

**Encounters in Theory and History of Education**  
**Rencontres en Théorie et Histoire de l'Éducation**  
**Encuentros en Teoría e Historia de la Educación**



**Teachers' Practices and Teacher Models: Anísio Teixeira and Initial Teacher Training (Rio de Janeiro, 1932–1935)**

**Pratiques d'enseignants et modèles d'enseignement : Anísio Teixeira et la formation initiale des enseignants (Rio de Janeiro, 1932–1935)**

**Prácticas docentes y modelos docentes: Anísio Teixeira y la formación inicial docente (Río de Janeiro, 1932–1935)**

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Volume 23, 2022

State, Democracy, and Education in Brazil: The Trajectory of Anísio Teixeira

L'État, la démocratie et l'éducation au Brésil : le parcours d'Anísio Teixeira

Estado, democracia y educación en Brasil: La trayectoria de Anísio Teixeira

URI: <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1096719ar>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.24908/encounters.v23i0.15662>

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Article abstract

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Publisher(s)

Faculty of Education, Queen's University

ISSN

2560-8371 (digital)

[Explore this journal](#)

Cite this article

Gonçalves Vidal, D. (2022). Teachers' Practices and Teacher Models: Anísio Teixeira and Initial Teacher Training (Rio de Janeiro, 1932–1935). *Encounters in Theory and History of Education / Rencontres en Théorie et Histoire de l'Éducation / Encuentros en Teoría e Historia de la Educación*, 23, 24–47. <https://doi.org/10.24908/encounters.v23i0.15662>

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# Teachers' Practices And Teacher Models: Anísio Teixeira And Initial Teacher Training (Rio de Janeiro, 1932–1935)

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## **Abstract**

With the purpose of investigating the relationship between teachers' practices and teacher models, the present article takes as its main thread the work of Anísio Teixeira at the Teachers School of the Institute of Education, in Rio de Janeiro, between 1932 and 1935. In doing that, it resorts to oral and written sources and dares to outline a research methodology. The narrative is organized into four parts and an introduction. The first part offers a general description of the place where Teixeira's professional work is developed. Only those aspects of the history of the creation of the Institute of Education deemed as necessary to the study are described. The second part explores the broad features of that teacher practice, interweaving written and oral documentation. In the third part, the focus is on the issue of the sources. As final comments, the importance of historical investigations on teachers' practice and models is addressed.

Keywords: history of education, teacher training; oral history; teachers' lives; teacher models

## **Prácticas docentes y modelos docentes: Anísio Teixeira y la formación inicial docente (Río de Janeiro, 1932–1935)**

### **Resumen**

Con el propósito de investigar la relación entre las prácticas docentes y los modelos docentes, el presente artículo toma como hilo conductor el trabajo de Anísio Teixeira en la Escuela de Profesores del Instituto de Educación, en Río de Janeiro, entre 1932 y 1935. Con el fin de desarrollar esta cuestión, se recurre a fuentes orales y escritas y se esboza una metodología de investigación. La narración está organizada en cuatro partes y una introducción. La primera parte ofrece una descripción general del lugar donde se desarrolló el trabajo profesional de Teixeira. Sólo se describen aquellos aspectos de la historia de la creación del Instituto de Educación que se consideran necesarios para el estudio. En la segunda parte, exploramos los rasgos generales de esa práctica docente, entrelazando documentación escrita y oral. En la tercera parte, nos centramos en el tema de las fuentes. Como comentarios finales, consideramos la importancia de las investigaciones históricas sobre la práctica y los modelos docentes.

Palabras clave: Historia de la educación; formación de profesores; historia oral; vida de los docentes; modelos de profesores

## **Pratiques d'enseignants et modèles d'enseignement: Anísio Teixeira et la formation initiale des enseignants (Rio de Janeiro, 1932–1935)**

### **Résumé**

Cet article étudie la relation entre les pratiques des enseignants et les modèles d'enseignement en prenant comme fil conducteur le travail d'Anísio Teixeira à l'Escola de Professores (l'École des enseignants) de l'Institut de l'éducation à Rio de Janeiro entre 1932 et 1935. Nous aurons recourt à des sources orales et écrites afin de tenter d'esquisser une méthodologie de recherche. Seuls les aspects concernant l'histoire de la création de l'Institut seront décrits. Notre article est divisé en quatre parties. La première offre une description générale de l'endroit où Teixeira développa son travail professionnel, la seconde examine les grandes lignes de cette pratique pédagogique par l'entremise de documentation à la fois écrite et orale, la troisième se concentre sur la question des sources, et comme dernier commentaire, nous considérons l'importance des enquêtes historiques sur la pratique pédagogique et les modèles d'enseignement.

Mots clés : histoire de l'éducation, formation des enseignants, histoire orale, la vie des enseignants, modèles d'enseignement

## Introduction

*Dr. Teixeira was an intellectual model for me. It does not mean that I am like him or that the contents of my lessons are... no. I actually consider him as my intellectual model to this day. I have a profound admiration for him. For he was at the same time of an amazing capacity to present the themes... He was a man of such candor, of an incomparable humility. So that for me Dr. Teixeira is something of an idol.<sup>1</sup>*

Iva Waisberg Bonow (1913–1997) was a teacher who graduated from the Teachers School of the Institute of Education (EPIE)<sup>2</sup> in Rio de Janeiro in 1934, later becoming a teacher at the same school, and course coordinator at the National Institute of Pedagogical Studies (INEP)<sup>3</sup> in the 1950s. In an interview she gave in 1995 when commenting on her experience as a student of the initial teacher training course, she related her teaching practice to the influence of a particular teacher: Anísio Teixeira. Weaving a narrative about her past, giving it a meaning, Iva Bonow pulled the threads of her memory, constructing a teacher identity by parallels and contrasts with a model of a teacher—not a particularly singular procedure. Even before the emergence mainly in the 1980s of studies that demonstrated the importance of teachers' life histories for understanding aspects of their teaching practice, the relevance of positive (and negative) models of teaching among the various formative elements of school was already highlighted by educators (Goodson, 1992).

Product of a later judgment, reflecting on decades of coexistence with Teixeira, Bonow went on in the interview to say,

We were very close, very close indeed. He was my teacher in more than one discipline, and I wrote a lot about him, Dr. Teixeira. And there was great intellectual affinity between me as a student and him as a teacher. I learned a lot from him.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Interview conducted with Iva Waisberg Bonow on 2 February 1995 in Rio de Janeiro. From the original: *O Dr. Anísio foi um modelo intelectual para mim. Isso não quer dizer que eu me pareça com ele ou que o conteúdo das minhas aulas sejam... não. Eu realmente o tenho até hoje como meu modelo intelectual. Tenho uma admiração profunda por ele. Porque ele era ao mesmo tempo de uma capacidade espantosa de apresentar os temas... Ele era um homem de uma simplicidade, de uma modéstia incomparável. De modo que Dr. Anísio para mim é uma espécie de ídolo* (translated by Jesse Rebello)

<sup>2</sup> A presentation of EPIE will be made in section 1.

<sup>3</sup> Currently named National Institute of Educational Studies and Research Anísio Teixeira, INEP was founded in 1937 as a department of the then Ministry for Health and Education (MES), today Ministry for Education, with the objective of conducting research on the problems of teaching in Brazil. Between 1952 and 1964, Anísio Teixeira directed the Institute. Previous directors had been Lourenço Filho (1938 – 1945) and Murilo Braga (1945 – 1952). In 2001, the Federal Senate approved the inclusion of Teixeira's name to the Institute's. On the history of the Institute, see INEP 80 ANOS: 1937-2017/ Instituto Nacional de Estudos e Pesquisas Educacionais Anísio Teixeira -- Brasília: Viva Editora, 2018. ([https://download.inep.gov.br/institucional/inep\\_80\\_anos/exposicao/LIVRO\\_INEP\\_80\\_ANOS.pdf](https://download.inep.gov.br/institucional/inep_80_anos/exposicao/LIVRO_INEP_80_ANOS.pdf))

<sup>4</sup> Interview conducted with Iva Waisberg Bonow on 2 February 1995 in Rio de Janeiro.

Bonow's testimony mixed her memories as a student with those she had as Teixeira's professional colleague. Between 1932 and 1935, Anísio Teixeira had been a teacher at EPIE, and between 1952 and 1964 he was INEP's director.

It is impossible to unravel the various temporalities that constitute the act of remembering. One of the primary features of the oral source, the representation that an interviewee constructs of subjects (including her/himself) and lived facts, is what makes them into characters and events of the past. The warnings made by Bourdieu (1996) against biographical illusion, which presupposes in the unicity of the biological body the unity of identity, can be extended to the narrated data. It is the subject of the narrative that endows them with meanings, renewed as the past-present relations are altered, "a continuous process of reconstruction and transformation of remembered experiences" (Thomson, 1997, p. 57). For memory, as put by Ricoeur (2000, p. 733), "is not linked solely to an *I*; neither is it collective in the sense given to it by Halbwachs, but rather plural, 'manifold attribution of memory to a diversity of grammatical persons.'"

The dynamics of testimony, however, are not restricted to the dialogue of the narrator with him/herself (remembrance). In fact, they are also shaped by the presence of the researcher. The interviewee does not represent the past just to her/himself, but also to another person that incites her/him to do it. Therefore, there is a double subjectivity in the oral source, since it results from a relationship in which the interviewee and the researcher are both implicated. That is why Portelli (1981, p. 100-101) draws attention to the differing credibility of the testimonies. Its truth relies on the conditions of production of the narrative. The moment experienced by the interviewee and the situation of the interview produce the realm of possibilities for the narrated version.

One last element needs to be considered: that which Hargreaves and Moore (2005) denominated *nostalgia*. For those researchers, in addition to conceiving speech acts as memory in their cognitive and emotional dimensions, and to consider the influence of the present in their elaboration, it is also necessary to perceive them as resulting from generational experiences and expectations. This latter aspect involves the particular choices of the interviewee in the events narrated, always made sentimentally, and the expression of a feeling of loss. It is, therefore, necessary to be aware of the possibility that the testimonies comprise the idealization of the subjects about their personal and professional trajectories, without neglecting the perspective of their current judgment of the events of the past, regarding what they were or should have been vis à vis the expectations shared by a generation, and even the need to situate this conflict socially and historically in the various temporalities; not of the narrative, but of life itself.

Taken under such advice, Iva Waisberg Bonow's testimonies, as well as those by other former students at the Institute of Education during the period in which Teixeira worked at the Teachers School, and who also bring as a defining feature of their formation the figure of Prof Anísio, are not used as a pathway for *rescuing* the past. Permeated by shared professional experiences that extend to other fields of educative action, as well as by readings of that educator's work, the testimonies present us with constructions of a presence elaborated in the absence: narratives about characters that

intercross multiple times along one's professional (and life) trajectory. Teixeira acquires the characteristics of the hierarchical superior and of an intellectual of prestige. In the remembrance these identities are blurred and reconstructed. Between 1932 and 1935, besides exercising the general directorship of the Department of Education of the Federal District, Rio De Janeiro, Teixeira wrote the manuscript for *Educação progressiva (uma introdução à filosofia da educação)* (Progressive Education (An Introduction to The Philosophy of Education)), edited in 1933 by the *Companhia Editora Nacional*<sup>5</sup> as part of the *Atualidades Pedagógicas* (Pedagogical Novelties) collection.

Nevertheless, caution warns against juxtaposing these various roles presupposing their coincidence. The distinct loci of production of Teixeira's discourse demand the recognition of differentiated strategies and interlocutors. The "procedures whose role is to ward off its powers and dangers, to gain mastery over its chance events, to evade its ponderous, formidable materiality" (Foucault, 1981, p. 52) need to be considered in understanding discourses that were put in circulation at the same historical moment and enunciated by the same historical subject. Even though the present text will not insist on such analysis, the precaution of noticing, rather than delving into, the dimensions of the politician, of the intellectual, and of the teacher, runs through these lines, and occasionally reveals itself, albeit tenuously.

Nonetheless, the testimonies do work as indexes to understand how knowledge and practices that were developed in the teacher training course organized by Teixeira imprinted on the students, becoming a motto for the elaboration and re-elaboration of their professional trajectories. Associated to other sources, such as programs, bibliographies, reports, and notes from Teixeira's pen, identified in the archives of the Center for Research and Documentation of Brazilian Contemporary History (CPDOC),<sup>6</sup> they help us to discern the outlines of a teaching practice and of the meanings attributed to it by the students. It is worth mentioning that, developed within a written culture and marked by modern rationality, the school is nevertheless permeated by orality, even though little of it was then preserved (especially at a time when the use of video and sound recorders was still sparsely disseminated). Reports, notebooks, class journals, and notes keep record and hold the remnants of this orality: ways in which the pedagogical proposals were transformed into speeches and gestures in the classroom.

To face this challenge, the article is divided into four parts. The first part outlines the locus of Anísio Teixeira's professional work in the training of teachers. Only those

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<sup>5</sup> Founded in 1925, the Companhia Editora Nacional published literature, poetry and textbooks. In 1931, Fernando de Azevedo, a Brazilian educator, created the Collection aiming to promote the constitution of a new scientific field, that of educational sciences, aligned with the New education ideas. For more information, see Toledo, 2013, p. 57-78. (<https://www.scielo.br/j/heduc/a/t73SrvJS9hTRfDJ sCjLf3jn/?format=pdf&lang=pt>), Accessed on 15 November 2022.

<sup>6</sup> The CPDOC was created in 1973 with the objective of housing document collections related to Brazilian contemporary history, developing research, and promoting graduate and undergraduate courses. Among the more than two million documents it houses, there are those belonging to Anísio Teixeira's Personal Archive, available at <http://www.fgv.br/cpdoc/guia/detalhesfundo.aspx?sigla=AT>. Access on 7 January 2022.

historical aspects of the Institute of Education's constitution deemed as necessary to the present study were selected. More comprehensive analyses of this theme have been carried out elsewhere, which I believe exempts us from a more thorough investigation of this topic here (see Vidal, 2001). The second part of this article explores the outlines of such teaching practice interweaving written and oral documentation. The third part delves into the problem of sources. Finally is a discussion of the importance of historical investigations on teachers' practice and models.

## The Institute of Education of Rio De Janeiro

Established in 1932 through the integration of a Kindergarten (*Jardim de Infância*), primary school, secondary school, and a teacher training school, the Institute of Education elevated the formation program for entry into the teaching profession to the level of higher education in Brazil, according to Decree 3.810 of 19 March 1932, signed by Teixeira himself.<sup>7</sup>

Whilst strengthening the value of teacher training within the scope of a still rather undefined pedagogical science, the Institute created teacher professionalization strategies proposed as models. It is true that in several Brazilian states since the establishment of the Republic, and even before it during the Empire, there were efforts to establish normal schools as models, and that the legislation that created the Institute of Education was inspired by references from New Education, shared to a greater or lesser extent by other reforms undertaken in Brazil in the 1920s and 1930s.<sup>8</sup> However, the proposal here assumed nationwide prominence, not just because it would be implemented in the Republic's capital shortly after the creation of the Ministry for Health and Education in 1930, but also because the promulgation of Decree 3.810 was made on the exact day that the *Manifesto of the Pioneers of New Education*<sup>9</sup> was published. The latter suggested several of the formulations present in the decree.

A rigorous external and internal selection of future teachers—it is important to note that Article 60 of Decree 5000 of 11 July 1934 restricted the enrolment of male students to the Teachers School to 10% of the total enrolment—and rituals of distinction

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<sup>7</sup> For more information about the political role of Anísio Teixeira in Brazil, see the articles of Clarice Nunes and Rosa Bruno-Jofré & Naomar Almeida-Filho in this dossier.

<sup>8</sup> For more information about the creation of the Institute, see Vidal, 2001. To connect this initiative with the transnational movement of New education, see Vidal & Rabelo, 2019, <https://seer.ufu.br/index.php/che/article/view/47659/257460> Accessed on November, 15<sup>th</sup> 2023.

<sup>9</sup> The *Manifesto of the Pioneers of New Education* has become an unavoidable reference for the studies in history of education about the *Escola Nova* (New School) in Brazil. A letter-monument, as it was referred to by Libânia Xavier (2002) in her already classic study, it was signed by 26 Brazilian educators. It became known in historiography for its defense of a single primary school, lay and mandatory, a duty of the State, and a right of the citizen. Among the proposals it put forward, there was the formation for the teaching profession at higher education level within the Institutes of Education, associated to universities, as was the case of EPIE, which in 1935 was made part of the University of the Federal District (UDF). It emerged from the disputes between distinct groups for the control of the newly-created Ministry for Health and Education. For more information on the political and pedagogical dimensions of this document, see, among others, Mendonça (2002) and Vidal (2013).



implemented at the Institute, such as the recognition of the best students, helped to shape an ideal of the teaching profession and of the teaching professional, in which science and art were articulated. Moving away from the primacy of the innate vocation, the conception of teaching as a profession, defended by educators working at the School such as Anísio Teixeira and M. B. Lourenço Filho, at the time the principal of both the Institute of Education and of its Teachers School, focused on the efficiency of professional training, directed at the specificities of the exercise of the profession, centered on the reflection about pedagogical practice. The art of teaching, a practical dimension of the teaching profession, was intertwined on an equal footing with the science of education.

Between 1928 and 1929, before working as a teacher at the Institute and taking on the general directorship of the Department of Education, Teixeira had conducted graduate studies for ten months at Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, whence he received his Master of Arts. A student of Kilpatrick, he became acquainted with academics such as William James, Bertrand Russell, Edward Thorndike, and John Dewey, the latter a former teacher of Kilpatrick's (Nunes, 2000, p. 138). From that experience, he absorbed, among other influences, the value of the courses on subjects as formative for the teaching profession. Implemented at the Teachers School of the Institute of Education, these courses were described by Teixeira (1934, p. 7) in the following terms:

The Subjects at the Normal Schools should not be taught with the features of secondary education teaching, neither should they be taught with the specialized character of higher or university education. They are taught from the point of view of the teaching profession. If the teaching level is that of primary school, the courses will be special courses in which the knowledge of the subject appropriate to children in primary school will be given, alongside the knowledge of the difficulties faced by children to learn it, the special methods to organize it, to pace it and distribute it for teaching, and, whenever possible, the history of its development and its function in children education.<sup>10</sup>

The emphasis put by Teixeira on teaching practice, seen as an art, and the primacy of pedagogical science in the formation for the teaching profession, was thereby clearly enunciated.

The Courses of Subjects prepared the future teachers for the teaching activity, offering them elements of a scientific order as well as content. However, despite the eminently practical character of these disciplines, the quality of teaching could only be

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<sup>10</sup> From the original: *As matérias, nas escolas normais, não devem ser ensinadas com o caráter do ensino de nível secundário, nem com o caráter especializado do ensino de nível superior ou universitário. São ensinadas do ponto de vista da profissão do magistério. Se o grau do magistério é o primário, os cursos de matérias serão cursos especiais em que se ministre o conhecimento da matéria apropriada às crianças da escola primária, e o conhecimento das dificuldades dessas crianças em aprendê-la, dos métodos especiais de organizá-la, dosá-la e distribuí-la para o ensino, e sempre que possível, da história do seu desenvolvimento e da sua função na educação da infância* (translated by Jesse Rebello).



ascertained and improved by the classroom experience, hence the emphasis on the practice of teaching.

Practice also became a scientific activity, with specific procedures following pre-established sequences given by specialist teachers in consonance with the interests of primary school, as determined by the principal and the teaching staff. It became a discipline, named as such, occupying three trimesters in the second year of the regular course of teacher education, with a minimum weekly load of 12 hours, in coordination with the subject sections which, in their turn, were coordinated to the general principles that gave substance to the courses of philosophy, history, psychology, and educational sociology. It corresponded to the laboratory work in the courses of theory and the subject.

In each trimester, practice unfolded into a specific activity—observation, participation, and direction, each with its preparation. In the first stage, that of observation, students were distributed in groups by the different classrooms of elementary education, where they observed the general situation of the class. A series of classes by the chair of educational psychology had been previously dedicated to improving the observation of children’s activities by trained eyes. It consisted of practical exercises conducted with the help of movie projections.

After watching a short scene, limited to two to three minutes, the students made notes of the facts observed. In their first attempts, few of them managed to record the whole sequence of events. We insisted during various classes on the practice of watching and taking notes of the children’s activities in their various stages of development. The movie gave us the advantage of correction (Marinho, 1959, p. 120-121).<sup>11</sup>

The experiment was repeated in primary school. After the observation, students and the assistant teacher of the practice section answered questionnaires that were then debated within the group. The debate was conducted observing scientific procedures, to discourage the emotional behavior of those involved, favoring the rationality of the interventions. To standardize the activity, allowing the “mastery of oneself,” M. B. Lourenço Filho put together instructions to be followed by the students at the Teachers School, which were published in the school’s journal, *Arquivos do Instituto de Educação* (Archives of the Institute of Education), in 1934. Carlos Delgado de Carvalho (1934), professor of the chair of sociology at EPIE, was also interested in the subject, discussing the exercise of preparing notecards, which he considered important not just in the selection of topics of study, but also in the organization of the interventions during class. The objectives in this first stage were to allow students to understand and

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<sup>11</sup> From the original: *Depois de assistirem a uma pequena cena, limitada a dois ou três minutos, anotavam as alunas os fatos observados. Nos primeiros ensaios, poucas conseguiam registrar toda a sequência dos acontecimentos. Insistíamos, durante várias aulas, na prática de ver e anotar a atividade infantil em vários graus do desenvolvimento. O cinema nos dava a vantagem da correção* (translated by Jesse Rebello).

analyze the situation in the class under their observation in its material organization and psychological environment, and to develop critical thinking about their work.<sup>12</sup>

In the next trimester, they moved on to the stage of participation. For 20 to 30 minutes, the students experienced a teaching situation. Firstly, they conversed with the regent of the class, who indicated, according to the progress of the course, the topic of that class. Next, they debated with the regent the content of the class. The student would then prepare her<sup>13</sup> work script. Her participation was followed by other students, by the regent-teacher, and by the assistant of the practice section, who recorded their observations in specially prepared questionnaires. These contained questions about the general attitude of the regent-student, the reaction of the primary school pupils, the contents of the class, the process adopted, its sequence, and results.

The results were discussed in groups: initially, the regent-student presented a self-critique, then the observations made by her colleagues and teachers were presented. Overall, each student took part in eight to ten teaching situations and observed more than sixty of those. Apart from introducing students to the habit of self-critique, this discipline aimed at putting students in direct contact with the classes in thought-out, planned, controlled situations, to awaken in them the understanding of the movement of learning, preparing them to detect favorable moments for motivation, for creation, retention, or reviewing exercises, and teaching them how to use time, material, and program resources.

In the last trimester, they reached the stage of class directing. A student would be given direct responsibility over a class for three hours. During that period, apart from expanding the student's teaching capacities, the discipline aimed at preparing them for the practice of school office writing and correspondence and the use of the library and museum. The questionnaires were replaced by reports written by the students, their colleagues, and by the regent-teacher of the class. The constant assessments and critiques of the teaching/learning situations prompted students to rethink their practice, trying to improve it by incorporating the observations of their peers and teachers.

Such critical activity on the part of the students, however, was not reduced to self-critique or the assessment by peers and primary teachers. They were also called on to give their opinion about the course itself. In a questionnaire distributed in 1934, the students had to make reports on the section of teaching practice. Among some of the answers recorded in that instrument gathered by Léa Castro (1986, p. 84-86), one finds criticism of the insufficient study of the subjects from the point of view of the elementary school, of the lack of analysis of the programs, of the excessive number of classes (hindering the possibility of adequate preparation for them), and of the neglect of some aspects of the subjects studied in secondary education that were necessary for the teaching activity. In that same year, students took part in an inquiry on the validity of the use of multiple-choice tests as grading activities in disciplines in lieu of the traditional

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<sup>12</sup> *Prática de ensino. Arquivos do Instituto de Educação*, 1 (3): 357, mar. 1937.

<sup>13</sup> The majority of the students were female, which explains the use of the feminine here.

written examinations. The students were, therefore, prompted at various moments to reflect upon their practice and upon that of their peers and superiors, preparing reports on that and thus adapting to the needs of a *changing civilization* (as put by Kilpatrick) or of *progressive education* (as preferred by Teixeira).

In this sense, the direct work of Anísio Teixeira as a teacher of philosophy of education at the Teachers School reinforced some of the practices established in the Institute. As an intellectual and a politician of education, Teixeira had helped to build a place for teacher preparation in Rio de Janeiro that aimed at being modern and exemplary. He had acted on the externality of the Institute of Education, guaranteeing its work conditions and discussing its teaching direction. Overcoming the distance between directives (political and theoretical) and practice, he also worked within the School as a teacher in various courses, consolidating aspects of a training proposal for the teaching profession conceived as innovative. It is this last activity of his that we want to discuss in the following sections.

### “Education And The Modern Spirit”

That was the title topping a list of ten themes of the course offered at the Teachers School by Anísio Teixeira in the last trimester of 1934.<sup>14</sup> The School’s curriculum, to be accomplished over two years, was divided into disciplines of extensive study (taking the whole of one academic year), such as history of education, music, drawing, and physical education, recreation and games; and disciplines of intensive study (taking one trimester) such as educational biology, educational psychology, educational sociology, philosophy of education, and introduction to teaching - principles and techniques (this latter discipline was offered only in the first trimester of the year), apart from disciplines of subjects and teaching practice.<sup>15</sup>

Next to the themes, a distribution in weeks indicated the time deemed as necessary for the development of that subject between early October and mid-December. This is how the program was presented:

1. Nature – Man – Scientia
2. Man and Society
3. Experience and Learning
4. Human Needs and Aspirations – their achievement and their limits

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<sup>14</sup> The program is part of the Anísio Teixeira Archives, CPDOC (CPDOC/FGV, AT/IE, pi 1932.00.00) [https://docvirt.com/docreader.net/DocReader.aspx?bib=AT\\_prodInte&hf=www.fgv.br&pagfis=1883](https://docvirt.com/docreader.net/DocReader.aspx?bib=AT_prodInte&hf=www.fgv.br&pagfis=1883), accessed on 7 January 2022.

<sup>15</sup> Unfortunately, class schedules, which would have been relevant to understand the time distribution among disciplines of intensive and extensive study, could not be located. It is important to emphasize that, in Brazil at the time, only the Institute of Education in Rio de Janeiro and the Institute of Education in São Paulo shared the same curriculum and had the status of Faculties of Education, requiring to the enrollment the attendance of secondary school. In 1934, the IoE of São Paulo was integrated to University of São Paulo, and 1935, the IoE of Rio de Janeiro became part of the University of Distrito Federal (RJ).

5. Experience, life, and education – education as a reconstruction of experience
6. The educative process and its direction
7. The objectives of education and the teaching subjects
8. The school program: its organization and execution
9. The school order (discipline and freedom)
10. The school and the reconstruction of human life  
(Emphasis in the original)

Except for the first topic, which had a handwritten indication “1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> week Oct,” all topics were programmed to be developed in one week. At the end of the document, the date October, 6<sup>th</sup> 1934 indicated the coincidence between the preparation of the course (or of its typing) and the start of the trimester.<sup>16</sup> It was, therefore, a discipline of intensive study, not of an introductory character, since it was offered by the end of 1934.

The analysis of the themes affords few inferences but stimulates reflection. The relationship between teaching subjects and the objectives of education in theme 7 repositions in a certain way the discussion previously outlined in this text about the art of teaching. The sequence of the terms “experience,” “life,” and “education” in theme 5 seems to refer to John Dewey’s book *Vida e Educação* (Life and Education), published by Edições Melhoramentos in Brazil in 1930 in a translation by Anísio Teixeira (Dewey, 1930). That book contains an “Outline of John Dewey’s Education” written by Teixeira and entitled “Dewey’s Pedagogy” and is subdivided into “I - Education as The Reconstruction of Experience” and “II - The School and the Reconstruction of Experience.” The first of these two subdivisions corresponds exactly to the brief clarification of theme 5.

Let us go back to the archives. Going through the program, other documents allow us to detail the themes a bit further. Under the heading Nature – Man – Scientia,<sup>17</sup> we find a text whose form resembles that of an exercise. Dated 4 October 1934, it precedes in two days the typing of *A educação e o espírito moderno* (Education And The Modern Spirit). Comprised of twenty statements, it presents as its first statement the following:

1. Let us consider the following:
  - The latest earthquake in Japan caused the death of more than two thousand people;
  - Droughts and epidemics constantly decimate crops and livestock;
  - Thirty million bags of coffee have been destroyed in Brazil to maintain market balance;
  - In Rio de Janeiro one person commits suicide every day;
  - Health and nutrition in Brazil are highly deficient;

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<sup>16</sup> In Brazil, the lective year begins in March and ends in December.

<sup>17</sup> CPDOC/FGV, AT/IE, pi 1932.00.00 ([https://docvirt.com/docreader.net/DocReader.aspx?bib=AT\\_prodInte&hf=www.fgv.br&pagfis=1885](https://docvirt.com/docreader.net/DocReader.aspx?bib=AT_prodInte&hf=www.fgv.br&pagfis=1885)) Accessed on 7 January 2022.

And at the same time:

- The world's population grows every day;
  - Human wealth is larger every day;
  - Human activity is wider and more intense every day;
  - The dissatisfaction and disquiet, large as they may be, are smaller than the desire to do, accomplish, be active.
- a) What do these facts reveal about the nature of the world and of man?
  - b) Do they adjust to each other, or are they contradictory?
  - c) Is precariousness and contingency indispensable to man's life, or is it safety and inevitability that would make him genuinely happy?
  - d) What is the real origin of the different doctrines about this?  
(Emphasis in the original)

We were unable to locate within the whole collection of documents maintained at CPDOC a list of subthemes to the program's themes. However, four pages of statements like the one above, typed or handwritten, rearranged the selected problems. New combinations, changing the occasional aspect of the statement, reveal that the themes were frequently re-elaborated. Examples taken from everyday life prompted the inquiries, always constructed in an open manner, as in c), and presupposing the analysis by the student, as in b).

In an effort to understand the organization of the contents of the course, we looked for information in the interviews made with former students. Iva Bonow supplied us with some elements.

Teixeira was a thinker. Admirable. He showed modesty... A modesty so rare, so striking, that we even forgot that he was modest. There were many things that he said, pearls, that he thought were trifles, but they were not. It was hard. It was not easy. He was not an easy-to-understand teacher. But after we matured, we started to find the pearls. But it was not easy. It was not easy to understand, easy to study. He always made us do the most important thing, which is thinking. It is important. It is difficult<sup>18</sup>.

Iva Bonow repeatedly used the expression "it was not easy." Perhaps, the difficulty she referred to is connected to the one we met with to understand the pages of

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<sup>18</sup> Interview conducted with Iva Waisberg Bonow on 2 February 1995 in Rio de Janeiro. From the original: *O Anísio era um pensador. Admirável. Tinha uma modéstia... uma modéstia tão rara, tão chocante, que a gente até esquecia que ele era modesto. Havia muita coisa que ele dizia, pérolas, que pensava que eram bagulhos, mas não eram. Era difícil. Não era fácil, não. Não era um professor fácil de entender. Mas depois que nós amadurecíamos, nos começávamos a pescar as pérolas. Agora, não era fácil. Não era fácil de entender, fácil de estudar. Ele sempre obrigava a gente a coisa mais importante que é pensar. É importante. É difícil* (translated by Jesse Rebello).

statements found in the archive. Instead of a sequence of subjects to be studied, the class was developed as a set of problems to be discussed, in which the active presence of the student, questioned about different issues, stood above the teacher's voice. The logical organization, the thread that joined together the various statements, was built by Teixeira. But the open style of the formulation offered room for debate, stimulating a reflection that mixed philosophical concepts and practical problems. *Trifles and pearls* start to make sense: woven into apparently trivial discussions, philosophical issues were debated.

Writing about “The Meaning and Purpose of Philosophy of Education,”<sup>19</sup> Teixeira, drawing on Dewey, stated that philosophy emerged from the need to reconcile empirical and positive knowledge of mankind’s traditional and religious—essentially poetic—people. It was constituted historically not as a disinterested activity of the human spirit in search of truth, but rather as an effort of intelligence to justify, with rational groundings, traditional customs, beliefs, and institutions. The change that was operated in modern times was the transformation of philosophy from a “specialized instrument of research of ingenious conceptions of justification and rationalization of traditional truth, into an intellectual instrument of work for each one of us.”<sup>20</sup> He concluded: “Philosophy relinquished the final causes and eternal truth to land among men and debate with them their typical problems.”<sup>21</sup>

That seemed to be the direction that Teixeira tried to give to the classroom activities—a debate about the typical problems of humankind—and therefore, the organization of the classes around statements such as those mentioned above, that stimulated the recourse to orality. Orality, however, is only possible in the modern school, rooted as it is in the written culture (De Certeau, 1994) if conceived in consonance with the written record. In that sense, we can understand not just the effort of typing the statements, whose handwritten version can be found in the Anísio Teixeira Archives, but the typing of “The Meaning And Purpose of Philosophy of Education: Opening Conference of The Course on The Philosophy of Education,”<sup>22</sup> given by Teixeira, a task that reveals its importance when we compare it with Iva Bonow’s testimony about the appearance of the mimeographic system.

There were few [works in Portuguese]. And then the mimeograph appeared. You see, the texts that were translated into Portuguese by various people... And the

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<sup>19</sup> CPDOC/FGV, AT/IE, pi 1929.00.00. [https://docvirt.com/docreader.net/DocReader.aspx?bib=AT\\_prodInte&hf=www.fgv.br&pagfis=6688](https://docvirt.com/docreader.net/DocReader.aspx?bib=AT_prodInte&hf=www.fgv.br&pagfis=6688). Accessed on 07 January 2022.

<sup>20</sup> CPDOC/FGV, AT/IE, pi 1929.00.00 [https://docvirt.com/docreader.net/DocReader.aspx?bib=AT\\_prodInte&hf=www.fgv.br&pagfis=6700](https://docvirt.com/docreader.net/DocReader.aspx?bib=AT_prodInte&hf=www.fgv.br&pagfis=6700). Accessed on 7 January 2022.

<sup>21</sup> CPDOC/FGV, AT/IE, pi 1929.00.00 [https://docvirt.com/docreader.net/DocReader.aspx?bib=AT\\_prodInte&hf=www.fgv.br&pagfis=6704](https://docvirt.com/docreader.net/DocReader.aspx?bib=AT_prodInte&hf=www.fgv.br&pagfis=6704). Accessed on 7 January 2022.

<sup>22</sup> CPDOC/FGV, AT/IE, pi 1932.00.00 [https://docvirt.com/docreader.net/DocReader.aspx?bib=AT\\_prodInte&hf=www.fgv.br&pagfis=1962](https://docvirt.com/docreader.net/DocReader.aspx?bib=AT_prodInte&hf=www.fgv.br&pagfis=1962). Accessed 7 January 2022.



translations were texts from... for the students. Have you ever heard about this?<sup>23</sup>

Used to disseminate the translations, it is likely that the strategy was extended to the reproduction of classroom texts. Such a hypothesis is corroborated by the introduction to the typed text “Education And Human Personality,”<sup>24</sup> written by Anísio Teixeira.

We examined in the three previous lessons the general problems of the purpose of philosophy of education, of life [illegible] process, and the moral, just, or happy life. Let us now examine the problem of the human person. Of how it is formed. – The nature of its conduct or behavior. The discussion may aim at the theme: Education And Human Personality. Read the exposition alongside. Formulate your doubts or questions.<sup>25</sup>

It is worth noting here that in the reading guidelines the work upon the text did not drive at closed questions, but rather opened to the formulation of questionings on the part of the student. At the same time, the suggestion of the theme of discussion employed the modal verb *may*, indicating an invitation to reflection.

Many other strategies were employed by the Institute of Education in the dissemination of the written material: the creation in 1934 of the journal *Arquivos do Instituto de Educação*, focused on the publication of works and investigations about teaching and school organization, carried out by teachers and students; the pecuniary incentive, incorporated to the salary, offered to the teachers who had their books approved by the Institute’s technical council; and the purchase of books in Brazil and abroad, to update the library (Vidal, 2001). To these strategies, we can associate initiatives that permeated the work at the institution, such as the participation of M. B. Lourenço Filho as general director of the Institute of Education, and in the direction of its Teachers School, while also coordinating the *Bibliotheca de Educação* (Education Library) collection for Edições Melhoramentos publishing house.

Let us now see how these strategies worked. As already pointed out, John Dewey’s *Vida e educação* had been published in 1930 by Edições Melhoramentos and included an introductory essay by Anísio Teixeira. The library of the Institute of Education had two copies of the book, which was the second most adopted book in the programs of the various disciplines of the Teachers School, after Lourenço Filho’s *Introdução ao estudo da Escola Nova* (Introduction to The Study of New School) (Vidal, 2001). “The

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<sup>23</sup> Interview conducted with Iva Waisberg Bonow on 2 February 1995 in Rio de Janeiro. From the original: *Havia poucos [trabalhos em português]. Nisso apareceu o sistema do mimeógrafo. Tá entendendo? Os textos que eram traduzidos para o português por diversas pessoas... e as traduções eram texto de... para os alunos. Você nunca ouviu isto?* (translated by Jesse Rebello).

<sup>24</sup> CPDOC/FGV, AT/IE, pi 1932.00.00, doc I-17, photogram 0743. The digitalized document was not found on the website.

<sup>25</sup> From the original: *Temos examinado nas três aulas anteriores os problemas geraes da finalidade da filosofia da educação, da vida [ilegível] processo e da vida moral, justa ou feliz. Vamos, agora, examinar o problema da pessoa humana. Como ella se fórma. - Natureza da sua conducta ou comportamento. A discussão poderá visar o thema: EDUCAÇÃO E PERSONALIDADE HUMANA. Leia a exposição junto. Formule suas duvidas ou questões.* (translated by Jesse Rebello).



Meaning and Purpose of Philosophy of Education” was published with a few changes in the last pages of *Educação progressiva* by Anísio Teixeira, released, as already pointed out, by Cia. Editora Nacional in 1933. Two copies were also incorporated into the library, and the work was included in the programs of the disciplines. Both books were available at bookstores at the time Teixeira offered the course “Education And The Modern Spirit. They were, therefore, available both for purchase and for consultation by the students. These works were possibly used not only in the course but also later in the professional lives of the educators who graduated from the Institute (and from other schools).

Haydée Gallo Coelho, who concluded the teacher training program at the Institute of Education in 1934 and worked as a teacher in its primary school from her graduation to her retirement, wrote in her notebook in 1939:

Anísio Teixeira says at the end of his book *Educação Progressiva*: “Teachers today have to practice the philosopher’s saying: nothing human is alien to me.

They have to be students of the most perplexing modern problems, they have to be students of civilization, they have to be students of society, and they have to be students of Man, they have indeed to be philosophers.”<sup>26</sup>

After reading that excerpt during the interview conducted in 1999, she exclaimed: “That is Anísio Teixeira!” The identification of Teixeira with the selected paragraph was as interesting as the contents of that fragment. We go back not just to the typed text of the opening conference, finally published with some alterations in the book we are focusing on, but also to the terms of the course offered in 1934—Man in Society—and to some of the organizing statements of the classes. By extracting that fragment and identifying it to Teixeira, Haydée Coelho was perhaps pointing out aspects frequently observed in Teixeira’s teaching activity.

Corroborating the concern already mentioned with stimulating reflection and an active attitude of students towards knowledge, Maria Violeta Vilas Boas, another member of the 1934 class and principal of the primary school of the Institute of Education in the 1940s, described in an interview a particular event: an assessment situation.

Anísio Teixeira was my teacher in philosophy of education. He gave the cleverest exam I have ever seen. It was a test of the coherence of statements. You see, it had multiple-choice questions. When I left the classroom, I remember that a group of colleagues asked me, “What do you think of it?” “I don’t know what I think.” That is to say, “I don’t know what he’ll think. I know I did what I thought I should do.” In the end, I was right, because he judged only the coherence of the answers... the coherence that we showed, because the questions were

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<sup>26</sup> Interview conducted with Haydée Gallo Coelho on 23 April 1999 in Rio de Janeiro. From the original: *Diz Anísio Teixeira no final do seu livro Educação Progressiva: “O professor de hoje tem que usar a legenda do filósofo: nada que é humano não me é estranho. Tem que ser estudioso dos mais embaraçosos problemas modernos, tem que ser estudioso da civilização, tem que ser estudioso da sociedade e tem que ser estudioso do Homem, tem que ser, enfim, filósofo”* (translated by Jesse Rebello).

formulated in terms of options, and you had to choose between them. And either the options matched each other, or they didn't. Perhaps I shouldn't say that, but four of my colleagues and I became known as "the big five," because we received the five highest grades. Teixeira was brainy, one of those people you don't come across often.<sup>27</sup>

Teixeira's teaching practice seemed to stimulate the reflective attitude of the students, just like it stimulated self-critique in the exercises conducted by the Teaching Practice section. In this sense, it matched the general orientation of the studies at the Institute of Education. In Helena Silva de Olivera's testimony about the classes in the Secondary School, the concern with active teaching was reiterated.

So, Carlos Werneck brought a water snake, so that it would lay its eggs and from the eggs, the little snakes would be born. The principal at the time, Lourenço Filho, was scared to death. He was terrified. He used to bring a frog so that we could see how it was. When certain parts of the frog were poked, its defenses liberated that kind of poison. So we had to protect ourselves. The classes were as alive as they could be! There were no dead things. There was one skeleton. All the bones there, all organized nicely, so that when the exam came we had to say the names of all those bones. Some of the teachers used to say: 'They are going to be teachers, not doctors, why all this?' In hygiene [class] we also learned the reproduction of microbes very fast; if we took something that was deteriorating, we would follow it on the microscope. Everything was like that.<sup>28</sup>

Even so, Teixeira's practice displayed aspects that distinguished it from those of other teachers at the Institute of Education, as Iva Bonow's formula *trifles and pearls* seems to indicate. Emerging as differences were the open procedure in dealing with the

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<sup>27</sup> Interview conducted with Maria Violeta Coutinho Villas Boas on 26 September 1994 in Rio de Janeiro. From the original: *Anísio Teixeira foi meu professor de Filosofia da Educação. Ele fez a prova mais inteligente que eu já vi. Era uma prova de coerência de afirmações. Eram questões de múltipla escolha, está entendendo? Quando eu saí, eu me lembro que um grupo de colegas me perguntou "o que você achou?" "Eu não sei que achei." Ou melhor. "Eu não sei que ele vai achar. Eu sei que eu fiz o que eu achava que devia ser." E depois eu tinha razão, porque ele fez a correção pela coerência das respostas... pela coerência que nós tivemos, porque as questões eram formuladas por opções e você escolhia. Essas opções batiam ou não batiam umas com as outras. Eu talvez não devesse mencionar isso, mas eu e mais quatro colegas ficamos sendo chamadas de "big five". Porque fomos as cinco primeiras de notas. O Anísio era uma cabeça, uma daquelas pessoas que não se repetem* (translated by Jesse Rebello).

<sup>28</sup> Interview conducted with Helena Silva de Oliveira on 8 July 1994 in São José dos Campos (SP). From the original: *Então, o Carlos Werneck levou uma cobra d'água, para nascerem os ovos e dos ovos nascerem as cobrinhas. O diretor, na ocasião, ficou morrendo de medo, que era o Lourenço Filho. Ele ficou apavorado. Ele levava sapo para nos vermos como era o sapo. Quando apertava determinadas, partes a defesa do sapo em soltar aquele veneno de defesa. Então a gente tinha que proteger. Eram o mais possível aulas vivas, tá? Não era coisa morta. Tinha um esqueleto. Os ossos lá todos armados direitinho para nós lá na hora de exame saber dizer o nome daqueles ossos todos. Havia uns professores que diziam eles não vão ser professores... não vão ser médicas, para que isso? Não é? Em Higiene também nos aprendíamos a reprodução de micróbios com uma rapidez, se nos botássemos uma coisa que se estava deteriorando, nos acompanhávamos pelo microscópio. Era tudo assim* (translated by Jesse Rebello).

class's themes, the constant dialogue of theory and daily life problems, and the incentive for free thought more than the observation of students inside the classroom.

## Questions of Method

To accept the challenge of discussing past school practices, one has to face the delicate issue of the sources. Circumscribing the possibility of the enterprise to the gathering of testimonies imposes a limit to the research: it can only be conducted for the history of the present time. The recourse to written sources affords the widening of the investigation towards more distant times. In this sense, dealing with programs and letting oneself be touched by the materiality of the objects employed in the conduct of the works of the discipline, such as the exercises and, in this case, the mimeographed texts, yields the broadening of the documentation.

Also, including reflections about the narrativity of the written documents, such as those developed by Arlette Farge (1989) for the Judiciary Archive, gives new perspectives to the analysis. Her assertions when arguing that “the archive maybe does not inform the truth, but is *about* it”<sup>29</sup> (p. 40), or when she says that “phrases are also *events* because they are developed to make someone believe”<sup>30</sup> (p. 99), or still “because they hark back (...) to usual forms of communication where language is also in correspondence with cultures and with the personal and particular knowledges”<sup>31</sup> (p. 103) are particularly pertinent. Her reflection invites us to revisit the written record not just in search of what it has omitted, but especially in search of what it did tell, with particular attention to how the narrative was composed. The premise relies on the understanding that forms of communication also inform about social practices (and, in our case, school practices).

But, although oral sources are not the single resource for analysis, they should not be neglected if and when their use is possible. We must use them with the necessary precautions, already mentioned in the Introduction, which I recall here based on the dialogue between the object of study and the testimonies cited.

The testimonies used in the present article were given by Teixeira's former students that declared being influenced by his teaching practice, seeing him as an exemplary teacher. The discourses, therefore, are caught in a web of praise for the qualities of that educator.

These speeches also refer to a specific moment in the life and professional trajectories of the interviewees. The testimonies dealt with their preparatory courses for

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<sup>29</sup> From the original: *L'archive ne dit peut-être pas la vérité, mais elle edit de la vérité* (translated by Jesse Rebello).

<sup>30</sup> From the original phrases *sont aussi des 'événements' parce qu'elles sont là pour faire croire* (translated by Jesse Rebello).

<sup>31</sup> From the original: *Parce que cela renvoie (...) à des formes de communication usuelles où le langage est aussi en correspondance avec des cultures et des savoirs tout à fait particuliers et personnels* (translated by Jesse Rebello).

the teaching profession, the initial landmark of their teaching activity, and probably an identity milestone of professional activity, both concerning the work in the classroom, and the occupations they took on in other spheres of state and national education (in which they also had Teixeira's personal and intellectual company).

Haydée Gallo described the importance of the Institute of Education in her professional trajectory with the following words:

So, I did the first year of the gymnasium there. Before I finished, in October, they opened the Normal School on Mariz e Barros St., and we were all transferred. The school was transferred. Then I had that wonderful time, at that Institute. It was ... later I ... finished my course there. I was invited to work. You already know that; I've told you before. I was invited alongside ... a small group ... a group that later achieved some prominence in the field of ... of teaching techniques, teaching practice. This whole thing and ... the first classes that we gave were followed by ... by the teachers and all. Then, they invited those that they felt were more adapted, or in better conditions to teach at that school, which was a model school. Now, can you imagine that wonderful building, all those brand-new classrooms, the desks? Everything wonderful. Good. So, we all went there. I finished my course and stayed there. Then I was invited to work there. Me and a small group. We worked ... the first class they gave me ... was the first series. When the principal, Orminda Marques ... you see my luck, I had all those people. Orminda Marques was the principal of the primary course. She ... invited me ... one day for a meeting. I went without knowing what it was for. It was to tell us that we had been ... that Dr. Lourenço Filho had indicated the ... best evaluated in teaching practice, to teach at the Institute. Thank God I was in that group.<sup>32</sup>

The testimonies also referred to a time consecrated in the educational field and in the studies about teacher education, particularly in Rio de Janeiro, as the founding era of a new conception of the teaching profession. It was the first time that teacher formation

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<sup>32</sup> Interview conducted with Haydée Gallo Coelho on 23 April 1999 in Rio de Janeiro. From the original: *Então, eu fiz o primeiro ano ginásial ali. Antes de terminar, portanto em outubro, inauguraram a Escola Normal, na rua Mariz e Barros e nós todas fomos pra lá. A escola mudou-se. Então, passou aquela maravilha, aquele Instituto. Ali foi... pra adiante eu... acabei meu curso lá. Fui convidada pra trabalhar. Isso você já sabe, eu já tinha te contado antes. Fui convidada com a... com um pequeno grupo... grupo que se destacou mais na parte de... de técnicas de ensino, prática de ensino. Essa coisa toda e... as primeiras aulas que nós demos que foram assistidas pelos... pelos professores e tal. Então, eles convidavam as que achavam que estavam mais adaptadas ou com melhores condições de lecionar naquela escola, que era a escola modelo. Agora você imagina aquele prédio maravilhoso, aquelas salas todas novinhas, as carteiras. Tudo maravilhoso. Bom. Então, fomos nós pra lá. Eu acabei o meu curso e fiquei lá. Depois fui convidada pra trabalhar lá. Eu e um grupinho pequeno. Ficamos trabalhando... a primeira turma logo que me deram... foi primeira série. Quando a diretora, dona Orminda Marques... Você vê a sorte, peguei essa gente toda. D. Orminda Marques era diretora do primário. Ela... me convidou... um dia, pra uma reunião. Eu fui sem saber pra que era. Era pra dizer que nós tínhamos sido... o dr. Lourenço Filho tinha indicado as... melhores notas na prática de ensino, foram convidadas pra trabalhar no Instituto. Eu graças a Deus estava nesse grupo* (translated by Jesse Rebello).

was raised to the level of higher education. This is how Maria Violeta Villas Boas evaluated her experience at the Institute:

The creation of the Institute of Education was a true revolution in Normal schooling in the state. We might say, in the country. Although São Paulo also had an Institute of Education. It was not the first Normal School. The first Normal School was in ... even in the north-east. And later there was a Normal School here at the court. And it was actually more recent than a school that belonged to the state of Rio. Well, but Normal School, yes. Now, the Institute of Education was a revolution, and why was that? Because it created a new structure and new dynamics that imparted a level and a quality of teaching different from what was happening before. Because before that the Normal School was undoubtedly very useful, but it was ... it had little in the way of foundations, and did not go into the heart of the techniques and processes of teaching. It was something that stayed somewhat on the surface. It was ... a necessary contribution, good in a certain way because nothing else was done. But in the end, it didn't fulfill the requisites ... necessary for the future primary teacher. But not the Institute. The Institute gave a new dimension, both in the sense of a greater wealth of curriculum and the treatment of this curriculum and of the disciplines that comprised it.<sup>33</sup>

Finally, the testimonies were also marked by the situation of the interview and by the present that it created, being conducted in the dialogue established with a researcher from São Paulo interested in the experience carried out at the Institute of Education in Rio de Janeiro. The reference to the Institute of Education in São Paulo betrayed the double subjectivity of Maria Violeta's speech. Praising the Rio de Janeiro proposal and the characters associated with it was surely one of the recurring themes of her report. But the position of teacher of history of education at the School of Education of the State University of Rio de Janeiro (UERJ), which she had at the time of the interview, also made itself felt. This explains the need in her speech to go back to the early nineteenth century, the moment of creation of the first normal schools in the country. The interview found Maria Violeta when she had just concluded the writing of the monograph *Resgate da memória do Instituto de Educação/RJ de 1930/1970* (Rescuing

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<sup>33</sup> Interview conducted with Maria Violeta Coutinho Villas Boas on 26 September 1994 in Rio de Janeiro. From the original: *A criação do Instituto de Educação foi uma verdadeira revolução no ensino normal no estado. Digamos, no país. Embora, São Paulo também tivesse o Instituto de Educação. Não foi a primeira Escola Normal, não. A primeira Escola Normal foi no... até no nordeste. E depois houve uma Escola Normal aqui na corte. E, inclusive, foi posterior a uma que foi do estado do Rio. Bom, mas Escola Normal, sim. Agora, Instituto de Educação foi uma revolução por quê? No ensino normal. Porque ela criou uma nova estrutura e nova dinâmica que imprimiu um nível e uma qualidade de ensino diferente do que vinha acontecendo. Porque antes a Escola Normal era, sem dúvida nenhuma utilíssima, mas ela era... pequena fundamentação e não entrava no âmago das técnicas e processos de ensino. Era uma coisa que ficava um pouco na superfície. Era um... era uma contribuição necessária, de uma certa maneira boa, porque não se fazia outra coisa. Mas, na verdade, não preenchia os requisitos a... necessários ao futuro professor primário. E o Instituto, não. O Instituto deu uma nova dimensão, tanto no sentido de uma riqueza maior de currículo, como de tratamento desse currículo e das disciplinas que o compunham (translated by Jesse Rebello).*



The Memory of The Institute of Education/RJ – 1930/1970) as part of her work at the Group of Studies and Research in Permanent Education (NEPEP) at UERJ.

Nevertheless, we should not suppose that the testimonies were untrue and that different views among the educators involved in the project of the Institute of Education in Rio de Janeiro were not put forward therein. In the reports, differences were clearly visible. For example, Iva Bonow, when comparing two teachers, M. B. Lourenço and Anísio Teixeira, said:

Because even psychology I learned with Dr. Teixeira, despite having been a student of Lourenço Filho for three years in a row. Because with Lourenço we had the contents of the curriculum, what was in the program, you understand? So, they were systematic studies. But with Teixeira ... Teixeira was a thinker. Admirable.<sup>34</sup>

The clarity of the problems that permeate the production of the oral narrative only singularize the work upon it, highlighting the peculiarities of its use. Oral narratives do not aim to ensure the precision of historical facts, such as dates, which are possibly more accurate in written records. Even in the latter, different sources sometimes point to contrasting information, which require clarification. The testimonies aim at recording the meanings with which the historical subjects constructed the narrative, and in so doing constructed themselves. In the words of Portelli (1981, p. 100), “what makes oral history unique and necessary is its plot,” in other words, “how the narrator arranges the materials to tell a story.”

## Final Comments

Anne-Marie Chartier (2000), quoting Bourdieu: “It is not easy to speak about the practice in any form other than the negative”;<sup>35</sup> and Michel de Certeau, stating that “when going up, down, and around the practices, something always escapes, something that cannot be said or taught, but that must rather be practiced”;<sup>36</sup> both ask themselves about the possibility of historical research treating school practices scientifically. They question the way of carrying out investigations that at the same time break into the school black box and avoid analyses that neither slide into anachronism, conceiving the past in identity with the present—deducing former school procedures from contemporary school practices—nor draw support from mere empirism, painstakingly describing classroom situations.

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<sup>34</sup> Interview conducted with Iva Waisberg Bonow on 2 February 1995 in Rio de Janeiro. From the original: *Porque até Psicologia eu aprendi com o Dr. Anísio, apesar de ter sido aluna por três anos consecutivos com o Lourenço Filho. Porque o Lourenço, a matéria constava do currículo, do programa. Compreende? Então, eram estudos sistemáticos. Já o Anísio, o Anísio era um pensador. Admirável* (translated by Jesse Rebello).

<sup>35</sup> From the original: *não é fácil falar da prática de outra forma que não de maneira negativa* (translated by Jesse Rebello)

<sup>36</sup> From the original: *ao subir, descer, girar ao redor das práticas, alguma coisa escapa sem cessar, que não pode ser dita nem ensinada, mas deve ser praticada* (translated by Jesse Rebello).

We intend to highlight elements that help to outline a methodology of research on the school practices and to overcome the premise of the school as a known reality. Anne-Marie Chartier invests in a direction of work that, beyond building lists of the invariants of the *school form* (Vincent, 1980) and delving into the structural repertoire of this *school grammar* (Tyack and Cuban, 1999), allows the description of the *ordinary doings* (De Certeau, 1994), shifting the attention of observations towards the speakable, towards the modalities of saying or writing.

To be sure, this is a delicate enterprise and perhaps one not particularly prone to success. Because of that, this text took on the nature of an essay, both in what concerns the narrativity of its construction and the methodological exercise of analysis itself: repeated approximations to the object. However, it is perhaps this exploratory character of the text that may contribute to the study of past school practices.

Understanding teacher education within the wide cycle of individual and collective experience requires not only insisting on the study of the importance of institutions in the dissemination of knowledge and practices and the ascendancy of teachers, as reported here by the interviewees, but also being interested in investigating experiences along the school trajectory and the exercise of the teaching profession. In the first case, the warnings of E. P. Thompson (2002) about the differences between adult pupils and children, emphasizing that the former bring to the pedagogical relationship their previous school experiences, seem to open still further fields for research, extending to the whole of schooling the construction of a teaching *ethos*.

In the latter case, the research must let itself be touched by the observation of rites and values associated with the teaching profession, which constitute an *invented tradition* (Hobsbawm, 1997), constantly re-created as support for the teaching action. Here, the positive models of teachers constitute and are constituted by rules shared by the community, investing them with certain provisional identity, despite being understood as immemorial, which reinforces the idea of founding landmarks associated in general with a perception of the teaching profession as immutable.

These procedures assume particular importance in the analysis developed in this article since it explores a model school—the Institute of Education of Rio de Janeiro—and an intellectual of great prestige—Anísio Teixeira. They are perhaps effects of what Portelli (1981) denominated *plot*. Because the teaching profession is exercised as an oral practice and the professional identities are constructed (also) in the daily experiences of teachers within or without the school, and the exchange of good and bad experiences.

The representation of the teaching practice itself, as well as that of model teachers as stable, plays the role of guaranteeing the perpetuity of the individual and collective action of the teaching profession, irrespective of the changes that they undergo as a consequence of the appropriations produced throughout one's personal and professional life. At the same time, they reveal the signs of nostalgia, as speculated by Hargreaves and Moore (2004). Iva Bonow's testimony, included as an epigraph to this article, brings these issues together: "Dr. Teixeira was an intellectual model for me. This



does not mean that I am like him, or that my classes are ... no."<sup>37</sup> After all, we are dealing with the distinct temporalities of life (and of memory) and with the various subjects of the living (and of the remembering).

It is worth insisting, however, that the studies on teachers' practices and models of teachers cannot be restricted to the history of the present time. In this sense, the written (and visual) documents are relevant. For the present article, both the texts published by Anísio Teixeira and the records of his classes and programs gathered from CPDOC were particularly useful. This case reinforces the need to preserve the marks of this art of teaching which, despite being invaluable in the formation of the school subjects, is evanescent in our archives. Its survival, however, may give testimony to the essential activity of being a teacher, and raise the question of how these subjects left a significant mark in the school trajectory of their students. Indeed, this was the main purpose of this article, which had its writing shaped by the vestiges left by Anísio Teixeira in his teaching and intellectual activity.

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<sup>37</sup> Interview conducted with Iva Waisberg Bonow on 2 February 1995 in Rio de Janeiro.

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