Psychiatric Reform and Psychosocial Rehabilitation: A Reading From Dialectical Materialism

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Objectives: To reflect on the issue of the Psychiatric Reform and psychosocial rehabilitation in Brazil, from dialectical materialism.

Methodology: Descriptive analytical. The authors review the principles of dialectical materialism from the interpretations of Lukacs, Kondo, Kosik and Lefebvre.

Results: The author examines three aspects of psychosocial rehabilitation from the concept of dialectic totality: a) the interdisciplinary and trans-disciplinary work b) dialectic communication, and c) the transformation of the forms of treatment and recovery. With reference to inter and trans-disciplinary work, the author, based on Kosik and Kondo proposals, said that professional teams, even though they apply separate practices, seek to intertwine knowledge to promote articulated intervention. As for the dialectical notion of communication, the author analyzed in agreement with Konder two of its applications: the negotiation between mental health professionals and users and their families, and the dialogue between professionals. And finally, in regards to the treatment of mental disorders, the author suggests, with the support of Lukacs, theoretical and practical transformation to visualize the entire subject in order to implement complete and comprehensive solutions.

Next, the author describes, with the support of Lefebvre, five laws of dialectical method applied to the process of institutionalization / deinstitutionalization / psychosocial rehabilitation: 1) universal interaction, 2) universal movement, 3) unity of opposites, 4) transformation of quantity into quality, and 5) spiral development or negation / improvement. The author succinctly explains that the first law favors the creation of the rehabilitation. The second allows listening to the internal motion of a process and its relation to reality. The third permits distinguishing tension between institutionalization and deinstitutionalization, visible in the performance of health practices. The fourth explains the qualitative leap from dialectical continuity to discontinuity in the movement of the Psychiatric Reform in Brazil. The fifth shows the dialectical leap of transforming medical practice.

Thus, the author examines two constant features of psychiatric treatment: making the diagnosis and the application of knowledge and exclusionary hegemonic practices. These are compared to three discontinuous characteristics in the application of rehabilitation: a) the restructuring of psychiatric care between 1980 and 1990, b) the modification of therapeutic work, and c) the merger of treatment and psychosocial rehabilitation. She finally displayed impossibility of absolute discontinuity in mental health services. To demonstrate it, cites three changes occurred in the Reform: 1) the de-institutionalization, 2) high quality, and 3) the internal integration of the professional team.

Conclusions: The author concludes that the dialectic law of negation-improvement can be applied to the area of psychosocial rehabilitation in the field of mental health. For the author, the Psychiatric Reform in Brazil obeys a qualitative leap achieved in the area through a transformative practice. Dialectical transcendence is achieved through the union of subjective and objective aspects carried by bearers of mental suffering.