, educational-cultural and political

Martins (2011) based on the thought of Gramsci identifies three functions of an organic intellectual teacher concerning the dispute for hegemony in the capitalist context. The

function of the teacher as an organic intellectual to the school also consists in a work for the production of the hegemony of the popular will. It is about producing a moral and intellectual reform, and as a result, to produce new human relations socially structured according to popular interest. This will be done by the triple path; (a) scientific-philosophical, (b) educational-cultural and (c) politics (MARTINS, 2013).

(a) The scientific-philosophical function tries to understand the dynamics of society, in its various dimensions: political, economic, social, educational, and so on. Through the philosophy of praxis, you will be able to know the coming to be of this society, its institutional structures, its potentialities and limitations. In this way, it will formulate a new vision of the world in view of a new organization, anchored in the interests of the working class (MARTINS, 2013). This first function refers to the knowledge of social reality through the philosophy of praxis and the production, dissemination of a new world view in the form of procedural and pedagogical relationships to produce a new historical block. The organic intellectual to the subaltern classes would be able to:

[...] questioning the hegemonic worldview and, at the same time, presenting alternatives to the subaltern classes in the contest for hegemony, raising to another level the understanding they have of reality, enabling them to become aware of the process of economic exploitation, social alienation and ethical-political subalternity to which they are subjected, in order to mobilize them to fight for the overcoming of this historical condition lived under the aegis of the capitalist way of life⁸. (MARTINS, 2011, p. 141)

(b) Cultural Educational Function is intrinsically articulated with the scientific-philosophical function. The task of producing a new world view through the philosophy of praxis refers to the scientific-philosophical function. However, the dissemination of this new world view is properly a pedagogical relation regarding the educational-cultural function. The educational processes carried out within or outside school tend to articulate with the hegemony of the dominant social group, causing the subaltern class to be taught to live according to the needs and desires external to their class (MARTINS, 2013).

In a Gramscian perspective one can understand the importance of the educational-cultural dimension in the revolutionary process through the school education revealed in the concept “unitary school”. In school education a contrast is established between the original

⁸ Original text: [...] questionar a visão de mundo hegemônica e, ao mesmo tempo, apresentar alternativas às classes subalternas na disputa pela hegemonia, elevando a outro patamar a compreensão que têm da realidade, possibilitando-lhes a sensibilização em relação ao processo de exploração econômica, de alienação social e de subalternidade ético-política a que estão submetidas, para mobilizá-las a lutar em busca dessa superação dessa condição histórica vivida sob a égide do modo de vida capitalista.

culture of the subaltern class and that of the bourgeois class. It is to develop educational processes for the cultural elevation of the masses, so that a new articulated, organic and unitary world view is possible.

Martins (2013) mentions that the organic intellectual to the subaltern class has in the educational-cultural function the opportunity to integrate organically to the people, to better understand it and to be able to mobilize it for action. Thus, it will be necessary for this intellectual to fully readjust his values, his beliefs, principles, and especially his language, so that he can collaborate in the construction of a new historical block that has immaterial and material force for its concretization. In addition, its performance happens objectively and subjectively, striving to build an egalitarian society based on the principle of freedom, as human self-creation (MARTINS, 2013).

(c) The political function involves the social engagement of the organic intellectual considering its philosophical-scientific and educational-cultural function. In the social context, a teacher is impregnated by politics, while at the same time politics holds deep relations within civil society (MARTINS, 2013; NOSELLA; AZEVEDO, 2012). Therefore, in the political function, the expected result is the construction of a “historical block”, that is, an articulated and contradictory set of structural and superstructural forces that expresses the set of social relations of production (GRAMSCI, 1999, p. 250) according to the popular will.

This new class of intellectuals has the function of organizing the subaltern classes to produce a new conception of the world, to spread culturally and to act for the liberation of the oppressed, forging a new historical block, born under the aegis of the exploited, excluded, dominated and directed by the hegemonic class (MARTINS, 2011). Thus, in the context of a unilateral education, the need for an organic intellectual teacher to the subaltern classes is strongly felt, who feels what the people feel, and he/she is politically engaged in a triple function, as mentioned above, according to Martins (2013).

Final remarks

It is understood that a teacher as an organic intellectual in Gramsci acts in an epistemological way to know the social reality through the philosophy of praxis, to disseminate this new worldview between cultural contrasts, in a pedagogical and cathartic process, to produce a new historical block. It is a question of mobilizing the masses through moral and intellectual reform to act in order to overcome the historical condition of capitalist exploitation in order to sustain another social structure.

In this sense, the function of the teacher as an organic intellectual to the school consists of a work of dialogical reflections in favor of the popular will. It is a matter of producing a moral and intellectual reform, and as a consequence, producing new human relations socially structured according to this same interest, constituted of the functions: scientific-philosophical, educational-cultural and political. The teacher as an organic intellectual, in its various levels of performance, plays the crucial role in the formation of consensus, since they are creators, mediators and multipliers of public opinion (NOSELLA; AZEVEDO, 2012).

In this sense, the organic intellectuals of the subaltern class have the function of formulating, disseminating and consolidating a new vision of the world that has the power to concretely effect and promote the radical transformation of the way of life. It is in the praxis that will happen the overcoming of fragmentation, occasionally and incoherence present in the conception of the World to be overcome. When the teacher performs his work in a unity between theory and practice, he will exercise the function of an organic intellectual so that he is deeply bound up with the material and immaterial needs of the social group in which he belongs. He will have succeeded in his scientific-philosophical, educational-cultural and political functions when the collective action of the school in concrete reality is in the same organic, articulated and coherent way as the conception of the World, that is, the philosophy of praxis.

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