

La transmisión del legado haitiano en perspectiva sociológica de la educación y de la cultura

The transmission of the Haitian legacy in the sociological perspective of education and culture

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RESUMEN: El artículo aborda el efecto socializador que posee la transmisión del legado cultural haitiano al ser examinado desde perspectiva de la sociología de la educación y de la cultura. Se muestra el insuficiente aprovechamiento de la potencialidad de formación que posee tal transmisión como proceso fundamental en la educación en el ámbito escolar, familiar y comunitario. De ahí que el objetivo sea el proponer el tratamiento de diferentes contenidos para el perfeccionamiento del sistema de conocimientos en carreras universitarias de ciencias sociales y humanísticas relacionados con esta temática. Se emplea como métodos el análisis bibliográfico y de documentos, entre otros.

Palabras clave: Sociología de la educación y de la cultura; Legado Cultural Haitiano; Transmisión cultural; Socialización; Escuela, familia y comunidad; Universidad

ABSTRACT: The article addresses the socializing effect of the transmission of the Haitian cultural legacy when examined from the perspective of the sociology of education and culture. It shows the insufficient use of the training potential of such transmission as a fundamental process in education at school, family and community levels. Hence, the objective is to propose the treatment of different contents for the improvement of the knowledge system in university careers of social and humanistic sciences related to this subject. Bibliographic and document analysis, among others, are used as methods.

Keywords: Sociology of Education and Culture; Haitian Cultural Legacy; Cultural transmission; Socialization; School, family and community; University

Introduction

There exists in Cuba a Haitian cultural legacy (LCH). Cultural expression of that cosmovision, which denotes a process of insertion, precedent and latent, which in turn is a process of social reproduction, because several networks of relations have been in charge of maintaining and transmitting it. This constitutes an opportunity for the academic, cultural and political-ideological

formation of university students of Social and Humanistic Sciences, as well as for the formation of ethical and moral values.

Its study demonstrates the insufficiency in the use of the potentiality that the LCH possesses and in the effective treatment from the politics in the process of insertion of that culture in the receiving culture; permeated, in a subjective way, by the aspect of exclusion that the Haitian descendants suffered, and that same conception and representation.

With the creation of the House of the Caribbean in Santiago de Cuba in 1982, the studies for the knowledge and balance of the cultural relations between the Haitian immigration and the Cuban traditional popular culture began.

Researches such as those of Espronceda (2002) and Guanche (2015) transit through the communitarian, from reflections around immigration itself and its impact on family structure, religion as a component of cultural identity and in relation to community cohesion of Haitian immigrants and descendants. They are developed - with greater or lesser intensity - from ethnographic, anthropological, historical and sociological perspectives, with emphasis on the sociology of culture, close to the Cuban reality.

The results of research carried out by these authors indicate that Haitian cultural elements constitute the unit of referents, behavior patterns, practices and symbols that characterize us as the result of a process of cultural transmission in which education plays a transcendental role.

Studies carried out both at the international and national level corroborate this by defining the main task of the teacher in this process, depending on the context. These studies are systematized in researchers such as Degl' Innocenti (2008); González and Rivera (2019); and Espinoza et al. (2021) when analyzing the transmission of culture as the axis of the pedagogical task, in the sense that they visualize culture as a resource of power and fundamental source of conflicts, in a space where education has the role of acting as a tool, promoter and manager of cultural growth. This places the LCH transmission process in the scenario of the teaching-learning process itself.

Overcoming the insufficient use of the formative potential of LCH transmission, given its socializing effects as an essentially educational process, demands its multilateral approach as a problem, not only because of the existence of different contexts at school, family and community levels, but also because of the wide diversity of contents and forms of implementation of educational action.

Therefore, in addition to accounting for the existing problematic in relation to this issue, the objective includes the formulation of a proposal for the treatment of contents for the improvement of the knowledge system in university courses in the social sciences.

Development

For the development of the present work, several scientific research methods were used, including bibliographic and document analysis, among others.

These methods allowed a systematization of the main literatures related to the transmission of the Haitian legacy in a sociological perspective of education and culture.

With respect to this particular, it is important to emphasize that the Haitian, as object and subject of the process of mutual cultural influence, had in diverse stages behaviors of defense of their habits, customs, beliefs, etc., before the aggression, subjugation and systematic discrimination to which they were subjected for years by other members of the society until the triumph of the Cuban Revolution.

Even when they maintained a tendency towards a defensive, self-forming way of life, closed in on themselves with respect to the rest of society, they were not totally alien to the creative assimilation of the surrounding reality, of the advances of the economy, science, technology, culture, in short, of the development of Cuban society.

It is quite frequent in the literature the allusion to the negative visions that around the Haitian were conformed during the first half of the XX century as classist expression of social exclusion of any diversity in front of the established by the existing domination.

As a preamble to the study of the traditions of Haitian immigrants in Guantánamo, it is necessary to explore the term cultural legacy. García (2023) refers that it is the result of the transmission of knowledge, practices, values and customs from one generation to another. This transmission can be through formal and informal education, family, religion, literature, among other means.

UNESCO (2024) assumes it in its heritage value, whose content “encompasses much more than monuments and collections of objects. It also includes traditions and living expressions (...) and practices related to nature and the universe” because “it is the legacy of our ancestors that is transmitted from generation to generation” (p. 1).

In Cuba, cultural institutions play a crucial role in the transmission of LCH through activities, exhibitions and cultural exchange programs that have contributed to making this heritage visible. Such initiatives should be supported by stronger educational policies that integrate LCH in a systematic way. (González, 2021)

Guantanameros identify the contributions of Haitian culture in religion, music-dance and cuisine - in that order of importance, inferring their relationship with popular festivities, where customs, myths, legends, behaviors, interpersonal relationships, kinship, neighborhood, friendships and thoughts are also linked. This shows the results of the sociological conditioning that the transmission of LCH has had in our reality, from its historical origin to the present, by showing the successive states of Cuban society embedded in the socializing evolution through which this transmission takes place as a formative process through its means and ends.

The transmission of this cultural legacy is a fundamental process in the education of human societies. In this regard, it is necessary to “think about the concept of transmission of culture and to consider it as an invariant property of every educational process” because “to think of education as transmission of culture is to give it a meaning and also a sense” (Degl' Innocent, 2008, p. 33).

Hence the need and relevance of a sociological reading aimed at capturing the social conditioning social dynamics, family structures, educational institutions and cultural contexts that influence the way in which the LCH is transmitted, as well as the importance of this process in the formation of collective identities and in social development due to the relevance that such legacy contains, as a resource for the development of communities in which it is presented as an opportunity to hierarchize. It is, therefore, a process that transcends the transfer of knowledge, traditions and values from one generation to another.

Cultural transmission as an educational process

Cultural transmission contributes to the teaching of cultural values of a given society or social group, which leads to establishing a link or recognition of this process with that of socialization. The cultural and the socializing integrated in the reality of the LCH transmission process demands, for its understanding, the integration of two sociological approaches that correspond to the sociology of education and culture to capture the complexity of such a social relationship.

According to Blanco *et al.* (1994):

Socialization consists (...) in the transmission (and consequent assimilation and reproduction by the individual) of socially acceptable knowledge, values, norms and principles, that is, that society admits as useful and necessary, and therefore demands their transfer to new generations. (p. 9)

It also states that its object of study is the systems of social relations established in the process of education, understood as a process of socialization of the individual and that the relations are manifested in various levels or contexts: school, family and community, and responds to the historical and class-based nature of education (Blanco *et al.*, 1994, p. 11).

The concept itself incorporates the category of transmission, expressing its link with education, including the school, family and community contexts. Likewise, the idea of the main scenarios that influence the process and types of education (formal, non-formal and informal) is essential.

The transmission of LCH has a particularity when it comes to socialization processes. On the one hand, it highlights the results that show intergenerational links as the main pathways. The family and the community as contexts of excellence of informal education. From here it is ratified that Haitian culture is expressed in its cultural habits such as language, music-dance, religion, cuisine and customs. Haitian roots were sustained mainly in the rural areas, merging with the already existing miscegenation in the Cuban culture.

Nevertheless, the school constitutes an essential space in which social relations are structured, restructured and reproduced. Therefore, the approach to formal education is of vital importance to understand also the way in which contents are transmitted from a conscious preparation for the achievement of an educational purpose and the realization of cultural activities that contribute to reveal the LCH from the teaching-learning process.

Limitations in the treatment of the subject at school

The issue lies, according to Degl' Innocent (2008), in the fact that “the internal tensions of the educational phenomenon reflect the contradictions of society and are conditioned by them” (p. 33). In this sense, a look is oriented towards universities and their primary task of understanding how culture is reproduced through social relations. In this regard, he points out:

As teachers we consider that the specificity of our task should focus on the process of transmission of knowledge; that is, we consider teaching as the process of transmission of culture. This process allows us to 'pass on' to the students the necessary tools for the

subsequent autonomous construction of knowledge. We maintain, at the same time, that the potential of education lies in articulating the conservation of cultural products with the possibility of generating spaces for creativity and renovation. (p. 34)

Therefore, it is necessary to visualize the way in which the process of transmission of culture is constructed and developed according to its own historical-social moments. In turn, it implies the establishment of links between generations, developed by diverse social relations, both in the family and in the community. This leads to the need for transformation of educational practice, to the extent that social conditioning drives a positioning in relation to cultural transmission in the scenario of origin.

The conception expressed by Degl' Innocent (2008) regarding the role that the teacher must assume in this process is enlightening:

Faced with the difficulty of assuming the asymmetry of the link and the inevitability of some level of symbolic imposition in the transmission of culture, many teachers limit their task to motivating, interacting, accompanying, sharing learning experiences with students. Interaction does not exclude knowledge, but it acquires an instrumental value. This social representation has an impact on the concept of transmission and on practice: sometimes, sustaining that the teacher is the bearer of knowledge is associated with authoritarian positions and this hinders the possibility of assuming that the teaching function is to transmit this knowledge. (p. 37)

In this sense, the university, as a formal space of transmission, constitutes the social institution in charge of preserving and promoting the culture accumulated by society. It is in it where the teaching-learning process has a systematizing and planned character, as it expresses the trends prevailing from pedagogy, psychology, and philosophy in a given social historical context and the relations with the carrier community. (González & Rivera, 2019)

Treatment of contents on LCH in the university teaching-learning process

Guantánamo being one of the provinces with the greatest potential of Haitians and their descendants in the country, its university is taken as a reference as a scenario par excellence for the conformation of the local culture represented in said ethnic group and to visualize the transmission of the LCH in the teaching-learning process that takes place in this center.

Here it is considered that the contexts where there was greater migration also mark the treatment of the subject matter from their own curricula and/or elective electives in use. In an investigation carried out at the University of Guantánamo, it was possible to appreciate a greater treatment of the content of the transmission of LCH in the social careers, such as Art History, Art Education, Sociology, and Sociocultural Management for development, among others.

According to Morandi (2021), to inscribe education, and therefore the teaching-learning process, in the framework of the transmission of LCH, implies assuming some questions:

- this task must not be assumed from a will (conscious or unconscious) of reification of young people. it must be a requirement of a new pedagogical conception.
- that the transmission processes take place in the link between generations, for which it is essential that the pre-existing generations become referents of authority, which can be recognized as such by the new generations. (p. 12)

This university context allows us to identify some central challenges of the teaching-learning process, in which the teacher's task acquires meaning and directionality. The first is that it refers to the need to think about the relationship of teaching-learning with the processes of transmission and selection of the cultural legacy in the context of redefinition of the education-society relationship and the assumption of a political perspective that recognizes education as a right. Secondly, to problematize the processes of knowledge construction in the transmission processes of LCH (Morandi, 2021).

Taking this into account, it is proposed as the immediate way out to a treatment of content related to these issues, to the subject Panorama del Desarrollo Sociocultural Guantanamero of the Elective/Elective curriculum, located in the Study Plan E of the career of Sociocultural Management for Development.

The subject allows students to encourage the study of the sociocultural development of the locality, including Traditional Popular Culture as a genuine heritage of the Cuban people.

It responds to the need to include in their professional training the capacity to revitalize and rescue the popular traditions of Cuban culture, particularly the Guantánamo culture; and to insert traditional popular culture in new cultural projects as a way to maintain the continuity of our national culture, based on a consistent scientific-research work and an attitude of commitment to social development, management, promotion and socio-cultural transformation.

The proposal given for the improvement of the knowledge system allows:

- To know the main events that marks the history of the Haitian culture in the Guantanamera region and influences in its sociocultural development.
- To apprehend the Haitian cultural value systems throughout the historical evolution of humanity until today, from the study and understanding of the components of traditional popular culture.
- Decode the expressions and manifestations of Haitian culture in its formal, technical and content aspects.

To be able, upon graduation, to be able to:

- Critically analyze a given historical-social and artistic-literary reality.
- Explore the artistic fact from different angles.
- Identify the historical and artistic values of the community in order to promote its development and contribute to the cultural rescue and the reaffirmation of its sense of belonging.
- Integrate the artistic tendencies of a carrier community to other contexts.
- Value how the integration of the artistic and cultural values of an LCH carrier community, created in a given historical context, contributes to the conformation of its heritage and the reaffirmation of its historical-cultural identity.
- To select methods and procedures for critical analysis and historical or artistic research and to rule on quality and significance within a given manifestation or a folkloric group carrying Haitian expressions.

Moving in this direction is important because it acts as a link to the past, allowing us to connect with our roots and to understand how we have become what we are today, since “cultural heritage gives young generations the possibility to recognize themselves in a history, a genealogy, a belonging from which to shape their own subjectivity” (Degl' Innocent, 2008, p. 30).

Therefore, through the preservation of ancestral traditions and customs, important aspects of our history can be kept alive. For this reason, the cultural legacy as heritage is a source of inspiration and creativity for present and future generations, and its preservation contributes to sustainable development and the strengthening of national and international identity.

Conclusions

In Cuba there is an LCH constituted as a unit of referents, behavior patterns, practices and symbols, whose cultural transmission, as an educational process with relevant socializing effects, shows two states of Cuban society: one prior to the triumph of the revolution as resistance to the social exclusion of the diverse in the face of the existing domination; and another after 1959 in which transculturation becomes more viable, although it must still overcome inertias left by the previous social order or newly reconfigured in the new social reality.

In Guantánamo, the contribution of Haitian culture is identified in religion, music-dance and cuisine, from which its relationship with festivities, customs, myths, legends, behaviors, interpersonal relationships, kinship, neighborhood, friendships and thoughts can be inferred. However, it is insufficient to take advantage of the formative potential of the process of cultural transmission existing in relationships that are manifested in the school, the family and the community.

It is shown that it is indispensable and pertinent to carry out a sociological reading, in an educational and cultural perspective, oriented to capture the social conditioning social dynamics, family structures, educational institutions and cultural contexts that influence the way in which LCH is transmitted.

By giving an account of the state of the problem related to the transmission of LCH as an educational process in terms of the formation of values, a proposal is made for the treatment of contents for the improvement of the knowledge system in university careers in the social sciences.

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