

# Educate to humanize of Max Scheler and the post-modernity of Zygmunt Bauman

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## ABSTRACT

Education has always been and remains the object of interest, studies, investigations, analyses and reflections by various actors of society, from the sphere of public policies to various areas of knowledge, specially the human and social sciences. Understanding the human being and all phenomena concerning it, specifically education, as inherent in life in society and politics, the transformation of education is linked to, perhaps even subordinated to, the political, social and economic changes that take place from time to time, from society to society. This article aims to discuss if education as proposed by M. Scheler has a place in the postmodernity of Z. Bauman, a time in which volatility, disposability, immediacy and consumerism reign sovereign, in which things only have value for their utility.

## PALAVRAS-CHAVE

education; humanization; Max Scheler; Zygmunt Bauman; postmodernity.

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## *EDUCAR PARA HUMANIZAR DE MAX SCHELER E A PÓS-MODERNIDADE DE ZYGMUNT BAUMAN*

### RESUMO

A educação sempre foi e permanece sendo objeto de interesse, estudos, investigações, análises e reflexões por vários agentes da sociedade, da esfera das políticas públicas a diversas áreas do saber, sobretudo das ciências humanas e sociais. Entendendo-se o ser humano e todos os fenômenos que dizem respeito a ele, aqui especificamente a educação, como inerentes à vida em sociedade e à política, a transformação da educação está ligada, talvez até subordinada, às mudanças políticas, sociais e econômicas que acontecem de época para época, de sociedade para sociedade. O presente artigo tem como objetivo discutir se a educação proposta por M. Scheler tem lugar na pós-modernidade de Z. Bauman, época na qual volatilidade, descartabilidade, imediatismo e consumismo reinam soberanos, na qual as coisas só têm valor por sua utilidade.

### KEYWORDS

educação; humanização; Max Scheler; Zygmunt Bauman; pós-modernidade.

## *EDUCAR PARA HUMANIZAR DE MAX SCHELER Y LA POSMODERNIDAD DE ZYGMUNT BAUMAN*

### RESUMEN

La educación siempre ha sido y sigue siendo objeto de interés, estudios, investigaciones, análisis y reflexiones por varios agentes de la sociedad, de la esfera de las políticas públicas a diversas áreas del saber, sobre todo, de las ciencias humanas y de las ciencias sociales. Entendiendo el ser humano y todos los fenómenos que se refieren a él, aquí específicamente la educación como un fenómeno inherente a la vida en sociedad y la política, la transformación de la educación está ligada y, quizás, subordinada a las transformaciones políticas, sociales y económicas que suceden de época para época, de sociedad a sociedad. El presente artículo tiene como objetivo discutir si la educación propuesta por M. Scheler, tiene lugar en la posmodernidad de Z. Bauman, época en la cual, volatilidad, desechabilidad, inmediatez y consumismo reinan soberanos, era en la que las cosas solo tiene valor por su utilidad.

### PALABRAS CLAVE

educación; la humanización; Max Scheler; Zygmunt Bauman. posmodernidad.

## INTRODUCTION

The history of education is intertwined with that of humanity. Education has always been and continues to be the object of interest, studies, investigations, analyses, and reflections by various agents of society, from the public policy sphere to the various fields of knowledge: the human sciences — which are the areas or disciplines that place man and social relations at the center of research, such as sociology, psychology, philosophy, anthropology, and history — and applied social sciences — such as economics, among others. Understanding human beings and all the phenomena that concern them, here specifically education, as phenomena inherent in society and politics, the transformation of education is related to the political, social, and economic changes that take place throughout human history, from period to period, and from society to society. Modernity, characterized by order, progress, truth, reason, unique systems of understanding reality, borders, barriers, long term, objectivity, universalistic theories, solid institutions, hierarchy, so on and so forth, gave the subject the comfortable feeling that the world was a safe place. However, this feeling has been shaken by the rapid processes of change that have given the very same world a postmodern configuration.

Education participates in the life and growth of society, both in its external destiny and in its internal structuring and spiritual development; and, since social development depends on awareness of the values that govern human life, the history of education is essentially conditioned by the transformation of the valid values for each society. The stability of valid norms corresponds to the solidity of the foundations of education. From the dissolution and destruction of norms comes weakness, lack of security, and even the absolute impossibility of any educational action. (Jaeger, 2003, p. 4)

In the passage from modernity to postmodernity, man has encountered a world in which wholeness no longer exists. Values, notions of family, motherhood, fatherhood, education, religion, classes, time/space, nation, work, etc. have changed. Being in the world changes, human action changes. Man has been thrown from security to freedom, from enduring truths to everyday uncertainties, from subject to commodity. According to Bauman (2008b, p. 161), “the success in the life of postmodern men and women depends on how fast they can get rid of old habits, rather than how quickly they acquire new ones.” We live in a culture of excess, the eternal plus and, consequently, the disposable, intense, volatile, and urgent things, desires, and feelings. Humans are marked by lack of time and speed, changes occur at a maddening pace, causing turmoil. Everything is trivialized, due to the ease of obtaining and discarding, and due to excess. Violence and misery are no longer a source of concern or attention. They go unnoticed. Group identifications are no longer class or ideological, they are more NGO and tribe identifications. For Bauman (1999, p. 5): “The problem with the contemporary condition of our modern civilization is that it has stopped questioning itself. Not asking certain questions is

extremely dangerous.” By not questioning themselves and the world around them, that is, by not having a reflexive position about their existence and the world, humans are tormentors and victims of a chaotic and disturbing society, in which the institutions that compose it, such as the family and the school, both by nature, with the function of educating, get lost in the volatile whirlwind of values, knowledge, information, identities, in short, in a whirlwind of references that do not have any kind of permanence and were not created to remain. Just the opposite, they are created to liquefy. The crisis is installed, not only in the sphere of education but in all the spheres of society. However, through education, which is at the core of the whirlwind, humans have the opportunity to emerge, to re-signify their being in the world, the reference system that governs them, and their actions in society.

The present article aims to discuss whether the education proposed by Max Scheler — to educate to humanize, to develop the spirit, which is intrinsic to human beings and only to them (precisely what differentiates them from other living beings) — has a place in Zygmunt Bauman’s postmodernity, an era in which fluidity, disposability, immediacy, and consumerism reign supreme, and people and things, both commodities, only have value for their immediate utility.

## MAX SCHELER: EDUCATION AS A PROCESS OF HUMANIZATION

Max Ferdinand Scheler, a German social philosopher, value theorist, writer of undeniable exuberance, and religious man, was born in Munich on August 22, 1874, and died still young, in 1928, at the age of 54. A disciple of the philosopher Rudolf Eucken, he sympathized with the vitalist theories of Henri Bergson and later with Edmund Husserl, becoming the first phenomenologist. Scheler did not take education as the first and central object of concern and studies, but rather, concerns and elaborations in the sphere of ethics, especially values. Having developed an axiology, he treated with equal importance the philosophy of religion and leaned towards the anthropological question, developing a philosophical anthropology. These central and original issues, ethics/value, religion, and anthropology, led him to other questions. Among them was education, especially because Scheler lived, we emphasize here, through the 1910s and 1920s, decades in which education in Europe was the object of extreme interest and divergence among several segments. In this way, it would not be illegitimate to consider that Scheler appropriated education as an object of concern, reflection, analysis, and discussion, proposing it as a “humanization process” that will be, in the educational view, one of its key, fundamental concepts. Therefore, Scheler starts from fundamental questions: who is the human being? What is peculiar to the human being? The human being is a process, an eternal becoming, a going back and forth based upon the hierarchy of values, which reflects the way he and society perceive values and experience them in everyday life. Educating implies humanizing, which translates into the act of developing the spirit, that which is inherent in the human being, and it is precisely this specificity that differentiates the human being from all other living beings (Schulz, 2017). Scheler, having lived before, during, and after World War I, a very

troubled and critical time, was led to seek and understand the context that he came to call decadence due to the inversion of the hierarchy of values. Western civilization, with its Greco-Roman and Judeo-Christian bases, over time, saw the collapse of what he considered to be the highest values for humans and humanity, giving way to utilitarianism, positivist science, and capitalism, all of which were a threat to cultured education. “The most profound inversion of the hierarchy of values that modern morality carries with it is, however, the increasingly insinuating subordination of vital values to utility values” (Scheler, 2012, p. 163).

Scheler (1986) distinguishes three levels of knowledge: that of domination or realization; that of essence or culture; and that of metaphysics or salvation. The knowledge of domination is at the level of technical realization that seeks a technical mastery over the world and ourselves, and that certainly has some importance for society; however, this knowledge cannot be exclusive, as it degenerates the culture, the human. It is necessary to confront and overcome this trend. The knowledge of the essence is the knowledge of culture; it is how culture frames education, defending a formation that is neither merely technical nor merely utilitarian, but one that prioritizes humanization, the formation of the being, the very destiny of human beings. The knowledge of essences is a humanizing knowledge that shows humans who they are as human beings, never putting them in the place of objects to alienate them. The knowledge of salvation is the highest in the hierarchy, which means becoming a microcosm.

It is only from the image of the essence of humans, researched by philosophical anthropology, that it is possible to conclude as to the true attributes of the supreme foundation of all things, a conclusion that is a reverse extension of the act of the spirit that had its origin in the center of the human being. [...] Man is a microcosm, that is, a world in miniature; all the essential generations of the being, the physical, chemical, living, and spiritual being, meet and intersect in man's being; and therefore, it is also possible to study in man the supreme foundation of the vast number, the macrocosm. And that is why man's being as microtheos is also the first access to God. (Scheler, 1986, p. 15-16)

Paradoxically, it is precisely this knowledge, the knowledge of salvation, which has fallen into oblivion by prioritizing utilitarian knowledge, and to recover the knowledge of salvation, it will be necessary to face overcoming resentment (Scheler, 2012).

The central object of Scheler's philosophical concerns and studies were values and their hierarchization. In his classic work *Formalism in Ethics and Non-Formal Ethics of Values*, of 1916 (*apud* Matheus, 2002), are gathered the central elements of his philosophy, education, and the concept of values and their hierarchy, the latter being Scheler's basis on the objectivity of values. He states that the hierarchy of values is universal, necessary, and conceives the hierarchy based upon importance. In brief, for Scheler, values exist *a priori* to experience in hierarchical form, from the least important and immediate to the most important and mediated, from

material to vital, ethical and religious values, the latter (ethical and religious) being the only absolute values (Schulz, 2017). Human beings do not create values, they simply intuit and value them.

For Scheler (1916 *apud* Matheus, 2002), there is neither history nor social cohesion without value perception. They are the values that separate or unify men as well as establish the distinctions between one historical era and those that precede or succeed it.

Humans, however, cannot leave aside their fundamental characteristics: they are beings in search of value. They are in constant search for what can enhance their value or, simply, what is worth for them. In short, humans are beings in a constant process of evaluation. From this fundamental imperative arises the great impasse: how to evaluate? Using what referential? According to time, place, and circumstances, what is considered “good” for the human being has varied greatly. (Werneck, 2003, p. 2)

According to Scheler (1916 *apud* Matheus, 2002), every society has in its constitution the different classes as a result of their level of power economic, political, and cultural power, and has assigned to each one of them a behavior in line with the perceived values. There is in every member of every class something that goes beyond their individuality, which is the presence of an element introduced by the class into personal values and that Scheler calls the social *a priori*. According to him, there is not an I without a We, because the values apprehended by the class become part of the entire individual scale of values. However, this does not imply that the notion of the individual is exhausted in its adherence to the values of the class to which it belongs. Class values interfere, but they are not the only ones that the individual holds onto. Material values are dependent on social classes insofar as they take precedence in ethical conduct. For Scheler, material values have total exclusivity in determining human acts. They are stronger, more pressing, and more imperative. This is precisely why they are objectively inferior within the scale of values. Being positive in themselves, material values become ethically negative when elevated above higher values — vital and spiritual. These are universal and necessarily superior to material values, just as these are universal and necessarily stronger and more pressing than spiritual ones. This thus establishes, even if implicitly, a duality between superior and inferior values, both in individual and collective action and in the production of individual and social knowledge. In Scheler’s view, it is not because of their strength that material values condition spiritual values, since the latter, even if more fragile, remain and predominate in time and space; rather they have greater power, precisely because they condition the choice of lower values. Consequently, educational actions, educational projects, the production and form of knowledge, in any social groups and times, necessarily result from the relationship between lower and higher values, that is, they have a direct and clear relationship with the hierarchy of values. Nonetheless, the question that unsettles Scheler is: what is the human being, and what makes humans different from other living beings?

Humans are themselves superior and sublime beings, above all life and its values, above the totality of nature; beings in whom the psyche has purified itself and freed itself from the service it renders to life by elevating itself to spirit, to a spirit at whose service life is now placed both in the objective and subjective psychic sense. (Scheler, 1986, p. 37)

In summary, for Scheler, man is an instinctual and spiritual being, with education having a fundamental role in the development and appropriation of the knowledge of the essences.

The driving principle represents the tendency toward reproduction, economic production, and domination, which is identified with the kind of knowledge of domination or fulfillment, with the lowest values, while the spirit is the knowledge of essences and the priority principle of education. (Schulz, 2017, p. 559)

Based upon his axiology and the concept of man as an instinctual and spiritual being, Scheler (1986) defines education as humanization, a process aimed at the formation of essences and of the spirit, as is the case of solidarity.

The human being has to learn again to understand the great and invisible solidarity of all living beings with each other in the total life, the solidarity of all spirits in the eternal spirit, and at the same time the solidarity of the world's process with the destiny of the evolution of its higher foundation, and the solidarity of this foundation with the world's process. (Scheler, 1986, p. 120)

Since the human being is an eternal moving forward and backward, it is only through education that humans can regain their place as such. "The great destination would be to become a person, that is, to reach full human value" (Werneck, 2013, p. 41).

## ZYGMUNT BAUMAN'S POSTMODERN AGE

Perhaps there is no worse deprivation, no worse lack, than that of the losers in the symbolic struggle for recognition, for access to a socially recognized existence, in short, for humanity. (Bourdieu *apud* Bauman, 2008c, p. 7)

Zygmunt Bauman, of poor Jewish origin, was born in the city of Poznan, Poland, on November 15, 1925, and died in 2017, aged 91, in the city of Leeds, England. He was a sociologist, professor emeritus of sociology at the University of Leeds and Warsaw, who gained recognition in the last decades of his life. He devoted himself to analyzing, using the concept of liquid modernity (Bauman, 2001), themes on which the narratives of the human condition have developed and which, undoubtedly, are disturbing in contemporaneity: emancipation, individuality, time/space, work, politics, identity, freedom, consumption, disposability, love, and community. In the words of Bauman (2001, p. 15), "it would be imprudent to deny,

or even underestimate, the profound change that the advent of ‘fluid modernity’ has produced in the human condition.” For Anthony Giddens, Bauman became the theorist of postmodernity (Bauman, 2011). His texts are still marked by the forcefulness of the ethical and humanitarian issues inherent in the human condition in the post-modern era, in which change is our only permanence and uncertainty our only certainty.

Success in the life of postmodern men and women depends on how fast they can get rid of old habits, rather than how quickly they acquire new ones. The best thing is not to bother with the question of standards; the habit acquired in “tertiary” learning is the habit of living without habits. (Bauman, 2008b, p. 161)

Postmodern society demands rapid change, volatility, exchange, and disposability. It is the world of uncertainty, in which individual freedom reigns supreme. A society in which the individual and his autonomy are above the community. In Lipovetsky’s words (2005, p. XXI): “Postmodern culture is a vector of increasing individualism; diversifying the possibilities of choice, liquefying the points of reference, undermining the unique meaning and higher values of modernity.”

A society without heritage is made up of individuals orphaned of symbolic truths and ideas, that run after the seduction of images imposed in many ways. In the absence of identifications, they try to produce an identity that allows them to live in the moment, and adopt them without any firmness or conviction. In other words, identity patterns are no longer marked and references have been lost. Such lack of lasting reference points is the agent that causes the great malaise of the instability of one’s own identity. The boredom of security in modernity has given way to the insomnia of postmodern individuals (Bauman, 1998). The contemporary world is a disoriented world with an emphasis on the short term. There is no long term, which means changing, not compromising, and not sacrificing, furthermore eroding the ideas of integrity, trust, and mutual help. Postmodern institutional, social, and affective networks are characterized by the strength of weak ties, which means that temporary forms of association are more useful to individuals than long-term relationships, and strong social ties no longer seduce nor make any sense. Postmodernity appreciates neither logic nor rational coherence, being subjected to communication and images, which are instantaneous and incoherent. Badiou says (1994, p. 13): “It is a very fast and memoryless world. A world in which opinions are both extremely mobile and extremely fragile. To hold firmly to a logic of thought is therefore very difficult.” According to Sennett (2006), how can a human being decide what has lasting value in an impatient society that focuses on the immediate moment? “How can a human being develop a narrative of identity and life history in a society composed of episodes and fragments?” (Sennett, 2006, p. 27). The contemporary world is one of concreteness, in which meanings are reduced to the concrete of survival, “the subject becomes the fruit and victim of that which is imposed on him and which strikes him” (Da Poin, 2001, p. 14). Society is structured and organized around real, concrete, excessive, immediate criteria and objects, promoting alienation and non-reflective and voracious consumption, which is characterized by a



reflexive distancing that Bauman calls consumerism. In his words: “Consumerism comes when consumption takes the key role in society” (Bauman, 2008c, p. 41). Consumption is an attribute and an occupation of the individual as a human being, to the same extent that consumerism is an attribute of society, in which human relations are constituted according to the pattern and similarity of the relations between those who consume and the objects they consume. This relationship is present in all spheres of society, in all possible spheres of consumption, and is always governed by volatility, utility, advertising, and disposability. Education has not escaped this vicissitude.

Today’s consumerism does not consist in accumulating objects, but in their disposable enjoyment. Therefore, why should the “package of knowledge” acquired at school and university escape this universal rule? In the turmoil of change, it is much more attractive to have knowledge created to throw away, knowledge ready for instant use and disposal, the kind of knowledge promised by computer programs that come and go from store shelves at an ever-increasing pace. (Bauman, 2010, p. 43)

For Bauman (2010), education has demanded some revisions and reforms over time. Its constitutive characteristics, which until then had not been questioned, now seem to need to be replaced. The idea of something lasting seems to cause repulsion. Objects and ties need to be discarded without difficulty; objects should not be accumulated. “Why should the ‘package of knowledge’ acquired at university escape this universal rule?” (Bauman, 2010, p. 42). The idea of institutionalized education, with knowledge that must be preserved, no longer corresponds to the aspirations of young people. In other words, the solid-type education present in the modern era clashes with the liquid-type education present in the postmodern one. One of the main characteristics of the liquid is, on the one hand, its fluidity, and on the other, the absence of a shape that inevitably results in a multiplicity of shapes — the liquid takes shape according to the container in which it is placed and, moreover, it is nothing more than a product that must be consumed immediately and then discarded like any other product.

According to Bauman (2008a, p. 42),

the idea that education can still consist of a “product” made to be appropriated and kept is disconcerting and certainly does not speak well of institutionalized education. To convince their children of the usefulness of studying, the fathers and mothers of the past used to say that “what you have learned, no one can take away from you.” This was perhaps an encouraging promise for their children, but for contemporary young people, it must represent a horrifying prospect.

A very interesting point made by Bauman (2010) is that if contemporary transformations are unpredictable, the world changes and challenges the truth of existing knowledge, how could education and knowledge represent the world now?

How can we justify the benefit of the transmission of knowledge by the teacher to the student, through human experience? Teachers in modernity had the self-confidence to “carve into the personality of the students, as sculptors do with marble, the form that was always presumed to be fair, beautiful, good, and therefore virtuous and noble” (Bauman, 2010, p. 44). In a volatile world, knowledge can evaporate at the moment it is learned. Education and learning were created to be durable when memory was an asset. Nowadays, memory seems to be useless.

In a volatile world of instant and erratic change, consolidated habits, solid cognitive schemas, and preferences for stable values — the ultimate goals of orthodox education — become disadvantages. At least, this is the role offered to them by the knowledge market, which [...] hates fidelity, indestructible ties, and long-term commitments, which are considered obstacles that get in the way and need to be removed. (Bauman, 2010, p. 47)

The postmodern human being, in Bauman’s reading, is the one: whose subjectivity is composed of purchase options; who does not become a subject without first becoming a commodity, albeit a desirable and desired commodity; who is organized around concrete objects and will be defined by the real of genetics, psychopharmaceuticals, beauty, the body, sex, in short, who will define himself from the models proposed by the media, in which advertising creates a system of needs that makes man consume what the industry needs to sell and discard what needs to be replaced. This decision-making power of advertising over the human being also applies to other issues, such as romantic love and education. Excessive consumption is the standard of success and the road that leads to fame and applause. It is necessary to put into action the verbs to consume, to possess, and to discard. This is the post-modern condition for happiness, and perhaps even for human dignity. “The joy of ‘getting rid’ of something, the act of discarding and throwing it away, is the real passion in the world” (Bauman, 2010, p. 41).

## FINAL REMARKS

Bauman was, in fact, an incisive critic of the current, contemporary society that is structured around consumption, immediacy, the spectacle of the body, and capitalism. “To complete the popular and revised version of Descartes’ cogito, ‘I buy, therefore I am...’, a subject should be added” (Bauman, 2008c, p. 26).

In postmodern society, the central value is globalized capitalism, which is expressed through consumerism, taken as a criterion for happiness and well-being. The human being is seduced, not only by other human beings but also by objects of desire produced and imposed by the media. There are increasingly individualistic, narcissistic, consumerist personalities, insecure in the face of the obligation and multiplicity of choices to be made. Affective and social relationships become fleeting, fortuitous, and fluid, increasing the fragility of social ties and causing a feeling of superficiality and emptiness. Everything becomes artifice and illusion

in the service of capitalist profit. Fashion becomes social and a sign of power. No one is spontaneous, everyone is affected by advertising, authenticity is forcefully forged. A ruin of social identities and personalities is taking place, political and ideological attrition. According to Bauman (2010, p. 69): “What matters for young people is to retain the ability to recreate the ‘identity’ and the ‘network’ every time this is demanded or is about to be demanded [...]. Identities must be disposable.”

The postmodern society, called by Bauman (2008c) a consumer society, has no place for flawed, imperfect consumers, who know the difference between what they are and what they consume, who look for references and lasting values. These consumers, in contemporary times, are stuck on the outside or have no place on the inside. We live in a society of excess, immediacy, individualism, consumerism, rapid change, seeking individual solutions to social problems.

The undeniable speed of events and the globalization of the media and journalism anesthetize human beings. One invests in oneself and one’s body, but cannot shake off the insecurity of the race against time, the fear of old age, and death. There is an emptiness of feeling, and the crumbling of idealism has brought only apathy and self-indulgence. What is the postmodern human being?

From Francis Wolff:

According to Kant, the three fundamental questions humans can ask themselves are the following: What should I do? What can I know? What can I expect? But there is, still according to Kant, an even more important question, the question of questions, which is the key to all the others: What is the human being? (*apud* Novaes, 2009, p. 37)

Since humans are not a cell in a state of free fluctuation, they are inscribed, act and circulate in a given society, in a given era; as a rule, what a human being is reflects the hierarchy of values of the person’s class, the morals and customs of the society in the era in which he lives. The person of the postmodern era, according to Bauman (2008c), is a product of the market. If the postmodern human is essentially a product of the market, this clarifies the meaning of postmodern human existence, as well as allows us to answer the three other questions: I know that I can expect to be consumed and consume; I know that I can know everything that capitalism and positive science reveal; and, above all, I know what I should and should not do, everything that is dictated by fashion and “imposed” by the media.

Based upon the post-modern existence proposed by Bauman, it would not be frivolous to say that the human being is a slave and master of consumerism, immediacy, and utilitarianism. That this same person, confused with the objects he consumes, is the bearer of fleeting identities and an anxious traveler of fluid reality.

Today’s subject harbors an almost melancholic nostalgia for the marks of an absolute that no longer exists and for guarantees of truth that have been lost. We live in a disenchanting world and are currently experiencing the malaise

born of the emptiness caused by the absence of God, faith, and law. (Da Poin, 2001, p. 12)

If, according to Max Scheler, to educate is to humanize, which translates into the act of developing the spirit, that which is inherent in humans — and it is precisely this specificity that differentiates them from other living beings —, this education is urgent in the contemporary world so that humans can review their hierarchy of values, which conditions their actions and decisions.

The notion of education is linked to the notion of value; to the discovery, the apprehension, and the hierarchization of what is worth to humans, to their well-being and well-living. Education refers to the exercise of sensitivity for the perception and apprehension of value, that is, of what can satisfy human needs and longings. It takes place fundamentally in the realm of sensitivity as a cognitive process, not, especially, in reason. (Werneck, 2014, p. 93)

According to Edgar Morin (2001), educators need to reflect on the nature of the knowledge to be acted upon by the school, emphasizing teaching about: the human condition, the earthly identity, the uncertainties that increasingly annihilate the human species. This is in order to develop an education aimed at understanding at all educational levels and at all ages, which calls for the reorganization of mentalities and the consideration of the ternary character of the human condition, which is to be at the same time individual/society/species. Morin (2001) concludes that there is a need for education to be concerned with the ethics of humankind, intending to “establish a relationship of mutual control between society and individuals through democracy and conceive humanity as a planetary community” (Morin, 2001, p. 97).

At the beginning of this century, conditioned, on the one hand, by the consequences of rapid change, volatility, daily uncertainties, the standardization of consumerism and disposability, technological advancement, technicization — the replacement of human beings by machines — and, on the other hand, globalization, one of the main characteristics of which is deterritorialization, the relations between humans and institutions, be they of an economic, political or social nature, tend to become detached from the contingencies of space, and the concern turns towards the construction of a planetary education that is focused on humanization. Such construction has its support base in the four pillars listed below:

- 1) Learning to know, [...] learning how to learn, to benefit from the opportunities offered by lifelong education.
- 2) Learning to do, [...] in the context of the various social or work experiences that are offered to young people and adolescents, either spontaneously, as a result of the local or national context, or formally, thanks to the development of education alternated with work.
- 3) Learning to live together, learning to live with others, developing the understanding of the other and the perception of interdependencies — conducting

common projects and preparing to manage conflicts — while respecting the values of pluralism, mutual understanding, and peace.

4) Learning to be, to better develop their personality and be able to act with increasing capacity for autonomy, discernment, and personal responsibility. To this end, do not neglect in education any of the potentialities of each individual: memory, reasoning, aesthetic sense, physical abilities, aptitude to communicate. (Delors *et al.*, 1998, p. 101-102)

Uncertainty about humanity's common destiny takes on new and diverse forms. Despite the uncertainties about their own vicissitude, shared by the inhabitants of the planet, the impression is paradoxical: never before has the feeling of solidarity been so intense and transformed into action, but, at the same time, there have never been so many divisions, conflicts, individualism, the breaking of social ties, utilitarian patterns that have extended from relationships with objects and goods to interpersonal and loving relationships. Education has not escaped utilitarian standards. There has been a commodification of this that is hopelessly subject to the shackles of the laws of the market and currency. An education that, more than anything else, is aimed at dehumanization, thus deviating from its fundamental purpose: to educate for humanizing.

Perhaps it is also through this education, which by nature has the purpose of humanizing, that humans have the opportunity to subvert the hierarchy of values that governs them, subordinating utilitarian values to vital ones and, thus, repositioning themselves in the world as subjects and no longer as merchandise and, who knows, even returning to the condition they should never have abdicated from: the condition of being human.

According to Werneck (2013, p. 53-55):

The vital value is fundamental and primordial for human beings. It is a condition for their humanity [...]. The very qualification of "human" is understood as praise for being above the irrationality of life, for being able to feel beyond instinct. They become inhuman when they abandon what characterizes their humanity.

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