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History of the Cuban school. A first approach for a global view.

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Introduction

The research focuses on the history of the Cuban school starting from the day after the revolutionary victory (1959), up to the so-called "special period" (the nineties), a decade of undoubted interest and great changes for the Caribbean Island, also reflecting the radical change in the international scene after the end of the Cold War. The praise of UNESCO (but not only) at the school policies of the revolutionary Government and the results achieved, make the Cuban school a case of interest, which has not received the due attention of the educational historians. The research I carry out could help fill a rather obvious gap in Cuban scholastic historiography.

Research question and aims

From a first hypothesis of research aimed at collecting school memories of former students and former teachers to expand the field of interpretation on the history of the Cuban school, has subsequently emerged - during the exploration of historiography and primary sources - the lack of a comprehensive synthesis of the institutional history of the Cuban revolutionary school. It was therefore appropriate and necessary to redesign the initial project in favor of an approach aimed at reconstructing the very "legal" history of the Cuban school.

Transversal objectives:

- explore the integration between education and the socialist political system established by Castro and the rebels after '59;
- establish how much the education system has taken into account the socio-economic conditions of the country during the following decades;
- verify whether the education and training system has remained faithful or not to the revolutionary line over the decades;
- examine how much education and training have influenced the survival of the communist ideology on the island and the economic self-sufficiency imposed by the US embargo;
- move within the context of that debate on Marxist pedagogy, which saw its most flourishing period in Italy between the 1960s and 1980s;
- Create a website where to publish research results via podcasts, video documentaries, articles, etc. to increase the dissemination of a subject that still needs to be completely systematized.



Expected results and future perspectives

The results of the research - given the enormous difficulties I have had to face in the last two years - could offer contributions in two fields of educational sciences:

1. the historical-educational one, the results of which could probably contribute for the first time to provide a more detailed and comprehensive view of the revolutionary Cuban school;
2. Comparative pedagogy, the results of which could be compared with the Italian context to strengthen school and educational policies through state interventions.



Method

After a timely historiography review on international and Italian sources about Cuban education and pedagogy, I proceeded to research on the field where, specifically, I examined first-hand archival sources and scientific literature on historiography preserved exclusively in the libraries of La Habana. I have therefore adopted a historical approach that has privileged the archival research. Currently the study of sources is still in progress and aims mainly to make dialogue the legislative history of the school and the pedagogical debate.

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