

ARTICLE

IDEOLOGY AND EDUCATION FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF LOUIS ALTHUSSER

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ABSTRACT: Approaching ideology requires the ability to go inside the contemporary perspectives of this topic given the phenomenon's complexity today. We chose the Slovenian philosopher Slavoj Žižek as articulator of many concepts about ideology and Althusser's theory and his concepts of Ideology and its "Ideological State Apparatus". When reflecting on these concepts we visualize how ideology acts and what are crucial elements. We approach the concepts of positivity of Hegel, *dispositif* of Foucault and Agamben, and "great Other" of Lacan, as control and alienation of the subject. We seek to better understand the criticism of the "School Ideological Apparatus" and its developments concerning to Brazilian education. We also perceive the limits of Althusser's thought with regard to the process of subjectivation and desubjectivation, and about how the education process can be full of events since it can be in permanent transformation because it is never complete, like the subject is never is.

Keywords: Ideology, ideological apparatus, subjectivation and education.

IDEOLOGIA E EDUCAÇÃO NA PERSPECTIVA DE LOUIS ALTHUSSER

RESUMO: Abordar a ideologia exige a capacidade de adentrar diferentes perspectivas contemporâneas dessa temática, visto que este fenômeno adquire configurações crescentemente mais complexas atualmente. Escolhemos o filósofo esloveno Slavoj Žižek como articulador da miríade de conceitos sobre a ideologia e, tomamos por fundamento a teoria de Althusser e seus conceitos de Ideologia e Aparelhos Ideológicos de Estado. Ao tensionar reflexivamente os conceitos visualizamos como a ideologia atua, quais seus elementos fulcrais. Para tanto, dentro da tradição filosófica, aproximamos a perspectiva do aparelho de Althusser, aos conceitos de positividade de Hegel, dispositivo de Foucault e Agamben e "grande Outro" de Lacan, como mecanismos de controle e alienação do sujeito. Desse modo, compreenderemos melhor a crítica ao "Aparelho Ideológico Escolar" e seus desdobramentos no que diz respeito à educação brasileira. Nesse sentido, percebemos também os limites do pensamento de Althusser, no que se refere ao processo de subjetivação e desubjetivação, e de como o processo de educação é atravessado por variados fenômenos e acontecimentos, uma vez que pode estar em permanente transformação, pois nunca é completo, como o sujeito também nunca é.

Palavras-chave: Ideologia, aparelho ideológico, subjetivação e educação.

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IDEOLOGÍA Y EDUCACIÓN DESDE LA PERSPECTIVA DE LOUIS ALTHUSSER

RESÚMEN: Abordar la ideología requiere la capacidad de entrar en diferentes perspectivas contemporáneas de este tema, ya que este fenómeno adquiere configuraciones cada vez más complejas hoy en día. Elegimos al filósofo esloveno Slavoj Žižek como articulador de la miríada de conceptos sobre la ideología y, tomamos la base la teoría de Althusser y sus conceptos de ideología y Aparato Estado ideológico. Al tensar reflexivamente los conceptos visualizamos cómo actúa la ideología, cuáles son sus elementos centrales. Para ello, dentro de la tradición filosófica, abordamos la perspectiva del aparato de Althusser, a los conceptos de positividad del dispositivo Hegel, Foucault y Agamben y del "gran Otro" de Lacan, como mecanismos de control y alienación del sujeto. Por lo tanto, entenderemos mejor la crítica del "Aparato Ideológico Escolar" y sus desarrollos con respecto a la educación brasileña. En este sentimiento, también percibimos los límites del pensamiento de Althusser, con respecto al proceso de subjetivación y desubjetivación, y cómo el proceso educativo es atravesado por diversos fenómenos y eventos, ya que puede ser permanente transformación, porque nunca está completa, ya que el sujeto nunca lo es tampoco.

Palabras clave: Ideología, aparato ideológico, subjetivación y educación.

INTRODUCTION

Ideology carries the immanent notion of doctrine, set of ideas, beliefs and concepts, and seems to be determined to convince people of veracity, when, however, it serves a certain subterfuge of power. An ideological matrix is routinely constructed in a manner apparently disconnected from its material condition, and yet it persists in regulating the relationship between what is most subtle and basic in life, including the great ideals that dominate and motivate the masses. We see a crowd that sings along with the Brazilian popular rock poet: "Ideology, I want one to live" (Agenor de Miranda Araújo Neto, Cazusa, was a Brazilian composer, poet and lyricist; he was born in Rio de Janeiro and lived between 1958-1990). *Ideologia* (1988), besides a song, is the album title. The album cover features different symbols and values, provoking a reflection on Brazil's political and cultural situation in the 1980s. By analyzing the song briefly, we can realize the expression of society's confusion and emptiness, desubjectivated people who cry out for values to live.

In this aspect, according to the dialectical tradition, we can say that ideology is immanent, standing between the transparent and the opaque, the material and the immaterial, the possible and the impossible, and even seems to be present in everything that points to something beyond a dualistic way out; ideology operates an important articulation that affects everything and everyone and everywhere. This first point, however, seems to be commonplace among philosophy thinkers and scholars. Then, how to build a perspective that allows us to cross the obvious and get out of an already overused discussion about ideology? How to move towards a more interesting reading of the foundation of ideology? In this article, we propose to develop a modality of criticism that intends to discern the tendency that is not recognized in the official reality, through its ruptures, gaps, and lapses. Instead of directly evaluating the adequacy or veracity of the different notions of ideology, we want to understand the multiplicity of determinations as an indicator of different concrete situations. Doing so, we announce a reading crossed by Lacanian psychoanalysis and a Hegelian historical-dialectical transposition of the problem to its own solution.

This way of proceeding was designed by the Slovenian philosopher Slavoj Žižek (Liubiana 1949-) and can be understood in some of his works as *The Parallax View* (2008) and *Less than Nothing: Hegel and the Shadow of Dialectical Materialism* (2012). Žižek is a philosopher, psychoanalyst and one of the main contemporary theorists, moving through various areas of knowledge ranging from cinema to cafes and, under the influence of thinkers such as Marx (Trier, 1918 - London, 1883) and Lacan (Paris, 1901 - Paris, 1981), makes a striking cultural and political criticism of postmodernity. Žižek acts in this research as an articulator of the diversity of thoughts about ideology, pointing and contorting the

concepts so that they may appear less worn out, given that this is a topic that has already been so much examined.

‘Ideology’ can designate anything from a contemplative attitude that misrecognizes its dependence on social reality to an action-orientated set of beliefs, from the indispensable medium in which individuals live out their relations to a social structure to false ideas which legitimate a dominant political power. We seem to pop up precisely when we attempt to void it, while it fails to appear where one would clearly expect it to dwell. When some procedure is denounced as ‘ideological par excellence’, one can be sure that its invention is no less ideological. (ŽIŽEK, 1996, p. 09) 03

An interesting starting point is to realize that the criticism of ideology itself implies a kind of privileged place, as if it were exempt from the upheavals of social life, which would give this critical subject, in the face of reality, the incredible capacity to perceive the hidden mechanism that regulates visibility and social invisibility. Is it not this image of offering criticism of ideology from a supposedly neutral point of view, in itself, already ideological?

Faced with these questions, several philosophers contributed to a possible investigation into ideology: Marx, by drawing important notes for criticism of contemporary ideology that moves away from a naive project; the perspective of Althusser (Algeria, 1918 - La Verrière, 1990) and his Ideological State Apparatus and some other similar *dispositifs*; Lacan, by tensioning the concept of ideology with its core in fantasy. These thinkers appear to Žižek in an interconnected manner and we will refer to them, but since dealing with ideology so broadly is not the purpose of this work, we will refer to ideology in its otherness-externalization, a moment dialectically innovated by the Althusserian notion of Ideological State Apparatus (ISA). This practical understanding of ideology is also reached in the apparatuses and other forms of mechanical articulation of ideology with respect to reality in its efficient form as it guides daily practices that can culminate in totalitarian exercises.

Thus, our effort, despite constituting a dialogue around a constellation of thinkers and concepts, focuses on understanding the work *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus*, by Louis Althusser (1980), since it structures the theme of ideology based on the dialectic approached through a radically different matrix, the structural (over) determination. We will see how the material existence of ideologies in ideological practices, rituals and institutions are consolidated.

IDEOLOGY FOR ALTHUSSER

The French philosopher - who was born in Algeria - was a combatant during World War II and joined the Communist Party in 1948. He was a little over 40 when began to have great recognition of his thought. His initial concerns were about the relationship between Christianity and Marxism, emphasizing the criticism of Hegel in Marx’s thought (ALTHUSSER, 1979). Althusser taught seminars on Marxist studies and was already drawing himself as one of the most influential contemporary interpreters of the “Capital” author. He shared his knowledge and reflections with great thinkers of the time, such as Étienne Balibar, Yves Duroux, Jacques Rancière, Jean-Claude Milner and Alain Badiou.

Althusser was one of the thinkers of the twentieth century who contributed most to Marxist philosophical analyzes, making a strong criticism of the economism and humanism attributed to the theory. He sought not only to focus on criticism, but to contribute to overcoming certain political analyzes, towards a fruitful dialogue with psychoanalysis and other trends in contemporary philosophy. The understanding of ideology as a genetic theory of ideas goes back to Destutt de Tracy (Paris 1754 - Paris 1836), but, according to Althusser (1980), it was Marx who, in the German ideology (2007), by retaking the term, attributed to it a new and reinvigorated understanding which perceived ideology as a system of ideas, of representations that dominate the spirit of man or of a social group.

For Althusser (1980), it is extremely important to develop a theory of ideas, taking into account that whatever it is, it always rests on the history of social formations and their consequences. However, he warns us that a theory of ideologies in general is not possible. The multiple ideologies can only be understood in their particularity since they have their own history based on regional and class

relations. Ideology operates differently in each concrete circumstance, representing the practical impossibility of thinking about a theory of ideologies, in the sense of a historical synthesis. In the POST-SCRIPTUM of the work *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses*, Althusser (1980) clarifies that it is only from the classes' point of view, that is, from the class struggle, that ideologies can be perceived, because it is the place one finds materialization of dominant ideologies and understands from where the ideologies that structure the Ideological State Apparatuses come. ISA are not the materialization of ideology in general, nor are they the materialization without conflict of the ruling class' ideology.

Žižek (2013) warns us of Althusser's lesson about the "class struggle," because this, paradoxically, precedes classes as determined social groups. Each class determination and position is already an effect of the "class struggle." Thus, classes are not categories of positive social reality, parts of the social body, but a category of the register of the Real (as opposed to reality, as a category of symbolization); of a political struggle that crosses the entire social body, preventing its "totalization." And Žižek (2012) also admits that the class struggle is another name for the fact that "society does not exist," not as a positive order of being.

However, for Althusser, what matters most is to develop a theory of ideology in the singular, as a concept, whether a theory of ideology in general or a theory of ideology in particular, since each expresses a class position within it, a topic. Althusser returns to Marx in the German Ideology to think about the theory of ideology in general, but seeks to overcome it by using psychoanalytic concepts. Thus, he begins to build his thesis that ideology in general has no history:

In *The German Ideology*, this formulation appears in a plainly positivist context. Ideology is conceived as a pure illusion, a pure dream, i.e. as nothingness. All its reality is external to it. Ideology is thus thought as an imaginary construction whose status is exactly like the theoretical status of the dream among writers before Freud (ALTHUSSER, 1980, p. 72).

Althusser's thesis establishes the notion of ideology that distances itself from the Marxian theory and dialogues with Freud (ALTHUSSER, 2000), insofar as it is in line with the proposition that the unconscious is eternal, that is, it has no history; "[...] eternal means, not transcendent to (all) temporal history, but omnipresent, transhistorical and therefore immutable in form throughout the extent of history [...]" (ALTHUSSER, 1980, p. 75).

If ideology, in general, has no history, we can understand that it acts on the structural basis of society in an infinite and universal manner, in its essence. When we think that the objects represented by ideology are an illusion, we are obliged to admit that in some way they allude to reality. Therefore, it would be enough to interpret this illusion to find, under its representation, the reality of the material world. The problem is that, in practical reality, things do not work out that way. The elementary perception, that of a simple illusion of reality created by the subjects to represent the ideas, falls apart, because the ideology that operates the imaginary deformation of the relations that exist is the representation of the relations that derive from it.

[...] it is not their real conditions of existence, their real world, that 'men' 'represent to themselves' in ideology, but above all it is their relation to those conditions of existence which is represented to them there. It is this relation that is at the centre of every ideological, i.e. imaginary, representation of the world. [...] all ideology represents in its necessarily imaginary distortion not the existing relations of production [...], but above all the (imaginary) relationship of individuals to the relations of production and the relations that derive from them. What is represented in ideology is therefore not the system of the real relations which govern the existence of individuals, but the imaginary relations of those individuals to the real relations in which they live (ALTHUSSER, 1980, p. 81 and 82).

From the Althusserian perspective, ideology is not fundamentally "a matter of 'ideas': it is a structure that imposes itself on us, without necessarily having to pass through consciousness" (TEIXEIRA, 2005, p. 75). We can see here a different Althusserian contribution in relation to ideology, since ideology is conceived "as something in the indeterminate state of not being true, but which is, however, necessarily vital" (TEIXEIRA, 2005, p.75).

Ideology is not theoretically presented in reality, but in its materiality, its existence is concrete and is manifested through an apparatus. It affects individuals, subjects who live in an ideology, that is, who have a representation of the world, whether religious, moral, legal, etc. It is in this sense that the imaginary deformation depends on the imaginary relationship to the material conditions of its existence. We can affirm that the individual's imaginary relationship to his class condition is, in itself, based on a material existence. For Althusser,

Ideas have disappeared as such (insofar as endowed with an ideal or spiritual existence), to the precise extent that it has emerged that their existence is inscribed in the actions of practices governed by rituals defined in the last instance by an ideological apparatus. It therefore appears that the subject acts insofar as he is acted by the following system (set out in the order of its real determination): ideology existing in a material ideological apparatus, prescribing material practices governed by a material ritual, which practices exist in the material actions of a subject acting in all consciousness according to his belief (ALTHUSSER, 1980, p. 90).

This understanding, unprecedented until then, removes ideology from the plane of ideas and imposes materiality on it, tracing significant notions for the dialectical understanding between ideology on the theoretical plane and its aspect in the material reality, as it finds, in the notions of subject, consciousness, belief and acts, repercussions that enable Althusser (1980) to enunciate two joint theses: "There is no practice except by and in an ideology" and "There is no ideology except by the subject and for subjects." It is in this aspect that Althusser agrees with Lacan (2005) on the impossibility of having access to the "real conditions of existence," since we are stuck with language and our symbolic dimension that leads our experience in the plane of material reality. However, if we approach society rigorously, reaching a less naive understanding of how we are inscribed in ideology, through complex processes of recognition, we will be able to better understand how ideology works socially.

In line with this perspective, we cannot lose sight of the fact that, for Althusser, ideology is also fundamental in terms of the constitution of the subject. According to Silva (2009), the function of ideology is to convert concrete individuals into subjects. Thus, the process of ideological interpellation to which the subjects are subjected is fundamental to the constitution of his theory of ideology.

Such a process is recognizable and happens as individuals who believe in something reveal themselves as possessing consciousness which contains the ideas of their belief. Through a conceptual apparatus, established by the subjects themselves, a certain behavior unfolds in materiality. As a result, the individual who believes behaves according to certain practices regulated by the ideological apparatus, on which the ideas the subject has chosen freely and consciously depend. In this aspect, we understand, together with the philosopher, that the subjects come to believe in the ideas that their consciousness accepted freely, so they act according to their ideas and inscribe in their acts of material practice their own ideas of free subjects. "[...] the ideology of ideology thus recognizes, despite its imaginary distortion, that the 'ideas' of a human subject exist in his actions [...]" (ALTHUSSER, 1980, p. 86 and 87).

It is in this process that ideology supports the acts inserted in concretely regulated practices. If we consider that in the subjects the existence of ideas in their belief is material, their ideas are material acts inserted in material practices; then, in the last aspect, ideology is the practice of managing material rituals. It is in this process that the term *idea* becomes increasingly abstract, until it becomes entirely detached from the material reality to which it refers. In this mechanism, the idea becomes implicit in the acts, and not completely disappearing it becomes transparent, remaining permanently and efficiently in the terms: subject, consciousness, belief and acts, which are not physically material, but are evident and happening in objective terms in the rituals through the ideological apparatuses. One of the most elaborate forms of this procedure is the ideological questioning that will be developed below.

IDEOLOGY INTERPELLATES INDIVIDUALS AS SUBJECTS

According to Althusser (1980), the gradual substitution of ideas for materiality corresponds to a very peculiar remodeling, having its structure based on the subjects as the ones that operate the imaginary deformation in their relationship to reality. For this reason, the author's fundamental

contribution is to categorically structure ideology as an interpellation of individuals as subjects, implying that there is only ideology by subjects and for subjects, at the same time that ideology converts concrete individuals into subjects. Subject and ideology are dialectically interwoven insofar as one constitutes the other. “In the interaction of this double constitution exists the functioning of all ideology, ideology being nothing but its functioning in the material forms of existence of that functioning” (ALTHUSSER, 1980, p. 94).

This dialectical game that affirms the duplicity in which the subject is crossed by ideology is, at the same time, its reproducer and a touchstone for understanding the phenomena of ideological materiality. Recognizing this phenomenon is important, as this process becomes increasingly hidden, which paradoxically highlights the problem of concealment that ideology produces, simultaneously occulting this same movement. This phenomenon occurs because one of the effects of ideology is denial: ideology is never recognized as ideological; it is necessary to be outside ideology, in scientific knowledge, in order to be able to affirm that something is ideological or even recognize, in an exceptional case, that one is in ideology, what we have perceived so far to be an entirely fragile and cynical procedure. According to Peter Sloterdijk (2012), the dominant mode of functioning of contemporary ideology is that of “cynical reason.” It is founded on the paradox of an enlightened false consciousness, which knows its falsity, but does not abdicate it.

As Althusser (1980) affirms, ideology in general is eternal, therefore, it has no exterior, it has interpellated individuals as subjects since its inception, at all times; since birth, ideology surrounds the individuals, harasses them, transforming them into subjects. “[...] practical telecommunication of hailings is such that they hardly ever miss their man: verbal call or whistle, the one hailed always recognizes that it is really him who is being hailed” (ALTHUSSER, 1980, p. 99-100). The subject, from the Althusserian perspective, is both a subject of action, of practices, and a subject submitted to another Subject. In this respect, Althusser (1980) requests “The mirror stage as formative of the function of the I,” of Lacan (1998). According to Teixeira, the mirror stage is

[...] the child’s jubilatory moment confronted with his own image in the mirror, when he, previously merged and confused with the world around him, recognizes his own image through the figure of another self. From this image, the child simultaneously perceives his differentiation in relation to the external world and confirms, from the outside, the narcissistic perfection that constitutes it as fallus of his mother. (TEIXEIRA, 2005, p. 75).

Althusser structures a concept of subject contrary to the notion of Cartesian subject that modern philosophy has adopted and developed. He requests a symbolic dimension, “the human subject transcends his true state of diffusion or decentralization, and finds a consolingly coherent image of himself, reflected in the mirror of a dominant ideological discourse” (TEIXEIRA, 2005, p. 75). In other words, for Althusser, individuals interpellated by ideological operation, transformed into social subjects, act according to the identification they find in the ideologies existing in the other’s discourse. The subjects, when faced with the multiplicity of existing social discourses, are interpellated by a discourse that positions them as discursive subjects.

This Subject can be recognized in religion, for example, as an apparatus that structures the interpellation of the individual as a subject without a name, a Unique and absolute Subject, submitting the subject to the Subject. This ideological procedure fosters reciprocal recognition between the subjects and the Subject. Thus, there is a guarantee that everything is in its proper place, everything occurs well as the subject is subjected to universal recognition, and ideology appears as something that has taken distance; therefore, its operation is hidden for most subjects. “Their material, concrete behavior is simply the inscription in life of the admirable of the prayer: *‘Amen - So be it’*” (ALTHUSSER, 1980, p. 113). It is in this aspect that we find the regression to ideology at the exact point that we seemed to come out of it. According to Žižek (1996), in Althusser, religious faith is not only an internal conviction, but it is the Church as an institution and its rituals. The latter, far from being a simple externalization of intimate belief, represents the very mechanisms that generate it. For Žižek,

When Althusser repeats, after Pascal: ‘Act as if you believe, pray, kneel down, and you shall believe, faith will arrive by itself,’ he delineates an intricate reflective mechanism of retroactive ‘autopoietic’ foundation that far exceeds the reductionist assertion of the dependence of inner belief on external behavior. That is to say, the implicit logic of his argument is: kneel down and *you shall believe that you knelt down because of your faith* - that is, your following the ritual is an expression/effect of your inner belief; in short, the ‘external’ ritual performatively generates its own ideological foundation (ŽIŽEK, 1996, p. 18).

In this example, given by Althusser and retaken by Žižek, we can materially find, in social reality, the interpellation of the subject, that is, the way in which ideology interpellates the subject socially. When the subject believes that he has knelt down because of faith, he simultaneously recognizes himself in the call of the God-Other who has determined that he should kneel down. “[...] it is from this external character of the symbolic machine that we can explain the status of the unconscious as radically external - that of a dead letter” (ŽIŽEK, 1996, p. 321). Belief, in this respect, is a matter of obedience to the dead and not understood letter, exposing a kind of short circuit between the intimate belief and what Žižek calls the “external machine” that imposes its order, thus referring to the more subversive nucleus of Pascal theology.

The way in which ideology interpellates the individuals, transforming them into subjects, is fundamental to the action of the ideological apparatuses; they only have their full performance as they are freely accepted by the subjects already captured by the ideology. In the next topic we will understand how this process works.

THE STATE APPARATUS AND THE IDEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

This kind of contemporary version of the Pascalian machine is a unique contribution to the perspectives on ideology previously developed, but it leaves an open point, since it fails in exhausting in depth the link between the ISA and the ideological interpellation. The discussion then revolves around understanding how the ISA, as a Pascalian machine, is internalized producing the effect of ideological belief, in a relation of cause and effect that connects to the process of subjectification. In this case, how does the recognition of the position posed by the interpellation happen?

We can understand this question only if we seek the answers in the essentials of the Marxist Theory of the State. According to Althusser (1980), this is expressed in the understanding that the State and the existence of its apparatus only make sense in the function of State power. The entire class struggle revolves around the taking and preservation of state power, by a certain class or by its alliances. Thus, the Marxist classics stated:

(1) the state is the repressive state apparatus, (2) state power and state apparatus must be distinguished, (3) the objective of the class struggle concerns state power, and in consequence the use of the state apparatus by the classes (or alliance of classes or of fractions of classes) holding state power as a function of their class objectives, and (4) the proletariat must seize state power in order to destroy the existing bourgeois state apparatus and, in a first phase, replace it with a quite different, proletarian, state apparatus, then in later phases set in motion a radical process, that of the destruction of the state [...] (ALTHUSSER, 1980, p. 38).

The philosopher seeks to go beyond the mere description of the State and the State apparatus in order to enter into a discussion that presupposes these categories, but trying to differentiate “*State power*” from “*State apparatus*.” The State defines, in fact, the fundamental function of the State apparatus as the force of execution and repressive intervention in the service of the ruling class. It thus defines that the State is a State apparatus, not only a specialized apparatus whose existence and need are recognized from the requirements of legal practice, such as the police and the army, but also as the government and the administration.

In turn, in a reciprocal way, the State apparatus as a means to consolidate the State power, comprises: government, administration, army, police, courts, prisons and everything that works through repression and violence, including violence that manifests itself beyond physical form. The State apparatus is repressive and unified, it is an organized whole whose different forms are subordinated to a

command unit: State power. Its centralized organization under the direction of the ruling class' representatives executes the policies that support the dichotomies of the class struggle, which are, ultimately, exploitation relations.

The SA does not act in a specialized way, belonging entirely to the public domain, but the very distinction between public and private was the object of bourgeois right: “[...] the State, which is the State *of* the ruling class, is neither public nor private; on the contrary, it is the precondition for any distinction between public and private” (ALTHUSSER, 1980, p. 46). The State Apparatus works in itself massively, through repression, and secondarily through ideology, since these two, State and Ideology, are never entirely detached. And precisely through ideology, the ruling class that holds the State power consolidates and ensures the harmony between the repressive State apparatus and the Ideological State Apparatus. Hence the need to understand what Althusser designates as the Ideological State Apparatus, “a certain number of realities which present themselves to the immediate observer in the form of distinct and specialized institutions” (ALTHUSSER, 1980, p. 43). Then, it acts in a determined manner in its specificities, such as

[...] • the religious ISA (the system of the different churches), • the educational ISA (the system of the different public and private schools, • the family ISA, • the legal ISA • the political ISA (the political system, including the different parties), • the trade-union ISA, • the communications ISA (press, radio and television, etc.), • the cultural ISA (literature, the arts, sports, etc.). (ALTHUSSER, 1980, p. 44).

The plurality with which the ISA manifests itself is antagonistic to the uniqueness of the SA. While one is public, the other is private, while one is repressive and violent, the ISA is obviously ideological. This is not only the target of the class struggle, but the very place where it manifests itself materially. These two dimensions do not come apart, so it is essential to note that the two types of apparatuses combine very subtly to be able to operate in everyday life. We need to be aware, since the set of apparatuses builds a precarious consonance, and this dialectical connection in which each depends on the other to socially manifest and act while negativity can and must be attacked. According to Žižek (1996), the ISA exert their strength as they are experienced in the subject's unconscious economy, as a traumatic and meaningless injunction. For the Slovenian philosopher,

Althusser speaks only of the process of ideological interpellation through which the symbolic machine of ideology is ‘internalized’ into the ideological experience of Meaning and Truth: but we can learn from Pascal that this ‘internalization’, by structural necessity, never fully succeeds, that there is always a residue, a leftover, a stain of traumatic irrationality and senselessness sticking to it, and that this leftover, far from hindering the full submission of the subject to the ideological command, is the very condition of it: it is precisely this non-integrated surplus of senseless traumatism which confers on the Law its unconditional authority: in other words, which – in so far as it escapes ideological sense – sustains what we might call the ideological jouis-sense, enjoyment-in-sense (enjoy-meant), proper to ideology (ŽIŽEK, 1996, p. 321).

Therefore, Žižek (1996) points out that the very gap that exists between the ideological interpellation and the performance of the ISA is exactly the space for the consolidation of ideology; this space can be better understood if we deepen the studies on the models of control and manipulation with which other philosophers understood this same theme, and hence the need to know the concepts that we will work on next.

THE APPARATUS, THE POSITIVITY, THE DISPOSITIF AND THE “BIG OTHER”

The apparatus that Althusser presents is of great originality and importance for political philosophy and studies on ideology. It operates materially, showing how ideology is established in society in very well articulated mechanisms that stick to reality in such a way that they appear perfectly natural – or if not, as a pressing need that cannot be replaced by another control mechanism.

A myriad of thinkers approached the concept of apparatus in a different way. Thus, the following can be highlighted: the concept of *dispositif*, supported in the thought of Foucault (2008) and

Agamben (2009); positivity, in Hegel, and the notion of “big Other,” in Lacan (1992). All these philosophers sought to investigate the mechanisms by which society gains a determined form of manipulation that is architected by means of equipment, arrangements, mechanisms, apparatus and other technologies that operate the forms of coercion, alienating subjectivation and desubjectivation. Diversely, this set of concepts contributes significantly to the understanding of ideology. Even if some of these authors, as in the case of Foucault, do not use the term *ideology*, the concept is replaced by others potentially capable of explaining and understanding the phenomenon from other articulations, as it is the case of *dispositif*. Thus, the concept of *dispositif* seems to encompass the concept of ideology, determining our interest in it.

According to Agamben (2009), apparatus is a decisive technical term in Foucault’s thought, and can be understood as a heterogeneous, linguistic and non-linguistic set, which virtually includes anything in the same title: speeches, institutions, buildings, police measures, philosophical propositions, etc. It always has a concrete strategic function and is part of a relation of power and knowledge. “The term “apparatus” designates that in which, and through which, one realizes a pure activity of governance devoid of any foundation in being. This is the reason why apparatuses must always imply a process of subjectification, that is to say, they must produce their subject” (AGAMBEN, 2009, p. 38). Thinking about governmentality, Isis Freitas (2016) states that:

Michel Foucault’s lectures entitled Security, Territory, Population, given at the Collège de France in 1977-1978, has as its fundamental mark the development of a genealogy of modern governmentality. In this course three forms of power are presented: the model of the territorial state of sovereignty (power based on the theory of sovereignty, which is linked to a form of power that is exercised over the land and the products of the land, much more than over bodies and what they do); disciplinary power (disciplinary society), the apparatuses aim, through a series of practices and speeches, knowledge and exercises to create docile bodies, which are applied to the body through surveillance techniques and punitive institutions) and biopower (state of contemporary population - which captures life in a massive and totalizing sense) (FREITAS, 2016, p. 62).

The concept of “self-transcendence of society,” which is the *dispositif*, was taken from Foucault, but it also demands the Hegelian notion of “positivity” as a substantial social order imposed on the subject and experienced as an external destiny and not as an organic part in itself. Positivity is the name given by Hegel to the historical element, with its rules, rites and institutions externally imposed on the individual, but which becomes internal to the system of beliefs and feelings. The young Hegel (1971), in the text *The positivity of the Christian religion*, investigates the reasons why the Christian religion has become authoritarian, even forging a political acceptance of slavery, since man accepted external authority in legality and heteronomy. According to the German philosopher, it is exactly in historical examples like these that positivity expresses a character of coercion, of non-freedom, of heteronomy, contrary to reason.

Jean Hyppolite, a thinker who had a strong influence on Foucault and French philosophy, encouraged Foucault to further develop the concept of *dispositif*, now taken by Agamben. For Hyppolite (1971), the concept of positivity in Hegel’s *Introduction to the philosophy of History*, has its place in the opposition between “natural religion” and “positive religion,” in which natural religion would be the one close to nature and not institutionalized; the positive, while historical, comprises the set of beliefs, rules and rituals that are imposed on the individual by exteriority. Thus, this positive religion would imply, according to Hegel (1971), feelings that are imprinted on the soul through coercion and behaviors that are the result of a relation of command and obedience. In this sense, positivity functions as an articulation of ideological manipulation anchored in belief.

The intentions of Hegel (1971) and Foucault (1971) are clearly different. Hegel seeks to reconcile the domains of religion and reason and thus seeks to unveil positivation. Foucault investigates the concrete ways in which apparatuses act in relations and power games. He refused to work with general, or universal, categories, but we also admit that the apparatuses are precisely Foucault’s strategy, not to talk about isolated security measures, specific power technologies, but to refer to a set of practices and mechanisms that constitute subjectivity in an urgent and immediate manner.

For Agamben (2009), the notion of *dispositif* originates in the doctrine of Divine Providence and is linked to Greek *oikonomia*, implying the relationship of God with the world and even the way God manages His kingdom. He shows how an *dispositif* is minimally sacred, in such a way that, as soon as a living being is captured by a *dispositif*, he is expropriated from his own identity as a subject. However, *dispositifs* have been remodeling over time, and this mechanism, according to Agamben, starts to work in a multiple way, as in the case of new technologies. Technological devices, such as cell phones, tablets and applications used for all kinds of purposes, subjectify making use of artificial intelligence, to collect data and adapt it to individualities. But, at the same time, they desubjectify, as they massify performances and docilize bodies and minds to the subjugation of technology, making subjects amorphous mass, or true ghostly zombies, without authenticity, emptied as subjects, resulting in a “spectral subject.” In these circumstances, the devices desubjectify without producing a new subjectivity:

Hence the eclipse of politics, which used to presuppose the existence of subjects and real identities (the workers’ movement, the bourgeoisie, etc.) and the triumph of the *oikonomia*, that is to say, of a pure activity of government that aims at nothing other than its own replication. The Right and the Left, which today alternate in the management of power, have for this reason very little to do with the political sphere in which they originated. They are simply the names of two poles - the first pointing without scruple to desubjectification, the second wanting instead to hide behind the hypocritical mask of the good democratic citizen - of the same governmental machine (AGAMBEN, 2009, p. 48-9).

This reading by Agamben (2009) presents us with the understanding that there are subjects among living beings and apparatuses. Or rather, what we understand as subjects is the result of “the relentless fight between living beings and apparatuses” (AGAMBEN, 2009, p. 41). That is why, at the same time, the individual can be the place of multiple processes of subjectification. What Agamben says is quite similar to Althusser’s statement: “ideology interpellates individuals as subjects” through an apparatus. This interpellation of the individual as a subject is the understanding of the individual interpellated as a (free) subject so that he can freely obey the orders of the one who formulates his subjection, so that such subjection is accepted (freely). Thus, this subject, alone, starts making the gestures and actions of his subjection (of his free and spontaneous will). This notion of subject leads us to a non-naive understanding of the notion of subject and its overlap with ideology. Thus, according to Žižek,

[...] Foucault, Althusser, and Lacan insist on the crucial ambiguity of the term the “subject” (as both free agent and as subject to power) — the subject qua free agent emerges through its subjection to the *dispositif*/ISA/“big Other.” As Agamben points out, “desubjectivation” (“alienation”) and subjectivation are thus the two sides of the same coin: it is the very desubjectivation of a living being, its subordination to a *dispositif*, which subjectivizes it (ŽIŽEK, 2013, p. 619).

Paradoxically, nowadays, the sophistication of this process, with the intensification of the administration and regulation of the individuals’ lives, means that the apparatuses no longer generate the interpellation of the individual as subject. Agamben (2009) draws attention to the fact that, as the citizen is desubjectivated, he does not ask himself about the hegemonic apparatuses of contemporary democracy, that is, the bourgeois subject was expropriated from this definition, he does not know what democracy is. The apparatuses are so articulated that citizens have their lives controlled even in the most intimate details, and thus the very passivity of these citizens puts the performative effectiveness of these apparatuses in suspension, making this machine “run on empty” and transform itself, according to Žižek (2013), into “a self-parody which serves nothing.”

Similarly, we remember that the economic field mistakenly concerns the sphere of non-ideology, to the point that economists consider themselves to be post-ideological, because, in their self-perception, they think they have overcome ideology. Like those who consider themselves as being outside ideology, some of them support economist thinking from an ultraliberal bias. This predominance of the economic sphere may seem like an absence of ideology, but now, in contrast, the economy, more than ever, serves as an ideological model. “We are then fully justified in saying that the economy is here is

operative as an ISA - in contrast with “real” economic life which definitely does not follow the idealized market model (ŽIŽEK, 2012, p. 301).

In this aspect, for Althusser, individuals are living beings under which the apparatus/ISA acts, imposing a series of practices on them, whereas the subject is not a category of the living being, of the substance, but the result of the captures of these living beings in an apparatus/ISA. According to Žižek, the problem is that

Where Althusser falls short is in his disappointing and misplaced insistence on the “materiality” of the ISA: the primordial form of *dispositif*, the “big Other” of the symbolic institution, is precisely immaterial, a virtual order - as such, it is the correlative of the subject as distinct from the individual qua living being. Neither the subject nor the *dispositif* of the big Other are categories of substantial being. (ŽIŽEK, 2013, p. 619).

Althusser’s contribution to thinking ideology and the structure he makes of this thought is invaluable, but from the point of view of materiality it still seems to leave the apparatus without a solid foundation due to lack of progress towards articulation with the most substantial categories of psychoanalysis. However, in this work, the articulation with Hegel regarding the concept of positivity, the idea of apparatus as a recurring concept in Agamben and Foucault and Lacan’s “big Other,” are important elements for a deeper understanding of ideology, as they differently contribute to addressing the problem of interpellation of the subject and the overlap of factors inherent to ideology. That is why, by relying on the reading of the ISA, added to the reading of the concept of apparatus, we will achieve a more dense understanding of the notion of ideology. By the way, Althusser is an author who advances critically in the idea of rupture with the ideological domination apparatus that is the school, seeking to approach this school apparatus more coherently and thus providing an analysis for the contemporaneity of how it still seems to be a space for the dissemination and materialization of ideology. We proceed with this thematic nucleus in the next topic.

SCHOOL AS IDEOLOGICAL APPARATUS

During the pre-capitalist period, there was a dominant ISA: the Church, which, according to Althusser (1980), concentrated not only religious functions, but also school and cultural ones. That is why, from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century, mainly with the Protestant Reformation, the ideological struggle was anti-clerical and anti-religious. The French Revolution also contributed to the attack on the Church as an ISA, and modified the functioning of the state apparatus by allowing the transfer of power from the feudal aristocracy to the capitalist-commercial bourgeoisie. Thus, a certain type of state repressive apparatus was broken, which was replaced by others. The course of the class struggle during the nineteenth century led the landed aristocracy and the industrial bourgeoisie to occupy the functions that were once exclusive to the Church, and the School was THE place found to consolidate and structure this power. In this sense, the function that was performed by the Church-family duo was replaced by the School-family duo. “[...] the Ideological State Apparatus which has been installed in the *dominant* position in mature capitalist social formations as a result of a violent political and ideological class struggle against the old dominant Ideological State Apparatus, is the *educational ideological apparatus*.” (ALTHUSSER, 1980, p. 60).

Capitalist exploitation and domination relations are the result of the incidence of all types of ISA as a whole, but the school plays a dominant role, according to Althusser (1980), although, paradoxically, this domination is not always given much attention, as it acts, like all ideology, in a silent manner. The school, in an opaque manner, is the basis of the learning disseminated by ideology; it is there where all children from different social classes are placed, during the most vulnerable years of childhood, and then are taught the dominant ideology. This happens through practical knowledge: languages, calculations, history, science, literature, or simply pushing the dominant ideology in its purest state: morals, civic instruction and political-religious indoctrination.

As it is an apparatus that has had for a long time mandatory attention of a considerable part of society, that is to say, children, the dominant ideology reaches the family as a whole. The school

dominates the children strongly, as it is present in their lives from five to six days a week. Slightly older, teenagers throw themselves into the world of work, becoming cheap labor. Another more limited part of schooling youth remains in the educational system to take up posts in the petty bourgeoisie. Thus, a considerably small number of young people get reasonable jobs, while the majority fall into semi-employment, or, as today, unemployment. By the way, as Althusser points out,

Each mass ejected *en route* is practically provided with the ideology which suits the role it has to fulfil in class society: the role of the exploited (with a 'highly-developed' 'professional', 'ethical', 'civic', 'national' and a-political consciousness); the role of the agent of exploitation (ability to give the workers orders and speak to them: 'human relations'), of the agent of repression (ability to give orders and enforce obedience 'without discussion', or ability to manipulate the demagogy of a political leader's rhetoric), or of the professional ideologist (ability to treat consciousnesses with the respect, i.e. with the contempt, blackmail, and demagogy they deserve, adapted to the accents of Morality, of Virtue, of 'Transcendence', of the Nation, of France's World Role, etc.) (ALTHUSSER, 1980, p. 66).

The ideology that the school conceals, in a naturalized and palatable manner, reproduces the capitalist regime. It is through the learning of practical knowledge disseminated in classes that the ruling class' ideology is massively inculcated. In this process, as an ideology that represents the School as a neutral medium devoid of ideology, this school conceals exactly the ideology that is said to be non-ideological. In the bourgeois school that functions as an ISA, the teachers, supposedly respectful of the conscience and freedom of children entrusted to them by their parents, raise students to the freedom, morality and responsibility of adults for their own example, for knowledge, literature and their virtues. But all this school discourse only reproduces the relations of production based on a capitalist social formation.

Teachers collaborate in such a way with this system, and are as immersed in ideology as any other living being, that they do not question the functioning of the school. Without realizing such a process, educators contribute by their efforts to maintain the ideological representation of the School that makes it natural, indispensable, useful and beneficial, as much as the Church was previously. The school ISA co-opts teachers and, through ideological representation, the school detaches itself from its material historical construction made by mankind, and appears as any other ideological phenomenon, including for teachers. However, Althusser situates teachers by making the following reflection:

I ask the pardon of those teachers who, in dreadful conditions, attempt to turn the few weapons they can find in the history and learning they 'teach' against the ideology, the system and the practices in which they are trapped. They are a kind of hero. But they are rare and how many (the majority) do not even begin to suspect the 'work' the system (which is bigger than they are and crushes them) forces them to do, or worse, put all their heart and ingenuity into performing it with the most advanced awareness [...] (ALTHUSSER, 1980, p. 67-68).

The profound crisis that the school and family system suffers acquires a political meaning if we consider that the school constitutes the dominant IEA, the "Apparatus playing a determinant part in the reproduction of the relations of production of a mode of production threatened in its existence by the world class struggle." (ALTHUSSER, 1980, p. 68). In other words, the school teaches to reproduce the operating mode of capitalism that is in permanent class struggle. As it reproduces the class struggle, the school and the family are, in themselves, always in crisis, as they do not work fully with a view to human emancipation, but simply for the reproduction of capitalist relations of production (ALTHUSSER, 2008).

The school decisively participates in the process of consolidating the subject. The interpellation of the individual as subject happens through ideology, and the school supports and participates as an apparatus for the articulation and implementation of this process. The twenty-first century school adopted business performances and the neoliberal economic reproduction model. The power of the school apparatus is enhanced by operating in line with the prevailing economic order, in which the economy is also ideological.

Nowadays, the school has become a company, and it is like any other economic corporation that aims at “more value.” The commitment, therefore, is with the market and not with the formation of free subjects. From this perspective, the aim is the formation of entrepreneurs who dehumanize and desubjectify themselves. Today’s young people, as Althusser has already pointed out in the past, are committed to the exploitation, precariousness and exclusion of human beings, as this is what school/economic ISA has become. An era of schools is devoted entirely to serving the world market, according to the interests of large economic corporations. These are the values of the school that can be called neoliberal, in which economic values are above the collective good; this school understands education as a private good.

[...] it is not society that guarantees its members the right to culture; it is the individuals who must capitalize on private resources whose future income will be guaranteed by society. This privatization is a phenomenon that affects both the sense of knowledge and the institutions that supposedly transmit values and knowledge and the social bond itself. Institutions that seem to have no other reason for being than serving interests are analogous to the affirmation of the full autonomy of individuals without strings attached, except those that they themselves recognize by their own will (LAVAL, 2019, p. 16).

In Brazil, the connection of the school apparatus with the economic one is even more evident when, during the government initiated in 2019, educational reforms that were increasingly subservient to the domination of the international ultraliberal economic apparatus were applied. According to Laval (2019), the education system in Brazil is much more “neoliberalized” than many European systems. The reform of secondary education, Law No. 13.415, implemented in February 2017, currently proliferates the perspective of the school as an ISA, associated with the entrepreneurial relationship model, as well as the application of the “Future-se” project in higher education.

The brief presentation that the Ministry of Education makes on its website provides information that demonstrates only the market management to which universities must submit.

1. What is *Future-se*? *Future-se* seeks to strengthen the administrative, financial and management autonomy of universities and federal institutes. These actions will be developed through partnerships with social organizations. The program is divided into three axes. **2. What are the three axes? Management, Governance and Entrepreneurship.** Promote financial sustainability, by setting a limit on personnel spending at universities and institutes - today, on average, 85% of the institutions' budget is used for this purpose; establish transparency, external audit and compliance requirements; create ranking of institutions with a prize for the most efficient in spending; real estate management: stimulate the use of real estate in the Federal Government and collect through use of assignment contracts, concessions, investment funds and public-private partnerships (PPPs); provide the means for university/institute departments to raise their own resources, encouraging the sharing of knowledge and experiences between them; authorize “naming rights” (having the name of companies/sponsors and patrons in the institution) in campi and buildings, which would allow the maintenance and modernization of equipment with support from the private sector. **Research and Innovation:** install research and innovation centers, as well as technology parks; ensure a favorable business environment for the creation and consolidation of startups, that is, of technology-based companies; bring institutions closer to companies to facilitate access to private resources for those that have research and development ideas; reward the main innovative projects, with emphasis on universities and institutes that have better performance, respecting the initial conditions and specificities of each one. **Internationalization:** encourage exchange of students and teachers, with a focus on applied research; revalidation of foreign titles and diplomas by public and private institutions with high performance, according to MEC criteria; facilitate access to and promotion of subjects on online platforms; establish partnerships with private institutions to promote publications of journals outside the country; enable scholarships for Brazilian students with high academic and athletic performance in foreign institutions. (MEC. Available at: <http://www.mec.gov.br/future-se>. Access on: September 29, 2019).

It is not appropriate to make a lengthy presentation on *Future-se* here, but incentive for private investments in public universities are contemplated, which, in the long term, aims to restrict access to the university for those who can pay for it, thus consolidating the privatization process of this institution.

The entrepreneurial and technicist discourse is strongly directed at the university to foster the training of professionals focused exclusively on the labor market, disregarding investment in scientific research and development that is not immediately linked to the interest of capital. Long-term research is not considered to be productive. This way of proceeding, according to the government's understanding, strikingly attacks the human and social sciences as those that do not contribute to and even hinder the process of economic development, causing expenditure to society and, therefore, must be eliminated.

The reform of secondary education also serves the interests of an ideological apparatus that imposes the economic interest above the school interest, as it eliminates the mandatory nature of the multiple regular subjects that we know, making only Portuguese and English languages and Mathematics regular subjects during the three years of this learning stage. In this sense, a space for generic knowledge areas is opened up, in which professionals of “notorious knowledge” can act. According to the Law, “Professionals with a notorious knowledge recognized by the respective education systems, to deliver content from areas related to training or professional experience, attested by specific qualifications or teaching practice in educational units.” (Law 13.415, Art. 5, paragraph IV).

The increase in teaching hours includes the so-called integral education, which in theory seems to be interesting from the point of view of consolidating knowledge, but it does not take into account the structure of schools, regional differences, or even the daily life of the school-aged worker, making this a reform that mainly serves the ruling class' interests. According to the Law, “The minimum annual workload should be progressively increased, in high school, to one thousand and four hundred hours, and the education systems should offer, within a maximum period of five years, at least one thousand annual hours of workload, as of March 2, 2017” (Law no. 13.425, §1). In this sense, high school in its totality will reach 4,200 hours, of which 1,800 will be of National Common Curricular Base (BNCC) and the rest, 2,400 or more, of diversified content. Such modeling of hours means that students receive more specific training content than what is basic content for teaching; in this context, the basic training aimed at criticism and human emancipation are extremely lacerated, as they will have very few hours.

Such changes, which do not take into account the diverse demands of an average of 80% of young Brazilians who study in public schools, recommend that all students compete for exams for access to higher education. While families that can afford private schools, in which their children will be trained for ENEM (National High School Exam which grade is a requirement for access to higher education), will be those whose children will have access to education at the best universities. For public schools, where most of the impoverished youth are, professionals with “notorious knowledge” will be able to teach classes for the training of technical labor, which in the context of labor reform is completely precarious. Distance learning is offered for many young workers, but only as a means of distorting education.

The education offered to those subjects who need training the most to overcome their condition of class prejudice makes them intentionally remain imprisoned in the same condition. Hence the distortion of teaching, since despite the minds articulating a teaching improvement discourse, they actually intend that students surrounded by control and coercion apparatuses have access to teaching platforms through access to computers and the Internet, but students do not have access to these tools. The option, therefore, is home studies, a proposal that is still under discussion. These are desubjectivological technological methods, which use apparatuses and framing devices that empty the real possibilities of interaction and transformative knowledge, therefore preventing the real possibility of changing their living conditions, except in exceptional cases when they will be used by minds that think of education as examples of meritocracy, strengthening the perverse idea of “self-entrepreneurship.” Still referring to the debate on home studies, it gains space within the traditional families gathered by the neo-Pentecostal churches that defend this teaching modality, raising the flag of a conservative liberalism, in the face of the moralistic interests that they defend.

On the topic of basic education and the teaching / control apparatuses, there are large conglomerates and educational groups with their publishers and teaching systems ready to be sold. Laval (2019) states that Brazil was one of the first countries in the world to arrive at what he calls “school and university capitalism.” The massive dominance of giant companies listed on the stock exchange, such as the Kroton, Estácio, Anhanguera group, with more than 1.5 million students, shows how education is

treated, mainly in Brazil. “School neoliberalism resulted in a real war between classes to enter the “good schools” of an increasingly hierarchical and unequal school and university system.” (LAVAL, 2019, p. 13).

In a short time we will be able to see the offer of education professionals both at a distance and in outsourced services for schools and families. Thus, applying the business logic of profit and competitiveness, they offer the cheapest service to the most extraordinary gain, therefore, not always prizing the quality of teaching and humanization of the service provided. In this context, we can have low quality classes for public school students and a new model of home education for the affluent class, based on charging high values for services provided individually to these financially privileged students.

With regard to this same theme in Brazil, we cannot renounce the reflections that Severino (Rio Claro, 1941) makes about the condition of education in our society, especially with regard to ideology (SEVERINO, 1986). According to him, the operating mode it finds itself is currently assumed to be neoliberal in profile. Characterized “with expressions in the cultural plane, with its exacerbation of individualism, productivism, consumerism, cultural industry, the commodification of even symbolic goods, it does not establish any postmodernity.” (SEVERINO, 2000, n.p.). That is to say, the way our society is organized and, therefore, constructs the educational process is embedded in the ideological processes that capitalism has imposed since modernity. For the Brazilian author, we have not reached postmodernity, because in society the maturation of the premises and promises of modernity itself is still deepening. “Nothing is more modern than this technicization, made possible by the information revolution. Finally, modernity is fulfilling the promises embedded in its civilizing project. Nothing is more modern than the selfish individualism of today.” (SEVERINO, 2000, n.p.).

Severino warns us that we must not lose sight of the historicity of human existence, which is hidden by the refined ideological process that the end of the utopias of human progress can also mean the end of history (SEVERINO, 2000). And the reality of the Latin American historical context is marked by the exclusion of human beings’ rights. Thus, it is necessary to observe with bravery that the current situation in Brazil in the twenty-first century denies the idea that the right way to build a mature, just and democratic society would have already been found. For Severino:

The modernization process that the continent has gone through and that continues to occur is happening at a very high price. The capitalist-based economic organization, under a political climate of internal domination by national elites and the external domination of international groups, imposes a socioeconomic configuration in which the living conditions of the vast majority of the population remain extremely precarious. In fact, the acclaimed globalization process of the economy seems to universalize the advantages of productive capital and the disadvantages of wage labor. Given this situation, knowledge in general and education in particular are challenged in relation to their historical role. The picture of Brazil's social and educational reality shows how far the historical existence of Brazilians is from reaching a minimum level of quality. It also shows how serious the educational deficit is in quantitative and qualitative terms and how great the challenge for education managers in Brazil. They are required to make a more critical assessment of the real situation in our society and to be more vigilant in the face of the wailing sirens of neoliberalism. (SEVERINO, 2000, n.p.)

It seems that, until now, education is not the lever that enables the transformation of society, since it is still under the exclusive demands of capitalist economic formation; as Althusser warned, the school is an ideological apparatus, and now allied with the economic apparatus. So we must be aware of how we can act to transform this device.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Althusser was classified as a structuralist for making analyzes of the basic functioning of every ideology as a system that involves four instances: 1) the interpellation of concrete individuals as subjects; 2) these individuals subjected to the Subject; 3) the mutual recognition between the subjects and the Subject, the recognition of the subjects among themselves and finally the recognition of the subject by himself; 4) the absolute guarantee that everything is really like this, and under the condition that the

subjects recognize what they are and behave as such everything will go well: amen - so be it. (ALTHUSSER, 1980).

Such understanding implies the dimension that the ideological interpellation and its connection with the ISA, especially the school, cannot renounce the Lacanian formula of fantasy. That is, once again, this short circuit, this gap between these two phenomena, so fundamental to the implementation of ideology, has as touchstone the space where fantasy presents itself. Althusser (1980) pointed out this space laterally when he developed the thesis that “ideology is a ‘representation’ of the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence”. However, as it is an explanation based on idealisms, this is not enough to explain how such a phenomenon manifests itself materially; that is why it points out the interpellation as a connection point, for the instrumentalization of the ISA that are in a dialectical relationship with the interpellation itself. What Althusser did not take into account is that there was still an unexplained space where fantasy operates. Thus Žižek reminds us that:

This is the dimension overlooked in the Althusserian account of interpellation: before being caught in the identification, in the symbolic recognition/misrecognition, the subject (\$) is trapped by the Other through a paradoxical object-cause of desire in the midst of it (a), through this secret supposed to be hidden in the Other: $\$ \Delta a$ – the Lacanian formula of fantasy. What does it mean, more precisely, to say that ideological fantasy structures reality itself? Let us explain by starting from the fundamental Lacanian thesis that in the opposition between dream and reality, fantasy is on the side of reality: it is, as Lacan once said, the support that gives consistency to what we call ‘reality’. (ŽIŽEK, 1996, p. 323).

That is why, at the beginning of this work, we tried to show that ideology is not an illusion, much less an illusion of the dream type. For our understanding, ideology is a construction of fantasy that supports our reality. An illusion in the sense that structures our real and effective social relations, and that, for this reason, masks the unbearable impossible real nucleus; its function in this respect is not to provide an escape from reality, but reality itself as an escape from the traumatic real core. Returning here to Althusser’s position, it is appropriate to point to what is most relevant in it:

[...] all ideology represents in its necessarily imaginary distortion not the existing relations of production [...], but above all the (imaginary) relationship of individuals to the relations of production and the relations that derive from them. What is represented in ideology is therefore not the system of the real relations which govern the existence of individuals, but the imaginary relations of those individuals to the real relations in which they live. (ALTHUSSER, 1980, p. 82).

For Žižek (1996), fantasy is thought within ideology, because fantasy is both what covers the inconsistencies within the symbolic order and what allows ideological interpellation in our apparently post-ideological time. It is through this apparent distance from ideology that fantasy captures subjectivity. There is always a gap between public discourse and its phantasmatic support. Far from being a secondary weakness, or a sign of imperfection in power, this split is constitutive of its exercise. The fact is that there is no reality without the specter (fantasy) that the circle of reality can only be closed by means of a strange spectral supplement.

Another limitation in Althusser, in addition to the lack of a deep link between ideology and materiality, is to question, in the case of blunt criticism of state apparatus, repressive and ideological apparatus, and all apparatus in general, and their overthrow: how to organize society? The perspective that the author provides puts in check all forms of institutional organization and the forming of economic relations without bringing any perspective or indication of what to do if we end up with the apparatuses. An outdated nihilistic attitude remains in his reading. In the scenario presented by Althusser, how is the organization of the social and political body of society? Without institutions, which are all repressive and ideological, how do we organize ourselves? There is no overcoming of the apparatus; we criticize it, the school and all institutions in a very fair and fruitful way, but how will we organize ourselves? Do we need organization? Education? Is this entire apparatus only at the service of the bourgeois school? All of these questions are left open in Althusser’s readings. A few years later, authors

will answer them, like Bourdieu, in the case of education, and other thinkers about ideology in general, but in Althusser, we find no answers.

Regarding education and the school, in particular, we need to be permanently attentive to the apparatus and *dispositif* that it composes in the bourgeois State, but we understand that the school institution needs to persist as a place for learning culture, science and citizenship. The school needs to be aligned, in the foreground, with the logic of human emancipation and the formation of thinking beings capable of understanding the ideology to which even the school is subjected. Tensioning this view so that the student becomes the subject of the knowledge process, we will build an approach full of events and that needs to be permanently in transformation, as it is never complete, as the subject never is. Education as a whole must unmask and sharpen awareness of social contradictions, contributing to their overcoming in objective reality. “It can also be an element that generates new forms of world conceptions capable of opposing the dominant world conception in a given socio-cultural context.” (SEVERINO, 2000, n.p.).

The school cannot be suppressed from society, but it needs to precisely persist as a turning point in society’s alienated understanding. It needs to be the condition of life, which understands ideology beyond naivety. The school needs to be a space that guarantees autonomy, including in relation to the ISA that the family and the economy are, since these apparatuses can mainly coerce childhood and youth. Understanding how the ideology works and affects education and the school allows the studenta to transform the school towards an act of overcoming the social problems they face daily.

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