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Artigo

“[...] THE BRAZILIAN SO KNOWN AMONG US”: THE CIRCULATION OF LOURENÇO FILHO WORKS IN THE LIBRARIES OF MEXICO (1933 - 1963)

Rony Rei do Nascimento Silva*

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ABSTRACT

The text aims to analyze the circulation of the works of Lourenço Filho in Mexican libraries, in the period between 1933 and 1963. It is possible to affirm that the presence of these works in Mexico is indicative that they were part of the collections destined for the formation of normal schoolteachers, Primary Education leaders and school administrators, especially for offering readers principles of educational psychology, rural teacher training, experiences in Brazil and an overview of educational systems on a global scale. It can be concluded that the circulation of Lourenço Filho works in Mexican libraries is due to a network of relationships that he established with Mexican intellectuals, mediated by UNESCO and Crefal.

Keywords: Lourenço Filho, Mexico, UNESCO, Crefal.

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“[...] EL BRASILEÑO TAN CONOCIDO ENTRE NOSOTROS”: A CIRCULAÇÃO DAS OBRAS DE LOURENÇO FILHO NAS BIBLIOTECAS DO MÉXICO (1933 - 1963)

RESUMO

Este texto tem por objetivo analisar a circulação das obras de Lourenço Filho nas bibliotecas mexicanas, entre 1933 – 1963. Analisa-se os títulos *Tests ABC – de verificación de la madurez necesaria para el aprendizaje de la lectura y escritura*, *The training of rural school teachers* e *Educacion comparada*. A presença dessas obras no México indica que fizeram parte dos acervos destinados à formação de professores normalistas, líderes de Educação Fundamental e gestores escolares, por oferecer aos leitores princípios da psicologia da educação, experiências de formação de professores rurais no Brasil e um panorama dos sistemas de ensino em escala global. Trata-se de um trabalho histórico com metodologia da História Conectada, centrada na pesquisa documental enquanto fontes de pesquisa. Pode-se concluir que a circulação das obras de Lourenço Filho nas bibliotecas mexicanas, se deve a uma rede de relações estabelecida por Lourenço Filho com intelectuais mexicanos, mediada pela Unesco e Crefal.

Palavras-chave: Lourenço Filho, México, Unesco, Crefal.

“[...] EL BRASILEÑO TAN CONOCIDO ENTRE NOSOTROS”: LA CIRCULACIÓN DE LAS OBRAS DE LOURENÇO FILHO EN LAS BIBLIOTECAS DE MÉXICO (1933 - 1963)

RESUMEN

El texto tiene como objetivo analizar la circulación de las obras de Lourenço Filho en las bibliotecas mexicanas, en el período entre 1933 y 1963. Es posible afirmar que la presencia de estas obras en México es indicativa de que fueron parte de las colecciones destinadas a la formación de maestros de escuela normal, líderes de Educación Primaria y administradores de escuelas, especialmente por ofrecer a los lectores principios de psicología educativa, formación docente rural, experiencias en Brasil y una visión general de los sistemas educativos a escala global. Se puede concluir que la circulación de las obras de Lourenço Filho en las bibliotecas mexicanas se debe a una red de relaciones que el estableció con intelectuales mexicanos, mediada por la Unesco y Crefal.

Palabras clave: Lourenço Filho, México, UNESCO, Crefal.

"[...] LE BRÉSILIEN TELLEMENT CONNU PARMI NOUS": LA CIRCULATION DES ŒUVRES DE LOURENÇO FILHO DANS LES BIBLIOTHÈQUES DU MEXIQUE (1933 - 1963)

RÉSUMÉ

Le texte vise à analyser la circulation des œuvres de Lourenço Filho dans les bibliothèques mexicaines, entre 1933 et 1963. Il est possible d'affirmer que la présence de ces œuvres au Mexique indique qu'elles faisaient partie des collections destinées à la formation des enseignants des écoles normales, des responsables de l'enseignement primaire et des administrateurs scolaires, en particulier pour offrir aux lecteurs des principes de psychologie de l'éducation, la formation des enseignants ruraux, des expériences au Brésil et un aperçu des systèmes éducatifs à l'échelle mondiale. On peut conclure que la circulation des œuvres de Lourenço Filho dans les bibliothèques mexicaines est due à un réseau de relations qu'il a établi avec des intellectuels mexicains, médiatisé par l'UNESCO et Crefal.

Mots-clés: Lourenço Filho, Mexique, UNESCO, Crefal.

INTRODUCTION¹

Lourenço Filho, the Brazilian so well known among us for his magnificent books spread. (EL NACIONAL, 1950, p. 3).

The epigraph that opens this text was taken from the Mexican newspaper *El Nacional*, in 1950 and is emblematic for the unfolding of a complex historical plot marked by the circulation of books, ideas, subjects, practices, citations, references, translations and travels. The reference made to Manuel Bergström Lourenço Filho's books as "magnificent" is signed by the Mexican educator Jaime Torres Bodet, who at the time was director-general of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco)², which gives legitimacy to the production of the Brazilian educator.

This text³, therefore, aims to analyze the circulation of works by Lourenço Filho in Mexican libraries, in the period between 1933 - 1963. It starts from the initial assumption that the presence of these works in Mexico is indicative that they were part of the collections intended for the training of normalist teachers, Elementary Education leaders and school administrators, and this is due, in part, to the good relationship of this Brazilian educator with the intellectual elite of his time and Unesco.

In this context, it was published in Mexico the title *Tests ABC – the verification of the maturity needed for the apprenticeship of reading and writing*, in which Lourenço Filho (1933) offered readers the principles of

¹ The translation of this text was supported by the Capes/proex: nº 03/2021 CAPES/PROEX.

² Jaime Torres Bodet he was general-director of UNESCO (1948 – 1952) and headed the Secretariat of Public Education of Mexico twice: 1st period (December 23rd 1943 to November 30th 1946, during the presidency of Manuel Ávila Camacho); 2nd period (December 1st 1958 to November 30th 1964, during the presidency of Adolfo López Mateos).

³ This text stems from a Doctoral Thesis and a research project that aim to analyze the diffusion of school libraries aimed at teacher training in Latin America and invest in issues that bring identity to the movement of creation of these libraries. The starting point is the set of educational reforms and the creation of school libraries undertaken in Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Colombia and Mexico, in the 19th and early 20th centuries, to understand the ways in which each country appropriated the cultural models in circulation.

educational psychology. In *The training of rural school teachers* (1953), the author presented the experiences of training rural teachers carried out in Brazil and, finally, in *Comparative Education* (1963), constructed an overview of education systems on a global scale.

The works were found respectively in the Library “Lucas Ortiz” from the Center for Information, Research and Culture (Cediic) of the Regional Cooperation Center for Adult Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (Crefal), Historical Archive of the Meritorious and Centennial Normal School of the State of San Luis Potosí (BECENE - SLP) and in the University Research Institute and Education (IISUE) of the Historical Archive of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (AHUNAM).

Throughout this text, it can be noted how extensive and multiple Lourenço Filho's production is. The scope of his studies is evident, which are diversified into literacy booklets for children and adults, series of graded readings, manuals for teacher training; even more, studies on diverse subjects, such as comparative education, “[...] primary education, teacher training, rural schools, psychometrics, psychotechnics, trajectory of psychology in Brazil. In view of the repercussion, some studies are being translated into French, English, Spanish and Arabic” (MONARCHA, 2018, p. 19). His body of work was systematized by Carlos Monarcha and Ruy Lourenço Filho (2001).

In relation to the theoretical-methodological options, this text is guided by the assumptions of connected history. This historiographical reference consists of a theory/method that establishes connections through the opening of dialogue. As pointed out by Prado (2005), the expression “connected stories” was coined by Sanjay Subrahmanyam, Indian historian based in France, who challenged the traditional perspective of European historiography on the Asian world. Serge Gruzinski (2003), in defense of this interpretative matrix, he has emphasized the incapacity of traditional history to identify the specificities, remaining the division between the different worlds. Therefore, for this author, the task of the historian

[...] may be to exhume the historical connections or, rather, to be more exact, to explore the *connected histories* if we adopt the expression proposed by the historian of the Portuguese empire, Sanjay Subrahmanyam. Which implies that histories can only be multiple – instead of speaking of a single, unified History with a capital “h”. This perspective also allows the observation that these histories are linked and that they communicate with each other. Faced with realities that must be studied from different aspects, the historian has to become a kind of electrician in charge of reestablishing the international and intercontinental connections that national historiographies and cultural histories have disconnected or hidden, blocking up their respective borders. (GRUZINSKI, 2003, p. 323).

In this sense, such a view seeks to break with the limitations of national borders and ethnocentrism. Insofar as it is up to the historian to re-establish “the international and intercontinental connections that national historiographies have disconnected or hidden” (SOUZA, 2016, p. 842). The metaphor of the electrician, in charge of reestablishing international and intercontinental connections, is used to connect a web of relationships about the circulation of Lourenço Filho's works in Mexico not as a coincidence, but as an intention. However, operating with Connected History “imposes limits and advantages to the historian” (SOARES; PLESSIM, 2019, p. 546), that needs epistemological vigilance, as it is subject to risks and traps that are covertly scattered along the paths and trails opened up by this historical doing. Even knowing the dangers that a study of this nature offers, the risks are assumed.

From this, we formulate some questions: What is the place occupied by the works of Lourenço Filho in Mexican libraries? Why and what were the conditions of production and translation of his works in Mexico? How was the relationship between this Brazilian educator and the Mexican Jaime Torres Bodet established? How did Unesco and the Centro Regional de Educación Fundamental para la América Latina [Crefal] propagate these works?

“BE HERE, BE THERE”: UNESCO AND THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOURENÇO FILHO AND JAIME TORRES BODET

Lourenço Filho (2004), in his book *Comparative Education*, spoke about the conditions of creation of Unesco. This institution was created at the end of the historically known “Preparatory Conference”, held from November 1st to 16th 1945, at the Institute of Civil Engineers in London, as a specialized agency of the UN. With the purpose of advancing, through educational, scientific and cultural relations among the peoples of the world: “[...] the objectives of international peace, and the common welfare of humanity, for which the Organization was established of the United Nations, and which are proclaimed in its Letter.” (UNESCO, 1998, p. 12).

Around Unesco, which was soon established, and later came to have its permanent headquarters in Paris, “[...] the purposes of studying Comparative Education and those of propulsion of international political action, through education, science and culture.” (LOURENÇO FILHO, 2004, p. 28). However, it is worth noting that as Unesco emerged after a great conflict, the representatives of the allied countries, realizing the importance and scope of intellectual cooperation between peoples, decided to create an organization to be a system of “[...] **supervision** and **alert**, in defense of peace, solidarity and justice” (UNESCO, 1998, p. 12, author's emphasis). Thus, the foundation “[...] of Unesco was of great importance for the standardization of educational projects throughout the world, and the dissemination of a model of rural education in particular.” (CERECEDO, 2013, p. 2). In this interpretation, Unesco was concerned with projecting its image as a symbol of peace, national and global security.

In the case of Brazil, at the same time, the Brazilian Institute of Education, Science and Culture was created in Rio de Janeiro in 1946 (IBECC) as Unesco National Commission. In 1952, Lourenço Filho was elected president of the IBECC and, on that occasion, Jaime Torres Bodet wrote a letter to

congratulate him on winning the new position. Lourenço Filho received letters from subjects linked to international organizations presenting, for example, opinions on their productions, general reports, invitations to participate in events, give conferences and on other issues related to rural education. In the contents of Bodet's correspondence one reads:

I have the honor to thank you for receiving your letter of May 3rd, IBECC/7, in which you informed me of your election as President of the Brazilian Institute of Education, Science and Culture.

I would like to warmly congratulate you on your appointment to these high positions, to which your competence and dedication to the cause of UNESCO made special mention. I look forward to your presence at the helm of the IBECC, which I am sure will allow us to establish ever closer ties with your country.

(BODET, 1952, p. 1)⁴.

It must be considered that the correspondence exchanged between Jaime Torres Bodet and Lourenço Filho reveals the network of relationships established between subjects and, consequently, the institutional and diplomatic relations that involve Brazil and Mexico, given the tone of proximity between them.

The gateway to the development of this text were the two trips Lourenço Filho to Mexico, inserted in a movement of ideas and subjects (politicians, educators and intellectuals) in conferences, congresses, meetings, committees, printed and guiding documents of educational policies, carried out by international organizations.

This educator traveled to Mexico on two occasions, fulfilling an institutional work plan, respectively at the II General Conference of Unesco, held

⁴ Mr. President, I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your letter of May 3th, nº IBECC/7, by which you kindly informed me of your election as President of the Brazilian Institute for Education, science and culture. I would like to warmly congratulate you on your appointment to these high offices, to which your competence and your devotion to the cause of Unesco have particularly designated you. I am delighted to be able to count on your presence at the head of the IBECC, which will allow us, I am sure, to establish ever closer ties with your country. (BODET, 1952, p. 1)

at the Palace of Fine Arts in Mexico City and at the National School of Teachers, in 1947 and at the Meeting of the Committee of the Inter-American Cultural Council, held in Mexico City, between September 10th and 25th, 1951.

THE ABC TESTS AT CREFAL LIBRARY

The background to this story lies in Mexico's past, which developed other experiences in the field of adult education, which resulted in the creation of the Secretary of Public Education (SEP) in 1921 (MIRANDA, 2014). With the social tonic, a model of education was built in this country, with especially revolutionary characteristics⁵, from 1910. These historical conditions formed the basis for the construction of rural schools, cultural missions, rural normal schools and school farms, based on the concept of fundamental education - newly created, at the time, by Unesco, especially with the creation of the first Regional Center for Fundamental Education for Latin America [Crefal]⁶, in Pátzcuaro, Michoacán, México.

Crefal was created a few months after the Elsinor Conference, during the IV Unesco General Conference, and its emergence followed a tradition: “[...] along the lines of Unesco and the builders of a world government focused on the achievement of human rights, which has representatives in all countries. They work for the same thing, they go in the same line” (DÍAZ, 2020, p. 25). This center opened its doors between May 9th 1951 and June of the same year, with the presence of Miguel Alemán Valdés (President of the Republic), Jaime Torres Bodet (General-Director of Unesco) and Lucas Ortiz Benítez (prime Director of

⁵In this regard, check Peres & Pérez (2009).

⁶This center has undergone several changes of paradigm and nomenclature, from Regional Center for Fundamental Education for Latin America (Crefal) came to be called Regional Center for Community Development in Latin America, in 1961, Regional Center for Functional Literacy for Rural Areas of Latin America, in 1969, Regional Center for Adult Education and Functional Literacy to Latin America, in 1974, and, finally, Regional Cooperation Center for Adult Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (Crefal), from October 1990 to the present day.

Crefal), among other personalities. On land granted by Lázaro Cárdenas, the then president of Mexico, Crefal settled in the city of Pátzcuaro, that “[...] it offered ideal conditions as an ‘experimentation zone’ as the city was circumscribed by rural indigenous communities with a diversity of urgent problems” (RODRÍGUEZ, 2020, p. 11).

In the beginning of the center, “[...] with its Latin Americanist vision and its origin involved in the revolutionary social movements of rural teachers” (DÍAZ, 2020, p. 23), it was basically aimed at helping Latin American governments meet two urgent needs: providing training to teachers and leaders of Elementary Education and preparing materials adapted to the needs, resources and cultural levels of communities, especially rural ones. Mexico's historical background created the conditions for installing Crefal in that country.

Crefal's network was expanded with four more centers of the same type, located in Africa, South Asia, South South Asia and in the Far and Middle East (Egypt, Thailand, Ceylon [now Sri Lanka] and Korea), establishing with them a program 12 years to eradicate illiteracy worldwide. Jaime Torres Bodet's idea was to promote at Unesco a network of Elementary Education centers in rural areas of Latin America. However, “unfortunately, the only one that worked in the 1960s was the one in Mexico.” (MIRANDA, 2014, p. 111).

Crefal's objectives were clear, however, it was necessary to formulate a concept of Fundamental Education and, thus, this concept was formulated within Unesco and widely debated with Crefal, especially in its publications and seminars. Unesco sought to formulate this concept in a considerable number of observations, without, however, departing from a theoretical definition. This is categorically stated in the first Unesco monograph on the subject, in which the term was adopted by Unesco: “[...] to cover a wide number of educational activities that, however, present from one country to another and from one region to another, great similarity in terms of the problems focused and the goals pursued” (CREFAL, 1952, p. 14).

In this context, Crefal trained teachers to teach the rural populations of

Latin America to read and write. To fulfill this objective, the work *Tests ABC – verification of the maturity necessary for learning to read and write* (Buenos Aires: Kapelusz)⁷ it was part of the collection of the “Lucas Ortiz” Library in Crefal. The translation was not carried out with the intention of circulating in Mexico, originally, but in Spanish speaking countries.

The presence of ABC tests in training courses for teachers and leaders of Mexican Elementary Education reveals the circulation of educational psychology principles developed in Brazil based on studies also carried out by Lourenço Filho. In this book, the author presents research results with 1st grade students (current 1st grade of elementary school⁸), which was carried out with the objective of finding solutions for our children's difficulties in learning to read and write. It then proposes the eight tests that make up the ABC tests, as a way of measuring the level of maturity necessary for learning to read and write, in order to classify the literacy students, aiming at the organization of homogeneous classes and the rationalization and effectiveness of literacy. According to the author, from the point of view of the learning economy:

[...] and the organization of homogeneous classes for reading and writing, a natural consequence of modern school organization, another criterion, therefore, other than that of mental age must prevail. In the light of the findings of the most eminent researchers, and of the analysis of the processes involved in learning, in functional terms, only one hypothesis will remain: that of the classification by levels of maturity. (LOURENÇO FILHO, 1934, p.51-2)

The national and international impact of this work is evidenced by the reach of its 12 editions, between 1933 and 1974, totaling 62 thousand copies, having been translated into Spanish, under different titles⁹. Figure 1 shows the

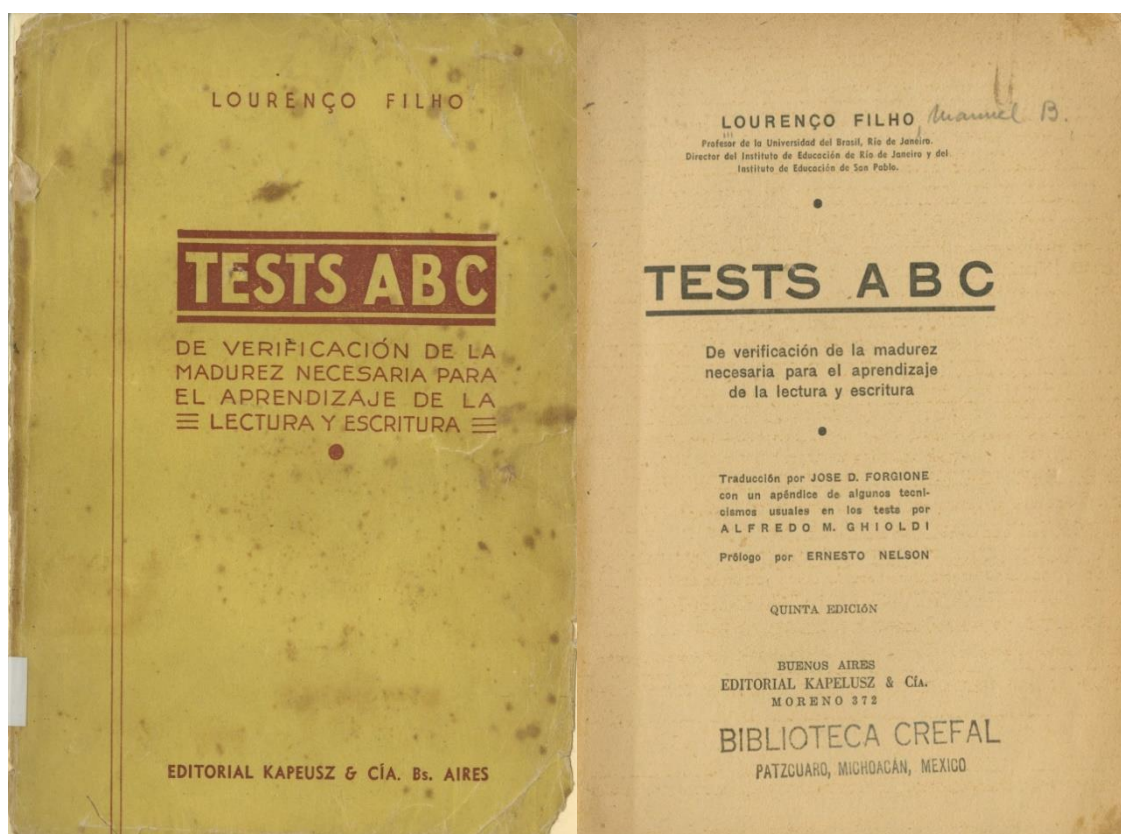
⁷ The edition (fifth) found was translated by Jose D. Forgione and Alfredo M. Glioldi and featured the prologue made by Enerto Nelson.

⁸ Not to be confused with Elementary Education.

⁹ For Spanish, *Tests ABC for first grade* (Buenos Aires: Kapelusz) and *Tests ABC de verificación de la madurez necesaria para el aprendizaje de la lectura y escritura* (Buenos Aires: Kapelusz),

work Tests ABC, with the stamp of the “Lucas Ortiz” Library by Crefal:

Figure 1 – Tests ABC – verification of the maturity necessary for learning to read and write



Source: “Lucas Ortiz” Library of the Center for Information, Research and Culture (Cediic) of the Center for Regional Cooperation for Adult Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (Crefal).

The publication of this work in Brazil, in 1933, with the title *Testes ABC para verificação da maturidade necessária à aprendizagem da leitura e escrita*, it was part of a “testing movement”, based on scientific means of prognostication through the use of brief and objective tests. For the contemporary of the

and for English, The ABC Test, a method of verifying the maturity necessary for the learning of reading and writing, résumé of the book ABC Tests (Philadelphia: Temple University). In Europe, ABC Tests were publicized by Radecka (1932) e por Piéron (1931), respectivamente com Les Tests ABC, pour la verification d’une maturité nécessaire à l’apprentissage de la lecture et l’écriture e Un essai d’organisation de classes selectives par l’emploi des Tests ABC (1931). In this regard, check Monarcha (2008).

movement at the time, the eminent Antonio Carneiro Leão, psychological tests would materialize the “golden dream of pedagogy”, that is, “[...] so appointed, mentally retarded and gifted with intelligence” (MONARCHA, 2008, p. 7).

The work was widely publicized on the occasion of international congresses promoted by Unesco. The numerous references in the foreign bibliography are also highlighted¹⁰, which can be grouped into two categories: “that of works that expose, comment and analyze the fundamentals of the ABC Tests; and that of others [almost a hundred] who report its adaptation and application in two dozen countries.” (LOURENÇO, 1957, p.208).

In the first category, we highlight, among others, the assessments of: H. Piéron (Paris, 1931); H. Radecka (Copenhagen, 1932); A. Ballesteros (Madrid, 1934); H. Ruiz (Mexico, 1940); W. Gray (Paris, 1955); e E. Planchard (Coimbra, 1957). And, in the second, the reports of: A. Alanis (Argentina, 1941); E. C. Argento (Montevideo, 1943); F. Olmo (Caracas, 1955). To these should be added: the “recommendations for the use of ABC tests in primary schools”, present in “official recommendations from several Latin American countries”; the special entry “ABC Tests” in the *Dicionario Enciclopedico de la Psique* (Ed. Claridad, Buenos Aires, 1950); and the declaration of Bureau International D’Education that “after a survey carried out by this organization, it was found that these tests were then the most used in Latin-speaking countries, on an equal footing with the tests Binet-Simon.” LOURENÇO, 1957, p.209).

THE TRAINING OF RURAL SCHOOL TEACHERS AT THE IISSUE LIBRARY

Unesco publications consist of a public space, in the terms of Chamon and Faria Filho (2007), as the authors use this space to make their experiences

¹⁰ Silva (2013) brings indications that Lourenço Filho also had contracts with European countries for the translation of his books.

public. Lourenço Filho produced joint works by Unesco, in 1953, which dealt with the experiences of rural education developed in Brazil, published with the title *The training of rural school teachers* (1953)¹¹, in English (Figure 2) and *La formation des maîtres ruraux* (1953), in French (Figure 3):

Figure 2 – Cover of the book in English

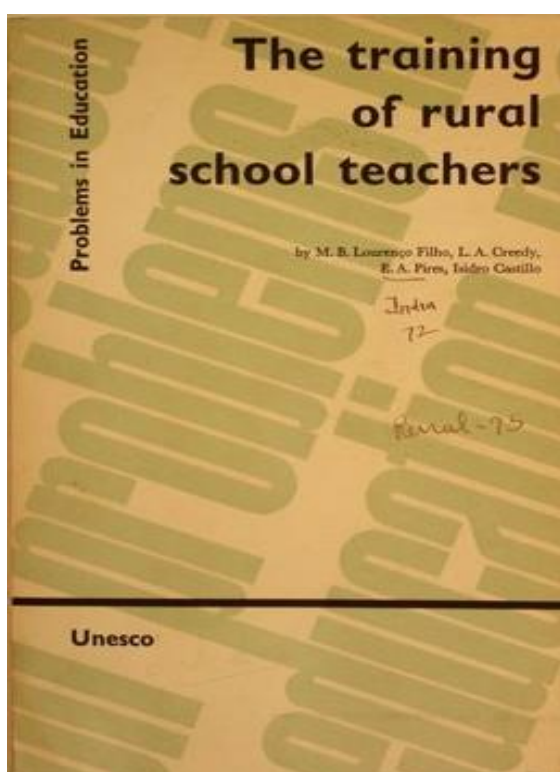
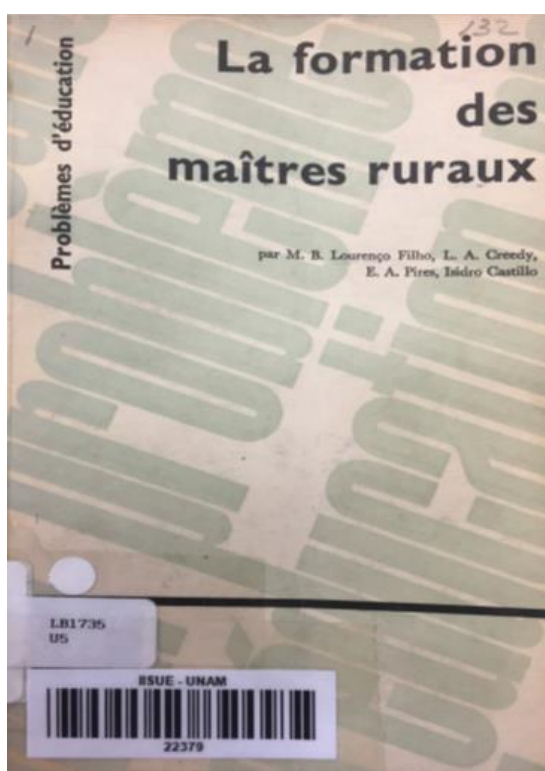


Figure 3 – Cover of the book in French



Source: Institute for Research on the University and Education (IISUE).

This publication aimed to bring together a set of studies and experiences on the training of rural teachers in Brazil, Gold Coast, India and Mexico, with a view to offering instructions for other countries that needed to implement policies for the training of rural teachers in the world. In this work, Lourenço

¹¹ This book comprises four national studies on rural teacher education, written by experts from four countries familiar with the subject: Lourenço Filho, Brazil; L. A. Creedy, Gold Coast; E. A. Pires, India, and Isidro Castillo Pérez, Mexico. The book was published by UNESCO as part of the 16th International Conference on Public Education, convened jointly by the International Bureau of Education and UNESCO. (Geneva, July 1953).

Filho dedicated his chapter to offering readers an overview of rural teacher training experiences carried out in the country. To this end, he created a statistical table of the illiteracy rate and the relationship with the training of rural teachers, using numerical data and documentary sources offered by educational institutions. The four studies are considered, in the introduction to the work, sufficient to:

[...] to show the close connection between the quantitative expansion of primary school facilities in rural areas, the type of education to be provided by the rural school, and the provision of training facilities in adequate and quality measures that meet the needs of rural areas. Most regions of the world where there is a high percentage of illiteracy and inadequate school provision are predominantly rural. It is concluded, therefore, that the issue of supply and training of rural teachers is of prime importance for the propagation of compulsory education. Discussion of this problem in all its aspects by educators and educational administrators from various parts of the world can make a significant contribution to the progress of free and compulsory education. (LOURENÇO FILHO as cited in UNESCO, 1953, free translation).¹²

Lourenço Filho devoted a significant part of his chapter to referring to two ongoing experiences in Brazil: first, the training course for rural teachers in Juazeiro do Norte, in the state of Ceará (1934), and at Fazenda do Rosário in Betim, in the state of Ceará, from Minas Gerais (1948).

According to the 1940 census, according to this educator, in the Brazilian case, the general proportion of illiteracy in the 10-year-old and older age groups was 57%. “Regionally, the proportion ranged from 42% in the South, through 56%

¹² [...] show the intimate connexion between the quantitative expansion of primary school facilities in rural areas, the type of education to be offered by the rural school, and the provision of training facilities in adequate measure and of a quality that would meet the need of the rural areas. Most of the regions of the world where there is a large percentage of illiteracy and inadequate provision of schooling are predominantly rural. It follows, therefore, that the question of supply and training of rural teachers is of paramount importance to the spread of compulsory education. The discussion of this problem in all its aspects by educators and educational administrators from various parts of the world may make a significant contribution towards the further progress of free and compulsory education. (LOURENÇO FILHO as cited in UNESCO, 1953, p. 12)

in the North States, 58% in the South East, 67% in the Midwest States, to a maximum of 72% per cent in the Northeast region” (LOURENÇO FILHO as cited in UNESCO, 1953, p. 17, free translation)¹³. The census also showed that rural areas consist of more than two-thirds of the total population. In the case of teacher training, in 1951: “[...] there were 114 regional teacher training courses in operation, in addition to the regular teacher training schools, 444 in number” (LOURENÇO FILHO as cited in UNESCO, 1953, p. 15, free translation)¹⁴.

Lourenço Filho, when analyzing the distribution of teacher training courses in Brazil, pointed to regional disparities as an alarming fact. To paraphrase this educator, there are states in the South and Southeast where the proportion of teachers without professional training is low, reaching 10%. However, in parts of the North, Northeast and Central-West States, the proportion varies from 70% to 80% and, he also pointed out, that not only do rural primary schools lack trained teachers, but also schools in small towns where there is no there are trained teachers. For Lourenço Filho, faced with this reality, a set of measures was necessary to overcome the most pressing problems in rural areas, namely:

[...] reform of the land tenure system; expansion not only of services for the promotion of agriculture, but for the provision of credit and producer protection; improvements in communication and welfare services, education services for illiterate adolescents and adults, rural missions using modern mass information techniques such as cinema and finally the improvement of school facilities, construction of houses for teachers and teacher training organizations regionally based and with special reference to the general requirements of life in each environment. Broadly speaking, this second group was advocating a program very similar to what UNESCO has since defined as fundamental as education. (LOURENÇO FILHO as cited in UNESCO,

¹³ Regionally, the proportion ranged from 42 per cent in the south, through 56 per cent in the northern States, 58 per cent in the eastern zone and, 67 per cent in the west central states, to a maximum of 72% per cent the northeastern region. (LOURENÇO FILHO as cited in UNESCO, 1953, p. 17).

¹⁴ [...] there were 114 regional teachers’ training courses in operation in addition to the ordinary teachers’ training schools, 444 in number. (LOURENÇO FILHO as cited in UNESCO, 1953, p. 15).

1953, p. 19, free translation)¹⁵.

This set of measures was in line with what UNESCO recommended for rural education policy, especially through the use of the concept of Fundamental Education, in addition to the Mexican experiences of cultural missions, cinema, construction of houses for teachers, among other initiatives. Lourenço Filho, for the production of this book, used national references such as *The objectives of rural primary school*, by Almeida Junior; *The problem of rural education*, by Fernando de Azevedo; *The Brazilian Education Crisis*, by Sud Mennucci; *The rural primary school*, by Ruth Ivete Torres de Silva, and also international ones, such as *Observations and impressions on rural education in Brazil*, by Robert King Hall.

COMPARATIVE EDUCATION IN THE BECENE LIBRARY

[...] sense of duty fulfilled; teaching how to live, instilling in those being educated a humane, cordial and active respect for the rights of all their fellow men; teach to live in freedom, but ensuring that each student understands, feels and cultivates its freedoms with the affection of the efforts that he has to make to support them, without detriment to others; That is, without a doubt, the great mission that incubates, in all the classrooms of the Republic, the teachers worthy of understanding it.

Jaime Torres bodet

(BODET, 1963, s/p).

¹⁵ [...] reform of the system of land tenure; expansion not merely of the services for the promotion of agriculture but of others for the provision of credit and protection the of producer; improvements of communications and welfare services, adolescent and adult illiterates' education services, rural missions using modern mass techniques of mass information such as the cinema, and lastly the improvement of school premises, building of housing organization of teachers' training on a regional basis with special reference to the general requirements of life in each environment. In broad terms this second group was advocating a programme very similar to what Unesco has since defined as coming under the head of fundamental education. (LOURENÇO FILHO as cited in UNESCO, 1953, p. 19).

The work *Comparative Education* (1963), when translated into Mexican Spanish, it was featured on the back cover signed by Jaime Tores Bodet. Lourenço Filho, in turn, had already established a network of relationships with Bodet on the two occasions he went to Mexico (1947 and 1951), explaining in a way the participation of this Mexican in the book. The presentation added to the book helped to legitimize this reference in teacher training courses, and in it the author expresses the Republic's duty to educate its people, permeating values such as freedom and justice.

We start from the initial assumption that Comparative Education originated in the consolidation of national educational systems, this scientific field is located halfway between scientific research and reform actions. “With the consolidation of these national systems from 1945 onwards, he gained new interests with the restructuring of the international space and globalization.” (GOMES, 2018, p. 133). In this perspective, Unesco has animated this field of knowledge on a global scale, which has resulted in publications, teams of experts, international conferences, international research projects, among other initiatives.

The book *Educação Comparada* was published in Brazil in 1961 and translated into Spanish and published in Mexico under the title *Educacion Comparada*, in 1963, by the Federal Teacher Training Institut and by the Pedagogical Library of Professional Perfection of the Public Education Department. It was especially used in the courses offered by the General Direction of Training and Professional Improvement of the Teaching (DGCMPM), which indicates that it was a reference intended for the training of Mexican normalist teachers.

The work was found in the Historical Archive at Meritorious and Centennial Normal School of the State of San Luis Potosí (BECENE - SLP). The Normal School of that state was inaugurated on March 14th, 1849, in the building of the Lancastrian Main School: “was created by DECREE No.41 issued by the C. Constitutional Governor of the State, which ordered in its article, the

establishment of a Normal School for teachers of both sexes.” (BECENE, 2020, p. 1). The presence of this work in the aforementioned Normal School may indicate its relevance in the scenario of teacher training in Mexico.

The second essay also considers a specific issue, but in a single country, through the data of its historical and social evolution, and with a more direct projection in a project intended to educate. It is about rural education in Mexico, a country that the author visited twice for the express purpose of examining this issue. Perhaps it can serve as a general scheme for monographic investigations of the subject.

Rio, November, 1960 L F (LOURENZO FILHO, 1963, p. 12).

The term Comparative Education was used by Unesco to “designate a certain branch of studies that are primarily characterized by the vast scale of observation they use, by virtue of their object” (LOURENÇO FILHO, 2004, p. 17). In this sense, it enabled the performance of politicians, educators and intellectuals in several countries, above all, to deal with issues related to Rural Education. As a result of this movement, trips were made with the intention of knowing and evaluating the specificities of rural education in other countries.

The 1940s and 1950s will be remembered for industrial development, which accentuated the globalization of capital and the introduction of international organizations in the financing and implementation of policies aimed at the “total recovery of rural people”, from a colonizing perspective. The comparative perspective consisted of a fundamental resource in the activities developed by Unesco. For this reason, educators have always used it when they wanted to clarify theoretical and practical questions related to national education systems, because:

The comparative examination cannot be limited to the legislative structures, nor to the numerical expression of the scattered statistics of each country. Nevertheless, it is from these elements that they should start, so that the other expressions of social life are related and pose an integral problem of culture when analyzed objectively.

It is the desire to offer an overview of comparative studies, in all its aspects, which is why I also include two more in-depth essays here. The first refers to primary education programs in all Latin American countries, prepared by the author at the invitation of UNESCO, as a working document of the II Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Education Rights, held in Lima in 1956, and published by that body, in English, French and Spanish, but not yet and in Portuguese language. (LOURENÇO FILHO, 1963, p. 11).

As previously mentioned, the method of Comparative Education was used by Unesco to enable Lourenço Filho and other specialists to work in the analysis of national education systems. According to this educator, despite the importance of the legislative and statistical structures of each country, a comparative perspective could not be limited to aspects, as this type of analysis must include other expressions of social and cultural life. The interest of Unesco and, consequently, of this Brazilian educator, converged on primary education programs in all Latin American countries. However, Lourenço Filho seems to resent the fact that Portuguese is not among Unesco's official languages.

Between the 1940s and 1960s, Velarde (2000) detected only three productions referring to comparative education: *Educacion Comparada* (1945), by Emma Pérez Téllez, from Cuba; *Pedagogía comparada* (1961), by José Manuel Villalpando Nava, from México, and *Educação Comparada* (1961), by Lourenço Filho, from Brazil. The Comparative Education “[...] begins by describing them and comparing them with each other, to point out similarities and differences in terms of morphology and functions, whether these are only provided for in legal documents or reach effective realization.” (LOURENÇO FILHO, 2004, p. 17). He continued on the following pages, asserting that Comparative Education takes educational models:

[...] at a given time, as a special object of inquiry, admitting that, based on them, social forces can be characterized, verified in their nexus of dependence and, finally, duly understood in an organic structure. In this way, it comes to establish hypotheses and compose models, according to which each special system, related systems or families of

systems can be better understood and, after all, explained. (LOURENÇO FILHO, 2004, p. 18).

The work was especially used in the courses offered by the General Directorate of Training and Professional Improvement of the Teaching (DGCMPM), which indicates that it was a reference intended for the training of Mexican normalist teachers. In a general way, the work *Comparative Education*:

[...] Everywhere that it gathers, it illustrates many of the themes of "education problems", presented in the last part of our work entitled: Introduction to the Study of the New School, in the expanded form of its last edition and by its comparative methods. , whose effect has been the most well-founded analysis of the issues of philosophy of education and current political action, and whose subject is taught through the examination of the teaching conditions of each nation. In this virtue, it points out inductively based elements, by which the principles or projects of school administration and organization can be confronted and discussed in less vague ways. (LOURENÇO FILHO, 1963, p. 9).

Unesco has developed its comparative education actions on a global scale, taking into account the most diverse "educational problems". From this perspective, this methodology originated in the consolidation of national educational systems and this scientific field is situated halfway between scientific research and reform actions. According to Gomes (2018): the first comparatists were in fact more "[...] cautious about international interdependence and the difficulties of transferring 'lessons' from one place to another, considering the respective historical-cultural contexts, which generate the differences" (GOMES, 2018, p. 133-134). In the case of Mexico, the author pointed out the relationship between revolutionary peculiarities and the formation of the Mexican education system:

The study of educational evolution in Mexico offers a very special interest, for two main reasons. The first, due to the fact of having constituted the country, as a nation, with a very considerable contingent of indigenous races of origin whose cultural origin is not uniform. The

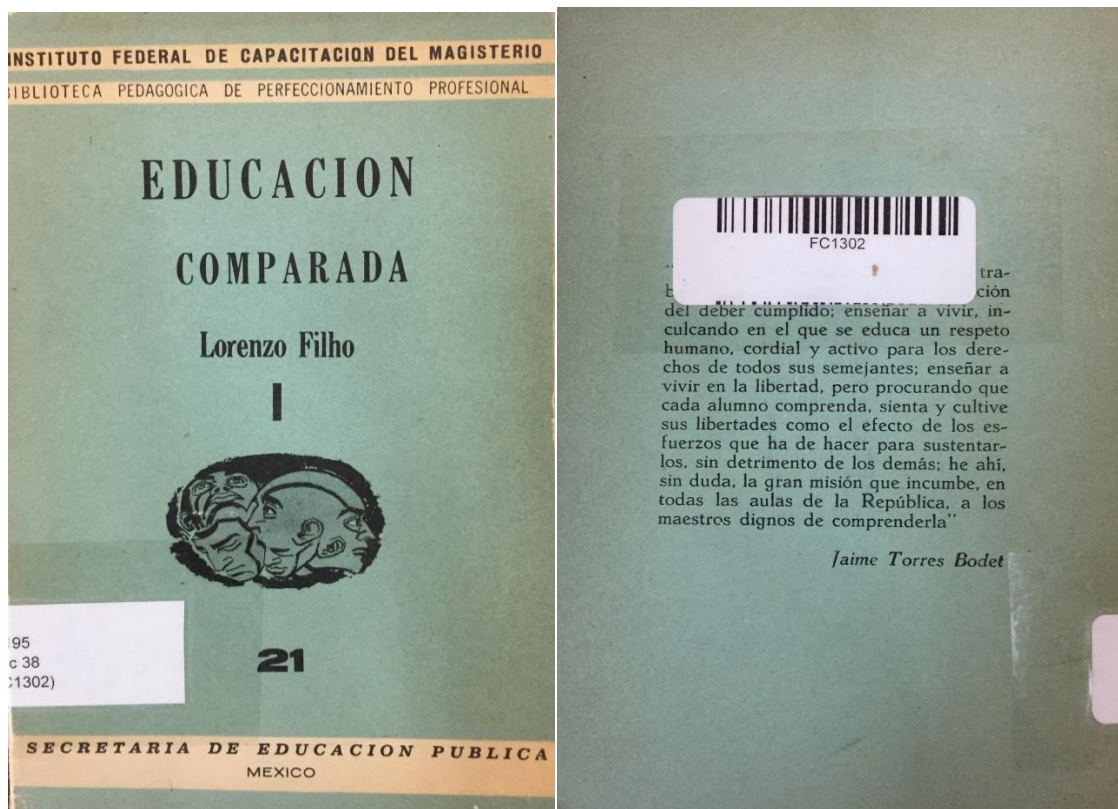
second, due to its own geographical location, which facilitates various influences, which give rise to a scenario of cultural contrasts, without taking into account the effects that the neighborhood of the United States may have on the life of the country. The Mexicans have taken advantage of this nation, the methods of modern technology, although they resent, however, other influences of a political and economic nature. The history of Mexico records a series of revolutions, the largest of which occurred in the present century, between 1910 and 1920. This last movement called for agrarian reform, national control of mineral resources, the separation of Church and State and the opportunity of education to the popular masses. The first of these questions was translated, in a very special way, into a movement in favor of rural education. (LOURENZO FILHO, 1963, 174-175).

The historical conditions of formation of the education system in Mexico are substantially different from the formation of the education system in Brazil, because, despite the similarities, in Brazil there was no popular revolution of national dimension that, consequently, resulted in the formation of a education system.

In general, this book brought together several educational experiences in countries such as France, Germany, Italy, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United States, Mexico, Argentina, Japan and India, in which the author details historical, legal, organizational, statistical, among other elements that make up the education systems of these countries.

The book is part of a collection and has two volumes, aimed especially at students of Pedagogy, Didactics, Social Sciences and Journalism courses, in addition to “[...] to people who enroll in school administration courses at education institutes, whose studies require notions of Comparative Education” (LOURENZO FILHO, 1963, p. 9). Figure 4 shows the cover of *Educación Comparada* and the presentation on the back cover by Jaime Torres Bodet

Figure 4 – Cover of *Educacion comparada* (1963)



Source: Historical Archive of the Meritorious and Centenary Normal School of the State of San Luis Potosí (BECENE-SLP)

Finding the Comparative Education work, in the Historical Archive of Becene-SLP, consisted of an indication of the circulation of Lourenço Filho's works in the training courses of Mexican normal teachers. According to Nery (2019), Normal Schools in Latin America were centers that radiated new teaching practices. The libraries of the Normal Schools, in addition to “[...] laboratory of practical learning about being a teacher, it is the place where one tries to establish a theoretical-methodological body through a set of books, periodicals and other graphic elements that made up this space.” (NERY, 2016, p. 238).

The circulation of pedagogical knowledge, especially between the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th, became a factor of great importance in teacher training schools, which would substantially influence the development of primary schools in Mexico. As a space destined to gather a set of

knowledge, especially aimed at teacher training, as is the case of the libraries of Escolas Normais.

School libraries are the result of a conception of dissemination, systematization and circulation of pedagogical ideas, educational theories, school or pedagogical culture, which need to be legitimized, either by their relevance or by the implementation strategies that come in the form of legislation, projects or new ideas. Thus, throughout the history of school libraries and teacher training, these places are considered privileged spaces for the concentration and dissemination of knowledge.

According to Nery (2008), such a library was thought of as a way of keeping teachers in constant contact with the “evolutionary march of teaching in more advanced countries”, being attentive to the movement of modern pedagogy. (ANNUARIO DO ENSINO, 1911-1912, apud NERY, 2008, p. 5).

By understanding the library as a specific space for the production, circulation and constitution of a pedagogical culture, Nery (2009), when looking at the Brazilian case of the collection of the former Escola Normal de Piracicaba, takes as object this collection considered historical and points to the importance of this type of study in the sense of perceiving the pedagogical culture constituted through the strategies of implantation of a specific library for the use of the teacher of the Normal School and for the formation of the master student.

Regarding the composition of a specific library for teacher training, Nery (2009, p. 123) indicates that it includes “[...] a set of materials, in particular, books that, intended for the use of teachers and for reading school [...]”, become responsible for gathering and organizing a certain pedagogical culture necessary for teaching practice. With this, the school library installed in the Normal Schools can be considered a privileged space for teacher training activities and the future teacher.

[...] Professional training libraries can be taken as strategies for the circulation of training forms insofar as they constitute repertoires,

select, classify and dispose of different materials for the training of new specialized readers (NERY, 2009, p. 125).

The presence of Lourenço Filho's work in the Becene-SLP Library reveals that this author constituted himself as one of the main educational references of Brazil abroad, especially in the Mexican case, insofar as he worked at a time when national education was central in Brazilian social reflection.

This author, therefore, constituted himself as one of the main professional educators in the country, working at a time when national education was central to Brazilian social reflection. According to Celeste Filho: "In the mid-1960s, under a new authoritarian cycle, education gradually ceased to be the vortex of Brazilian social thought and the intellectual production of Lourenço Filho, not by chance, also declined" (CELESTE FILHO, 2019, p. 6). The analysis of his study dedicated to comparative education provides the possibility of ascertaining the apex and, paradoxically, the departure of a type of intellectual activity represented exemplarily by the trajectory of Lourenço Filho.

CONCLUSION

The electrician's work, as a historical metaphor, makes us realize that insight is indispensable in a historical operation of this nature. To the extent that connected history inaugurates the idea of "reconnecting" separate histories, especially due to the stagnation produced by national historiographies. To make this connected history, the electrician in charge of installing suitable conductor wires was assumed to establish complex connections that permeated the circulation of Lourenço Filho's works in Mexican libraries.

Finally, it is possible to affirm that the presence of the works *Tests ABC – verification of the maturity necessary for learning to read and write*, *The training of rural school teachers* and *Comparative Education* in Mexico is

indicative that they were part of the collections destined for the training of normal teachers, leaders of Elementary Education and school managers, especially for offering readers principles of the psychology of education, experiences of training rural teachers in Brazil and an overview of education systems on a global scale.

Such works were produced and translated in a time of influence of international organizations in the conceptions of Comparative Education and Fundamental Education. In summary, it can be said that there was a previous relationship between Lourenço Filho and Unesco and, consequently, with the then president Jaime Torres Bodet. In this perspective, Unesco was constituted in the place where the intellectual production made by it gains the stamp of legitimacy and, consequently, through publications reached its receivers in Mexico.

Jaime Torres Bodet and Lourenço Filho, given their differences, were subjects who acted in their respective countries in the face of national and international teacher training policies. In this sense, there were syntheses of the lessons learned with Lourenço Filho, to lead Mexican schools and, above all, in the training of primary teachers using the works dealt with throughout this text. In this sense, to a certain extent, there was an exchange of educational references.

In the Brazilian case, Lourenço Filho constituted himself as the main intellectual to establish relations with international organizations, between the 1950s and 1960s. and, consequently, through publications and seminars, they reached their recipients all over the world.

We hope that this reflection can, therefore, contribute to further studies, expanding the analysis to circulate the entire production of Lourenço Filho in Mexico. With this, we hope that this text can raise new relevant research problems to think about the theme and connect the debate with educational historiography.

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