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Physical Activity and Mental Health

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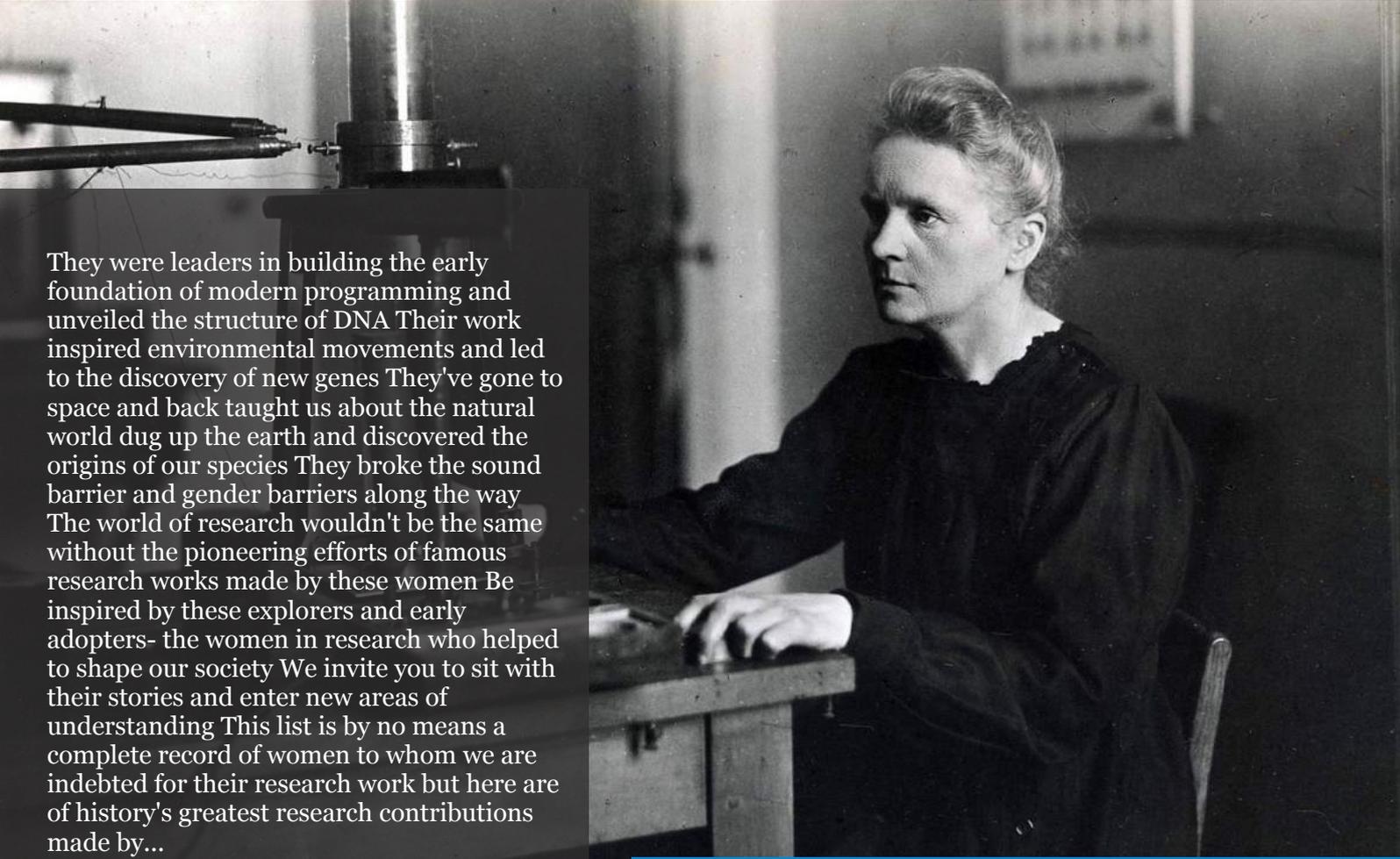
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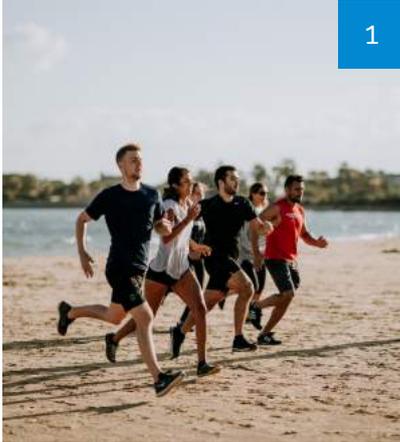
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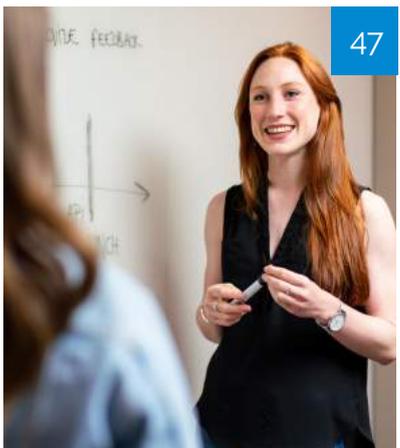
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Physical Activity and Mental Health: A Multidisciplinary Team

Maria Cristina Zago (PhD)

ABSTRACT

This paper aimed to describe the use of the *Physical Activity Group* technique in a mental health facility. It presents a qualitative analysis of experiences reported by a Physical Educator and a Nursing Technician regarding intervention in the practice of physical activity (PA) for subjects with severe mental illness (SMI). The instrument used was an open semi-structured interview, allowing new ideas to be brought up during its elaboration. Results indicate that PA plays an essential role in therapeutic projects, especially when it takes part in groups' procedures coordinated by trained professionals. Additionally, multidisciplinary work is fundamental on patient adherence and further attendance to this intervention. Finally, mental health practices should assist social rehabilitation, favour the beingness and promote human dignity.

Keywords: mental health; psychology; group psychotherapy; physical education.

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Maria Cristina Zago (PhD)

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This paper aimed to describe the use of the Physical Activity Group technique in a mental health facility. It presents a qualitative analysis of experiences reported by a Physical Educator and a Nursing Technician regarding intervention in the practice of physical activity (PA) for subjects with severe mental illness (SMI). The instrument used was an open semi-structured interview, allowing new ideas to be brought up during its elaboration. Results indicate that PA plays an essential role in therapeutic projects, especially when it takes part in groups' procedures coordinated by trained professionals. Additionally, multidisciplinary work is fundamental on patient adherence and further attendance to this intervention. Finally, mental health practices should assist social rehabilitation, favour the beingness and promote human dignity.

Keywords: mental health; psychology; group psychotherapy; physical education.

I. INTRODUCTION

Physical activity (PA) in health promotion and disease prevention has gained importance in recent decades. Fighting inactivity has become a significant global challenge. According to the specificities of each age group, the World Health Organization (WHO, 2010), aware of this issue, published recommendations regarding PA practice. Currently, the concept of health (WHO, 1992) is defined as “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and not simply, the absence of disease or illness”. Consequently, health programs are becoming more complex,

demanding integrated actions. Different perspectives of scientific knowledge contribute to making them more cohesive and adequate to specific objectives. It is also necessary to consider the social context of the population. Thus, Physical Education Professionals started working in unusual places, such as Psychosocial Care Centers (CAPS) and others related to the psych area. It is interesting to note that a survey of 620 psychologists indicates that many of them consider themselves willing and potentially able to promote PA as part of the psychological treatment of patients and would like to work in programs of this nature (Burton, Pakenham, & Brown, 2010).

However, there is still a need to clarify the consequences of PA practice in individuals with severe mental illness (SMI), especially concerning the psychic repercussions from the dynamic point of view. The World Health Organization organizes its recommendations for PA practice by age groups. But the psychological benefits appear discreetly: “reduced symptoms of anxiety and depression” (age group between 5 to 17 years); in individuals between 18 and 64 years old, and over 65 years old, a “decreased risk of NCDs (non-communicable diseases) and depression”, (WHO, 2010, p.7).

It is essential to highlight that PA is considered walking and structured exercise, including group physical activity or sport (Soundy, Faulkner, & Taylor, 2007). In a critical review of the literature, Alexandratos, Barnett and Thomas (2012) investigated the impact of exercise on mental health and quality of life of people with SMI. The authors concluded that exercise could contribute to mood, concentration, sleep patterns and

alleviate psychotic symptoms. At the same time, they list other additional benefits: increased quality of life through social interaction, meaningful use of time. Considering the specific needs of that population, they recommend further investigations to get more data about the practice of exercises. They reinforce that new studies should focus on psychological assessments to provide more evidence on the therapeutic effectiveness of this practice.

Subsequently, Lourenço et al. (2017) have recommended that nursing care professionals add PA and other educational practices to their mental health programs. At the same time, the article reflects on the role of PA in psychosocial rehabilitation. It is essential to emphasize “the need for further studies regarding scientific evidence of physical activity to health, concerning weight gain and the prevention of metabolic syndrome” (p.7).

Also, the professionals should adhere to PA practice in mental health facilities; since it is a viable, low-cost and, potentially therapeutic tool in treating these patients, whether in day-care centers (outpatients) or a situation of intensive care (inpatients). Thus, “PA practice in mental health facilities depends on the way managers understand care interventions and the elaboration of treatment programs (...) the value that caregivers confer to this practice, and the availability of everyone to provide support” (Zago & Padilha, 2017, p.620).

In addition, adequate social support offered to patients with SMI can act in the opposite direction to the barriers they report, hindering access to PA, such as anxiety and depressive symptoms (Bonsaksen, 2011). Nursing professionals, physical education professionals, and psychologists should play that role.

In a survey carried out at the CAPS in the city of Goiânia (Goiás State, Brazil) to analyze the main interventional characteristics of the Physical Education Professional, Furtado et al. (2015) point out that the work routine seems to be concentrated in therapeutic care activities (therapeutic workshops). Therefore, the Physical

Education Professional has legitimized his performance in Units that care for patients with SMI in the national territory. However, this performance would include discreet participation in family care activities and joint consultations, which would indicate a certain distance from the area of Physical Education concerning the clinical dimension of care and multi-professional work. On the other hand, a recent study points to the importance of integrating Physical Education as an auxiliary science to Psychiatry, according to an interdisciplinary perspective of mental health treatment (Melo, Oliveira & Vasconcelos-Raposo, 2014).

Subsequently, Furtado, Cavalari Neto, Rios, Martinez and Oliveira (2016) sought to understand the work routine of Physical Education Professionals at CAPS, paying attention to the daily and practical actions that give identity to the area. Thus, they point to two related categories: therapeutic care (63.8% of activities) and the planning, organization, and evaluation of therapeutic care (36.2% of activities). In addition, most therapeutic workshops involved body practices, showing the identity of Physical Education.

The history of the emergence and evolution of group psychotherapy in health institutions since the last century leaves no doubt that the group constitutes an adequate therapeutic tool for patients with SMI. Furthermore, PA can mediate between the components of the group. Thus, this practice is considered a new intervention in mental health facilities, especially in situations of impaired verbal communication, mutism or delusional processes (Zago & Terzis, 2012; Zago, Terzis, & Padilha, 2014; Zago & Padilha, 2017).

II. METHOD

2.1 Context

In this way, caregivers, mainly psychotherapists, nursing technicians and physical education professionals, acted in this unconventional setting so that patients could re-establish links with external reality. As follows, the Nursing Technician and the Physical Education

Professional had as main functions: to monitor, observe and participate, notably, in PA group practice, with the patients, sometimes, forming the subgroups, according to the spontaneous emergence of this demand.

It was essential to work on the engagement of the professionals with the development of this group technique. The researcher highlighted the intervention proposal's objectives and negotiated the administrative preparations, such as time, duration and frequency of the session (Foulkes, 1967), and others related to the unique characteristics of this group. The institution's manager must be attentive to the efficiency of this intervention and, especially, to the organization of the mental health facility staff to support the development of the procedure (Kadis, Krasner, & Foulkes, 1967).

The subjects were SMI patients from a Psychosocial Care Center, which constituted a small group (Kaës, 2005). Sixteen patients participated (aged between 27 and 56 years). The group was mixed in gender (15 men and one woman); there was a plurality of diagnosis. New patient admissions and dropouts were allowed (an open group) (Foulkes & Anthony, 1967). The frequency of sessions was once a week, with the duration of two hours each.

Participants met to PA practice in a Community Social Center, which is attached to the same Institution as the Psychosocial Care Center. According to the *Physical Activity Group* technique (Zago, 2014), the Psychologist and the Nursing Technician initially mobilized the patients at the Psychosocial Care Center. Then, there was the walk to the Community Social Center, as a therapeutic follow-up. The Physical Education Professional is the reference there for the group practice. In addition to the Psychotherapist, the Nursing Technician accompanied the group ensuring support to some physical demand (pain and general complaints) or psychic (motor agitation, etc.). At the Community Social Center, two 'captains' drew up the teams. Then there was the PA group practice within 30 min. After that, the professionals offered a free discussion moment (symbolic moment) for 20

min. At last, the group returned to the Psychosocial Care Center.

2.2 Participants

Two professionals responded to a semi-structured interview: a Physical Education Professional (a licensed professional inserted in a Community Social Center, Campinas region, State of São Paulo, Brazil); a Nursing Technician (professional inserted in a Psychosocial Care Center which is part of the same Institution).

2.3 Procedure

The semi-structured interviews were carried out individually in the respective units they worked (appropriate place). As this was a semi-structured interview, the author added other questions to those previously elaborated (Turato, 2010). Both interviewees consented to the transcription of the recordings. The researcher chose and analyzed excerpts of the interviews as they endorsed and explained how the group procedure could be a therapeutic assistant for patients with SMI. The professionals verbally communicated their impressions about the group activity stemming from the so-called triggering questions (Fontanella, Campos & Turato, 2006): 1-) How did you perceive adherence to group activity? 2-) How did you participate in this activity? 3-) How did you perceive the group's relationship with the community? 4-) What are your impressions of the relationships between patients during the process? 5-) How did you perceive the relationship between the professionals involved in the development of the activity? 6-) Would you like to add anything else?

2.4 Analysis

Finally, the content analysis followed the seven steps of the method proposed by Clinical-qualitative Content Analysis technique: 1) Editing material for analysis; 2) Floating reading; 3) Construction of the units of analysis; 4) Construction of codes of meaning; 5) General refining of the codes and the Construction of categories; 6) Discussion; 7) Validity. Therefore, the analysis involves a critical reflection on the

procedure carried out at each seven steps (Faria-Schützer, Surita, Alves, Bastos, Campos, & Turato, 2021).

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Adherence

Both professionals bring considerations regarding the patients' adherence to this intervention proposal. The Professional of Physical Education (PE) point that PA should have a playful character: "We have to offer something pleasurable for them. Something that gives them pleasure; then success is guaranteed (...). Sport is a facilitator" (S. L., Santos, personal communication, August 15, 2014) In turn, the Nursing Technician (NT) considers that the proposal should make sense to the patients: "As much as you try, as the other users try, the team tries, if the initiative came not from the patient, I find it very difficult. The first point is this" (W. C., Soier, personal communication, August, 30, 2014).

PE states that group PA practice is an essential ally for patients with SMI: "I think the mental health patient at this level does not join the group as often. This group of sports they manage to support (...) sport is just a tool to continue his treatment" (Santos, 2014). Therefore, he corroborates the considerations of other authors (Zago & Terzis, 2012).

In addition, PA can also be a strategy for establishing patients' bonds to the mental facility. In this way, it can favor the treatment process as a whole: "sports group can keep users inserted in the Unit as well. It is what makes him adhere to the treatment" (Santos, 2014).

WHO (2010) not only recognizes the benefits of PA, but also recommends this practice. In global terms, it fights against physical inactivity for the maintenance and promotion of health. Furthermore, it has called for concrete action by governments in this regard. There seems to be a lack of pragmatism complying with those guidelines in mental health facilities. Thus, PE signals: "today it is fashionable to talk about PA, (...) it is good for this, it is good for that, (...)

However, there is a lack of engagement in this practice in primary care units and mental health facilities" (Santos, 2014). This statement highlights the vital role of caregivers (doctors, psychologists, nurses, etc.) in patients' adherence and attendance to this therapeutic proposal (Zago & Terzis, 2014; Zago & Padilha, 2017; Daltio, 2018). Even though mental health professionals have recognized the therapeutic effects of PA, few recommend this practice to their patients (Mcentee & Halgin, 1996; Zago & Padilha, 2017; Daltio, 2018). In this sense, PE adds: "I think there is a need for greater involvement of the caregivers so that we can reach a greater number of users" (Santos, 2014).

Using an organicist theory viewpoint, NT comments the patient's adherence to this propose: "In case of a group procedure that implies physical movement (...) it is more complicated. Taking into consideration their lifestyle, some of them prefer to be more isolated" (Soier, 2014). It corroborates the findings of other authors, such as Leibovich & Iancu (2007), Johnstone et al. (2009), concerning non-adherence of that population's sedentary lifestyle, and sometimes social isolation. Literature suggests that patients with SMI have low levels of participation in PA when compared to control groups of subjects that do not fall into this category (Nyboe & Lund, 2012). Furthermore, NT points out: the cooking group (...) fills the kitchen, it happens inside here (...) No! Sports group is different. You have to leave the mental health facility to reach the Community Social Center and return to the Unit afterwards" (Soier, 2014).

3.2 Becoming a group

Both professionals did not have formal knowledge about group formation. Despite this, they describe group emergence: "I think we had a return in every week. I think this was strengthening the bond with us and the group itself, right? With each other" (Santos, 2014). NT points out: "At the beginning, I was a little insecure; whether it was going to work or not; and then in the course (...) they believed in them more. Being in a group, something that didn't happen before" (Soier, 2014). Groups gradually structure themselves as

units during the analytical work when identification processes are favored, links are established between the participants and between them and the coordinator (s). In this sense, Freudian social psychology postulates that identification places itself as “the most remote expression of an emotional bond with another person” (Freud, 1921/1996, p.115). In this sense, at the beginning of the process of forming a group, there is “a first, uncertain, protoplasmic body, in which the limits of the interior and exterior are still mobile: the differences in the structure of space are only outlined” (Kaës, 1976, p. 93).

At the same time, there was insecurity, distrust, fear of failure in their depositions. The PE puts his impressions: “We started in a very discreet way; going slow like this, patients afraid of not working. Would the group succeed, or not?” (Santos, 2014). At the same time, NT is categorical: “Because when it started, it was doubt, uncertainty” (Soier, 2014). At the beginning of the development of a group activity, anxiety about the unknown is expected (Pichon-Rivière, 1971). Furthermore, these narratives of group formation are not restricted to the moment of performing the group activity: “When I go to CAPS, sometimes, it is just like that. This group is constituted. They talk to each other, they stay together” (Santos, 2014). Moreover, he reports identification processes “is a group since they identify themselves with each other. They like the same thing, in this case, sport, football” (Santos, 2014). PE highlights the structuring of affective bonds between the group members in a way that stands out: “what I perceive is that a group is constituted. As if it were a group of friends that we created” (Santos, 2014). A very expressive testimony, in each section, resuming: “we created it” (Santos, 2014), signals a group matrix that was being woven: “The mother is the one who generated a person. The matrix is a common ground where a group or a crowd was generated” (Neri, 1995). Then he adds: “you end up creating a group, with your face, with the people you like, that you are involved with, you end up taking it to life too. It has had such an effect” (Santos, 2014). At this moment, there is a signal of the effectiveness of the proposal. The

benefits would not be restricted to the group space. The professionals seem to observe the construction of the feeling of brotherhood among the participants. In this sense, at a given moment, the NT comments: “the few who embraced the group, embraced which other, one missing the other” (Soier, 2014). Thus, the community of brothers “is not present at the beginning of the work, but is born when the members become aware of being a group” (Neri, 1995, p.215).

3.3 *The conviviality*

Both professionals bring considerations about PA practice's benefits (physical and psychic ones); that is, they report incorporating a broad concept of health. NT speeches contemplate the therapeutic character of this procedure: “it was not just playing and leaving. No! Afterwards, there was a conversation” (Soier, 2014). The ‘conversation’ refers to the moment for spontaneous verbal expression, the language, the interdiscursive processes: “I think the conversation at the end made the difference” (Soier, 2014). Thus, he retrieves past experiences and comments: “before that, the group played ball (...) and returned” (Soier, 2014). This professional recognizes the importance of the so-called ‘symbolic moment’ (space reserved for effective use of the free speech): “In the end, those conversations were a possibility for them to unwind” (Soier, 2014). Later, he also reports the social aspect of the procedure when he says: “the group was not just an activity, but to live with the people there” (Soier, 2014). Here the intention of the proposal is reinforced in terms of social rehabilitation, ‘coexist’ in its broadest meaning, by electing a Community Social Center as a place to carry out the activity. In this sense, Owens et al. (2010) investigated the promotion of well-being in mental health facilities from users and professionals’ perspectives. Partnerships with community social centers, such as those that provide PA practice, are essential. The scientific literature points out that PA can reduce social isolation and promote the engagement of individuals with SMI in mental health facilities, offering safe opportunities for social interaction (Carter-Morris & Faulkner, 2003; Zago & Terzis, 2012; Zago & Padilha, 2017).

PE seems to emphasize the coexistence, which can be understood in terms of the intersubjectivity that group activity favored in every detail. This proposal highlighted this by locating collective PA in a community center: “This is therapeutic. The patient comes here, lives with other people. This helps in his treatment too. Rescue him of his daily life. I think this is an answer for the therapeutics” (Santos, 2014).

3.4 The group technique

PE considers essential the offer of qualified interventional activities: “where they (patients) were, it was not a Health Service Unit with prepared professionals; it was something more punctual, an activity and that's it” (Santos, 2014). The environment and its surroundings are perceived as enabling or inhibiting the group therapeutic process: “it was a public space, they went with the CAPS staff; they stayed more with themselves” (Santos, 2014). Some barriers reported by patients with SMI to participate in PA programs refer to the offered environment, for example: fear of unsafe conditions, fear of discrimination (Mcdevitt, Snyder, Miller & Wilbur, 2006). On the other hand, PE points out the need for programs for PA practice, concerned with the profile, characteristics, and specific demands of the public: “When they came to the Community Social Center, there was another proposal, which is health promotion, in fact. A team is already prepared (...) a qualified offer” (Santos, 2014).

3.5 Relationships Practice

The professionals recover their initial fears regarding the encounter between patients and people in the community: “In the beginning, I think there was more our fear than that of patients” (Santos, 2014), especially concerning the proximity to children: “There was football, the children showed up” (Santos, 2014). In the same way, NT comments: “At the beginning, I was a little insecure. We didn't know what the reaction from the community and the patients would be” (Soier, 2014). These comments seem to report the social segregation often experienced by patients considered as “crazy”. The initial expectations and

fears presented in the statements refer to a profound cleavage in society regarding what is “healthy” and “sick”, “normal”, and “abnormal” (Bleger, 1991). Notably, the separation between two groups is suggested in this excerpt: the patients and the community.

Later, both are surprised by the results of this practice. Undoubtedly, there is a significant investment from these professionals. There is an effort to transform ideologies (Psychiatric Reform) into practical actions. A “peripatetic clinic” should be a clinic that leaves mental facilities (Lancetti, 2006). The professionals would invest in patients’ potentialities without denying their particular difficulties. PE seems to signal a process of building together up: “We were experimenting. I think the process went well. In the beginning, they were already interacting with each other. There was no distance between the children and the patients, or the community itself” (Santos, 2014). Right afterwards, he said: “Users were very calm (...) it was easy” (Santos, 2014). He refers to the patients as “users” (the term is common one in mental health facilities), instead of “patients”. In this sense there appears the constant search for overcoming segregation, categorization, and the subject's rescue. Besides, NT comments: “Then the time passed, we started to see that the patients were joining the community” (Soier, 2014). Then he points out: “I thought they developed close bondings with one another” (Soier, 2014). The comments seem to corroborate that this group technique provides opportunities for establishing bonds and social rehabilitation. Professionals reinforce that it can unit or reunite patients with the local community and vice versa. PE adds that: “we assist the patient. Then, he can manage to interact with children, with adults, with the community in general” (Santos, 2014). Furthermore, NT brings an observation that addresses social belonging: “I thought it was cool that the patient remembered the names of the other community participants. And the participants also remember the patients' names” (Soier, 2014). Soon after, he concludes that “you created a friendship between them, companionship, it was cool” (Soier, 2014). In this sense, it is understood that the group activity

avored socialization processes, enabling the learning of relationships (Foulkes & Anthony, 1967).

PE speeches reflect the concept of an expanded clinic, which has become one of the guiding principles of Mental Health practices in Brazil (Campos, 2003). Strikingly, he expresses the choice for a clinic in which the disease is part of the subject's life but never totally dislocates him: "We don't work aiming at a diagnosis, we work aiming at people" (Santos, 2014). Contrary to the notion of the traditional clinic, in which the subject is reduced to a disease, or a diseased organ, this professional adds: "In this place (Community Social Center) they are not only recognized by their madness, but by the subjects that they are" (Santos, 2014). Thus, the expanded clinic understands the subject as biological, social and subjective. Once again, this professional shows his commitment to the expanded clinic in this excerpt: "I think that the Community Social Center is the one that performs the Psychosocial rehabilitation" Santos, 2014).

3.6 Multidisciplinary Approach

Health promotion and disease prevention require multiple theoretical-scientific perspectives. Both professionals expressed the power of clinical practice by different views, "So as not to get something contaminated by a single bias. In our case, we had three areas thinking together. It is different if everyone was a psychologist or physical educator" (Santos, 2014). In addition, NT underlined professional collaboration: "each one completed the other's work" (Soier, 2014). However, sharing knowledge and actions requires availability; it should be a daily "exercise". But, in the institutional routine, this dialogue is not always possible. Certainly, existential diversity makes up collectiveness. In this way, dealing with differences is fundamental for coexistence in groups. "Of course, there are things that one think in a way that is not so equal to what the others think, but one learns from others" (Santos, 2014). In the course of the interview, NT resumed the strength of the collective work: "I think what has made a difference for the group maintenance was this: I am here, you (psychologist), and the

(physical educator professional) from there (...) it was not centered on one person" (Soier, 2014). In addition, he underlined the caregiver's roles and functions in group procedure: "my technical training permitted me to be here (CAPS) with them, to make this bridge, to take them there (Community Social Center), to care" (Soier, 2014). The literature calls attention to the nursing area's essential role in encouraging and assisting patients to PA practice (Happell, Phung-Platania & Scott, 2011). Then, he points out: "PE's academic education allowed the opportunity for the activity practice" (Soier, 2014). His comment seems to circumscribe the performance of the physical educator professional to the practice of PA. Even though PA benefits can go beyond those expected in body movement (Daltio, 2018), finally, the area of psychology would be marked by favoring verbal communication: "I think that psychologist offered a moment for conversation" (Soier, 2014). He concludes by emphasizing, once again, the singular and plural character of this procedure: "I think these three things formed one" (Soier, 2014).

VI. CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

Health promotion and disease prevention strategies should count on plural theoretical-scientific perspectives. Both professionals interviewed emphasized the importance of the collectiveness, which is constructed, deconstructed and reconstructed in a continuous dialectical movement.

The technique effectiveness resides in the joint work of professionals with different educational trajectories, who, by sharing knowledge and practices, propitiate the development of multifaceted therapeutic projects. The aim is to rescue subjects and legitimate their condition as citizens. Indeed, mental health practices should promote social rehabilitation and genuine "coexistence" in benefit to human dignity.

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School Inclusion in the Framework of the New Legal Regulation in Chile

José Manuel Salum Tomé, PhD

ABSTRACT

Today, the link between concepts of education and diversity are far away in Chilean schools, and even more so in the country's educational policies, which are only interested in the concept of inclusion as a concept that is more segregating than inclusive.

Already three years after it was enacted by President Michelle Bachelet, on Tuesday, March 1 of this year, the School Inclusion Law begins to be officially applied.

Doubts, criticisms and marked differences persist from different sectors towards the new regulation that in principle intends to end profit, selection and co-payment in subsidized private education establishments and not the integration and inclusion of students with SEN as a focus major.

Keywords: inclusion, diversity, sen, profit, selection, copay.

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School Inclusion in the Framework of the New Legal Regulation in Chile

Inclusión Escolar en El Marco de la Nueva Normativa Legal en Chile

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RESUMEN

Hoy en día, la vinculación entre conceptos de educación y diversidad están muy lejos en las escuelas de Chile, y aún más en las políticas educativas del país, que solo interesa el concepto de inclusión como un concepto más segregador que inclusivo.

Ya a tres años de que fuera promulgada por la Presidenta Michelle Bachelet, el martes 1 de marzo del presente año, comienza a aplicarse oficialmente la Ley de Inclusión Escolar.

Dudas, críticas y marcadas diferencias persisten desde distintos sectores hacia la nueva normativa que en principio se propone terminar con el lucro, la selección y el copago en los establecimientos de educación particular subvencionada y no a la integración e inclusión de los alumnos con NEE como foco principal.

Palabras claves: Inclusión, diversidad, NEE, Lucro, selección, copago.

RESUME

Today, the link between concepts of education and diversity are far away in Chilean schools, and even more so in the country's educational policies, which are only interested in the concept of inclusion as a concept that is more segregating than inclusive.

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education establishments and not the integration and inclusion of students with SEN as a focus major.

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I. INTRODUCCIÓN

La UNESCO (2010) define la educación inclusiva en su documento conceptual así: “*La inclusión se ve como el proceso de identificar y responder a la diversidad de las necesidades de todos los estudiantes a través de la mayor participación en el aprendizaje, las culturas y las comunidades, y reduciendo la exclusión en la educación. Involucra cambios y modificaciones en contenidos, aproximaciones, estructuras y estrategias, con una visión común que incluye a todos los niño/as del rango de edad apropiado y la convicción de que es la responsabilidad del sistema regular, educar a todos los niño/as*”

Se basa en el principio de que cada niño/a tiene características, intereses, capacidades y necesidades de aprendizaje distintos y deben ser los sistemas educativos los que están diseñados, y los programas educativos puestos en marcha, teniendo en cuenta la amplia diversidad de dichas características y necesidades. Se ocupa de aportar respuestas pertinentes a toda la gama de necesidades educativas en contextos pedagógicos escolares y extraescolares.

Lejos de ser un tema marginal sobre cómo se puede integrar a algunos estudiantes en la corriente educativa principal, es un método en el que se reflexiona sobre cómo transformar los

sistemas educativos a fin de que respondan a la diversidad de los estudiantes.

La educación es un derecho, no un privilegio

La educación inclusiva es una aproximación estratégica diseñada para facilitar el aprendizaje exitoso para todos los niño/as y jóvenes. Hace referencia a metas comunes para disminuir y superar todo tipo de exclusión desde una perspectiva del derecho humano a una educación; tiene que ver con acceso, participación y aprendizaje exitoso Parte de la defensa de igualdad de oportunidades para todos los niño/as. Tiene que ver con remover todas las barreras para el aprendizaje, y facilitar la participación de todos los estudiantes vulnerables a la exclusión y la marginalización.

Significa que todos los estudiantes reciben los soportes que requieren para tener la oportunidad de participar como miembros de una clase o aula regular, con pares de su misma edad y de contribuir a sus colegios del vecindario. Inclusión significa posibilitar a todos los estudiantes a participar de lleno en la vida y el trabajo dentro de las comunidades, sin importar sus necesidades. Es el proceso de mayor participación de los estudiantes en el colegio y la reducción de la exclusión de las culturas, el currículo y la comunidad de los colegios locales.

La inclusión se ve más como un enfoque de la educación que como un conjunto de técnicas educativas. Dyson, J. (2018), destaca que la inclusión simplemente denota una serie de amplios principios de justicia social, equidad educativa y respuesta escolar. La *educación inclusiva* significa que todos los niño/as y jóvenes, con y sin discapacidad o dificultades, aprenden juntos en las diversas instituciones educativas regulares (preescolar, colegio/escuela, post secundaria y universidades) con un área de soportes apropiada. Más que el tipo de institución educativa a la que asisten los niño/as, tiene que ver con la calidad de la experiencia; con la forma de apoyar su aprendizaje, sus logros y su participación total en la vida de la institución.

En el último tiempo, el concepto “inclusión” ha irrumpido en el sistema escolar chileno. Observamos cómo se multiplican los adjetivos “inclusivo” para referirse a las escuelas, profesores, currículos, entre otros, tratando de responder a una demanda social por mayor acceso y oportunidades para todos y todas los niños. Simultáneamente la Ley de Inclusión que entró en vigencia en marzo del 2016 interpela a las escuelas, especialmente a las particular subvencionadas, para que revisen sus sistemas de admisión y selección y, con ello, sus reglamentos disciplinarios y sus prácticas pedagógicas y profesionales.

Esta ley regula tres principios estructurales del mercado educacional chileno. El primero, prohíbe el lucro de sostenedores privados que reciben subsidio estatal a partir de un cambio en las condiciones legales de su tenencia y administración escolar; segundo, elimina gradualmente el copago en las escuelas particular subvencionadas y, tercero, prohíbe la selección de estudiantes en todos los niveles de enseñanza. La ley de inclusión ha sido definida como un primer paso para generar condiciones administrativas y regulatorias que permitan debilitar en parte la dinámica segregadora del mercado educativo.

Sin embargo, la noción de inclusión ya estaba instalada en muchas escuelas a partir de la aplicación del decreto 170 y el programa de integración educativa (PIE). La política educativa que regula los Programas de Integración en Chile lleva en ejecución 10 años (Decreto S No 170/09). Este decreto tiene por objetivo regular el diagnóstico y la atención de estudiantes con necesidades educativas especiales (NEE) de carácter transitorio y permanente, beneficiarios directos de la subvención de educación especial. También norma los procedimientos e instrumentos de evaluación, especifica los profesionales idóneos requeridos para diagnosticar las NEE y establece un marco regulatorio para el funcionamiento de los Programas de Integración Escolar.

Así, en la escuela chilena actual coexisten, al menos, dos enfoques para regular los procesos de

inclusión e integración. El primero, enraizado en las concepciones explícitas e implícitas del decreto 170, el segundo, de forma incipiente, en los postulados de la ley de inclusión que obliga a las escuelas a replantear sus procesos de admisión y sus reglamentos disciplinarios.

En este escenario de regulaciones nuevas y demandas de la sociedad civil por escuelas inclusivas, es preciso detenerse para analizar qué se entiende por inclusión escolar. Existe una tradición desde la educación especial o diferencial que ha sostenido un debate sobre el alcance de la noción de inclusión que posee mucha fuerza en el sistema escolar. Por otra parte, existen estudios de otras ciencias sociales, desde teorías críticas y postcríticas en particular, que ofrecen definiciones de la inclusión que incluyen elementos culturales y políticos y que trascienden el espacio escolar. El objetivo de este artículo es mostrar distintas formas de comprensión de la noción de inclusión escolar recogidas desde la literatura especializada, definir criterios y orientaciones de adecuación curricular que permitan planificar propuestas educativas de calidad para los estudiantes de los niveles de educación parvularia y básica que así lo requieran. Las disposiciones y pautas que se definen y desarrollan en este documento están dirigidas a los establecimientos de educación común, con o sin programas de integración escolar, y a las escuelas especiales.

Creo que los estudios y políticas sobre inclusión en la escuela deberían tener presente desde qué perspectiva la entenderán y cómo ello repercutirá en las formas de comprensión de la equidad y la justicia en la escuela. Finalizamos proponiendo una definición de “inclusión social” como marco comprensivo para estudiar las escuelas y el sistema escolar.

II. ¿INCLUSIÓN EN CHILE?

Ya a 2 años de que fuera promulgada la Ley de Inclusión por la Ex-Presidenta Michelle Bachelet, el martes 1 de marzo del 2017, comienza a aplicarse oficialmente la Ley de Inclusión Escolar en todo Chile. En el decreto N°170/2009 de Educación, en respuesta a este mandato, define

criterios y orientaciones para diagnosticar a los estudiantes que presenten necesidades educativas especiales, reglamentando los procedimientos de evaluación diagnóstica para la identificación de necesidades educativas especiales en los estudiantes, así como los profesionales competentes e idóneos para realizarlas. Este decreto señala también que dicha evaluación debe ser de carácter integral e interdisciplinario y considerar el ámbito psicoeducativo y de salud.

Para su aplicación se debe tener como referente el currículum nacional, esto es, los Objetivos Generales descritos en la Ley General de Educación, en su artículo 28 para los niños y niñas de educación parvularia, y en su artículo 29 para los niños y niñas de educación general básica, incluida la modalidad de adultos, y los conocimientos, habilidades y actitudes estipulados en las Bases Curriculares correspondientes.

Dudas, críticas y marcadas diferencias persisten desde distintos sectores hacia la nueva normativa que en principio se propone terminar con el lucro, la selección y el copago en los establecimientos de educación particular subvencionada y no a la integración e inclusión de los estudiantes con Necesidades Educativas Especiales (NEE) como foco principal.

Que haya salido un debate en nuestro país respecto de problematizar la posibilidad de instalar el tema de la inclusión en la educación es algo en sí mismo cuestionable. Desde los organismos internacionales, como la Unesco, el derecho a la educación implica el derecho a la inclusión. Es algo que no puede estar separado. Y es un debate en la medida que la educación en Chile está tremendamente privatizada, tanto a nivel secundaria y superior.

El planteamiento del académico de Juan González (2015), investigador del Observatorio Chileno de Políticas Educativas (OPECH) de la Universidad de Chile, en conversación con el programa Especial de Prensa, apunta precisamente a la complejidad de esta nueva legislación, y agrega: “Un estudio de la Unicef

determinó hace algunos años que en la Región Metropolitana, Santiago de Chile, el 50 por ciento de los reglamentos internos de los centros educativos tienen artículos que van en contra del derecho internacional”. Entonces, es en Chile que estamos haciendo este debate. En otros lugares del mundo este ya no es tema de discusión.

En ese sentido, se debe reflexionar sobre la discordancia que existe en la Ley “la inclusión, que tiene que ver con el término del lucro en la educación, sigue consagrada en la educación superior. Nosotros como docentes entendemos que el tema de la educación es único, donde el Estado debe tener ciertas atribuciones

que le permitan dirigir aquello que es necesario poner al servicio de todos los habitantes del país. La educación es un derecho social y no un bien de mercado.

2.1 La Ley de Inclusión no asegura esto.

Y mientras desde el Ministerio de Educación de Chile advierten que será necesario “aplicar el sentido común”, tal como lo manifestó la ministra Adriana Delpiano, desde las organizaciones de colegios particulares aseguran que se trata de una medida absolutamente ideologizada.

Todo esto es, que Chile efectivamente aparece como uno de los países de la Organización para la Cooperación y Desarrollo Económicos (OCDE) con más segregación, y se piensa que con esta ley habrá igualdad y equidad en educación.

Que a 16 años de la última reforma, se sigan discutiendo los mismos temas, sin desarrollar una reforma profunda a la educación pública, nos tiene que hacer cada vez más escépticos respecto de la voluntad que tiene la clase política y empresarial en hacer cambios, es fundamental que los movimientos sociales no caigan en la discusión coyuntural. Lo mínimo es demandar el fortalecimiento de los derechos sociales, como la inclusión en todos los ámbitos educativos.

La Ley de Inclusión Escolar, una norma que necesariamente debe considerarse en función de otras que también forman parte de la gran Reforma Educacional anunciada por el Gobierno.

Una norma que se suma a proyectos de ley que aún se discuten en el Congreso, así como a otros. La Reforma Educacional Inclusiva, busca brindar oportunidades de aprendizaje y desarrollo integral a todos los niños, niñas, jóvenes y adultos sin distinción. En este marco, los Programas de Integración Escolar (en adelante PIE), normados por el Decreto Supremo (Ed.) N° 170/2009, constituyen una herramienta fundamental para entregar oportunidades de una educación de calidad a todas las personas que deseen iniciar, continuar o completar sus estudios, incluyendo a aquellas personas que presentan mayores necesidades de apoyo (NEE).

En este escenario, el PIE es una estrategia que privilegia la creación de condiciones en los establecimientos educacionales y en la sala de clase, para dar respuesta a las diferencias individuales de los estudiantes, asegurando así su progreso en el currículo escolar. Para ello, se requiere de un trabajo colaborativo y planificado, que beneficie a todos los estudiantes del nivel, mejorando las condiciones generales en que se desarrolla el proceso de aprendizaje. Para facilitar la implementación del PIE, debe tenerse presente que éste aporta recursos materiales y humanos que permiten al establecimiento disponer de apoyos especializados en el contexto del aula común, con horas para planificar y evaluar la enseñanza, y para trabajar colaborativamente. Lo anterior, constituye también una efectiva oportunidad para fortalecer a los equipos directivos y técnicos de los establecimientos con otros profesionales, tales como profesores de educación especial, psicólogos, fonoaudiólogos, terapeutas ocupacionales, psicopedagogos, asistentes sociales, kinesiólogos, intérpretes de lengua de señas, entre otros, lo que permite al centro educativo fortalecer las prácticas pedagógicas, brindando una educación pertinente, relevante y significativa a estos estudiantes. Considerando que uno de los propósitos de la reforma educacional es asegurar a todos los estudiantes el derecho a una educación de calidad y pertinente, el Programa de Integración Escolar (PIE), es un elemento importantísimo que el Ministerio de Educación pone a disposición de los establecimientos que

ofrecen a quienes desean iniciar o completar sus estudios una oportunidad efectiva de atención conforme a sus necesidades y características.

La Ley de Inclusión Escolar entrega las condiciones para que los niños, jóvenes y adultos que asisten a colegios y Universidades, que reciben subvención del Estado puedan recibir una educación de calidad. ¿Pero qué pasa con los estudiantes de otros sistemas educativos?

La ley de inclusión escolar, entrega las condiciones para que los niños y jóvenes puedan recibir una educación de calidad y gratuita. Esta comenzó a regir el día martes 1 de marzo del 2016, y no contiene aportes concretos para asegurar la real inclusión de los estudiantes en condición de discapacidad. Así lo estima la autora de esta columna (revista Educar, 2019), quien opina que la nueva norma no es más que un cúmulo de acciones administrativas destinadas a unificar las normas de funcionamiento de todos los establecimientos que reciben subvención. Y se pregunta: “¿Cuándo sabremos de una ley de inclusión real y efectiva para el gran universo de alumnos con Necesidades Educativas Especiales y que no sólo sean confusas y débiles intenciones por parte de las autoridades ministeriales y del gobierno?

La ley en mención deja fuera lo referido a la tan anhelada “calidad en la educación”, subentendiendo que las medidas de esta nueva norma, por obra de la resonancia, serán un aporte real para mejorar el aprendizaje. Al parecer, poco se entiende de calidad en las cúpulas de gobierno y sus ministerios, que confunden los contenidos de esta ley. Sin desmerecer algunas medidas justas, como terminar con el lucro -abuso indiscutible del sistema-, claramente es una ley limitada que representa un cúmulo de medidas para unificar las normas de funcionamiento de los establecimientos que reciben subvención estatal y no merece el término de “inclusión”.

Basta con leer el decálogo que describe los puntos centrales de esta mal llamada Ley de Inclusión para darse cuenta que nada señala sobre procesos inclusivos para niños y jóvenes en condiciones de

discapacidad, sólo hace mención solapadamente a la no discriminación, punto que bien puede estar contenido en reglamentos que emanen del Mineduc y que sean supervisados por las entidades internas, como la Superintendencia de Educación. La Ley N°20.845 es un maquillaje de mala factura para la educación que, hoy por hoy, mantenemos en nuestro país.

La nueva ley señala, sólo a modo de sugerencia: “El sistema propiciará que los establecimientos educativos sean un lugar de encuentro entre los y las estudiantes de distintas condiciones socioeconómicas, culturales, étnicas, de género, de nacionalidad o de religión”. En otro acápite señala, como referencia: “Es deber del Estado propender a asegurar a todas las personas una educación inclusiva de calidad. Asimismo, es deber del Estado promover que se generen las condiciones necesarias para el acceso y permanencia de los estudiantes con necesidades educativas especiales en establecimientos de educación regular o especial, según sea el interés superior del niño o pupilo”.

Como se puede apreciar, queda al arbitrio del sostenedor efectuar cambios o no y, lo principal, a su voluntad en la selección de los estudiantes. Ahora, lo más importante es que no se menciona la inclusión educativa -sin discriminación- de alumnos con Necesidades Educativas Especiales (NEE) y las adecuaciones que ello significa.

En consideración a esta falsa intención de “inclusión educativa” por medio de la ley, no está de más reiterar los compromisos adquiridos por nuestro país, tanto nacional como internacionalmente. A saber:

La Ley N°20.422, que Establece las Normas sobre Igualdad de Oportunidades e Inclusión Social de Personas con Discapacidad, y que indica que el Estado será el “encargado de promover la creación de planes curriculares para estudiantes con Necesidades Educativas Especiales, como también la igualación de oportunidades en el acceso por medio de servicios y recursos para escuelas regulares y especiales”.

La Convención Internacional de las Naciones Unidas de Derechos Humanos de Personas con

Discapacidad, que establece que “los Estados Partes reconocen el derecho de las personas con discapacidad a la educación”, por lo que deben asegurar que “las personas con discapacidad puedan acceder a una educación primaria y secundaria inclusiva, de calidad y gratuita, en igualdad de condiciones con las demás, en la comunidad en que vivan”.

Podemos seguir mencionando muchos documentos validados e instancias que han tratado el tema de las que emanan recomendaciones claras y precisas para revertir la situación discriminatoria que sufren niños y jóvenes en condiciones de discapacidad en nuestro país, especialmente en la educación.

Dicho esto, las preguntas son obvias: *¿Seguiremos escuchando a muchos personeros y personajes públicos haciendo mal uso y abuso del concepto de inclusión, el que incorpora en sí mismo el proceso educativo? ¿Cuándo se terminará con el discurso de la gradualidad y tránsito pausado en medidas inclusivas para la población escolar en condiciones de discapacidad? ¿Tendremos que esperar el resultado de la II Encuesta Nacional que aún no entrega resultados sobre niños y jóvenes entre 2 y 17 años en condiciones de discapacidad?*

Es cierto que para lograr la inclusión social no basta con discursos y leyes que finalmente no se traducen en acciones concretas en beneficio de las personas en condiciones de discapacidad. Alguna vez se entenderá que lo importante es que todos somos personas, sin apellidos, y que no deben etiquetarnos, porque de nuestras diferencias nacen la creatividad y el aprendizaje, pues tenemos tanto habilidades como inhabilidades y transitamos en comunidades humanas, con mayores o menores dificultades para alcanzar el máximo de bienestar posible. Abruma y es hora de decir basta al sucio juego y mal manejo que hasta hoy se mantiene con y hacia los niños y jóvenes en condiciones de discapacidad, más aún en etapa escolar, con leyes y declaraciones que sólo conducen al engaño, la confusión y la trasgresión de los compromisos adquiridos.

Es de difícil comprensión que pasadas tantas décadas no se comprenda y actúe

consecuentemente con lo que señala la visión social y globalizada de la “discapacidad e inclusión”. Ya conociendo las conceptualizaciones básicas y erradicando la visión médica-rehabilitadora, y sin seguir buscando en las ya declaradas convenciones internacionales y leyes nacionales, no cabe duda que seguimos atrasados en términos de la visión actualmente entendida por la mayoría de los chilenos. Se debe comprender, de una vez por todas, que la rehabilitación física sólo es un medio para alcanzar niveles de independencia que sean funcionales, sin desmerecer su aporte en la autovaloración personal que adquiere la persona “rehabilitada”. Sin embargo, ello no es suficiente, se ha demostrado que son escasos los ejemplos de personas que llegan a ser incluidas en los ámbitos más importantes, como lo son la educación regular, en todos sus niveles, y el trabajo en igualdad de condiciones.

El ciudadano común está acostumbrado a validar su actuar en relación a las personas en condición de discapacidad vía caridad y exculpaciones a lo que llamamos “discriminación positiva” y no logra internalizar que todos tenemos múltiples necesidades, sólo que algunas personas requieren apoyos específicos para desenvolverse en la vida de una forma más independiente, efectiva, productiva y autónoma. Seguimos “al debe” con la población infantojuvenil en etapa escolar. Entonces, ¿cuándo sabremos de una ley de inclusión real y efectiva para el gran universo de estudiantes con Necesidades Educativas Especiales y que no sólo sean confusas y débiles intenciones por parte de las autoridades ministeriales y del gobierno?

Por último, una cita que es un buen mensaje para todos y todas

“La ética de la diversidad e inclusión combate la homogeneidad y privilegia ambientes heterogéneos celebrando toda y cualquier diferencia entre las personas del grupo. Es, por lo tanto, la base de formación de alianzas a favor del desarrollo inclusivo y sustentable en las cuales cada aliado contribuye con su experiencia y sus propios recursos en beneficio de todos” (Claudia Werneck, 2004).

A partir de la promesa contenida en la reforma educacional referida a terminar con la selección de estudiantes, la autora de esta columna (revista educar 2019) se pregunta de qué manera eso se hará efectivo para los miles de niños y jóvenes con discapacidad:

“Eliminado el proceso de selección, ¿puede un niño o joven ciego educarse sin obstáculos en cualquiera escuela, liceo o universidad del país? ¿Puede un niño o joven con discapacidad intelectual, sordera, con secuelas de parálisis cerebral o autista, ingresar a la educación regular sin mayor trámite ni exigencias académicas?”. ¿Es ahora el momento de la inclusividad en el sistema educativo chileno?

La reforma educacional nos hace pensar que sí. La permanente y amplia exclusión del actual sistema educativo, que se mal sustenta en premisas de oferta y demanda, debería verse afectada por los cambios estructurales que propone el gobierno. Cuando decimos inclusión, nos referimos a la conceptualización más acertada y digna de mencionar y es la que presenta UNESCO (2008): *“Proceso de abordar y responder a la diversidad de necesidades de todos los alumnos y alumnas mediante una mayor participación en el aprendizaje, las culturas y las comunidades, y la reducción de la exclusión dentro y desde la educación (...). La inclusión atañe a temas de género, origen étnico, clase, condiciones sociales, salud, derechos humanos, entre otros. Esto significa que las políticas de inclusión deben garantizar que todos los ciudadanos, sin importar sus condiciones sociales o económicas, tengan oportunidades de acceder al conocimiento tan amplia y libremente como sea posible en la escuela y en la sociedad en su conjunto, de participar completamente, de lograr el más alto nivel y de disfrutar de una alta calidad de vida”*.

Tener presente esta definición permite centrar la atención en uno de los ejes esenciales de la reforma, como lo es la “segregación e inclusión”, que implica - entre sus objetivos principales - eliminar la “selección para el ingreso a las escuelas e universidades”. Esta es una intención urgente y necesaria, además de bien fundada, en una sociedad que se jacta de avanzar en la

democratización de los espacios esenciales de la convivencia ciudadana.

¿Cómo avanzar?, esa es la cuestión. Desde la perspectiva de los estudiantes en condiciones de discapacidad, la primera necesidad que surge es contar con un diagnóstico situacional de los afectados. Lamentablemente, no tenemos actualizada la estadística. Urge entonces saber dónde, cuántos y en qué condiciones están las personas con discapacidad en el país. Sólo podemos mencionar la Encuesta Nacional de Discapacidad (ENDISC) realizada por el Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas y el Fondo Nacional de la Discapacidad (Fonadis) en 2004, la cual señala que en torno al acceso a la educación, sólo el 8,48% estudia y el 91,52% no lo hace, ni ha tenido la oportunidad de llegar a las aulas. Estas cifras obedecen a una población de 2.068.072 de personas con discapacidad y a un universo nacional de 15.998.873 chilenos. Qué duda cabe que más de una década después el censo debe ser actualizado lo antes posible, si lo que se pretende es formular una política inclusiva, focalizada, oportuna y con la seriedad que amerita y que demanda la sociedad chilena.

El que la reforma educativa, en sus acápites, termine con la selección eminentemente académica, puede generar cambios insospechados y muy positivos en miles de estudiantes, que aún están en las escuelas especiales, sin norte alguno para el momento de su egreso, convertidos así en jóvenes desesperanzados y abandonados históricamente por el Estado de Chile. Dicho esto, las interrogantes son muchas: eliminado el proceso de selección para el ingreso, ¿puede un niño o joven ciego educarse sin obstáculos en cualquiera escuela, liceo o universidad del país? ¿Puede un niño o joven con discapacidad intelectual, sordera, con secuelas de parálisis cerebral o autista, ingresar a la educación regular sin mayor trámite ni exigencias académicas? ¿Cuánto tiempo se estima para alcanzar la inclusión educativa, en todos los niveles de enseñanza, en el caso de personas en condiciones de discapacidad?

Paulatinamente, debemos responder a estas interrogantes que hoy tienen sentido por ser la reforma educativa un proyecto del país en ciernes. ¿Cómo traspasamos las fronteras de la ignorancia y la mediocridad para transitar hacia una cultura de la inclusión educativa? ¿Qué debemos hacer y con qué herramientas institucionales contamos para hacer efectiva la inclusión educativa, para todos los estudiantes en el país? Así, surgen muchas interrogantes que en algún momento deberán ser confrontadas con la realidad y el cambio hacia una educación como un derecho inalienable que propenda a la igualdad de condiciones para las futuras generaciones.

Por último, el tema de la discapacidad en Chile debe ser tratado transversalmente, en salud, educación, vivienda, acceso al entorno, comunicación. En resumen, igual que cualquier ciudadano, está demás decir que todos tenemos las mismas necesidades, sólo que algunos requieren apoyos específicos para que su desenvolvimiento sea más independiente y efectivo. Eso es una mirada y actuar inclusivo, no más segregación o discriminación positiva, a la que estamos tan mal acostumbrados.

Gran desafío tienen los involucrados en la reforma educacional para dar cabida plena a las personas en condiciones de discapacidad, ineludible responsabilidad de los movimientos sociales para incorporar a los “diferentes” y hacer que sus silenciadas voces se escuchen de una vez por todas. Por su parte, la actual institucionalidad política tiene una oportunidad histórica en este olvidado ámbito y no es novedad señalar que de abordarse será una tarea que dará sus frutos tras varias décadas.

Muchos chilenos que hemos aportado con nuestro trabajo profesional en la educación de niños y jóvenes con “habilidades distintas” abogamos por un real posicionamiento de la inclusividad en la educación básica, media y superior, a la vez que proponemos que ésta se constituya un nuevo paradigma para la sociedad chilena. Si estimamos que el valor de una buena educación es ser un medio indispensable del desarrollo personal y progreso colectivo, entonces el modelo educativo tiene la obligación de abrir

las puertas a las personas con capacidades diferentes dando una clara muestra de querer espantar definitivamente de la sala de clases el individualismo, el exitismo, la competencia a ultranza entre otros males modernos. Este será el único modo de hacer de la educación un espacio participativo, democrático para todas y todos, incluso para los “diferentes” y “distintos”.

A sólo días de las “24 horas de amor” para recaudar fondos para la rehabilitación de niños y jóvenes de la Fundación Teletón, Gina Basso (2019)-especialista en Educación Diferencial- plantea que existe un desafío aún mayor del cual las autoridades no se han hecho responsables: el proceso post-rehabilitación de los jóvenes. Mientras el Servicio Nacional de la Discapacidad dice no contar con ningún registro de talleres laborales para personas con discapacidad financiados por el Estado, como también afirma que esta problemática no se resuelve con “puro corazón”, sino que se requiere de políticas públicas y un sistema formativo laboral de continuidad que acoja a los jóvenes que egresan de la educación diferencial.

Humberto Maturana (2017), relacionado con lo emocional y razonable en la convivencia. Lamentablemente, para estos jóvenes cuya realidad es “confinarlos” en sus hogares se disminuyen claramente las posibilidades de tener, a su corta edad, un vivir que sea grato. Por el contrario, se les impedirá no sólo su crecimiento personal sino también se verá mermada su emocionalidad al no tener oportunidades en el medio socio-laboral acorde a su edad. Estamos hablando de personas jóvenes, a los cuales no se les respeta en sus derechos fundamentales, esos que se proclaman a diario en vocerías políticas y son temas de múltiples encuentros nacionales e internacionales que no logran colindar con esta realidad innegable que viven jóvenes y familias de nuestro país.

No necesitamos más información fría y cuantitativa del SENADIS o del MINEDUC. El problema que se debe resolver es otro y refiere a la inexistencia de una política pública intersectorial para los jóvenes que siguen y serán nuevamente “enclaustrados” en sus hogares. Este es un serio llamado a las autoridades, a quienes

les compete hacer cumplir el mandato de una ley y de muchos tratados internacionales a los cuales Chile ha adherido con el fin de que exista un verdadero acercamiento a la realidad de jóvenes con diferentes tipos y grados de discapacidad, los que históricamente han quedado a la deriva.

A su vez la ciudadanía, hoy más que nunca, debe tomar conciencia que el problema planteado no se resuelve “con el corazón”, ya que, una vez más, veremos a millones de chilenos donando a la fundación Teletón, a los personajes de la farándula gustosamente subiéndose al carro de la benevolencia y a muchos ciudadanos atentos y ansiosos por cumplir la gran meta. Pues bien, lamentablemente allí NO se hace evidente la penosa realidad post rehabilitación como una de las problemáticas sociales que por años se oculta y a la que aún no se da solución.

Ahora bien, ¿La Ley de Inclusión es un aporte para el país?

El 1 de marzo del 2017, entro en vigencia la Ley de Inclusión Escolar. Los chilenos debemos estar orgullosos y satisfechos con este importante paso hacia construir una educación de calidad, conforme a las necesidades de este siglo XXI.

La Ley de Inclusión Escolar busca mejorar integralmente, y así lo dispusieron explícitamente los legisladores, la formación del estudiante y la convivencia al interior de un colegio y universidades. La escuela es un espacio de reglas, de formación y de disciplina, pero también de diálogo y resolución de conflictos entre todas y todos, es el espacio privilegiado para la construcción de la sociedad. Si es inclusiva, integradora y abierta a la innovación, entregará mejor educación, educación de calidad. Además, si toda la comunidad escolar se involucra en el proceso, admitiendo su diversidad y creatividad, la educación mejorará aún más. Para ello los padres, madres y apoderados deben velar por el cumplimiento de los fines educativos, participar en la generación de los Consejos Escolares junto con los profesores, funcionarios y estudiantes; y estar atentos a fiscalizar y colaborar con la gestión de sus establecimientos. (A. Palma. 2016).

El programa de inclusión en universidades, permite que cada año más universidades se

sumen a iniciativas para hacer más inclusivo el acceso a la educación superior. Cada año son más universidades las que se suman a las políticas de mayor acceso e inclusión. Ya sea a través de cupos especiales, convenios o propedéuticos, muchas universidades buscan dar oportunidades a jóvenes talentosos que estudian en contextos vulnerables o que no han podido acceder a una educación de calidad. Estos programas se basan en el principio de que los talentos están igualmente distribuidos en la sociedad, independiente del nivel socioeconómico o dónde hayan estudiado los jóvenes.

A continuación, una lista de programas de equidad e inclusión implementados por universidades:

III. RED PROPEDÉUTICO

La red de Propedéuticos Unesco fue pionera en impulsar el acceso inclusivo a la universidad. El 2007 comenzó en la Universidad de Santiago, Usach, y actualmente hay otras 5 universidades afiliadas: Universidad Católica Silva Henríquez, Universidad Alberto Hurtado, UMCE, UTEM, Universidad Católica del Norte.

La iniciativa se basa en el principio de que los talentos están igualmente distribuidos entre ricos y pobres, que la educación es una herramienta de movilidad social, que las notas de educación media son un buen predictor de rendimiento académico y que la PSU replica las condiciones de inequidad y exclusión social de la sociedad

El objetivo del proyecto es ayudar a insertar en la universidad a estudiantes talentosos que provienen de contextos vulnerables. Está dirigido a los alumnos de 4to medio que hayan obtenido un promedio entre 1º medio y el primer semestre de 4º medio entre el 10% de mejor rendimiento de cada curso.

3.1 Universidad de Chile

Hace ya un par de año, la Universidad de Chile implementó el Sistema de Ingreso Prioritario de Equidad Educativa (SIPEE), dirigido a buenos estudiantes de colegios municipales que no

alcanzan el puntaje necesario para ingresar de la manera tradicional.

Para postular se debe acreditar la situación socioeconómica. Postulaciones abiertas desde el lunes 30 de septiembre hasta el martes 15 de octubre.

3.2 Universidad Católica

El Programa Talento + Inclusión de la UC tiene por objetivo asegurar el acceso y retención de alumnos talentosos. El programa incluye admisión especial, financiamiento, nivelación y acompañamiento académico. Además, el programa contempla vacantes especiales destinadas a estudiantes destacados de colegios municipales y subvencionados.

3.3 Universidad Diego Portales

El año pasado la UDP creó su Programa de Equidad que, a través de admisión especial, busca incorporar a estudiantes talentosos con desventajas socioeconómicas. Este año hay 59 cupos en todas las carreras de horario diurno.

La iniciativa está dirigida a estudiantes de colegios municipales y particulares subvencionados que, de ser seleccionados, tienen la oportunidad de estudiar de manera gratuita (adicionalmente reciben beca de alimentación, de transporte y fotocopias).

3.4 Universidad de Concepción

La Universidad de Concepción tiene el Programa de Formación Propedéutica orientado a estudiantes destacados de tercer y cuarto año medio de colegios pertenecientes a la Red de Vinculación con el Medio de la Universidad de Concepción. El objetivo del programa es desarrollar habilidades académicas de acuerdo a la formación universitaria que los estudiantes buscan seguir. Los estudiantes que aprueben este programa podrán acceder, a través del proceso de admisión especial, a una carrera de esta universidad.

3.5 Universidad Católica de la Santísima Concepción

El Programa Propedéutico UCSC convoca a estudiantes de cuarto año medio que los ubica en

el 10% superior del ranking de su curso. Para participar del Programa los estudiantes deben asistir a clases a la UCSC, durante el segundo semestre académico, entre agosto y diciembre, mientras cursan su cuarto año medio. Durante el año 2013 Propedéutico UCSC trabaja con estudiantes de 6 comunas (Quillón, Hualqui, Chiguayante, Penco, Talcahuano, Hualpén) de 11 establecimientos de la región del Biobío.

3.6 Ley de Inclusión: Una nueva forma de discriminar

Ley de Inclusión, hecho que destacado por la prensa y las autoridades, y que pone fin a toda discriminación de alumnos. Una buena noticia si pensamos en el derecho a la educación y en el interés superior de todos los niños de nuestro país. Desafortunadamente, en la práctica no es así. Podríamos sentar junta a toda una generación de estudiantes y no por ello cumplir con la inclusión, si es que no se les agrega una educación de calidad.

Al tener las escuelas un bajo rendimiento académico se produce la peor de las inclusiones: la del conocimiento. El objetivo fundamental e indiscutible de toda reforma educacional es mejorar los aprendizajes, la adquisición de conocimientos y el desarrollo de valores, habilidades cognitivas y sociales. Mantener diferencias importantes de rendimiento entre las instituciones educacionales o los alumnos trae como consecuencia una división social, económica y cultural importante, que empieza con el colegio, pero se amplía y potencia fuertemente una vez terminada la etapa escolar.

La Ley de Inclusión no contempla este tipo de discriminación, que es el fondo del problema, y pone su fuerza en terminar con la selección, pero sin ninguna preocupación por lo que encontrarán los niños una vez dentro. Poco o nada se logrará si no se obtienen los estándares de aprendizajes que esperan las familias y la sociedad. Por ello es que toma cada vez más fuerza la idea propuesta tantas veces por la FIDE a las autoridades, no sólo durante el debate de esta en el Congreso, sino a través de todo el proceso de reforma: la meta más

importante de una reforma educacional es mejorar la calidad de la educación.

Esta exclusión del conocimiento es la más común y la peor de todas, ya que es una discriminación encubierta. En una sociedad como la nuestra, una de las más desiguales y segregadas del mundo, queremos tener una educación incluyente e igualitaria para todos, sobre la base de una legislación e insuficiencia de recursos. La aplicación de esta Ley de Inclusión en una sociedad desigual sin plazos ni gradualidad acorde con las exigencias, impone una tarea descomunal a los directores y profesores. Y además, la impone bajo condiciones muy adversas. Esto no es un desafío, tal como lo han planteado quienes nunca han hecho clases en una escuela; en un despropósito, dados los recursos económicos y profesionales con que cuentan las escuelas. Aspirar a una educación igualitaria en una sociedad profundamente desigual, es un cambio paradigmático del sistema escolar. La inclusión total no se logra por decreto.

La misma escuela que fue creada para un sistema educativo desigual debe sortear con éxito esta barrera infranqueable bajo las actuales condiciones. Lo más urgente para las familias, especialmente para las más pobres. Es que sus hijos tengan una educación de calidad, ya que es la única herramienta con que cuentan para salir de la pobreza. Ante estas urgencias perentorias de mejoramiento que requiere nuestro sistema educativo, el debate sobre si la educación debe ser pública o privada es algo completamente irrelevante. Incluir todo tipo de alumnos en escuelas que no están preparadas para recibir un contingente muy diverso de jóvenes, es verdaderamente una irresponsabilidad, con potenciales efectos indeseados.

Las universidades continúan preparando profesores para desempeñarse en aulas homogéneas, y esta falta de competencias deberán asumirla los directores, que se encuentran sobrepasados con deberes, desprotegidos legalmente, sin apoyo profesional ni financiamiento adecuado. Las tareas propias de las instituciones de educación superior deberán hacerlas las escuela.

IV. CONCLUSIONES

Construir un modelo educativo inclusivo es una medida esencial para minimizar la discriminación social en un entorno que es clave a la hora de ofrecer igualdad de oportunidad a los niños y jóvenes del siglo XXI. Especialmente a aquellos estudiantes que son permanentemente discriminados y considerados distintos a la mayoría.

La inclusión educativa es un tema altamente complejo y no se vislumbran aún serias intenciones de abordar este proceso en lo que respecta a los que denominamos estudiantes con “Necesidades Educativas Especiales” (NEE). En la lógica de una política visionaria y responsable, la implementación de la Reforma Educativa debe sentar sus bases en la educación preescolar, es allí donde adquiere sentido lo proyectivo y preventivo al intervenir tempranamente en los infantes del país. Y es en ese instante que un menor en condiciones de “discapacidad” requiere mayor atención.

La complejidad conflictiva del fenómeno de la inclusión no acepta una mirada simplista que se remite a abrir las puertas de la escuela y juntar niños. Sin embargo, el legislador supuso que prohibiendo el lucro, el copago y la selección se produciría automáticamente la convivencia integrada –con estudiantes de diversos sectores socio -culturales, con NEE o con serios problemas de comportamientos y socialización–, y así tendríamos finalmente aulas inclusivas con mejores aprendizajes. Solo bastaba con prohibir, pero la prohibición solo impide, no produce. Alcanzar la inclusión es mucho más que eliminar algunos de los obstáculos a la entrada de alumnos en las escuelas. El legislador sobre simplificó el problema de la inclusión, pecó de ingenuidad o de un desconocimiento profundo de la baja capacidad de las reformas para procesar los problemas reales de la escuela; sus dinámicas internas; los ambientes escolares; y los alcances que tiene la pedagogía diferencial para atender a la diversidad en estos momentos. Supuso que bastaba con juntar niños y niñas simplemente de una amplia diversidad cultural, y esperaba que a partir de este amontonamiento de alumnos se superarían las diferencias culturales radicalmente

distintas; que florecería la integración, la amistad y los aprendizajes para todos; que se superarían los prejuicios sociales profundamente arraigados en nuestra sociedad; y que brotaría la sana convivencia transcultural.

El sistema económico-social neoliberal produce desigualdad como producto normal de su funcionamiento, y los legisladores supusieron que la escuela debía borrar esta desigualdad con la sola ley de inclusión, cargando esta responsabilidad a los profesores. Los mayores logros más inmediatos de esta ley son profesores con altos grados de estrés y depresión; con bajos niveles de autoridad; con mucha angustia por no saber desempeñarse con todo tipo de alumnos; con problemas pedagógicos no resueltos; desprotegidos ante una legislación garantista para alumnos y apoderados; amenazados por evaluaciones externas sancionadoras; agredidos por alumnos y apoderados violentos; y con la duda de perder el trabajo por el cierre de sus escuelas si logran bajos puntajes en el SIMCE durante tres evaluaciones seguidas, en escuelas sobrepobladas, con altos porcentajes de niños con NEE o con graves problemas cognitivos y conductuales. Esta ley debió quedarse con su nombre original: “No al copago, no al lucro y no a la selección”. Este nombre describe con mucha precisión lo único que hizo: prohibir. Porque no está diseñada para otra cosa y menos para lograr la inclusión. Hoy día tenemos una ley, mal llamada, de inclusión que logró la creación de aulas diversas, pero no tenemos aulas inclusivas.

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Death - Not an Illusion but a Reality

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to highlight that death is a reality and not a deception and the day of reckoning will surely come. The cycle of nature in its appearance and disappearance is in its constant work. Therefore, we should keep up our prayers. Prophet Mohammad, peace be upon him states through the Holy Quran that we should not associate anyone else with Allah Subhanahu wa ta'ala and we should take guidelines from the Holy Quran and the Ahl Al-Bayt. Imam Ali (The brother and Son-In-Law of Prophet Mohammad) guides us to believe in Towheed (Oneness of Allah as per the teachings of Islam), Nabuwat (Prophethood) and be pious. He also guides us to take up our responsibilities seriously and not evade them. (These responsibilities might be of personnel, familial or societal in nature.)

Keywords: death, towheed, nabuwat, piety, asceticism.

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This paper aims to highlight that death is a reality and not a deception and the day of reckoning will surely come. The cycle of nature in its appearance and disappearance is in its constant work. Therefore, we should keep up our prayers. Prophet Mohammad, peace be upon him states through the Holy Quran that we should not associate anyone else with Allah Subhanahu wa ta'ala and we should take guidelines from the Holy Quran and the Ahl Al-Bayt. Imam Ali (The brother and Son-In-Law of Prophet Mohammad) guides us to believe in Towheed (Oneness of Allah as per the teachings of Islam), Nabuwat (Prophethood) and be pious. He also guides us to take up our responsibilities seriously and not evade them. (These responsibilities might be of personnel, familial or societal in nature.)

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Abbreviations

- Subhanahu wa ta'ala - Which means "Glory to Him, the Exalted" is written in short form as (s.w.t)
- Alaihis Salam -Which means "peace be upon him" is written as (a.s.)
- Ajjallahu ta'ala Faraja'ous shareef – Which means "May the Almighty Allah hasten his reappearance and relief" is written as (a.t.f.s). It is a belief of Shiite followers that the twelfth Imam Al-Mehdi is in Occultation and therefore they are awaiting his reappearance.

I. PROLOGUE

Glorify Allah Subhanahu wa ta'ala in the dawn and in the dusk as he has fashioned you to praise him and his bounties. The entire creation with the galaxies, sky, earth, sun, moon, including the dense forests, elevated mountains with steep flanks, silvery rivulets full of colourful fishes in them glorifies Allah Subhanahu wa ta'ala. Green meadows with deep valleys and at places cascades of waterfalls are the bounties of Allah Subhanahu wa ta'ala which glorify him and his creation. Unfathomable sea beds with beautiful coral reefs of different shades all are the bounties of Allah (s.w.t). He it is Who shapes you in the wombs as He likes; there is no God but He, the Mighty, the Wise (The Holy Quran 3: 6)¹. He created us from dust therefore we are mortals and his best creation. He has created mates for us from ourselves that you may find rest in them. He created among you love and empathy. Most surely you can see in these signs of him for people to reflect. (The Holy Quran 30: 21)²

He has bestowed on you the night and day so that you can pray and praise him. He shows you the lightning and downpour of rain in flashes surely all these are the signs of our almighty Allah Subhanahu wa ta'ala. He (s.w.t) commands us to keep up our prayer and do not be among the polytheist. We should never associate anyone with our Lord Almighty. Seek his mercy and in need call his name, the exalted the omnipotent and omniscient. Believe in prophethood and remember death is not a deception but a reality and this world is just a passing phase. This paper aims to evaluate and discuss about death as a reality.

II. AN UNDING REMINISCENCE

The door opened and He (a.s.) came out of his home, he was of medium height and a very

handsome countenance with fair complexion and broad forehead, he was sixty-two years old with powerful shoulders and arms, strong and roughened hands because of the hard work he did. His (a.s) eyes were very big, black and piercing. (Jaffery 8)³ Eyes in which knowledge was evident, eyes which would see with love towards needy, orphaned and poor people. He was unable to forget the scene which he just left behind, his casual goodbye to his children, their pure and radiant faces were engraved in his eyes. A wave of pain left his heart for the thought of the suffering which is about to befall on his off spring's.

He looked at the sky it was twilight. Still a long time to go for the first ray of sunlight to appear on the horizon of sky. He looked at the dark cloudy sky and said, 'Be my witness, Ali in his lifetime, has never risen after the day break (not once) and has never missed a Salat (Prayer)' he moved further in the courtyard his pet geese, whom he pampered a lot, came cackling towards him and took the hem of his garment into their mouths and said to him in their bird language, master do not go; master do not go... today... to the mosque. A tyrant is waiting for you with his poisonous sword. Ali smiled at his geese and said, 'I have to go it is destined'. When Ali was leaving his abode, observes S. Ockley in his famous work, *The History of the Saracens*, the household birds began making a great noise and when one of Ali's servants attempted to quieten them, Ali said, "Leave them alone, for their cries are only lamentations foreboding my death." (Lalljee 259-260)⁴

Ali (a.s) reached into the great mosque of Kufa, and called Adhan (the call to prayer) it was a pleasant morning of 19th Ramadan 40 A.H. He roused those who were sleeping in the mosque. Amongst them was Abdul Rehman ibn Muljim Muradi. He was lying on his face and had hidden under his garment his sword, the blade of which had been poisoned. Imam Ali told him to wake up and told him it was an unhealthy way of sleeping as it hinders free breathing. He further told him to do the work for which he was here. Then he took his place in the alcove after calling everyone for the morning prayer and started the service. (Hasan 174)⁵ The worshippers came and stood

behind him in serried ranks, and the prayer began. Standing in the front row was Abdur Rahman and his accomplices. They were watching Imam Ali's movements. When Ali (a.s)'s forehead touched the ground for Sajda, Abdur Rahman Ibn Muljim struck the fatal blow at his forehead with such deadly force that it split open.

The members of the congregation realized what had happened, the prayer was disturbed. Blood was oozing from Ali's (a.s.) forehead. The wound which was bleeding profusely, was attended to and with his blood drenched lips He said 'Fuztu-be-Rabbil' Ka'ba" By the Lord of Holy Ka'ba I have succeeded. Oh Allah! I thank you for rewarding me with Martyrdom. How generous are you Lord and how kind, may your Mercy further lead me to the dominion of your grace and benevolence? (Jaffery, 69)⁶ He with the help of his son's Hasan and Hussain completed his second Sajda.

Maula Ali had a high level of self-restraint. In this hour of suffering when Sasa-Ibn-Sohan caught Abdul Rehman and brought him in front of Maula Ali, he saw his (Abdur Rahman's) hands tied-up at his back so tightly that they were cutting in his flesh. He (Maula Ali) forgot that the culprit standing in front of him with his head bend was his assassin. He was the very person who gave him the fatal wound. All Maula Ali knew was a human was subjected to inhuman treatment and thus he said to loosen his ropes and give him some water.

When the assassin heard the kind, treatment meted to him by Maula Ali he began to weep. A smile played on Maula Ali's lips and he said it is too late now to regret. Was I a bad Imam (leader) or an unkind ruler? The culprit hung his head in shame. Maula Ali advised his son Hasan ibn Ali, and the people around that if he dies the culprit should be killed in a blow as he has given him one blow and harsh treatment should not be meted to him. Maula taught us through his kindness and mercy towards his assassin that we should be merciful and kind towards the people around us in all the life's situations.

Maula Ali(a.s.) was brought back to his home by his son's Hasan, Hussain and few close friends.

For two days Maula Ali was in great pain whenever he used to gain consciousness, he used to advice everyone around to remember about the reality of upcoming death and to tread on the path of righteousness. He entrusted the Imamato to Imam Hasan with the related advice and breathed his last on 21st Ramadan 40 A.H. His martyrdom and death brought anguish and heartache for his family which is quite natural. *To Allah (Almighty God) we belong, and to Him is our return.*” (Qur'an 2:156)⁷ Whenever a Muslim hears any loss, it should be the motto of his/her life to recite this verse of Quran. It is the brief expression of what all Islam means. We are His, being His, our duty should be short of absolute submission to His will. We are returning to Him, which infers that we have preceded from Him and that we are in our march towards Him and He is our destination.

III. THE FACT ABOUT DEATH

In Islam death is the termination of worldly life and the commencement of the afterlife. It is perceived as the departure of the spirit or soul from the body and its transfer from this world to the next world. There is immense beauty in what is unknown. Death is unknown hence it appears beautiful and to some fearsome. If we do good deeds and is sure of reward, we may feel that our return to our Lord Almighty Allah (s.w.t) is delayed, we will be looking forward to die. On the other hand, if we do misdeeds, we have the fear of disgrace with it's visit. Our fourth Imam Zainul Abedien (a.s.) prays to Lord Almighty Allah in sermon 40th of Sahifat e Kamilah, 'And fix Death before our eyes, permanently (as a fixture) and let not our remembrance of it be intermittent. And let our service consist of good actions, (Mohani 118)⁸ He further says in his 11th prayer, 'And when our days of our existence are finished, and the duration of our lives comes to an end, and Thy summons—which is inevitable and the obedience to which is unavoidable—is served upon us' (Mohani 52)⁹ then oh Lord bless the pious family of Prophet Mohammad and accept our repentance and do not detain us for our sins and guilt.

Prophet Mohammad, peace be upon him states the command of Allah from the Chapter Al-Anam

of the Holy Quran (6: 163): “No associate (is there) for Him; and this I am commanded, I am the first of the Muslims (i.e., those who submit to God)¹⁰ The highest goal of every man and woman should be love of God; the believe in Towheed (Oneness of God). All other loves like self-love, love of family, love of children, possessions, currency, supremacy everything will be obsolete one day. If all these loves are motivated towards the cause of God than there cannot be anything more wonderful, outstanding and purer. Islam means complete submission to the will of God. The Holy Prophet and the Holy Ahl al-Bayt perfected this love. There every word and deed was generated only for the Love of God. Whether it was Hazrat Ali (a.s.) in Mosque of Kufa or Hazrat Ibrahim (a.s.) who was thrown in Namrood's fire or Hazrat Esa (a.s.) who was crucified or Hazrat Yousuf (a.s.) who was thrown into prison because of his strength of character. They all did it with the love of God. Or the Martyr of Martyrs Hussain ibn Ali(a.s.) who sacrificed his home, his children and everything he possessed for the love of God. Therefore, it is essential for us to devote all our energies towards the love of God.

In Nahjul Balagha Imam Ali Ibn Abi Talib(a.s.) says, next to sincere faith in the unity of God (Towheed) and the a postle hood (Nabuwat) of the Holy Prophet we should strive for piety. 'He wants us to realise that piety is not a juicy morsel to be swallowed easily nor it is a dip in a river to clean all the dirt and filth from the body. Piety means actions and those actions in beginning may be sour, harsh and painful to perform. Piety means to free oneself from vicious desires and wicked deeds. This freedom cannot be obtained but by constant efforts and end eavours' (Jaffery 85)¹¹

Few things are forbidden to us but many things are allowed, Allah (s.w.t) has not barred us from normal relaxations, ease and comfort and from sober and harmless pleasures and pursuits. According to Maula Ali(a.s.): 'Asceticism was a sin against self' (Jaffery 85)¹² History cites many instances where he admonished the persons who had given up their homes and families, had severed every connection with society, had taken to a mosque, and had been praying, fasting and

reciting the Holy Book morning, noon and night. He sent them back to their homes and told them that their duties lie among their fellow beings, and what they had taken to is not piety but fanatic asceticism which is not allowed in Islam.

In Surah Naziaat Allah is swearing upon the angels who violently pull out the souls of the wicked and by those who gently pull out the souls of the blessed. (Holy Quran 79:1-2)¹³ In these Ayats Allah swears upon the angels that he has created numerous bounties for us. He (s.w.t) has created the heaven at a height and then he put it in a right good state. He made the night dark and brought out light out of it to form the day. He expanded the earth and brought forth from it water and pasturage. He made the beautiful serene mountains that are firm. He made these mountains a provision for you and your cattle. But never forget after giving so many bounties Allah (s.w.t) reminds you to remember his bounties and go on praying and performing your duties towards your lord in the way he has taught you. Do not be greedy because the day of reckoning will not be far away. And the one who is extravagant in spending the bounties of Allah (s.w.t) and prefers the life of the world then surely for him/her is the hell. And the person who fears his lord and stands in the presence of his Lord and forbids the soul from low desires and surely for him will be the garden as his abode.

When we see the life of Maula Ali Ibn Abi Talib on various occasions we find how viciously he followed Allah's commands. Jurjy Zaidan (George Gordon) a famous historian says 'None can praise Ali to the extent that he deserves. So many instances of his piety and fear of God are cited that one starts loving and venerating him' (Jaffery, 10)¹⁴ Maula Ali always used to carry his household goods himself and if anyone offered him to help, he would politely refuse. He never had servants and he never allowed his slaves to work hard. He was always fair in his dealings never deceived, misled or betray anyone. His deeds carried an aura of nobility, wisdom, bravery and principles. Each aspect of his life carried a lesson for us. He never wasted his bounties. As his followers we should learn to be fair and self-reliant as him.

In this mortal world we will be tested by different things by our Lord Almighty. Some will be tested by bestowing numerous boons and some will be tried by taking away boons. We will be tested with money, life, children, poverty, prosperity and different situations. In all these situations we have to tread with righteousness, stability and patience. Thank Allah (s.w.t) in every situation. When we profess to love someone than we do everything as per their wishes. Allah (s.w.t) likes people who are righteous, pious and who follow the laws stated by lord. Therefore, we should try hard to be pious, righteous and to follow the laws stated by him. In Surah Al-Anbiya Allah says: "Every soul shall taste of death; We try you with evil and (with)good (by way of) a test; and unto Us shall ye (all) be returned. (The Holy Quran 21:35)¹⁵ Every nafs or soul (self) It obviously means death or extinction of life is destined even for the non-human souls like spirits and angels. It is said that before the day of final judgement the whole Universe along with the angels and the spirits will be ordered by God to go out of existence and then again everything will be brought to exist for the Final Judgement. Men are tested in this world through afflictions and prosperity to prove the reactions from the individuals as regards being faithful to God or getting lost in dejection or enjoyment. In whatever position you place yourself in this petite world in your petite life you are sure to return to your Lord for your reckoning.

Hazrat Ali Ibn Abi Talib says at the end of 67th Sermon "I pity negligent and unmindful people, because on the Day of Reckoning the very happenings of their lives will act as proof against their ill intentions and evil deeds, and lead them to Hell." (Jaffery, 163)¹⁶ Thus, we should remember not to be beguiled by the worldly life and its various distractions.

IV. CONCLUSION

Nothing in this world has been a perpetual existence. The process of extinction and revival is a mysterious, purposeful working of nature. The creative process is, in its constant course and the cycle of appearance and disappearance of the things in this world is continuously at its work.

You will be brought back again to life on the resurrection day. In Surah Al-e-Imran it is stated that we can make connection with the dead. They rejoice in the Grace from God and (His) bounty and in fact, God suflereth not to be lost the reward of the Believers. (The Holy Quran 3:171)¹⁷ This verse establishes beyond all doubts, the immortality of those who lay down their lives in the way of God. They are alive in a more real sense than the rest of mankind. They are gifted with waking consciousness and know what goes on in the world behind them. The souls of the departed ones somehow exist, and can communicate and be communicated with, by us and can establish their identity beyond all reasonable doubt. Therefore, we should do good deeds; deeds which have been shown to us by Allah (s.w.t) in his Holy book and through his Ahl Al-Bayt. So that when our deeds are shown to the Imam of our time, Al-Mehdi (a.j.t.f), our Ahl Al-Bayt (a.s.), our parents, elders and loved ones they souls should feel happy and it should not be vice-versa.

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From Ignoring to Engagement: Chinese Soft Power Pipelines Diffusion (SPPD) towards Israel, 1949-2020

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ABSTRACT

In the early days of Communist China, they objected to the very existence of Israel. But under the surface there had been some interactions for brief periods. However, ever since official diplomatic ties were established in 1992, the relations have gained momentum. The main reason for this shift, as this article argues, was China's labeling of Israel as a source of knowledge and innovation that they should cooperate with. As a result, Chinese attitudes toward Israel changed from resistance, which was at times quite active, to an increasing Chinese presence that makes widespread use of Soft Power Pipelines Diffusion (SPPD), such as the Confucius Institutes and more. The article chronicles the developments that occurred in China-Israel relations, while dividing the timeline into three major periods. Next, the article focuses on the final period to discuss and analyze Chinese's SPPD in Israel, and to examine their interests and Israeli responses.

Keywords: china, israel, soft power, diplomatic relations, soft power pipelines diffusion.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Since the founding of the People's Republic of China (hereafter: China), in October 1949, the country-maintained ties with the State of Israel at various levels and in various ways, including periods of total estrangement. Since the early 2000s, especially in the recent decade, the relations have been blossoming. Economic ties are the basis of the increasingly warming relations,

especially when it comes to technological innovation. This focus stems from the Chinese perception of Israel as a global innovation and technology hub, as well as their need for Israel's innovation capabilities to successfully meet their challenges. The fact that the word "innovation" was mentioned 47 times in a speech given by Hu Jintao, who served as Chinese President from 2003-2013, at a Chinese Communist Party (hereafter: CCP) assembly, demonstrates the importance of innovation to the strategy adopted by China's central leadership (Urio, 2020).

The examples below illustrate the Israeli capability in question: In the report of the World Economic Forum on Global Competitiveness for 2016-2017, Israel ranked second in the list of most innovative nations in the world. In the 2015 Compass Global Startup Ecosystems report, the Tel Aviv (hereafter: TLV) ecosystem ranked fifth in the world and first outside the US. According to ASGARD Human Venture Capital, Israel ranks third in the world in artificial intelligence solutions and holds a market share of 11 percent (Welchler, 2019) In the last decade, China's economy has been undergoing a slow and gradual transition from one that absorbs knowledge and innovation to one that develops them for itself, as well as for the international tech market. In 2014, a year after being appointed, Chinese President Xi Jinping said: "China must rely on innovation to achieve sustained and healthy economic growth" (Xinhua, 2014). Accordingly, many Chinese programs aimed at studying and absorbing innovation were introduced, many forums that discuss how to acquire innovation were launched, and new national goals were set in the field of innovation.¹

The Chinese believe that Israeli innovation derives from the local educational system and the historical-cultural characteristics of the Jewish people. They mention this on many occasions (The Innovation Authority, n.d.). As a result, and as the Chinese need for these Israeli capabilities increased, they began to exert their influence on Israel through SPPD, to deepen and strengthen their position among Israeli policymakers and other relevant entities, such as the local high-tech community. SPPD is a new theoretical term used in this article to enrich the discourse on Chinese Soft Power in Israel, and include the Confucius Institutes, the China Radio International (hereafter: CRI), the sports cooperation, Sinologist and Translators in Israel, China Cultural Centre, etc. These insights are from the discipline of policy communities, which widely used terms such as “policy diffusion” and “policy injection”. These terms are broadly used to examine how various ideas have penetrated the process of policy formation while emphasizing the methods of implementation serving the efficacy of their transformation from abstract ideas into a policy dictated via governmental pipelines, in this case from China towards Israel (Guerra & Sancho, 2011), (Stone, 2004).²

II. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This article aims to examine the SPPD that China has employed in Israel from 1949 to 2020. This is done through a comprehensive historical-chronological overview of the various Chinese SPPD that emerged in Israel since the inception of modern China until 2020. Although formal diplomatic ties between Israel and China were established only in 1992, various interfaces had nevertheless existed between the nations before. And even the lack of interfaces or SPPD can shed light on the policies and interests of both sides.

III. STRUCTURE OF THE ARTICLE

The article starts with a brief discussion on Soft Power and the Chinese case, followed by a breakdown into three main periods: The First Period is 1949-1989. During this time, the interface was maintained mainly by the Israeli Communist Party (Maki) and in the later years

also through business deals the countries made indirectly. The Second Period began in 1989, when the two countries agreed to establish mutual trade offices, which led to a warming of the relations until the early 2000s, when the scope of economic ties skyrocketed. The Third Period, which is the focus of this essay, spans from when the economic ties began to expand and until today. The spotlight is on this period because the sharp increase in the scope of relations, alongside regional and international events are what led to the dramatic shift from active Chinese resistance to Israel’s right to exist in the beginning to the exertion of multifaceted Chinese SPPD in Israel, out of mutual interests.

3.1 *The State of Research in the Field*

Many studies have been written about China-Israel relations: how they developed, the various stages of the relations, economics and politics, and even the implications of these ties on the parties involved or the regional and international arena. These includes the extensive writings of Yitzhak Shichor (1992)³, Aron Shai (2019)⁴, P. R. Kumaraswamy (2013)⁵, Yonatan Goldstein (1999)⁶, Yoram Evron (2013)⁷ and more. However, little has been written about a parallel and complementary process to the economic and political one, which is the exertion of Chinese Soft Power in Israel, or in other words, the use of SPPD to shape a positive view of China among the Israeli public.

The studies that did explore the social and cultural aspects focused mainly on the fact that both peoples are ancient and other folkloristic aspects. The socio-cultural aspect of the relations has not yet been studied from a critical standpoint that seeks to understand what SPPD the Chinese are using in Israel, what motivates their actions and what are their consequences. This article seeks to fill this gap in the discussion on China’s Soft Power efforts in Israel. Also, this article could serve as a theoretical basis for examining Chinese efforts in other countries, using the same research method.

3.2 Soft Power and the Chinese Case

Soft Power is a term first coined by Joseph Nye (1990). He defined it as “the ability of a country to achieve the political outcomes it seeks in the international arena, by the willingness of other countries to follow its lead or partake in a system that may create the same effect”. This concept is based, *inter alia*, on the works of Edward Hallett Carr (1954), whose main theory is “Power over Opinion” which speaks about the attractiveness of the culture, ideals and political values of countries. It’s also based on the writings of Steven Lukes (1974) which examine the third dimension of soft power, which includes culture, education and diplomacy through which other countries can be persuaded to willingly adopt the same goals rather than being coerced.

According to Nye (2004), who continued to discuss and develop this concept, a country's Soft Power is comprised of three key components: culture, political values and foreign policy. This article will focus on the cultural aspect of this concept, since the Chinese do not make much use of these two aspects towards Israel (henceforth, when the article mentions Soft Power it’s referring to the cultural aspect of the concept). A country’s culture, including the language, is essentially its identity card and the basis for all other Soft Power activities and efforts it conducts. Soft Power is exerted by a country, in this case China, to shape the preferences of a society, in this case Israeli society. This is done by highlighting the country’s positive and attractive sides to achieve political or other gain.

According to Nye (2003), the counterpart to Soft Power is hard power, which is “the ability to use carrots and sticks” through economic and military power to get others to do as you please.” This power stems from the active state's ability to use direct force against the passive state, primarily through economic incentives or threats, military force or the threat of using it, and the use of political pressure leveraged in part by the above two capabilities. In other words, while hard power forces the passive party to act the way the active party wants, when it comes to Soft Power the active state tries to persuade the passive state to

act as it wishes. There are many instances where soft and hard power are intertwined and serve one another to achieve the goal set by the active state.

Soft Power is achieved by highlighting the positive sides of the active state (China) to the passive state (Israel) and doing so by using variety of SPPD mentioned in the introduction. This is done to project towards the passive state and create or strengthen their positive view of the active state. The tools available to the active state are quite diverse and include the various activities in the fields of education, culture, society and the arts. The scope of possibilities for implementation is unlimited and depends on the state’s economic ability, its character and the purpose for which it seeks to use this mechanism. The audiences to which this mechanism is directed are also varied, and the choice of the target audience depends on the purpose for which the active state needs to use its Soft Power. According to Chinese scholar Men Honghua, culture alone cannot change the views of every citizen in the passive state towards the active state, but cultural activities, when conducted in the passive state, can affect a select group of people from that state who in turn will influence the views of the general public (Men, 2007).

The statements of the last two Chinese presidents indicate how modern-day Chinese leaders have perceived the need to use Soft Power. Hu Jintao, President of China from 2002 to 2013, said in the keynote address to the 17th Congress of the CCP on October 14, 2007, that the Communist Party of China should “expand the use of culture in the Soft Power of our country, which is becoming a force of growing importance in the overall competition between the nations of the world” (Nye & Jisi, 2009). At the 19th Congress held on October 18, 2017, the Chinese President, Xi Jinping, said: “We must increase China's Soft Power, build a positive and strong Chinese narrative, and better market China's messages to the world” (Wilson Center, n.d.). In the following lines, the article discusses the three-time periods indicted in Israel and China relationship.

3.3 Probing, Disregard and Resistance, 1949-1989

Since the founding of the People's Republic of China in October 1949, there had been some probing between China and Israel on various levels, in an attempt to establish relations. As early as January 1950, Israel recognized the People's Republic of China as the official and only representative of the Chinese people and was the first state in the Middle East (hereafter: ME) and the seventh of the non-communist countries to do so. The Chinese, on the other hand, officially recognized Israel's right to exist only when the two countries established diplomatic relations in 1992. In the early years, the interactions between the two sides were rather limited and focused mainly on the ties between Maki and its Chinese counterpart.

In those years, Chinese diplomacy followed the “people-to-people” policy approach whereby, to support ideological-revolutionary movements around the world, relations between people should be promoted rather than between leaders. The rationale behind this policy is that it allows China to appeal to more countries, even those with whom China has no official ties, as well as bypass international sanctions and embargos, which are usually imposed at the state level, not by individual people. That is how China acted concerning Israel (Evron, 2008).

Most of the ties between the CCP and its counterparts around the world did not involve a physical presence, soft or hard. They mainly included reciprocal invitations to various conferences and summits held by those directly related to the Communist or Maoist ideology and not to the general public. For example, in January 1950, Rut Lovich, a member of Maki's Central Committee, was invited to attend the Asian Women's Conference held in Beijing that month and got a reception she deemed “impressive” from the local government officials. Four years later, a Maki delegation was invited to take part in the founding conference of the Workers of All Asia organization.

However, most of these encounters ended in disappointment because the CCP saw Israel as a Western colonialist power and preferred to give

its support and blessing to the Arab side and to ignore the differing socio-political outlooks of the various groups comprising the Israeli population (Shai, 2016). These examples indicate that the efforts on the part of China were largely ideological, with no particular emphasis on Israel, and included mostly extending invitations to political representatives to visit its territory without any willingness or intention to maintain any kind of presence on Israeli soil.

The Korean War, which began in 1950 and lasted about three years between the two parts of the Korean peninsula, with the South supported by the US and the North by China and to a lesser extent by the USSR; the Bandung Conference; “Great Leap Forward”; and the Soviet-Chinese split resulted in the complete severing of ties between China and Israel. This because the latter was identified as a Western colonialist force or as closer to the USSR. Moreover, at this stage, the CCP had already adopted an approach that completely negates Israel's existence.

Thus, in 1964, with the establishment of the Palestine Liberation Organization (hereafter: PLO), the organization enlisted the support of China, which was the first non-Arab state to recognize it. China even allowed the PLO to set up a liaison office in Beijing (Cooley, 1972). Zhou Enlai, who served as the first Premier of the People's Republic of China since its inception and until his death in 1976, said that China was ready to give aid to the great Arab nation so that they can retake Palestine (Wilson Center, 1965). Many articles that appeared in the Chinese press, which is controlled by the government, stated frequently that China will help the Palestinians take over the entire territory of Israel (Shai, 2016).

Following the death of Communist China's first leader, Mao Zedong, in 1976, and the beginning of the Chinese economic reform pushed by his successor, Deng Xiaoping, which led to more liberal economic policies, the hostile tone against Israel was moderated. However, pro-Arab policies were maintained. From those years and until the establishment of a Chinese tourism office in Israel and an Israeli academic liaison office in China in 1989, several meetings and dialogues were held

between the two sides. The ties focused mainly on business, which was usually done under the condition that they remain secret. Considering all this, it is understandable why the Chinese chose not to use SPPD in Israel during this period, which would have required that they step out of the veil of secrecy that shrouded the ties up to this stage.

3.4 The Shift and the Beginning of Chinese Presence in Israel, 1989-2006

Two major factors helped establish a Chinese tourism office in Israel in 1989 and a liaison office of the Israel Academy of Sciences in China the same year. These offices were the first sign of proper relations between the two nations and served a diplomatic function for all intents and purposes, but without the official title of embassy (Evron, 2008). The first factor that upgraded the relations was the activities of Reuven Merhav, a diplomat who served in a number of positions in the Israeli Foreign Ministry. In 1985 he was appointed as Israel's Consul General in Hong Kong (then part of the United Kingdom). From his post in Hong Kong, Merhav studied the situation in China and acted to expand relations between the two countries (Evron, 2008).

The second factor was the activities of American Jewish figures, who met with Chinese delegations and groups and raised the Chinese's awareness of Judaism as a religion and subsequently as a nation, namely the State of Israel. As a result of these efforts, in 1988, then Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres met with his Chinese counterpart, Qian Qichen on the sidelines of the United Nations assembly in New York. In 1991, representatives of these two ministries held many meetings along with other figures from both countries. Eventually Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy was invited to a signing ceremony marking the establishment of diplomatic relations in the Chinese capital on January 24, 1992 (Evron, 2008). In October of the following year, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin visited China. He was the first Israeli prime minister to do so (Shavit, 2018).

Geopolitical factors in the three arenas - the Chinese domestic arena, the ME and the international scene, have also enabled and fostered the change in the overall Chinese approach, which led to the expansion of relations between China and Israel. In the Chinese domestic arena, the country began opening up, mainly due to the need to expand cooperation with outside forces for two main reasons: first, the need to import raw materials and technologies; and second, the need to export the finished Chinese products. These needs became an imperative for the Chinese economy, as it turned from an inward-looking economy to the world's factory, not just its own (Zhang, 2006).

This process was further bolstered by the Chinese president's statement on innovation, cited earlier in the essay, and established China's official position in the international stage as driven by economic priorities rather than its previous ideological motives. At the same time, the fact that in the ME arena the Arab struggle against Israel's existence subsided to a certain extent, enabled the Chinese to expand their relations with Israel without hindering their relations with the Arab states.

The first Gulf War that occurred in 1991 marked a turning point in the Chinese understanding of the ME region insofar as they realized that the other conflicts in the region are wider and deeper than the Arab-Israeli conflict (Shichor, 1994). In the international arena, China grew increasingly stronger until it became an economic powerhouse second only to the US (Barboza, 2010). China's economic rise has instilled an internal understanding that they must invest resources in building and strengthening their positive image around the world as well as act to dispel the notions that China is a threatening force.

However, even though diplomatic ties between China and Israel had already been established by then, and despite the other reasons mentioned above, the Chinese barely used any SPPD in Israel and there was almost no Chinese cultural-educational activity in Israel in the years that this study defines as the Second Period in the relations. In fact, in those years the Chinese had

no need for the goods and services that Israel had to offer and no need to promote Chinese interests in Israel.

One of the few instances in which the Chinese used SPPD during this period was in 2001 when the Israel Museum presented a first exhibit of its kind. It was titled "Treasures from the Land of China" and was unprecedented in its scope and the quality of the items on display, brought especially from eight different museums and cultural institutions across China. In addition to the exhibit, a Chinese cultural festival was held, featuring a variety of Chinese art. The exhibit was presented in collaboration with the National Museum of Chinese History and a Chinese Foundation called "China Art Exhibitions" and with the support and assistance of the Chinese Embassy in Israel (Bitterman, 2001).

Zhang Wenbin, director of the National Cultural Heritage Administration in China, wrote a letter to those who attended the exhibit. Among other things, he wrote: "Throughout history, China's relations with the rest of world promoted China's culture and spread its brilliance to many (Bitterman, 2001). In doing so, the Chinese director stressed the exhibit's emphasis on spreading the beauty and quality of Chinese culture around the world, without stating the purpose of this effort. Zhang Geum, a Chinese cultural figure, emphasized another message that runs as a recurring theme in the China-Israel relations, which is that the Chinese and Jewish cultures both have a long history and are some of the most ancient civilizations in the world (Bitterman, 2001).

The Chinese have used similar messaging when building their Soft Power relations with other countries as well. For example, when it comes to China's ties with Syria, China emphasizes that the two peoples are ancient. For example, Zhang's message was repeated almost verbatim by an official Chinese representative in the Syrian context (Xinhua, 2019). When it comes to their relations with the Gulf States, the name of Chinese mariner Zhang He, who visited the area in the 6th century AD, is often mentioned (Hassan, 2013). Indeed, historical references appear to be a

conduit of influence through which the Chinese try to link themselves with other countries to lay the foundation for the other types of relations.

3.5 Expanding the Use of SPPD, 2006-2019

Soft Presence is a new concept that this article seeks to add to the discourse on international relations. It refers to the way Soft Power is viewed, experienced, and exerted in the target country. For example, China exerts its Soft Power in Israel through Soft Presence. This term will allow us to focus and delve deeper into the passive side of the Soft Power and relations equation. The Third Period discussed in this article ushered in a sharp change from the First Period mentioned above (1949-1989) when China denied Israel's sovereignty and right to exist, to a situation where China exerts many SPPD to gain a significant Soft Presence in Israel and thereby influencing public discourse and public opinion.

The main reason for the above is the steady rise in trade between the two countries since the beginning of the Second Period (1989-2006). In 1992, when the two nations established their official relations, bilateral trade was estimated at fifty million dollars. A decade later, it reached nearly \$1.4 billion. The most significant upturn in trade between the countries occurred between 2004 and 2007, when the trade volume jumped from \$2.4 billion to over \$5.3 billion, respectively (Trading Economics, n.d.), (WITS, 2007).

This increase in trade, which occurred during the transition from the second to the third period and naturally led to an expansion of Chinese economic interests in Israel and private Israeli entities, also resulted in the increase of China's use of SPPD, in addition to the increasing economic presence. Below will be discussing what Chinese SPPD looked like in Israel, while analyzing the ventures the Chinese pursued in Israel during this period in education and cultural contexts to build and bolster their positive image among the Israeli public. Their activities will be presented in chronological order.

Confucius Institute at TLV University

Confucius Institutes around the world operate under the auspices of Hanban, a non-profit public

organization run by the Chinese Ministry of Education and headquartered in the Chinese capital. In 2006, the cultural attaché at the Chinese Embassy in Israel approached the then Rector of Tel Aviv University (TAU), Aron Shai, and proposed to establish a Confucius Institute at the University. According to Shai, the Chinese “came and begged us to open it. At first, we refused, but the more we refused or seemed uninterested, the more they wanted it” (Levinter, 2017). On May 28, 2007, the then TAU’s President Itamar Rabinovich and the Chinese Ambassador to Israel, Zhao Jun, signed an agreement to establish the Confucius Institute at TAU (Yogev, 2007).

A few months later, on November 11, 2007, the Institute was dedicated (Tel Aviv University, n.d.), becoming the first one in Israel and the second in the ME (following the one established a year earlier at St. Joseph University in Beirut) (University of Beirut, n.d.). Each university where a Confucius Institute operates is coupled with a twin university in China, to strengthen the partnership between both sides and encourage student exchange programs. TAU’s twin Chinese university is Renmin University in Beijing, one of the top universities in China. The link between TAU and one of the elite universities in China indicates how the Chinese view their relationship with the Israeli university⁸.

The Institute’s website describes its goals as follows: “The purpose of the various Confucius Institutes is to disseminate the Chinese language and culture to the general public, as well as increasing academic research of Chinese history and culture. True to these goals, the Confucius Institute at TAU offers a variety of courses in Chinese and cultural activities related to China - films, concerts, exhibits, and lectures, all open to the public. At the same time, it is working to expand academic research on China at the university through academic conferences, scholarships and awards for outstanding students.” The site then notes that the Institute operates in two main arenas, the public sphere and the internal academic sphere, catering to the students and the university faculty⁹. The two universities, TLV and Renmin, also set up a joint

book publishing venture with the aim of “exposing the Israeli audience to a variety of the best contemporary Chinese research literature, and disseminating the various Israeli research literature in China” (The Confucius Institute’s web page, n.d.).

Following a similar trend throughout the Western world, some in Israel urged to reevaluate the need for the Chinese institutes and the effect of their presence in the heart of the local academia (later the article will present details on the second Institute established at the Hebrew University. The following sources refer to both Institutes together)¹⁰. The Epoch Times magazine, affiliated with the Falun Gong movement, published an article titled “The Chinese Arm at the Heart of Israeli Academia”, in which they report “suspicion of espionage and an emerging climate that promotes student and faculty censorship” (Levinter, 2017). Another article, published in Haaretz and titled “Chinese Institutes at Universities Are Under Fire, but Israeli Scholars Insist There’s No Undue Influence”, presents the challenges these institutes pose to some researchers in the field, as well as comments by other scholars who claim these Institutes have no negative impact on the content taught and imparted at the university and do not promote any form of censorship (Stayrou, 2019).

The Hebrew language website of CRI, an SSPD that will elaborate on later, posted an article in response to these protests and the sentiment they represent, under the headline ‘Confucius Institute: Silencing Voices or Intercultural Dialogue?’ The article lists the common objections around the world to the presence of institutes within universities, and replies that “critics are plagued with prejudice when confronting this issue, since they desire to isolate the Communist Party”, and that “those [who criticize the Institute’s activities] exhibit intolerance of foreign cultures and are plagued by cultural racism” (Xinhua, 2014).

Shai, TAU’s rector at the time the institute was established, who was involved in the discussions within the university’s administration as to whether or not the Confucius Institute should be

allowed on campus, says that there were quite a few colleagues within the university who objected the idea and even though it was ultimately established, this move was preceded by lengthy, in-depth discussions. He writes that what tipped the scale was the financial need of the East Asian Studies Department and the drafting of a contract between Hanban and the university whereby the university would maintain its independence in research and teaching. In retrospect, he writes: "There was a problem here... We had second thoughts regarding our ties with Beijing". For the Institute's day-to-day operations, he added that the Chinese twin university Renmin University hindered the partnership after TAU officials refused to appoint a Chinese director to the Institute alongside the Israeli director. This almost led to the shutting down of the Institute at the beginning of the 2012-2011 school year (Shai, 2016).

The Chinese proposal to the university administration to establish the Institute occurred in parallel to the surge in China-Israel relations. Even if this concurrence is not viewed as the sole or central motive for establishing the institute, the timing cannot be ignored. The increasingly warming relations prompted China's need to establish and deepen its familiarity and influence on Israel. An institute located at the heart of one of the most important universities in Israel would certainly serve that goal. The public debate that began over a decade after the establishment of the Institute indicates the shifting mindset within Israeli society during this period, and may reflect the change in the way the Israeli public is starting to view China's presence in Israel.

The CRI in Hebrew

CRI Station was established in 1941, even before the Communist Party seized power in the country. According to its website, the station was launched to promote mutual understanding and friendship between the Chinese people and the peoples of the world". On September 23, 2009, the station's Hebrew language website was first launched. The site self-proclaims that it is "the first and only Hebrew website run by an official entity in China" and therefore "it offers [the Israeli reader] a

glimpse into the Chinese perspective on the various issues on the agenda" (CRI Hebrew, n.d.). Interestingly, the site also runs a Facebook page in Hebrew to address the Israeli public through additional channels, even though this social network is blocked to the Chinese user by what is known as the "Great Firewall of China" erected by the Chinese government, which, as stated, operates the site (Facebook, n.d.).

Wang Zhigang, who served as the Chinese Minister of Science at the time, came to Israel for the launch of the Hebrew language website. At the event held for the occasion, he said: "In recent years, relations between Israel and China have been tightening, with considerable progress in Israeli-Chinese cooperation in the economic, political and cultural domains. As we launch the Hebrew website, we seek to promote social cooperation between the governments and the peoples" (Kam, 2009). Jixuan Xia, Vice President of CRI, also came to Israel to attend the event and said: "I believe the launch of the Hebrew website will play a positive role in helping Israelis better understand China and I hope that this website will become the first source of information for Israelis to learn about what's happening in China" (Kam, 2009).

Shimon Peres, the President of Israel at the time, congratulated the official launch of the CRI Hebrew website, noting that Israel and China have a long history, and that the launch of the website is great news for Israel. President Peres thanked the Chinese government for establishing a new line of communication between the two countries and wished success to the operators of the new site. Eden Bar Tal, who served as director of the Israeli Ministry of Communications, described this launch as a "dramatic and symbolic event". Bar Tal added that "this is an important start in the effort to convey the story of modern-day China to the Israeli public." On the sidelines of the launch event where these speeches were made, there was a rather limited protest against the platform that Israel was giving to the official Chinese representative attending the event (Parsico, 2009).

Xi Xiaoqi, or Chinese Itzik as he is more widely known in Israeli media, is one of the well-known writers and creators on the website. He conveys the same messages in additional media platforms with his fluent Hebrew. For example, he has appeared many times in the “Zinor Layla” TV program on Israeli Channel 13, as a representative of the Hebrew Department of CRI and has provided his commentary on various local issues that concern China (Zinor Layla, 2013). On “Kan”, the Israeli Public Broadcasting Corporation, Chinese Itzik and other representatives of the station’s Hebrew Department who speak Hebrew appeared alongside Israeli employees of the corporation and presented a variety of segments and short videos on China-related issues (Kan 2-minutes, 2018)¹¹. On the Israeli TV network “Keshet”, Chinese Itzik served as a pundit on Chinese culture for the Israeli public in a series of articles presented by two of the channel’s news anchors (Kushmaru & Duek, 2002).

There is no precedent of a foreign state representative employed by his country’s state-run media gaining so much attention in Israeli media. And while the radio station’s website is expected to be associated with China’s goals, objectives and interests, the constant presence of a Chinese representative in the Israeli mainstream media is a completely different story. When an official mouthpiece appears in such media outlets, his remarks and commentary are given authority and therefore when representatives of CRI appear most frequently in the local media, the Chinese move to establish the Hebrew website can be deemed successful in promoting China’s goal to gain a positive reputation among Israeli citizens (Yellinek, 2020).

Confucius Institute at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem

In May 2013, during Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s visit to China, he attended a ceremony to mark the signing of the agreement to establish a second Confucius Institute in Israel, this time at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. At the time, the president of Hebrew University, Menachem Ben Sasson, who accompanied the Prime Minister’s visit, said that “Cooperation with China and developing ties with Asian countries is

a top priority for the Hebrew University. These relations will mutually benefit everyone involved” (Viva Sarah Press, 2013). The institute was officially dedicated on May 19, 2014, at a large ceremony attended by Chinese Vice Premier Liu Yandong, who said at the event: “The Confucius Institute opens a new chapter in the cultural dialogue between the two countries” (HUJI, 2014).

The Chinese university chosen as the “twin” was Peking University, ranked as the third best university in Asia in 2018 and the first in China (Bothwell, 2018). The fact that two Confucius Institutes in Israel were coupled with elite universities from China suggests the great importance that China attributes to the Israeli system. As mentioned, each Institute is associated with its host university and a Chinese university. As yet, no comprehensive research has been done on the mechanism of inter-institutional coupling, but one can assume that as far as the Chinese are concerned, the two most crucial factors are the international ranking of the host university and the way China’s leadership views the host country.

The Institute’s website details its objectives as follows: “To promote knowledge of China in Israel, in recognition that exposure to its rich culture will enhance the cultural ties and mutual understanding between Chinese and Israelis” (HUJI, 2020). The Institute’s activities, which run in tandem with the Asian Studies Department, “aim to expand and deepen the exposure of all Hebrew University students to the Chinese language and culture; to provide opportunities to experience Chinese arts such as martial arts, calligraphy, Chinese medicine; and at the same time to engage as many audiences as possible outside the university in activities that portray China’s character”.

According to its website, the Institute is entrusted with five tasks: to impart Chinese culture to university students and the general public; to reveal the experience of life in China to the students of the Department through participation in the “Chinese Bridge” summer course; to promote the study of the Chinese language among the general public in Israel; to create a

developed knowledge center on China at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem; and to establish a cultural center for the community of Chinese students at the Hebrew University (HUJI, 2020).

On January 24, 2017, the University and the Institute celebrated the 25th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Israel and China. This event was attended by China's ambassador to Israel, Zhan Yongxin. Speaking at the ceremony, the ambassador discussed the relations between the two countries and the role of the university, saying: "Many of its graduates are engaged in deepening relations between Israel and China and I hope that everyone here today will continue to contribute to the friendship and cooperation between the countries" (Ganon, 2017).

In doing so, the Chinese ambassador highlighted the Institute's role in promoting "Friendship and Cooperation", a legitimate goal in itself, but given the host institution, this goal may be considered a problem. Since the Confucius Institute operates within the university, there is an inherent difficulty in separating the activities of the Institute from the activities of the university. For this reason, the criticism mentioned above in the context of the Confucius Institute at TAU regarding foreign involvement in academic content applied to this case too. After all, the main role of a university is education and research, not "friendship and cooperation". If there is a conflict between the main goal and the goal declared by the Chinese ambassador, it may be difficult to decide how to act.

The Intention of Signing an Agreement between CMEC and the Hapoel TLV

In November 2016, representatives of the Hapoel TLV soccer team signed an agreement with the China Machinery Engineering Corporation, under which the latter would sponsor the team and transfer 50 million NIS over five years. At a ceremony held in TLV that month, the deal was presented along with fourteen other deals signed the same year between China and Israel and described by the Chinese government as China's "most strategic deals" in Israel. One of the motives of the China Machinery Engineering Corporation

to sponsor and invest the money in the TLV sports club may have been their desire to gain an advantage and secure a contract for building the team's new stadium. At the time, Chinese infrastructure companies had not yet penetrated the local market in Israel and the region.

Another possible explanation of the Chinese intention is their desire to create a positive image of China in Israel, even though it is not as extensive or economically significant as the other SPPD mentioned above. This theory is supported by the fact that this was presented as one of China's strategic deals in Israel. The Chinese seek to gain influence by purchasing or endorsing soccer clubs in many parts of the world, such as Inter Milan, Atletico Madrid, Nice and Sochaux, for the same purpose of creating a positive image through this SPPD.

Wang Hong, vice president of the Chinese corporation, said: "We appreciate the glorious history of the Hapoel TLV club and its impact on the community. We have no doubt that the partnership between Hapoel TLV and CMEC will serve as a platform to enter into the Israeli market... And we welcome the opportunity to join forces with Hapoel TLV in its outreach to the community". In her remarks, the Vice-President clarified and emphasized the main Chinese motive behind the move, which is, as stated, to create a positive image of China among the Israeli public by sponsoring a soccer club. On the part of the soccer team, the motivation to sign the agreement was mainly the financial need to stabilize the club to ensure future professional development (Calcalist, 2016), (Zanzifer, 2016). As of now, the deal did not come to fruition due to financial difficulties, but that does not negate the interest of a Chinese commercial company in influencing Israeli society by supporting a soccer club (Zafir, 2017).

The Chinese intention, even if ultimately not carried out, to support this specific soccer club, which is a long-standing and well-known team but not considered one of the largest and strongest in Israel like Maccabi TLV or Beitar Jerusalem, illustrates one of the following: Either the Chinese sought to gain an advantage and secure a contract

to build the stadium, or they planned to target the select Israeli population group associated with the club. Hapoel TLV is an elitist sports club established in 1920 by the Organization of Workers in Israel and has been referenced many times in Israeli culture, such as several songs by one of the club's best-known fans, iconic Israeli singer Arik Einstein. The Chinese decision to target this club specifically may indicate their desire to influence this Israeli elite group in particular.

Establishment of the China Cultural Center in Tel Aviv

In November 2017, the Chinese government opened the China Cultural Center in TLV with an investment of about NIS 20 million (Tzur, 2017). When asked why he thought there is a need for a Chinese cultural center in such a small country like Israel while most other nations don't have one, the cultural attaché at the Chinese Embassy in Israel, Wan Ting, explained: "The decision is part of an overall strategy of the Republic whereby Chinese culture should be made accessible in all countries with which it maintains strategic, diplomatic, economic and cultural ties. Although there are larger countries in terms of population size, Israel gets a special status in our view, and the decision to establish a cultural center here indicates our desire to invest in our cultural ties with Israel" (Azulay, 2017).

He added, "The Israelis and the Chinese are similar in their strong devotion to the family, the great love they have for festivals and holidays and the old cultural tradition they carry with them. Israeli culture is more open and infuses western and eastern values, while Chinese culture is more uniform and insulated. In my view, we show a little more modesty and consideration of our cultural origins. However, the gap is not too large and can be bridged" (Azulay, 2017). This center also offers courses, exhibits and workshops in a variety of Chinese cultural fields, similar to a Confucius Institute, but with a major difference in that, it mainly addresses the general public rather than students. It is the 32nd center, and the second overall in the ME, to be established by the Chinese in what appears to be a complementary endeavor

to the more academic Confucius Institutes (Gilad, 2017), (China Cultural Center, n.d.).

The Chinese decision to locate the cultural center in north Tel Aviv, a relatively affluent area, instead of central TLV or downtown Jerusalem like the cultural centers in other foreign countries, begs the question: why there exactly? One can argue that the property in that location was the most suitable for the needs of the center, especially because the new Chinese embassy building is also planned to be built in the same area in the future (Tzur, 2017). However, the chosen location can also indicate a Chinese desire to influence this particular group, and therefore the center was placed in an area that is accessible to it. The Chinese may wish to directly influence this elitist group, hoping that it will convey their influence to the broader Israeli population, perhaps because it may pose the greater opposition to Chinese presence in Israel or that objectively speaking communities of higher socioeconomic status have more time to devote to the new experiences offered by the center.

In June 2018, the Center held the first Dragon Boat Festival ever in Israel. This is a Chinese holiday celebrated at the peak of summer (Time Out Magazine TLV, 2018). In April 2019, the Cultural Center, in collaboration with the Brooklyn Public Library, presented exhibits on Jewish life in China during World War II. China's ambassador to Israel, Zhan Yongxin, published an article in Israel Hayom in which he commented on the exhibit, stressing that "even in the most challenging times, Chinese and Jews lived together in friendship." The ambassador also mentioned two people of that era who performed extraordinary acts for the other people. One is the Consul General of China in Vienna, Ho Feng-Shan, who issued thousands of visas to local Jews who were fleeing the Nazis (Yad-Vashem, 2020).

The other was Jacob Rosenfeld, an Austrian Jew who joined the Chinese people's war against the Japanese occupation and saved the lives of thousands. Citing these stories, the Ambassador asserts that there is a wide potential for relations between the two nations, based on deeper aspects

of mutual support and not just interests, and concludes that he is “hopeful that this courageous friendship will continue to be well maintained and nurtured by the peoples of Israel and China” (Yongxin, 2020). The center also runs a library that lends Chinese language textbooks and Chinese reading books tailored to beginners (China Cultural Center Tel Aviv, n.d.).

The Cultural Center is also active in encouraging Israeli tourism to China by posting videos online, including on websites that are blocked to the Chinese public (Facebook, n.d.). In addition, the center launched a campaign, in conjunction with Lametayel, an Israeli travel shop that also operates a travel web portal, which included an advertising campaign across the country that appeared on buses and transport terminals. The campaign also included raffles and prizes and some local TV stars who were invited to China for a publicized visit (Lametayel, n.d.), (Facebook, n.d.).

This investment of resources and attention from China to Israel raises the question of whether this is a campaign to expand tourism from Israel to China, a Chinese interest in creating a positive image in Israel, or perhaps a combination of the two. In 2018, approximately 141.2 foreign tourists visited China, in addition to extensive domestic tourism (Travel China Guide, n.d.). The potential Israeli contribution to the influx of tourism into China is minimal. This may suggest that the Chinese intention in launching the campaign is indeed to create a positive image of China among the Israeli public, especially since this was done by the Cultural Center. But this claim cannot be determined with certainty.

Founding Conference of the Association of Chinese Sinologists and Translators in Israel

On December 27, 2018, the China Cultural Center convened the founding conference of the Association of Chinese Sinologists and Translators in Israel, which was initiated by the Chinese Embassy in Israel. China's ambassador to Israel, scholars and other figures involved in the ties between the two countries spoke at the conference. In addition, the Embassy presented a lifetime achievement award in the field of Chinese

cultural studies to four of the top China scholars in Israel: Aaron Shai, Yoav Ariel, Yitzhak Shichor and Andrew Plaks (Pevzner, 2018). The conference was criticized by another China scholar, Noam Orbach, who said he was invited to the event but chose not to attend. This because he finds it academically unacceptable that a country establishes and manages a local organization that assembles researchers and enthusiasts in a particular field, and that this move by the embassy can be seen as a Chinese attempt to control the academic discourse on the subject matter.

According to Orbach, the two heads of the main Asian studies departments in Israel, one from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the other from TAU, where said Confucius Institutes were operating, also chose not to attend the founding conference, even though they were personally invited by the embassy. Furthermore, the elusive announcement before and after the conference itself raised many questions, since the conference was not announced in advance among those involved in the field, and even after the conference, not a single word appeared in Hebrew or English about the establishment of the association or the prize awarded. In contrast, many news items about the event were published in the Chinese language. This could indicate the focus and the central need that this body addresses, namely, to show internally in China that the discourse about China in Israel is being monitored and controlled (Orbach, 2019). As of now, no announcement or news report regarding the Association's activities has been published.

Individual Invitations - People to People

Another Soft Power approach that relates to the Chinese modus operandi in the past (during the time referred to in this article as the First Period) is the invitation of various Israeli figures to China and the exertion of Soft Power on them during their visit. Current Chinese President Xi Jinping even talked about this strategy extensively in one of his first speeches when he took office in 2013 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, 2013). This action is advantageous due to the relatively minor investment it requires, since it involves

individuals and activities within China itself, while the potential return is relatively high. For example, the Chinese often invite scholars and senior Israeli officials to give lectures in China, to provide consultation and sometimes they invite professors to stay for longer periods.

The invitees are usually influential people of public importance, so the expected return from this Soft Power investment is to turn these guests into ambassadors of China's goodwill. In doing so, the Chinese hope to gain widespread influence, by directing limited resources at one key individual, similar to the previously mentioned notion of appealing to the elite to channel the messages through them and control their discourse.

Each year, the Chinese invite guests from many countries to international conferences it hosts, including many Israelis. For example, Dr. Yossi Dashti (2017) says he was often invited to lectures in various places in China and received a particularly warm welcome. It is important to note that these guests haven't necessarily lost their judgment due to the hospitality, but the impression created by such a relationship, which is probably China's main interest, is that of affection and a positive attitude towards the host country. As mentioned at the outset, innovation is at the core of the relations and is China's main incentive to cultivate these ties and exert SPPD. Therefore, it is not surprising that the Chinese also approached key figures in this area with a dual purpose - to learn from their experience and to influence Israeli public opinion through them. For example, Dan Senor and Saul Singer, authors of the book *Start-Up Nation*, have become rising stars and quite sought-after professors in China, receiving much respect from their Chinese hosts¹².

IV. CONCLUSION

This article highlights and chronicles the process that led to the dramatic shift in China-Israel relations, from opposition to Israel's right to exist to the exertion of multi-faceted Chinese SPPD in Israel. This shift occurred due to many factors mentioned in the essay, some directly related to the countries themselves and some influenced by wider global and geopolitical processes. But one

could posit that the main motive that led to the era described in this article as the Third Period is the Chinese need to work with and learn from Israeli innovation. Since Xi took office in 2013, there has been a marked increase in the use of SPPD, seemingly in service of his directive to promote innovation in the Chinese economy. The article concludes that China have invested in and established a wide range of SPPD in Israel to create a positive reputation and exert influence on Israeli society.

It appears that China seeks to influence Israel in these ways because to them Israel is a source of knowledge and innovation. From the Chinese perspective, this innovation is largely credited to Israeli culture, its history and its education system and therefore they must gain access to this system. To be clear, the Chinese approach to the Gulf states rich in national resources is different because, unlike Israel, where education and innovation are at the core of China's interests, their relations with the Gulf states revolve around the energy sector. Therefore, it is clear that China's widespread use of Soft Power tools within the Israeli system differs from their approach to the Gulf system or any other system in the ME.

And the fact that the second cultural center in the ME was established in Israel and that two Confucius Institutes were established in a small country and both coupled to top universities in China indicates the uniqueness of the Chinese use of SPPD in Israel, compared to the other countries of the region. Men's theory, mentioned earlier in this essay, whereby appealing to a select group in the passive country is sufficient since they will channel the influence further, is consistent with the Chinese Israeli case and with Xi's directive to promote people-to-people diplomacy (P2P). The location of the Cultural Center and the endorsement of the Israeli soccer team may indicate an appeal to an elite group that in turn will influence the entire population.

These SPPD have stirred some criticism within Israel, but as of now, no measures have been taken to limit Chinese activity as a result. The criticisms leveled against China came mostly from the margins of Israeli society. These claims

usually boil down to the assertion that all of the aforementioned institutions and activities serve as an espionage apparatus or as a means of "mining information". This in contrast to the SPPD used by other countries, which are usually aimed at controlling the narrative or discourse. Despite this criticism, a poll conducted by the Pew Research Center and published on September 30, 2019 shows that nearly 66% of Israelis view China as a positive force in general, compared to 25% who view China as a negative force. These numbers reflect an 11% increase in favor of those who view China positively compared to 2018. Of the 32 countries surveyed, only in Russia and Nigeria do people hold a more positive view of China (Silver, Delvin & Huang, 2019). Therefore, it is evident that the use of China's SPPD is successfully influencing Israeli public opinion, and that the Chinese are cleverly managing to persuade Israel to act in their interest, without the need to exert hard power.

These Chinese efforts or SPPD towards and in Israel while Israeli biggest strategic ally, the US, and China maintaining an ongoing rivalry, shows the biggest context of China actions. China uses the SPPD towards and in Israel, not only because of its will to build an impact over the Israeli people as suggested along this article, but also because it wants to counter the American impact in one of their most important strategic allies. That is to say, we should expect to see this phenomenon growing as long as the rivalry between the two Superpowers keeps moving on. The findings of the article herald that China-Israel relations will continue to occupy China both because of the special interest that China finds in Israel as well as a component in the Superpowers competition.

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Notes

1. More about it can be found at: "Chinese Innovation China's Technology Future and What It Means for Silicon Valley", Bay Area Council Economic Institute, <http://www.bayareaeconomy.org/report/chinese-innovation/>, last modified February 1, 2020; "China-Israel Industrial R&D Cooperation Framework", *Israel Innovation Authority*, <https://innovationisrael.org.il/en/geography/china>, last modified February 1, 2020.
2. More about Soft Power Pipelines can be found at Roie Yellinek, Yossi Mann, Udi Lebel, 'Chinese SPPD Diffusion (SPPDD) in the Middle East 2000-2018', *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13530194.2020.1732870>.
3. Such as: Yitzhak Shichor, "China and the Middle East since Tiananmen", *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. 1992;519(1):86-100.doi:10.1177/0002716292519001007.
4. Such as: Aron Shai, *Sino-Israel Relations: 1890-2016* (Academic Studies Press, Boston, 2019).
5. Such as: P. R. Kumaraswamy, "China, Israel and the US: The Problematic Triangle", *China Report* 49 (1), 2013, pp. 143-159.
6. Such as: Yonatan Goldstein, *China and Israel, 1948-1998: A Fifty-Year Retrospective* (Praeger, Westport 1999).
7. Such as: Yoram Evron, "Between Beijing and Washington: Israel's technology transfers to China" *Journal of East Asian Studies* 13 (3), 2013, pp. 503-528.
8. More about Confucius Institutes throughout the region can be found at Roie Yellinek, Yossi Mann, Udi Lebel, "Chinese Soft-Power in the Arab World –China's Confucius Institutes as a Central Tool of Influence", *Comparative Strategy*, 2020 39:6, 517-534, DOI: 10.1080/01495933.2020.1826843; "Educational cooperation: Fostering a greater understanding of our peoples", *Jerusalem Post*, October 22, 2018, <https://www.jpost.com/Special-Content/Educational-cooperation-Fostering-a-greater-understanding-of-our-peoples-569942>, last modified February 1, 2020.
9. About, the Confucius Institute website of Tel Aviv University:<https://humanities.tau.ac.il/confucius/about>, last modified February 1, 2020.
10. This trend includes, for example: the movie "In the Name of Confucius", the UK Conservative Party's report on Confucius Institutes, February, 2019, http://www.conservativehumanrights.com/news/2019/18.02.19_Confucius.html; And the article about the closing of the Institute in Hawaii, July 30, 2019, https://hawaiiantel.net/news/read/category/news/article/the_honolulu_staradv-university_of_hawaiiis_confucius_institute_closes_a-tca, last modified February 1, 2020.

11. Page featuring articles on China on *Kan*: <https://www.kan.org.il/program/?catid=1408>, last modified February 1, 2020.
12. For example: The Israel-Asia Center Website Dedicates a Full Page to Saul Singer, who serves as a member of their Advisory Council: <https://israelasiacenter.org/staff/saul-singer/>, lastmodified May 21, 2020.
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PIBID Contributions to the Training of Physics Teachers During the Covid-19 Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

Through the Institutional Program of Scholarships for Initiation to Teaching (PIBID), undergraduate students can work in public schools of basic education, conducting research and building experiences as a teacher. In the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, a group of physics undergraduates from the Pontifical Catholic University of Minas Gerais had the opportunity to follow the daily routine of the physics teacher at the Maestro Villa Lobos State School and to study the Tutoring Study Plan made available by the Secretary of Education of the State of Minas Gerais. The group of undergraduates also had the opportunity to produce didactic material to meet the school's reality, aiming to improve distance teaching and learning during the period of social isolation imposed by the pandemic. This work aims to report on the contribution of the PIBID in the training of future teachers.

Keywords: PIBID, teaching, remote teaching, physics teaching.

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PIBID Contributions to the Training of Physics Teachers During the Covid-19 Pandemic

Contribuições do PIBID para a formação de professores de Física durante a pandemia de Covid-19

Bruna Rafaela de Almeida Noia^α, Gabriela Alves Santos^σ, Joice da Silva Araújo^ρ
& Poliana Marques Berto^Ω

Resumo

Através do Programa Institucional de Bolsas de Iniciação à Docência (PIBID), discentes de graduação em licenciatura podem atuar em escolas públicas de educação básica, realizando pesquisas e construindo experiências como professor. Em meio à pandemia da Covid-19, um grupo de licenciandos em Física da Pontifícia Universidade Católica de Minas Gerais teve a oportunidade de acompanhar o cotidiano do professor de Física da Escola Estadual Maestro Villa Lobos e de estudar o Plano de Estudos Tutorados disponibilizado pela Secretaria de Educação do Estado de Minas Gerais. O grupo de licenciandos teve, também, a oportunidade de produzir material didático para atender à realidade da escola, visando melhorias para o ensino-aprendizagem à distância no período de isolamento social imposto pela pandemia. Este trabalho tem como objetivo relatar a contribuição do PIBID na formação de futuros professores.

Palavras-chave: PIBID, docência, ensino remoto, ensino de física.

ABSTRACT

Through the Institutional Program of Scholarships for Initiation to Teaching (PIBID), undergraduate students can work in public schools of basic education, conducting research and building experiences as a teacher. In the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, a group of physics undergraduates from the Pontifical Catholic University of Minas Gerais had the

opportunity to follow the daily routine of the physics teacher at the Maestro Villa Lobos State School and to study the Tutoring Study Plan made available by the Secretary of Education of the State of Minas Gerais. The group of undergraduates also had the opportunity to produce didactic material to meet the school's reality, aiming to improve distance teaching and learning during the period of social isolation imposed by the pandemic. This work aims to report on the contribution of the PIBID in the training of future teachers.

Keywords: PIBID, teaching, remote teaching, physics teaching.

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I. INTRODUÇÃO

Apesar das Diretrizes Curriculares Nacionais de formação de professores para a educação básica preverem uma carga horária mínima de 800 horas de atividades práticas, distribuídas ao longo de toda formação, percebemos que outros projetos que extrapolam essa carga horária mínima e que incentivam os discentes através da

distribuição de bolsas, contribuem significativamente para aproximar o futuro professor do seu campo de atuação.

O Programa Institucional de Bolsas de Iniciação à Docência (PIBID) e o Residência Pedagógica fazem parte da política nacional de formação de professores e, em consonância com as Diretrizes Curriculares Nacionais dos cursos de licenciatura, visam valorizar, incentivar e preparar professores para atuarem na educação básica. Através desses programas, o licenciando tem a oportunidade de estudar, planejar e executar práticas de ensino desde os primeiros anos de graduação. A integração universidade-escola promovida por esses programas pode garantir que a experiência prática esteja presente na formação de professores, para além das vivências que ocorrem, normalmente, nos estágios obrigatórios e nos componentes curriculares de práticas de ensino. É importante destacar o que é afirmado por Holanda e Silva (2013) no tocante à necessidade de ações práticas, como forma de validação de toda a teoria pedagógica estudada previamente, sendo essa conexão entre a teoria e a prática a justificativa para a presença de um conjunto considerável de estudos de aprofundamento conceitual.

O PIBID foi criado em 2007 e, desde então, tem promovido a conexão entre universidades e instituições de ensino básico da rede pública, contribuindo para um elo entre esses espaços e os indivíduos que os frequentam. Conforme é destacado por Nascimento et. al (2012), o PIBID também atua como um incentivador à carreira docente nos cursos de licenciatura, uma vez que o ofício pode ser pouco visado e, até mesmo, rejeitado pelos licenciandos, principalmente nas áreas de Ciências da Natureza.

Em sua recente oferta, de outubro de 2020 a março de 2022, o PIBID contemplou cinco cursos de licenciatura ofertados pela Pontifícia Universidade Católica de Minas Gerais (PUC-MG), abrangendo cerca de 120 licenciandos da instituição, bem como 6 docentes da mesma e, também, 15 professores de escolas públicas (Noia et al. 2021). O objetivo deste trabalho é apresentar o relato de experiência de um grupo de

licenciandos em Física da PUC-MG que participou dessa oferta do PIBID, destacando os desafios e as contribuições do programa para formação prática e teórica do futuro professor, especialmente em um período de isolamento social, onde as universidades e as comunidades escolares precisaram rever e atualizar métodos de ensino tradicionais.

Sabemos que o ensino de Física, comumente feito de forma teórica em espaços tradicionais de sala de aula, geralmente é visto pelos estudantes como de difícil compreensão e com conteúdos distantes da realidade na qual os mesmos estão inseridos, acarretando no afastamento e no desinteresse para estudar Física (Alves, 2005). Para reverter essa marca do ensino de Física, concordamos com Nascimento (2020) que o uso de atividades experimentais pode proporcionar uma interação maior entre os alunos e professores, assim como entre os conteúdos e o cotidiano e a interdisciplinaridade. O ensino de Física em outros espaços como, por exemplo, laboratórios didáticos e plataformas digitais pode também contribuir para maior interesse dos estudantes para essa área do conhecimento.

II. DESENVOLVIMENTO

O início das atividades do projeto da Física, PUC-MG, no PIBID ocorreu em outubro de 2020 com a participação de 24 licenciandos (pibidianos), de um professor coordenador (professor de Física da PUC-MG) e três professores preceptores (professores de Física da rede pública de educação), um da Escola Estadual Padre Camargos, um do Instituto de Educação de Minas Gerais e um da Escola Estadual Maestro Villa Lobos (EEMVL). Cada professor preceptor supervisionou e orientou o trabalho de oito pibidianos, dividindo a área da Física em três grupos.

As atividades do programa iniciaram e se desenvolveram em um período sem aulas presenciais nas escolas devido ao isolamento imposto pela pandemia da Covid-19. Nesse cenário, como ponto de partida, os pibidianos analisaram o Plano de Estudos Tutorados (PET) elaborado e distribuído nas escolas pelo governo

do estado de Minas Gerais. Ao analisar a estrutura, o conteúdo e as questões, foram observadas diferenças significativas em relação aos livros didáticos disponibilizados pelo Programa Nacional do Livro Didático (PNLD). Entre as principais diferenças, podemos destacar a apresentação de textos resumidos e com poucas imagens e um número maior de exercícios. Com o conteúdo resumido, notamos a baixa indicação de exemplos, falta de detalhamento, e alguns erros conceituais.

Foi retirado do PET volume 1 e do PET volume 2, três exemplos que serão mostrados a seguir. Na figura 1, o texto mostrado, define que o Vetor é

uma seta, porém isso pode levar o aluno a confundir e interpretar qualquer seta como Vetor. Seria mais correto explicar que os vetores são representados por setas e trazer uma definição mais detalhada do mesmo, pois os Vetores são de extrema importância para o estudo da Física, e entendê-los é essencial. Na figura 2, a questão apresenta um erro ortográfico para “para-raios”, e também podemos citar de exemplo, a figura 3, onde a questão pede para o aluno determinar o valor da corrente elétrica, porém o material traz uma explicação vaga e superficial sobre o conceito e não apresenta a fórmula e sua explicação para que o aluno possa responder a questão.

VETORES

São segmentos de reta orientados usados para representar grandezas vetoriais, diferenciando-as das grandezas escalares. Ou seja, vetores são setas.

Figura 1: Questão retirada do PET volume 1, pág. 5, disponível em:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_MdqgzKUEe1_lRv6dqTlwQN9W1lgoBzz/view.

- 6 – Pesquise sobre o poder das pontas na eletrostática e como este princípio é aplicado no dispositivo pára-raios.

Figura 2: Questão retirada do PET volume 2, pág. 74, disponível em:
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Otq-jzRCjziVMPXdz-EZRt9uFGkKR5kL/view>.

- 1 – Uma corrente elétrica de intensidade igual a 8 A percorre um fio condutor. Determine o valor da carga que passa através de uma seção transversal em 1 minuto.

Figura 3: Questão retirada do PET volume 2, pág. 77 disponível em:
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Otq-jzRCjziVMPXdz-EZRt9uFGkKR5kL/view>.

Em conformidade com o arranjo, as questões foram apresentadas com pouca ou nenhuma contextualização, e, outras vezes, exigindo do aluno maior grau de conhecimento. Concluímos que seria mais viável manter o ensino com os livros didáticos disponibilizados pelo PNLD, mas concordamos que não seria possível abranger a

todos os alunos, uma vez que as aulas presenciais foram interrompidas antes do processo de entrega dos livros em formato físico, e alguns alunos não teriam o acesso através das plataformas digitais.

Em 2021, os pibidianos se dedicaram à produção de videoaulas, estudando e planejando todas as etapas de produção. Inicialmente, se propuseram

a produzir videoaulas para publicação no canal do YouTube do projeto PUC Ensina¹, que é um projeto dos cursos de licenciatura da PUC-MG, inaugurado em 2020. O objetivo do PUC Ensina é contribuir com a divulgação do conhecimento para os alunos da educação básica, através da criação e divulgação de videoaulas produzidas pelos licenciandos e disponibilizada através de um canal de fácil acesso como o YouTube. Os três grupos optaram por produzir uma videoaula com algum tema ligado à Astronomia. Além de divulgar o projeto PUC Ensina, a proposta dos pibidianos era produzir material de qualidade como forma de apoiar as atividades no ambiente virtual de aprendizagem do professor preceptor. Para Jesus et al. (2019, p.77): "Devido à facilidade de acesso, principalmente através do website *Youtube*, as videoaulas passaram a ser um ótimo recurso para o desenvolvimento da aprendizagem dos discentes, desde que seja bem utilizada."

A videoaula "Por que o céu é azul?"², elaborada pelos pibidianos da EEMVL, foi planejada em reuniões para decisão do tema, criação do roteiro, escolha de simulações, imagens e vídeos curtos, gravação e edição, orientados pelo coordenador e o professor supervisor. A videoaula foi publicada no canal do YouTube do PUC Ensina no dia 2 de maio de 2021 e disponibilizada para os alunos da EEMVL. Posteriormente, aplicou-se um questionário, pela plataforma *Google Forms*, com questões relacionadas à videoaula, com o objetivo de verificar a aprendizagem dos discentes da EEMVL. Observamos que o processo de ensino-aprendizagem ocorreu de forma apropriada com uso da multimídia, visto que houve um alto indicador de respostas corretas. Além disso, pedimos retorno dos alunos acerca do conteúdo, sendo que esses mostraram-se adeptos a essa metodologia de ensino. Segundo Noia et al.: "Os que reagiram à proposta diziam ter gostado e houve comentários pedindo que levássemos mais conteúdos como esse. O *feedback* por parte dos alunos nos mostrou certa efetividade do uso da ferramenta *YouTube* na metodologia em questão."

¹ PUC Ensina - YouTube

² Por que o céu é azul? O eletromagnetismo no cotidiano - YouTube

Com a mesma metodologia da criação das videoaulas, realizamos novas produções abordando conteúdos de óptica, ondas, energia e circuito elétrico com o objetivo de reproduzir experiências de um laboratório on-line, a partir das simulações do PhET Interactive Simulations³. Esse recurso foi o mais utilizado pelos pibidianos para diversos fins, não apenas nas produções das videoaulas, como também, para explicar os conteúdos em aulas ministradas com o auxílio do professor preceptor. A videoaula intitulada "Transformações de Energia" (Figura 3) produzida com esses recursos pode ser assistida em Transformações de Energia.

³ Plataforma desenvolvida pela Universidade do Colorado com diversos recursos educacionais que permitem trabalhar simulações experimentais aplicadas ao campo das ciências da natureza e matemática. Pode ser acessado em <https://phet.colorado.edu/>.



Figura 3: Captura de tela do vídeo publicado no canal do projeto PUC Ensina no YouTube.

O maior desafio dos pibidianos foi desenvolver atividades para engajar e estabelecer uma comunicação com os alunos em um período sem aulas presenciais. Em encontros semanais, os pibidianos planejavam e desenvolviam as atividades e, ao mesmo tempo, refletiam sobre o cenário em que a escola se encontrava, a fim de avaliar como contribuir de maneira gradativa e enriquecer as aulas do professor. Com a condição do distanciamento social que impedia o encontro presencial dos pibidianos com os alunos das escolas, a alternativa foi fazer alguns encontros pela plataforma *Google Meet*, para execução de dinâmicas de ensino-aprendizagem. Nesses encontros, os conteúdos foram expostos com o uso do Power Point e o PhET foi usado para aplicações de simulações experimentais. Para os alunos que não conseguiam participar do encontro on-line, os pibidianos disponibilizavam roteiros para o desenvolvimento dos experimentos virtuais. O objetivo desses roteiros era, também, mostrar como manusear a plataforma e apresentá-la como recurso alternativo para aprendizagem. As aulas on-line foram uma das primeiras experiências, para a maioria dos pibidianos, em que foi possível compartilhar conhecimento com os alunos, aprender com os mesmos e perceber na prática o desafio de ser professor em período de isolamento social. Outro recurso utilizado pelos pibidianos nos encontros on-line foi o *Kahoot*⁴, uma

⁴ www.kahoot.it

plataforma com linguagem *gamificada*, que permite fixar o conteúdo lecionado através de quizzes. Além do design semelhante ao de um jogo, a plataforma conta com a criação de um pódio ao fim da atividade, contribuindo para o aumento da competitividade entre os estudantes. De acordo com Henukh e Guntara (2020), esse tipo de experiência virtual reforça o aprendizado e também amplia o engajamento dos discentes ao proporcionar um escape da monotonia nas aulas.

Para solucionar dúvidas das atividades, foi criado um grupo pelo aplicativo *WhatsApp* - rede social amplamente utilizada no país como forma de troca instantânea de mensagens -, em que seria permissível o envio de dúvidas dos alunos da escola com respostas consoantes à disponibilidade dos pibidianos e do regente de turma naquele momento. Dessa forma, iniciamos com muito progresso, resolvendo as dúvidas apresentadas e, embora houvesse participação de poucos alunos, eram frequentes os questionamentos deles. Sob a orientação do professor preceptor e tendo como referência o PET, os pibidianos tiveram, também, a oportunidade de elaborar questões para atividades avaliativas que seriam aplicadas aos alunos.

Pelo período atípico e a intensa experiência proporcionada durante o programa por tal contexto, foi trazida à baila a seguinte questão: o PIBID alcançou seus objetivos na formação docente durante a pandemia? Com isso, foi

aplicado um questionário aos pibidianos da EEMVL para analisar a pauta. Tendo em vista tal objetivo, este contou com 5 questões para entrevistá-los e fazer um levantamento da satisfação em relação ao programa e suas experiências, contando com 7 respostas.

Nomeando cada um dos sete respondentes por: A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, A6 e, por fim, A7; é possível analisar as respostas recebidas.

A princípio perguntamos qual a contribuição do programa para concepção de docência dos respondentes e houve como tópicos mais citados: aproximação com a realidade escolar, contato com os desafios da docência e aproximação ao

cotidiano de um docente. No entanto, destacamos a fala de A3 - “A experiência contribuiu no sentido de possibilitar que eu vivesse uma realidade completamente diferente da que eu vivi a minha vida toda (que foi a de estudar em uma escola particular). Observar o dia a dia da EEMVL me ensinou muito nesse sentido. -, uma vez que no Brasil há uma dicotomia marcante entre os ensinos público e privado, podendo ter sido um choque de realidades. Outro ponto relevante é que, para um futuro docente, o contato com diversos tipos de instituição de ensino se mostra de extrema importância. No quadro 1 são apresentados os dados coletados pelos respondentes.

Quadro 1: Tópicos citados como influência na concepção de docência do pibidiano por respondente.

Tópico que influenciou a formação	Respondente
Aproximação com a realidade escolar	A1, A2, A4 e A7.
Contato com os desafios da docência	A2, A5 e A7.
Convívio com o cotidiano de docente	A2, A6 e A7.
Experiência com novo tipo de escola	A3.

Posteriormente, o foco é tentar compreender de que maneira o período pandêmico influenciou no que foi afirmado na questão anterior. Agora damos ênfase ao que é dito por A2: “Sem dúvida a pandemia foi a principal responsável pelas experiências vividas durante o período do programa. Alguns projetos se tornaram inviáveis, no entanto um novo leque de possibilidades nos foi apresentado.”; pois é possível notar que o uso

de metodologias alternativas - que contribuiu para a vasta maioria das intervenções no programa - acarreta em grande impacto não apenas para os discentes, mas também para o professor, que precisa encontrar uma ferramenta que melhor se adapte às suas necessidades e instruir-se para empregá-la corretamente. As respostas mais recorrentes a essa indagação podem ser vistas no quadro 2.

Quadro 2: Elementos surgidos na pandemia que intervíram na visão de docência dos respondentes por respondente.

Respostas recorrentes	Respondentes
Limitação	A1, A2 e A6.
Expansão de conhecimentos e novas aprendizagens	A2 e A7.
Exposição maximada dos desafios enfrentados na profissão	A3, A5 e A7.
Revisão dos métodos de ensino	A3, A4 e A7.

Ulteriormente, foram levantados dados correspondentes ao número de pibidianos que pretendem seguir na carreira docente, os quais revelaram que, destes, 71,4% (A1, A2, A4, A5 e A7) declararam o farão e 28,5% (A3 e A6) se encontram indecisos sobre isso. Em busca de compreender tal resposta, foi indagado o que poderia ser considerado atrativo e o que seria repelente na profissão. Com exceção de A2, que aponta não contemplar causas que o distanciem da docência, e A6; 57% indicam o descaso da disciplina de Física e a desvalorização da profissão como fatores que provocam desânimo com o

magistério. Porém, A6 muda um pouco ao indicar que a responsabilidade de assumir o papel de professor é o que poderia afastá-lo do professorado, entrando em acordo com sua primeira resposta de que o contato com o cotidiano de um regente de turma afetou sua interpretação de docência e também com a resposta seguinte de que o contato com as limitações, possibilitado pela pandemia o susceptibilizou a tal perspectiva. No quadro 3 e 4 se encontra a relação de prós da ocupação por pibidiano.

Quadro 3: Prós da ocupação por pibidiano.

Prós	Respondente
Possibilidade de transmissão de conhecimento	A1, A2, A4, A6 e A7.
Impacto na vida do discente	A2, A3 e A5.

Quadro 4: Contras da ocupação por pibidiano.

Respostas recorrentes:	Respondentes
Descaso e má valorização do professor e da matéria	A1, A3, A4, A7.
Recursos didáticos e estrutura do ambiente de aprendizagem	A5.
Responsabilidade de ser professor	A6.
Nada	A2.

Com a busca de um indicador direto, interpelou-se acerca da relação entre a atuação no PIBID e a projeção por seguir ou não no ofício. A resposta que se sobressai nessa questão é dada por A7 - “O pibid me permitiu entender a realidade de uma escola pública, os desafios que a mesma enfrenta. Me fez sentir na pele a desvalorização da educação, e ao mesmo tempo me impulsiona a querer prosseguir a docência e tentar de alguma forma contribuir para uma educação de qualidade para as futuras gerações.” -, visto que a conexão com o ambiente escolar

trouxe consciência dos desafios a serem enfrentados, mas, não como fator limitante, como estimulante, que é esperado nos propósitos do programa. O quadro 5 mostra os elementos impactantes na participação no PIBID por pibidiano.

Quadro 5: Elementos Impactantes Por Pibidiano.

Elementos impactantes	Respondente
Contato com o ofício	A2, A4, A5 e A7.
Uso de meios alternativos para compartilhar conhecimento	A5 e A6.
Contato com desafios	A1 e A7.
Aprimoramento da prática docente	A3 e A7.

III. CONSIDERAÇÕES FINAIS

As ações do projeto foram direcionadas de modo a fornecer melhor suporte à aprendizagem dos alunos. Nesse processo, foram realizadas diversas atividades desde o início do projeto, em outubro de 2020, até o final em março de 2022. Após a pesquisa qualitativa aplicada aos participantes do projeto PIBID e análise dessas respostas, conclui-se que o PIBID é de extrema importância para a formação docente. Segundo Santos et al.(2017, p. 4645) existe uma falta de conexão entre os saberes aprendidos no processo formativo e a prática docente, e que a teoria e a prática deveriam caminhar juntas, sendo assim, programas como o PIBID, tem o intuito de aproximar o licenciando das escolas a partir dos anos iniciais da sua formação. Ademais, os resultados corroboraram a relevância desse tipo de política pública na formação docente do país relatada na literatura.

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Solidarity and Equality as Initial and Final Conditions of the Moral Good: The Genesis of the Notion of Justice

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ABSTRACT

In this paper we will analyze Piaget's studies on the development of morality focusing on the notion of justice, since this notion is constituted as the regulating dimension of social exchanges. Piaget's hypothesis is the following: the fundamental source of the evolution of morality is found in children's actions and interactions involving relations of solidarity and equality, as opposed to explanations that postulate its origin in authority and in relations of competition or competition. Our study will take into account the early theoretical works as well as their later empirical research on moral development in children. We will highlight the importance and originality of the indicated hypothesis in his theory of morality and in his body of work as a whole.

Keywords: notion of justice, solidarity, equality, moral development.

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Keywords: notion of justice, solidarity, equality, moral development.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to highlight the importance of solidarity and equality in Piaget's theory of morality. The morality of goodness, far from seeking its origin in the action of authority and in relations of competition, rests its source in relations of solidarity among equals. This scientific fact becomes fundamental for the construction of an education and a pedagogy committed to the intellectual and moral activity of the student.

Although Piaget wrote little about moral life - there is only one book (1994) and some articles (1927, 1930, 1931, 1934, 1998a, 1998b) - we cannot deny the enormous importance of morality in his work. Although the elaboration of a theory of morality is an unfinished project, as some commentators claim, the works he left on this subject show originality and coherence with his theoretical and epistemological system.

Authors, like Freitag (1990, 1991, 1992), try to evidence Piaget's intention to formulate a theory of morals and knowledge. Authors like Ducret (1984), Vonèche (1992), Vidal (1994), Freitas (2003) recognize that this goal was already outlined in his youth work: in the autobiographical essay "Recherche" (1918).

According to Ducret (1984) and Lia Freitas (2003), Piaget, in this essay, intends to formulate a theory of morality based on certain fundamental biological and philosophical convictions. These convictions are related to the systemic and dynamic conception of the organization of life and knowledge. Systemic, in the sense of the relationships between the parts and the whole, at all levels and spheres of this organization; dynamic, in the sense of understanding the differentiation and integration between real and ideal equilibria. Real balances are unstable and tend toward an ideal or stable balance. In this way, the development of moral feelings, as well as knowledge, should be explained as a function of this movement.

It is in the perspective outlined above that Piaget proposes to treat morality in its specific nature,

but in coherence with his theory of knowledge. In this way, to found a theory of morals, the author will seek the roots of moral feelings in values opposed to utilitarianism and amoralism, such as altruism and solidarity.

For Piaget, the moral of goodness should have altruism and solidarity as its initial and final substrate, for it develops initially from the sensory-motor affective schemas and continues to develop, reconstructing itself, at the later levels of consciousness. "It will be neither utilitarianism nor amoralism nor a science of manners, in the strict sense of the word, but a morality of altruism corresponding to the highest aspirations of human consciousness" (Piaget, 1918, p. 174).

The theory of moral development, like the theory of the development of knowledge, must take into account the distinction between the real and the ideal equilibrium. Only in this way will it avoid reducing morality to the existent and thus justifying egoism and utilitarianism; only in this way can it reach the essential aspect of moral truth: the possibility of self-denial that exists in the individual.

Piaget insists, from the beginning, that the possibility of self-denial can only occur by virtue of another element related to the development process: the awareness of forces that tend toward equilibrium. In this way, for him, moral obligation is conceivable as the awareness of the forces that make the organization tend toward equilibrium. Thus, good is constituted as a form of equilibrium of moral feelings and evil as forms of unbalance of these individual and collective feelings. Freitas (2003, p.56) states: "There is unbalance both if individual interests predominate over those of solidarity, and if the sovereignty of solidarity takes away the authority of individuals".

Therefore, for Piaget, the tendency to the ideal balance in the individual is incompatible with both individual selfishness and the loss of individual identity.

In this work, aiming to rescue Piaget's theory of morality, we will show that, coherent with his initial objectives, the scientific research he carried out on moral life postulates that it is the solidary

and egalitarian relations between individuals that constitute the sources of the moral good, which have been extended to the level of consciousness and to more complex social exchanges. In this sense, we will dwell both on the initial and final states, and on the processes of formation of the moral notion of justice, considered by this author (1994, p. 157) as an immanent dimension or law of equilibrium of social interactions. The development of the notion of justice stands out in full autonomy when solidarity among children grows.

Relationships of solidarity and equality are also sources of the development of other moral notions in the child. Thus, the evolved notion of lying (as well as stealing) means taking into account the psychological motives or intentions of the transgressor, that is, understanding that the seriousness of the lie is not to judge only the transgression itself, according to socially pre-established rules, but rather, understanding the seriousness of the act of betraying another's trust, mutual trust. The discovery of the seriousness of the fault requires learning to put oneself in the other's situation, requires detachment from the interest of the self, requires freeing oneself from adult pressure, which imposes crystallized rules, and to act and discern taking into account the respect for the dignity of the other.

The importance of solidarity and equality becomes clearer and more evident in explaining the notion of justice, especially distributive justice, which is identified with the feeling of egalitarianism and which, in turn, influences the development of retributive justice.

II. STUDIES ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NOTION OF JUSTICE

Piaget's studies on the development of the notion of justice take into account the two ways of expressing justice: retributive justice and distributive justice. The first refers to justice that demands proportionality in sanctions for transgressions of moral rules; the second, to the requirement of equal treatment between people.

Retributive justice is initiated by primary notions of sanction centered on the "atonement" of the fault. This is because the child judges the rule in itself, in its external manifestation, and in function of absolute obedience to the adult's authority. Therefore, for younger children, the expiatory sanction is fair as long as it takes into account the proportionality between the fault and the sanction, because it is only about calming authority and restoring the broken unilateral respect link. For older children, the sanction should serve not to restore the link with authority, but rather the link of solidarity and reciprocity among group members. Thus, a sanction will be just to the extent that the rule breaker restores the balance of the relationship of mutual respect and trust, that is, of solidarity.

Retributive justice, in its most evolved form, consists in understanding sanctions as a function of the psychological conditions and reciprocity of human actions, and not simply of obedience to socially pre-established rules or those established by authority.

In the elementary form of distributive justice, children subordinate the feeling of equality to the order given by the adult. Thus, in cases where there is conflict between the feeling of equal justice and the order of authority, younger children lean toward obedience to the latter: what is established by authority should be complied with, even though he is unfair to his classmate. In cases where there is no conflict with authority, the demand for equality is spontaneous on the part of the young child.

When the notion of distributive justice evolves, in situations of conflict between the adult's order and the feeling of equality, research shows the existence of confusion on the part of the child between the idea of justice and obedience to authority. In its most evolved form, this notion demands equal and equitable treatment between people, regardless of the order received from authority or the established law. This form of justice results from a freely consented inner will, where awareness of the rule is autonomous and independent of the outer will (of authority).

What is the explanation for the change or transformation of retributive justice and distributive justice? Does retributive justice transform independently of the evolution of egalitarianism and solidarity?

Piaget's studies show that the change or evolution of retributive justice effectively follows the advances in distributive justice. The awareness of the need to sanction a fault by reestablishing the "solidarity link" obeys the advances in feelings of equality and solidarity among equals. When these feelings are affirmed, the expiatory sanction is attenuated and reciprocal sanctions are affirmed.

To prove this hypothesis, Piaget carries out experimental studies in which he puts the feeling of justice and the order of authority into conflict.

The data reveal that more evolved children, when faced with the conflict between justice and authority, appeal not to authority, but to equality. Even many of them, when defending egalitarianism, justify competition or concurrence, which could lead one to think that the development of justice would derive from competitive relations and not from solidarity.

However, as we will have the opportunity to observe later on, such a possibility is only apparent and is not supported by the experimental data.

Piaget's main hypothesis on the origins of the morality of autonomous justice is the following: the fundamental source of the evolution of the notions of justice - of the notion of distributive and retributive justice - is found in the relations of solidarity and equality and not in competition and concurrence. Similarly, the origin of the notion of justice is not to be found in the commandments of adult authority, but in the actions and reactions among children, among equals, which, by provoking conflicts, make it possible to become aware of the laws of equality and solidarity.

III. PROCESSES AND MECHANISMS OF EVOLUTION OF RETRIBUTIVE JUSTICE

Retributive justice is characterized as that justice which requires proportionality in the

administration of sanctions. This form of justice, in the first years of a child's life, obeys the commands of adult coercion and the phenomenon of infantile egocentrism. Thus, the young child judges that the one who has transgressed the rules should be subjected to an expiatory action to erase the fault, that is, should be subjected to a rigorous punishment and suffering to reestablish respect for the rule. This form of justice, in older children, is overcome when sanctions are based on other relations: those that reestablish the bond of solidarity among equals. Thus, for these children, the transgressor does not have to pay for his guilt with an arbitrary and unmotivated punishment, but by an action that restores the damage committed or allows him to observe the consequences of the act. This second form of sanction is called "sanction by reciprocity".

The explanation of the origin of expiatory justice follows two factors: the coercive relations of the adult over the child, and the child's unilateral feeling of respect for parents and authorities. On the one hand, adults, even the most liberal ones, in order to establish the basic rules of hygiene, safety, health, etc. establish the rules as duties to be fulfilled; on the other hand, children observe adults as the source of all power and mystery, to which they submit unconsciously and immediately. The sanctions that parents establish are considered fair and necessary insofar as they are proportional to the faults committed. In this way, they learn to judge that those who are disobedient and transgressors, such as those who lie, steal and commit mischief, should be punished rigorously, without taking into account their intentions and motives.

But to what does this form of judgment evolve? Why, when faced with the same disobedience and transgression actions, are older children tolerant and only demand sanctions that restore the bond of mutual trust or solidarity?

Piaget's research shows that expiatory sanctions seem to decrease with age, and this to the extent that cooperation overcomes adult coercion. Cooperation makes it possible to take into account the feelings and perspectives of others, of the partners with whom one enters into conflict.

This led the author to address the positive effects of cooperation in the field of justice, conducting studies that pose conflicts between distributive or egalitarian justice and retributive justice.

To this end, he conjectures that egalitarian ideas are imposed as a function of cooperation and constitute a form of justice that, without being in contradiction with the evolved forms of retributive justice, opposes the primitive forms of sanction and ends up making equality take precedence over retribution whenever there is conflict between them.

To illustrate, we will relate a story in which "A mother had two daughters, one obedient, the other disobedient. She liked the one who obeyed better and gave her the biggest pieces of candy. What do you think of that?" (1994, p.201).

The results show that young children make retributive justice predominate over equality:

It was fair. The other was disobedient. - But was it fair to give more to one than the other? - Yes, she (the disobedient one) should always do as she is told. Here is an example of a child for whom equality should take precedence over retributive justice: "It was fair - why? - She should give equally to both of them. - why? - ... - Was it fair what mother did? - No, she had to give the candy to both of them. - To the disobedient one too? - Yes - why? - If we didn't give it to her, that wouldn't be fair. (p. 201-202).

The opposition of the two types of response is clearly observed. For the small ones, the need for sanction prevails to such an extent that the question of equality does not arise. For the older ones, distributive justice takes precedence over retribution. The attitudes are different: the former do not seek to understand the psychological context and are insensitive to the human nuances of the problem. In contrast, the greater ones defend the right to equality and show a more subtle moral understanding and seek to understand the situation inwardly; possibly under the influence of experiences made about themselves or observed in their surroundings.

For the author, it could be said, then, that sanction prevails in the early years, and equality (distributive justice) eventually wins out over it in the course of mental development.

In view of this, the following question is necessary: To what, then, is the evolution of distributive justice, which seeks equality, due?

The expiatory sanction has its origin in adult coercion, for, from the earliest age, children's conduct is sanctioned by the adult. Does distributive justice also originate from the same source - adult authority - because, with entry into traditional schooling, sanctioning progressively and systematically prevails?

This question is fundamental, and entails another, on whose solution further research will depend: Could it be that egalitarianism derives from the child's respect for the adult, because there are parents who are very scrupulous in matters of justice and who inculcate in their children a lively care for equality? But is it also possible that, far from resulting from direct pressure from parents and teachers, the idea of equality develops essentially through the reaction of children to each other, and sometimes even at the expense of adults?

Choosing these two explanatory possibilities will depend on further studies, although the previous facts speak in favor of the second solution. Thus, the following research should focus on the analysis of distributive justice or egalitarianism among individuals.

IV. PROCESSES AND MECHANISMS IN THE EVOLUTION OF DISTRIBUTIVE JUSTICE

To take a closer look at distributive justice, Piaget conducts some important studies. These studies are devoted to analyzing the conflicts between the feeling of justice and authority and those referred to the analysis of justice among children.

Conflict between the feeling of justice and authority

To carry out the conflict analysis, the author conducts a first study and poses the following question: what will happen when children are told stories that put the need for equality in clash with

the fact of authority? Will the children examined give reason to the adult, out of respect for authority, or will they defend equality, out of respect for an inner ideal of mutual respect, even if this is in opposition to authority?

Piaget (1994, p. 210) refers to stories that were told to more than a hundred children between the ages of six and 12. After a quantitative analysis, the qualitative analysis was performed. The qualitative analysis shows what the child means and whether he or she reflects knowledgeably.

The results of this study show that the younger children lean towards authority and find the adult's order very fair; while the older ones lean towards equality and find the order described in the story unfair.

The younger children, the first type, do not distinguish fairness and order from obedience. A second type of children find the order unjust and yet consider that the order of obedience should take precedence over justice. These children claim that it is not fair what their mother tells them to do, but it is fair to obey. Both forms of response can be considered included in the same stage (first stage) to the extent that in both, obedience to authority prevails.

A third group of children (second stage) finds the order unjust and prefers equality to obedience. Finally, a fourth group (third stage) finds the order unjust, but does not find passive obedience obligatory, preferring to accept the mandate out of complacency rather than revolt.

What is the law of evolution of these responses?

Children in the first stage are unable to claim equality because the feeling of unilateral respect is so strong that it poses an obstacle to the free development of equality. This shows that reciprocity among children cannot be ordered by authority; imposed from outside, it will lead only to a calculation of interests and the rule would be subordinate to authority and therefore constitute as a rule outside consciousness. This would be contrary to the moral autonomy of justice, which makes sense only when the rule is superior to authority. Therefore, we can characterize this first

stage by the absence of the notion of distributive justice, since it implies a certain autonomy and freedom from adult authority.

During the second stage, egalitarianism develops and prevails over any other consideration. At this point, distributive justice opposes, in case of conflict with authority, obedience, sanction, and even more subtle reasons such as complacency and equity. Only during the third stage, simple egalitarianism gives way before the more refined notion of justice, which can be called equity. This notion defines equality according to the particular situation in which individuals find themselves, far from the imperatives of obedience to authority.

A second study (1994, p. 217-218) also highlights the conflicts between the feeling of egalitarian justice and the respect for authority, but now referring to a specific school situation, such as "cheating". This study meets the problem posed in relation to the competition versus solidarity alternative.

For Piaget, "cheating" derives from the traditional educational model centered on the "class" and on the individual and isolated work of the students. Students, instead of working in groups and researching cooperating with each other, are led to act in isolation and compete with each other. Thus, when competition prevails, each one tries to capture the teacher's benevolence, without worrying about the neighbour who has difficulty and tries to "cheat".

The problem that arises is how the child understands the meaning of "cheating" and why he condemns it: Why is it forbidden and why is it contrary to equality among children?

The question put to the children is: "Why shouldn't one copy from one's classmate?"

The answers were classified in three groups: In the 1st group: It is forbidden: "it's a villain", "it's a cheat", "a lie", "they punish us", etc. The ultimate reason for these children is always the prohibition made by the adult. In the second group, on the other hand, equality prevails: "it causes harm to the schoolmate", "we steal from him". This type of answers predominates in children between 10 and

12 years old. The third group simply repeats the moral lesson heard on the occasion of a "cheating": "it doesn't help to learn". Statements approving of "cheating" for reasons of solidarity are rare. The author highlights only one child for whom solidarity prevails over the desire for competition. However, he points out that many may have thought the same thing, without having dared to say it.

The responses from the second group are those with the highest percentage in the 10-12 age group, and the predominant arguments refer to equality for competition. These data could lead one to think that, in the answers appealing to equality, competition rather than solidarity underlies. In other words, the source of distributive justice is competition and not solidarity.

Examples of such arguments (1994, p. 218)

THE (nine years and seven months old): 'You should look out for yourself. It is not fair that they have the same grade. You should look for yourself'.

WILD (nine years and four months old) "It's stealing your work. - What if the teacher doesn't know? - It's villainising because of the neighbour. - Why? - The neighbour could get (a good grade) and you take away her place".

For the author, this would only be an appearance, because in reality equality grows with solidarity.

To prove this hypothesis, he carries out a study of the phenomenon of "snitching", where the conflict between adult authority and the need for justice is most clearly manifested.

The question to which the proposed stories refer is the following: Is it right to break solidarity between children for the benefit of adult authority? Is it necessary, in the case of whistle-blowing, to obey the adult or to respect the law of solidarity?

Piaget (1994, p. 219) proposes a story where the father, before leaving on a trip, asks the well-behaved and obedient son to look at the behaviour of his brother who often did foolish

things. The father left and the brother did some foolishness. When the father returned, he asked the other to tell him everything. What should he do?

The result shows that the vast majority of children think that they should tell their father everything. It is fair to tell the father.

Example of children who defend whistle-blowing:

SCHMO (Six years old): "I should say that he (the other) was bad. He should say what the other one did. The father had told him to. - The boy replied to his father: 'ask my brother yourself. I don't want to say it. Was it nice, or not, to answer like that? - It was not kind because the father had told him to (1994, p. 219)

Contrary to this group, most children above the age of eight think that nothing should be said, and some even prefer lying to betraying a sibling.

Example of children who are against telling lies:

FAL (eight years old) Should he tell? - No, because it's snitching. - But his father had asked him. - He should say nothing, say that he had been kind. - Would it be better not to say anything, not to answer, or to say that he had been kind? - To say that he had been kind (1994, p. 220).

For the author, the results of this study, even more than the previous ones, show the opposition of the two morals: that of authority and that of egalitarian solidarity.

There are two mechanisms in these judgments: on the one hand, there is the law, the authority: once we ask to snitch, it is fair to snitch. On the other hand, there is solidarity among children: it is not necessary to betray a friend in favour of the adult or the law.

The second attitude, which occurs in adults, is so firm in some that it leads the individual to justify lying as a means of defending others.

These data would be showing, then, that distributive or egalitarian justice develops at the expense of submission to authority and in close correlation with practice and awareness of solidarity among equals. Furthermore, they show that it does not derive from the habits of competition, but from the relations of reciprocity and solidarity between equals.

The child who is guided by justice prefers to suffer the consequences of his solidary action rather than betray or harm his colleague by guaranteeing the benevolence of authority. This is why, in children's terminology, this second type of children or adolescents are called "flatterer", "bootlicker", "the one who snitches", "clinging to mother's skirt", etc. The first type is called "elegant", "contrary to the saint", who will have to settle accounts with the established authority, but who embodies solidarity and equity among children.

Justice among children

It is important to note that the demand for equality among children is a spontaneous trait of theirs when the law of adult authority does not intervene.

In the case of retributive justice among children, it is observed that reciprocity asserts itself progressively with age; in the case of distributive justice, reciprocity manifests itself earlier.

Children from a very early age spontaneously strike back at the blows of other small children, but in the face of adult law, they back off in their actions and judgements. They come to believe that it is not legitimate to strike back, because it seems villainous to them because it is forbidden by adult law. As they evolve morally, they consider this attitude of defence just, because it rescues the law of reciprocity and equilibrium.

Piaget notes that those who do not want to strike back are, above all, submissive children, who count on the adult to defend them and who are more concerned with respecting orders received than with making justice and equality reign by the means proper to childhood society. As for the children who strike back, it is a matter of

re-establishing equality and justice and not brutal revenge. One must give back exactly what one has received and not invent some sort of arbitrary sanction.

In the research on the acts of cheating a colleague, we observe answers that move from justifications based on authority to others that appeal directly to solidarity and egalitarianism (distributive justice)

On the acts of "cheating" in the game, faced with the question "why one should not cheat," the little ones reply that "cheating" is "villainous" because it infringes adult orders and that it should be banned by severe punishment. For the older ones, for whom the rule is the product of relationships of mutual respect, "cheating" is reproved in the name of reasons that appeal to solidarity and the egalitarianism that stems from it.

Examples of the second type (p.231)

WI (ten years old): "It's not fair: it's cheating others. - why do you have to be fair in the game? - to be honest when you grow up". (response out of solidarity)

THEV (ten years old): "It is a villainous action. - why? - She acted badly. She shouldn't do that. - What if she lost? - It was better to lose than to cheat. - What if she cheated and still lost? - She would have been punished (by the fact itself). It was not fair for her to win. - Why shouldn't one cheat? - Because those who bluff are dirty guys." (response out of solidarity)

MER (nine and six months old) "It is not fair. - Why? The others don't do it: one must not do it anymore." (response out of equality)

A research that directly affects equality among children - distributive justice - clearly shows the spontaneous attitude of children when facing conflict situations. The need for equality is observed from a very early age and is affirmed with age when relationships and conflicts take place between children, without adult intervention. In fact, when faced with stories where conflict with authority is avoided and only questions of equality between peers are raised, all

the children examined affirm the moral need for equality.

Story I: Some boys play ball together in the yard. When the ball leaves the game and goes rolling in the street, one of the boys goes, on his own, to fetch it several times. The next few times, he is only asked to fetch it. What do you think about this?

Story II: Some boys were sitting on the grass to eat snack. Each of them had a bagel, which he had put beside him to eat after the cornbread. A dog sneaked up behind one of the boys and took the bagel from him. What was to be done? (1994, p. 232)

In the first story, all the children say that it is not fair that the same colleague always works for the group. In the second one, they also all agree that it is necessary that each one gives a piece of bagel to the victim in order to re-establish the equality between all of them.

This attitude highlights the fundamental fact, already foreseen in the questions on retaliation and informality, that the origin of distributive justice is found, far from the action of the adult on the child, in the actions of equality and reciprocity between children.

What emerges from this data is that the feeling of equality between children, outside of adult intervention, is spontaneous, and not transmitted by the adult. Its source is the practice of reciprocal and solidarity relations between equals and not competition or competition.

V. SOLIDARITY AS THE INITIAL SOURCE AND FINAL STATE OF MORAL LIFE AND THE ROLE OF AWARENESS

Piaget (1994) observes that there are two individual feelings that are observed from the earliest age of the child. On the one hand, jealousy, which is already expressed in an 8 to 12 month old baby when he sees another child on his mother's knees or when we take away a toy to give to another. In the face of this, he reacts with violent feelings of anger. On the other hand, he

shows gestures of sympathy, reactions of altruism and sharing, when he puts his toys in the hands of others or shares them.

These actions take place alternately and often with whimsical reactions of selfishness and sympathy. They can, however, serve as instruments that limit the abuse of others and of oneself. However, this does not mean that egalitarianism can be a form of instinct or a finished product of the individual alone; for true equality and the authentic need for reciprocity to exist, a collective rule is necessary, a *sui generis* product of collective life. Therefore, equality and reciprocity are schemes constructed in social life.

...it is necessary that, from the actions and reactions of individuals one upon the other, the consciousness of a necessary equilibrium is born, obliging and limiting, at the same time, the alter and the ego. This ideal equilibrium, glimpsed at the occasion of each dispute and each pacification, supposes, naturally, a long reciprocal education of the children, one on the other (1994, p.239).

The transit between primitive reactions and the ideal equilibrium could occur without major problems, but unfortunately this takes place in a long interval of time, where the child needs to overcome many internal and external difficulties, mainly in relation to the coercion of authority. Adult authority, even if it is in accordance with justice, promotes the feeling of duty that contradicts - short-circuits - equality and solidarity, which constitute the essence of freely consented justice. It is this form of relation - with authority - that makes it difficult to become aware of the actions of reciprocity and elementary solidarity among the children themselves.

Piaget's research, reported in the previous items, evidences that it is exactly the progress of cooperation and mutual respect - between children and those adults who are willing to establish this form of relation - that promotes the sense of justice, from the awareness of the first forms of sympathetic relations, altruism and sharing.

In Piaget's thesis, autonomous morality or the morality of good is not the result of social transmission, but rather the result of progressive awareness of the small child's initial actions of compassion and altruism, which reorganise themselves into systems of reversible composition, on the level of consciousness and representation. Following Claparède's path, Piaget (1994, p.) states that the awareness reverses the order of appearance of the notions: what is first in the order of practical action is last in the order of consciousness. The notion of the good which appears, in general, posterior to the notion of duty, possibly constitutes the product of the last awareness of what is the first condition of autonomous moral life: the need for reciprocal affection.

In other words, if solidarity begins and affirms itself in the first years of the child's moral life, it also becomes evident in the final stages of the development of the notion of distributive and retributive justice, when the obstacles imposed by adult coercion and infantile egocentrism are overcome, until they reach the need for the consciousness of the good as an a priori form.

According to Piaget, in the notion of retribution or sanction, it seems that there would be no a priori or properly rational element. This is because the ideas of "sanction by reciprocity" seem to derive from the ideas of equality and solidarity (egalitarianism). Similarly, to the extent that notions of egalitarianism increase, the notion of sanction - even by reciprocity - diminishes, until they become dispensable in autonomous personalities.

Distributive justice is a clear and evident form of a priori in moral feeling, when it reaches a form of rational (logical-mathematical) equilibrium.

For Piaget (1994), distributive justice, as observed in the previous items, can be reduced to the notions of equality or equity. Thus, for epistemology, such concepts could not fail to be a priori, if one understands a priori not as an innate idea, but, yes, as an ideal form towards which reason tends, as it goes on purifying itself. "Reciprocity imposes itself, in effect, on practical

reason, as logical principles impose themselves, morally, on theoretical reason" (1994, p. 238).

From the psychological point of view, where the explanation is of a causal nature, the a priori norm is a form of equilibrium towards which the phenomena of human behaviour tend. In this mode of causal explanation, which is not simply reflexive, the notion of reciprocity and solidarity does not contradict the a priori aspect of this final equilibrium.

Thus, psychogenetic research on morality, with children, seems to confirm Piaget's initial assumptions that the theory of morality should have as its initial and final substratum altruism and solidarity, and that autonomous morality is a form of ideal equilibrium to which human development tends.

These results lead to the need to stress the enormous importance of the mechanism of awareness and reflexive abstraction in the formation and (causal) explanation of the moral good. Pedagogical practice and theory would have everything to gain from this way of thinking and from these scientific results.

VI. "ORGANIC" SOLIDARITY IN CHILDREN'S SOCIETIES AND THE EVOLUTION OF JUSTICE: THE IMPORTANCE OF SOCIAL LIFE

The participation of the child in communities of "organic" solidarity, in children's society, contributes decisively to the progress of egalitarianism. It is in this form of societal organization where the most favorable opportunities for awareness of actions lived, of conflicts experienced occur, and thus make it possible to achieve greater cognitive, moral and affective equilibrium.

It is in democratically organised social life that the progress of solidarity goes hand in hand with egalitarianism. This solidarity presents a specific character in the evolution of children's society, which is configured as "organic solidarity".

Contrary to the society of the little ones, the society of the older ones ceases to be amorphous and constitutes an organic whole, with laws and regulations that establish limits and mutual agreements. If in the environment in which the little ones participate there is a kind of submission to the elders, in that of the older ones everything is prohibited which compromises the existence of the feeling of the group and of solidarity among its members. Lying, cheating and betraying are therefore forbidden. If the little ones are dominated by the sense of authority, the older ones demand, in a more intense way, equality and solidarity. In this group environment, discussion and the exchange of points of view are strengthened to guarantee commitments and agreements.

We see that the link between egalitarianism and solidarity is a general psychological phenomenon, which does not depend only on political factors, as it may appear in adult society. There are, then, in the child as in the adult, two psychological types of social equilibrium: a type based on the coercion of age, which excludes equality like "organic" solidarity, but which channels, without excluding, individual egocentrism, and a type based on cooperation, resting on equality and solidarity. (P. 240, emphasis added)

It is clear that a society as "organic solidarity" is not given to individuals and is not easy to build collectively. The "democratic schools" bear witness to this, for they, by constituting differentiated experiences of education on the planet, show the ideal of a solidary teaching-learning community where individual and social balance is possible.

VII. CONCLUSIONS

1. Piaget's hypothesis on the moral development of children, particularly of the notions of justice, is valid: the development of these notions is produced in function of the advance of the notions of equality and solidarity. Their evolution is not, therefore, the product of transmission, nor of competition or competition between equals. Competition can

intervene in collective and cooperative work, but it is subordinate to solidarity. Competition, subordinated to authority and pre-established laws, promotes the calculation of interests, contrary to solidarity and reciprocity, and therefore opposed to the autonomous morality of good.

2. Egalitarian justice originates in the action and reaction between children and the awareness of these actions. It is in the relationships between children, one with the other, that the awareness of the laws of equality and the need for balanced reciprocal relationships is produced.
3. But it is also possible that, far from resulting from direct pressure from parents or teachers, the idea of equality develops essentially through the reaction of children on each other, and sometimes even at the adult's expense. It is quite frequent that the injustice suffered makes one become aware of the laws of equality. We hardly see, in any case, how such a notion would assume any reality for the child before he has relations with his fellows, in the family and at school. The child's simple relationship with the adult does not involve any equality. Now, arising from the contact of children with each other, egalitarianism must at least develop with the progress of cooperation among children (1994, p. 209).
4. Everything indicates that the transformation of retributive justice, the passage from the expiatory sanction to the sanction by reciprocity, obeys the influence of the development of distributive justice or egalitarianism. This is evident when older children appeal to the "solidarity link" when judging the sanctions imposed by authority.
5. Young children's actions of compassion and altruism constitute primary sources of autonomous moral development. These actions and ideas are reaffirmed when the child overcomes the coercion imposed by authority, and overcomes the egocentrism that imprisons him/her in the perspective of the self. In these cases, the initial solidarity is prolonged, reconstructed, in the more finished forms of distributive and retributive justice. Therefore, for Piaget, the theory of morality

should have altruism and solidarity as its initial and final substratum.

6. The transformation from initial solidarity and reciprocity actions to more rational forms of justice obeys the law of conscious awareness and not to factors of cultural and social transmission, as common sense commonly thinks. It is precisely in this process that social relations between equals, such as community and "organic" forms of societal organisation, become decisive. In this perspective, dialogue and cooperation achieve their full meaning.
7. The development of moral notions and particularly the notion of justice is not the result of an exclusively individual construction; it requires, for its development, relations between two or more individuals, who submit to freely accepted rules of coexistence. These interactions promote development when subjects consider themselves, in fact and in law, as equals. In this sense, the privileged place for the development of these interactions are the organic societies, where children and adolescents can be free and assume the consequences of their actions.
8. Organic societies show the existence of an inseparable relationship between societal development and individual development. There are, in fact, alternative societies or communities collectively built where human relations are guided by practices of solidarity ("Just Societies", "Democratic Schools", etc.), which point to the real possibility of the ideal balance.

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