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As classes secundárias experimentais: uma tradição escolar (quase) esquecida

Norberto Dallabrida*

Resumo: O propósito neste artigo é fazer uma reflexão historiográfica sobre as classes secundárias experimentais. A análise abrange três momentos históricos: o primeiro, da década de 1950, quando os ensaios renovadores no ensino secundário brasileiro emergiram e foram oficializados pelo MEC, até o golpe de 1964; o segundo, durante o regime militar; o terceiro corresponde ao período de redemocratização da sociedade brasileira iniciado na década de 1980 e que se desdobra até hoje. Para tanto, usam-se os conceitos de memória coletiva, formulado por Jacques Le Goff, e de representação, enunciado por Roger Chartier, além de textos de história da educação, como artigos científicos, livros, dissertações de mestrado e teses de doutorado.

Palavras-chave: classes experimentais, ensino secundário, renovação pedagógica.

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Experimental secondary classes: a school tradition (almost) forgotten

Norberto Dallabrida

Abstract: The purpose of this article is to make a historiographic reflection on the experimental secondary classes. This analysis is made in three historical moments: first, from the 1950s, when these renovatory essays in Brazilian secondary education emerged and were officialized by the MEC until the 1964 coup; Second, during the military regime; And, finally, in the period of redemocratization of Brazilian society, which began in the 1980s and which is still unfolding today. To do so, he uses the concepts of collective memory, formulated by Jacques Le Goff, and representation, enunciated by Roger Chartier, and uses texts of history of education as scientific articles, books, master's dissertations and doctoral theses.

Keywords: experimental classes, high school, pedagogical renewal.

Clases secundarias experimentales: una tradición escolar (casi) olvidada

Norberto Dallabrida

Resumen: El propósito de este artículo es hacer una reflexión historiográfica de las clases secundarias experimentales. Este análisis se realiza en tres momentos históricos: en primer lugar, a partir de la década de 1950, cuando estos ensayos renovadores en la enseñanza secundaria de Brasil surgieron y fueron anunciados oficialmente por el Ministerio de la Educación hasta el golpe de 1964; en segundo lugar, durante el régimen militar; y, finalmente, el período de re-democratización de la sociedad brasileña, que comenzó en la década de 1980 y que se desarrolla hasta la actualidad. Para ello, se utilizan los conceptos de la memoria colectiva, formulado por Jacques Le Goff, y de la representación, enunciado por Roger Chartier, y, además, textos de historia de educación como artículos científicos, libros, disertaciones de máster y tesis doctorales.

Palabras clave: clases experimentales, enseñanza secundaria, renovación pedagógica.

Introduction

The transformation of the Brazilian secondary education began in the early 1950s through punctual experiences. In the State of São Paulo, renewal of secondary education was linked to the *Centre International d'Études Pédagogiques* (CIEP), created in Sèvres in 1945 with the objective of elaborating an innovative pedagogical tradition for the French secondary education - the *nouvelles classes* (Viaud, 2005; Araújo, 2013) - and to disseminate it, especially through the provision of internships to French and foreign educators. The first professor from São Paulo to attend an internship at CIEP was Luiz Contier, who, upon returning to Brazil in mid-1951, began a renovating pedagogical experience at the Alberto Conte Institute. In this educational essay, with reference in the *nouvelles classes*, he put into practice scholastic didactic strategies, such as research papers, studies of the medium, team activities, class councils, integration between disciplines and knowledge and constitution of smaller classes of students. This school culture gained prominence in the State of São Paulo and, in mid-1958, stimulated the Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC) to publish legislation authorizing, as an experiment, the accomplishment of secondary experimental classes in secondary schools (Vieira, 2015). It is important to emphasize that it was from this moment on that the renovating essays of the Brazilian secondary education came to be called experimental secondary classes.

Thus, from 1959, in a restricted way and regulated by the MEC, the experimental classes began to be implemented in some Brazilian secondary schools, concentrating more in the States of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. These experiences were usually introduced in the first year of junior high school - the first cycle of secondary education formed by four years - of colleges of the public system and of private networks, especially that of schools linked to the Catholic Church - the largest and most extended in national territory. In 1962, the year of completion of junior high school classes in 1959, there were 172 experimental secondary classes in Brazil, of which 112 were in junior high school and 60 in high school - the second cycle of secondary education. This fact indicated the affirmation of a new school tradition (Cunha & Abreu, 1963), foreseen in Law 4024 as of December 20, 1961 (Brasil, 1961), the first Law on Guidelines and Bases of National Education (LBDEN), which allowed the creation of experimental schools or classes, as stated in article 104: "The organization of experimental courses or schools will be allowed, with their

own curricula, methods and school periods, depending on their functioning for purposes of legal validity of the authorization of the State Board of Education, in the case of primary and secondary courses” (Brasil, 1961). The state education councils, created by LDBEN in 1961, were installed in the following year, indicating a decentralizing inflection of the Brazilian education.

In 1964, with the implementation of the military regime, this renewing pedagogical tradition was restrained and, with the intensification of authoritarianism forged by the decree of Institutional Act 5 (AI-5), on December 13, 1968, many renovating schools were closed and some of principals were persecuted and arrested.

With the predominance of technical education during the military regime, avant-garde essays in secondary education were forgotten, but with political openness they began to be re-enacted in different ways. Despite the military regime, some books on the History of Education came to mention, *en passant*, renovating experiences in secondary education. Effectively, with the political opening, timidly begun in the late 1970s, such experiences began to be studied systematically in academia, especially by educators and historians.

In this direction, the present study seeks to understand how the forgetfulness and memory of experimental secondary classes and vocational junior high schools were constructed in the historiography of the Brazilian education. It is noticed that these pedagogical renovating essays in the secondary education were forgotten by some of the works of history of the Brazilian education and remembered by others. For the analysis, we used the concept of ‘collective memory’ formulated by Le Goff (1990). In his sense, forgetfulness or remembrance is produced by power plays between individuals and/or social groups. The author asserts:

[...]collective memory was put into play in an important way in the struggle of the social forces for power. Becoming masters of memory and forgetfulness is one of the great preoccupations of the classes, the groups, the individuals who have dominated and dominate the historical societies. The forgetfulness and silences of history are revealing of these mechanisms of manipulation of the collective memory (Le Goff, 1990, p.426).

In addition, the recalled dimensions of the past are not fixed and crystallized, but are always part of the play of representations. Thus, in

this text, Chartier's concept of representation (2002, p. 165) is also taken into account, which is thought of a double dimension: "[...] making present an absence, but also exhibiting its own presence as an image, and thus constituting the one that looks as a subject that looks". In the presentification of the absent, there is a social construction of a thing, person or fact, but crossed by interests and intentions. In historiography, the absent is the past.

In the educational field, the construction of collective memory, materialized in texts of history or fiction, is also carried out through 'strategies of forgetfulness' (Carvalho, 2003) arising from the power play of individuals or social groups. On the other hand, recall strategies construct different representations of cultural goods based on the available traces, such as written texts, images and objects. Thus, the texts of history of education offer a mixture of forgetfulness and representations of the past that meet the demands of the present and therefore must be understood as provisional and fragmentary syntheses. The historiography of education, therefore, constitutes a rigorous and conceptualized form of collective memory, operating a specific reading of remnants of the past.

In this direction, the documentary corpus of this article is formed by academic studies of the history of education on experimental secondary classes, published in Brazil since the 1960s. The objective is to accompany the construction of forgetfulness and memories of a pedagogical tradition (almost) forgotten, as well as understand their representations.

It is also highlighted that what moves this historiographic work is the current situation of the Brazilian high school, whose marks of maladjustments and social exclusion indicate the urgent need for its renewal and democratization. One of the responses of the MEC in this sense is the creation of the Innovative Higher Education Program, which has been put into practice in different ways by the state education systems. Among the didactic strategies prescribed in such a program are curricular integration, full-time education, active teaching, and the closer involvement of the students' parents with the school.

To a large extent, with different pedagogical matrices, this school model was rehearsed in secondary classes in the 1950s and 1960s. The historiographic essay presented in this article aims to shed light on this past with the intention of contributing to the construction of more effective and socially just high school.

The first reports

In the first half of the 1960s - a period of great political and educational expectations - the experimental secondary classes were mentioned or analyzed in a specific way. For example, in the early 1960s, in a short text entitled *The movement of the new experimental classes*, the editorial team of the Journal Secondary School, linked to the Campaign for Improvement and Diffusion of Secondary Education (CADES), defended pedagogical experimentation in secondary education (A redação, 1961).

The first observation contained in the text is that the experimental secondary classes came to the attention of educators, teachers, students and parents, revealing the general dissatisfaction with the school culture prescribed in the Organic Law of Secondary Education produced at the apogee of the Getulista dictatorship. Following this, the highlight goes to the initiative of the holder of the Secondary School Board of MEC, Gildásio Amado, who did not measure efforts to implement legislation that made educational experimentation possible in secondary education, taking Brazil from the small group of countries that have not yet allowed renovating tests in the middle schooling. From the perspective of the team, on the one hand, “[...] the experimental classes allow for the decongestion of the traditional curriculum, allowing educators to adopt a study series that is more rational and in accordance with the real needs of learners”(A redação, 1961, p. 3); on the other hand, the extra-class activities were very salutary because they competed to stimulate the personal and creative initiative of the students, as well as their collaborative spirit. In short, the tone of the text is complimentary.

In the work *Grandezas e misérias do ensino no Brasil*, analyzing the Brazilian education system based on the school culture prescribed by LDBEN, Werebe (1963) contemplates the experimental classes in the chapter devoted to secondary education. Analyzed in less than two pages, these classes are initially hailed as “[...] an initiative that has come to breathe new life into the school routine” (Werebe, 1963, p.154). Referring to a study carried out by the Brazilian Center for Educational Research (CBPE), Werebe (1963, p. 155) notes that “[...] most of these classes [experimental secondary] have adopted the full-time regime for student, expanded school activities and in all of them the number of students per class was reduced”. It is also noted that the Brazilian experience was inspired by the French nouvelles classes and that the LDBEN allowed the expansion of pedagogical innovations for all high school. However, such

renovating tests were considered to be very restricted because they reached less than 1% of all secondary schools and were, in particular, under privileged conditions in terms of school infrastructure and clientele. In addition, it criticizes the absence of the state or regional nuclei of the renewal movement of secondary education that existed in the French school model.

The study referred to by Werebe (1963) was carried out by Nádia Cunha, a technician at INEP, and Jayme Abreu, a specialist in secondary education at CBPE, and published in the Brazilian Journal of Pedagogical Studies (Cunha & Abreu, 1963). It is a balance of the experimental secondary classes of 1959 - when they began to be implemented at the national level - to 1962, when the four-year period of these classes was completed - length of the junior high school - and the LDBN began. In relation to the experimental secondary classes that were in force in this period, the authors address the following topics: the current legislation; the quantification per state in relation to the two cycles of secondary education, the division by gender, the number of schools, students and teachers; the pedagogical structure, indicating and analyzing the methods imported and used in different educational networks. In the end, they make a conclusive analysis of the sense and meaning of this school experience.

In this regard, Werebe (1963) made a rather topical and reductionist appropriation of the work of Cunha and Abreu (1963), since it emphasizes only the expansion of school activities with the adoption of the full-time regime and the reduction in the Number of students per class and leaves aside the authors' analysis regarding the appropriation of innovative teaching methods - the central dimension of the experimental secondary classes.

After listing and describing the laws and normative instructions that enabled the implementation of experimental secondary classes at the national level, Cunha and Abreu (1963) present the results of a quantitative research on each of the years of the period cut by them in the schools that carried out renovating essays in secondary education. In 1959, experimental secondary classes were introduced in 17 private schools and 8 public schools, located especially in the states of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro; in 1962, these classes were present in 30 private schools and 16 public schools, distributed in eight states and concentrating on the Rio-São Paulo axis. During the four years analyzed, the great majority of the private educational establishments that carried out pedagogical

experimentation were of confessional character, with emphasis on those of the Catholic network.

In the third part of the article, Cunha and Abreu (1963) analyze the didactic-pedagogical strategies adopted in the experimental secondary classes, grouping them by schools in each state. In the State of Rio de Janeiro, Cunha and Abreu (1963) note the predominance of appropriate methodologies of the USA, such as the project method and the Morrison, Dalton and Winnetka plans, considering this referral as pedagogical hybridism. In the State of São Paulo, they note the massive use of French pedagogical matrices, such as: the nouvelles classes (public schools) and the personalized pedagogy of Father Pierre Faure (Catholic schools). At the national level, they emphasize the practices of the integration of disciplines, the directed study, the educational orientation and the class council.

By way of conclusion, in the last part of the article, Cunha and Abreu (1963) make a critical appreciation of the experience of the experimental secondary classes in the 1959-1962 quadrennium. On the one hand, they point to a positive balance of this pedagogical essay: "To our understanding, its greatest merit would be in conceiving the school as an opportunity for autonomy, for its own affirmation in the educational process, an opportunity that is regrettably subtracted with the validity of the centralized system" (Cunha & Abreu, 1963, p. 148). Among the innovative educational practices, the emphasis is on curricular flexibility, with the reduction or integration of disciplines, the adoption of active learning methods, the implementation of the educational guidance service and the length of time students stay in school. On the other hand, in relation to the appropriation of teaching methods, Cunha and Abreu (1963, p. 147) stated: "[...] in several cases, there was a perceptible methodological insecurity, with the adoption of inconsistent eclectic positions among them, denoting hurried improvisations". In addition to this methodological fragility, the authors point to the limited extent of experience of experimental secondary classes - restricted to a little more than 1% of secondary schools in Brazil - and the predominance of confessional schools, especially those of the Catholic network. The article by Cunha and Abreu (1963) is the most comprehensive work on the experimental secondary classes published between the late 1950s and the mid-1990s.

In relation to the expressive number of experimental secondary classes in Catholic schools, there are two reports by the same author on the experience put in practice in the Santa Cruz School, directed by Canadian priests of French ancestry and segmented for adolescent men. La France (1959) describes and analyzes the preparation of the implementation of experimental classes in the junior high school and, especially, the renovating experience in this course during the school year of 1959. After the conclusion of the experience in the four years of the junior high school, Lafrance (1963) published a long article, divided into three parts, on the renovating essay at Santa Cruz School between 1959 and 1962. The first part is dedicated to the philosophical foundation of the proposal, highlighting a Catholic reading of the New School movement and the appropriation of the ideas of Fernando de Azevedo. In the second part, the author focuses on the renovating pedagogical experience put in practice at the Santa Cruz School, identifying that its foundations were those of the pedagogy of Priest Pierre Faure, since this experience involved the use of worksheets or research, a new division of time, integration of disciplines, guided study, seminars, teacher guidance and other didactic strategies. Finally, it presents testimonials of the educational agents involved in the research, such as students, teachers, principal body and parents of students. The text of Lafrance (1963), therefore, is a detailed and consistent report of the practice of experimental secondary classes in a Catholic school.

The first reports of experimental secondary classes, produced in the first half of the 1960s, when there were almost two hundred renovating essays in secondary education, were of educators involved and committed to secondary school reform. From this period, the article by Cunha and Abreu (1963) is the only work that takes a panoramic view at the national level about the experimental secondary classes and presents a qualitative/quantitative approach. At the institutional level, Lafrance (1963) offers a consistent analysis of the experimental secondary classes at the Santa Cruz School from 1959 to 1962. Thus, there are two papers with a perception of the immediate post-experience, finalized in late 1962, when the high school cycle was completed.

Political repression and forgetfulness

During the military regime, which discouraged and, after the promulgation of AI-5, repressed the innovative experiences in the Brazilian secondary education, as well as persecuted and even imprisoned their formulators, there were few reflections on the experimental

secondary classes. Azanha (1974) criticizes these initiatives, exploring their lack of planning and their experimental character. Initially, he casts a negative glance on them: “It was thus, under the sign of improvisation and without a broad and critical discussion that the experimental classes emerged in the public teaching of São Paulo” (Azanha, 1974, p. 9). However, his fundamental questioning is epistemological. Its purpose is to understand the concept of educational experimentation adopted in the experimental secondary classes and to compare it with scientific experimentation. Relying on authors such as Gaston Bachelard and Karl Popper, he calls attention to the polysemy of the word experience, differentiating experimentation, the way in which hypotheses are controlled, a specific procedure of science, personal experience, which is subjective. Thus, Azanha (1974, p. 67-68) asserts: “[...] experimental classes and schools are not examples of scientific experimentation; not because they present one or another failure of planning or execution, but because they lack the indispensable: the hypotheses to be submitted to the test”. It is important to emphasize that, besides being a professor of Philosophy of Education at USP, the author of this work had directed the Coordination of Basic and Normal Education of the Secretariat of Education of the State of São Paulo from 1967 to 1970, when the latest innovative experiences of secondary education were destroyed by the military regime.

In the second half of the 1970s, in the work *Estórias da educação no Brasil de Pombal a Passarinho*, Lima (1975) makes some references to the modernization of secondary education implemented by MEC, which were due, to a great extent, to his performance as secondary inspector of secondary education in the State of Ceará (Lima, 1962) and later as head of the Board of Secondary Education, from which he was deposed by the military coup of 1964. In analyzing the ‘educators outside the system’, with emphasis on Anísio Teixeira, Lima (1975, p. 185), states that “INEP was the board of education with reference to the normal and primary course [...] (the pedagogy of high school only appeared with CADES, the school of application and the SCHOOL OF NOVA FRIBORGO) [sic]”.

As a secondary education inspector in the State of Ceará, Lauro de Oliveira Lima was a prominent member of the activities of the Campaign for Improvement and Diffusion of Secondary Education (CADES) - created in 1953 by INEP, under the direction of Anísio Teixeira. He gave lectures, courses, seminars, meetings with professors and directors linked

to CADES not only in Ceará, but also in the states of Amazonas, Pará, Pernambuco, Minas Gerais, among others. For that, he prepared written material, later collected and organized in the book *A escola secundária moderna* (Lima, 1962). CADES, through diversified initiatives, radiated its renewal action to all the states of the Federation and, between mid-1957 and 1963, published the journal *Escola Secundária*, whose editorial line prioritized didactic-pedagogical texts on the disciplines of secondary education (Rosa, 2014).

When he also mentions ‘the School of Application’, Lima is certainly referring to that of the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, but in fact, schools of application from several federal universities have set in motion a renovating school culture. In writing the School of Nova Friburgo with uppercase letters, Lima (1975), he gives the school distinction which actually had in the State of Rio de Janeiro. This school was established through an agreement between the Fundação Getúlio Vargas (FGV) and the Nova Friburgo prefecture and inaugurated on March 11, 1951, with the presence of the president Eurico Gaspar Dutra. School Nova Friburgo, located in the Cascata neighborhood of Nova Friburgo (State of Rio de Janeiro), was conceived and created to be a center of excellence for secondary education in Brazil, with a boarding and semi-boarding school program, with the aim at forming a modern elite. For that, the didactic units method was formulated, a hybrid didactic proposal, based especially on the notion of Morrison Plan unit. As a school-laboratory, School Nova Friburgo became a center for pedagogical training for educators committed to the renewal of secondary education through the provision of internships and the publication of the Journal Curriculum, which disseminated texts about their didactic-pedagogical experiences (Santos, 2005).

Defending the idea that there would have been a wave of pedagogical renewal more intense before LDBEN, Lima (1975, p. 192) lists modernizing initiatives of the Secondary School Board, among which the “Experimental Classes that allowed the introduction of pedagogy in MEC, under the influence of CADES”. This general and concise statement indicates that, unlike what occurred in primary education, pedagogical renewal in secondary education only emerged in the 1950s, which is why he highlights the performance of CADES - of which he was a part. However, it does not give prominence to the pioneer movement of implementation of experimental secondary classes that has occurred since

the 1950s in the State of São Paulo. Instead of this movement, which was the most vigorous in the Brazilian territory, both in the public system and in private networks, he emphasizes School Nova Friburgo and the work of CADES.

The 1970s, with Law 5692 (Brasil, 1971), which created the primary and secondary education grades, altered the structure of the education system in Brazil, was marked by the lack of debate on educational policy and by the investment in forgetting the renovating experiences of the Brazilian education, particularly those that were more critical in secondary education. On the one hand, Azanha's book (1974) makes a subtle critique of the experimental essays put into practice in secondary education, referring to methodological improvisation and refuting the concept of educational experimentation. On the other hand, Lauro de Oliveira Lima, with his creative works in the 1970s, plays tangentially and carefully in the renovating essays in secondary education, highlighting experiences in the State of Rio de Janeiro.

Redemocratization and the return of memories

In order to understand the modernization of the juniorhigh school from the 1950s to the 1960s and its relationship to the developmental model, Nunes (1980) makes considerations about the experimental secondary classes. She realizes that Brazil has appropriated the pedagogical matrix of the nouvelles classes of Sèvres and does not make reference to the New School Catholic matrix, developed by Pierre Faure at the Catholic Institute of Paris. At the same time, she affirms that the experimental secondary classes were directed to the private schools, but not to the public schools of São Paulo. Understanding the experimental secondary classes as a rupture with the rigid, traditional and centralizing character of the Capanema Reform, Nunes (1980, p. 61) asserts:

The first step towards breaking the secondary school curriculum rigidity, giving it the necessary flexibility to introduce practical and vocational disciplines, was the creation of experimental classes, which emerged only in 1959 after two years of legal-political proposals and counterproposals, in the management of Gildásio Amado [...]

Based on the French model of the nouvelles classes, experimental classes presented as objective, the test of new curricula, methods and teaching processes. [...]

The experimental classes were aimed at the clientele of private colleges and, therefore, predominantly for children of the upper bourgeoisie and middle classes. According to the same [INEP] study, some of the most highly skilled workers, especially of foreign ancestry, participated in the experience.

At the beginning of the political opening, there were initiatives to recall the renovating experiences of secondary education that had somehow been constrained and repressed by the military regime. The collection *Inovação educacional no Brasil* (Garcia, 1980) inaugurated this new moment, presenting two chapters on the experimental secondary classes in the State of São Paulo.

In the first, Warde (1980) analyzes the experience at the School of Application of the Faculty of Philosophy, Sciences and Letters of USP between 1957, the year of its creation, and 1969, the year of its closure. On the modernizing perspective of this school, Warde (1980, p. 113-114, author's emphasis) states: "As for the model of renewal that is perceived in the C.A., the influence of what was being sought in France through the 'new classes' is indisputable. [...] The participation of Werebe in the penetration of the model of French pedagogical renewal in the CA was great". The author emphasizes that Maria José Garcia Werebe was a trainee at the *Centre International d'Études Pédagogiques* and organized the Educational Guidance Service at the School of Application of USP. Nevertheless, as the focus is placed on the tensions within this school, which were closely due to political disputes at the Faculty of Philosophy, Sciences and Letters of USP, references to the renovating pedagogical model are economic.

In the other chapter, Werebe (1980) discusses innovative projects prior to the military regime and recalls the experience of the School of Application of USP, emphasizing that it was carried out in 'privileged working conditions' and with a clientele made up especially of middle-class children. Finally, regarding the experimental secondary classes, these texts restrict the reflection to the School of Application of USP, privileging political tensions.

In this collection organized by Garcia (1980), the experience of renovating so-called vocational junior high schools, held in the State of São Paulo from 1962 to 1969, was also privileged. To understand this fact, it is necessary to remember that in 1961, the São Paulo Education Secretariat had created the Vocational Education Service (SEV), whose

first leader was Professor Maria Nilde Mascellani, who had coordinated the experimental secondary classes at the Narciso Pieroni Institute in the city of Socorro. These experiments, known as experimental classes of Socorro, became a reference in the State of São Paulo; thus, to build the network of vocational junior high school, Maria Nilde had relied on the experience she had acquired with them. However, with the military coup, such experiences were considered as a leftist trend (Chiozzini, 2014). Thus, in 1969, with the enactment of AI-5, the vocational junior high schools were invaded and closed and their main leaderships, persecuted and even imprisoned. It was not by chance that the consolidation of redemocratization in the 1980s and the denunciations of political repression were memories of the experience of the vocational junior high schools that came to light. In this sense, the master's dissertations *Contribuição ao estudo dos ginásios vocacionais do Estado de São Paulo: o Ginásio Vocacional 'Chanceler Raul Fernandes' de Rio Claro* (Marques, 1985) and *A memória do ensino vocacional: contribuição informacional em um núcleo de documentos* (Oliveira, 1986) constructed there presentation that the experimental secondary classes were the prehistory of vocational junior high schools.

In the following decade, as a result of these reflections, it was produced the doctoral theses entitled *As cinzas e a brasa: os ginásios vocacionais – um estudo sobre o processo de ensino-aprendizagem no ginásio vocacional "Oswaldo Aranha" – 1962/69* (Rovai, 1996) and *Os ginásios vocacionais: a dimensão política de um projeto pedagógico transformador* (Tamberlini, 1998), as well as the master's thesis *Revisitando o ginásio vocacional: um locus de formação continuada* (Silva, 1999). To a great extent, these academic works are condensed in the collection *Ensino vocacional: uma pedagogia atual* organized by Rovai (2005), which seeks to establish connections between vocational education in the 1960s and technical education today. In addition, in the recent work *História & memória da inovação educacional no Brasil: o caso dos ginásios vocacionais (1961-1969)* (Chiozzini, 2014), in addition to problematizing the representations in dispute, we explore the relationship between experimental secondary classes of Socorro and the vocational junior schools organized by Maria Nilde Mascelani and Olga Bechara, since both worked with these educational experiences.

The tradition of Marxist pedagogical studies that was affirmed in Brazil from the 1980s did not give highlight to the experimental secondary

classes. The most paradigmatic work of this historiographical tradition is Saviani's *História da ideias pedagógicas no Brasil* (2008), for which, between the mid-1940s and 1961, when LDBEN was approved, there was a predominance of 'new pedagogy'. Besides the educators who signed the Manifesto of the New Education Pioneers and joined in the ABE from 1933, Saviani (2008) notes, arguably, the emergence of the 'new Catholic school' in the middle of the years 1950, and later the 'Popular New School', whose tip of the iceberg was the Paulo Freire method. Supported by Avelar (1978), he attaches importance to the interventions of Priest Pierre Faure, a French Jesuit, in favor of the dissemination of the pedagogical ideas of Montessori and Lubienka and of the defense of the experimental classes from what became known as personalized pedagogy, which appropriated the Montessori pedagogy, the Dalton Plan and the Catholic pedagogical tradition. In this direction, after affirming that the French Jesuit was in Brazil in 1955 and 1956, Saviani (2008, p. 301) states: "The same Pierre Faure will return to the country several times from December 1958 to prepare groups of teachers to work in the experimental classes installed in the Schools Santa Cruz, Sion and Madre Alix in São Paulo". It is curious that, as a Marxist historian, Demerval Saviani reflects on the implementation of the experimental secondary classes in the Catholic network and does not mention to the public establishments of secondary education that implemented the pedagogical renewal in the light of the French nouvelles classes.

Saviani (2008, p. 336) considers that the decade of 1960 was the "[...] apogee and crisis of the new pedagogy". He argues that the rise of New School movement was due to the impulse of the experimental schools - but does not cite or analyze any of them -, to the consolidation of the schools of application - but mentions only that of the University of São Paulo - and to the implementation and dissemination of vocational junior high schools in the State of São Paulo. In the case of these secondary schools, he identifies names and their location, and although he does not exploit its renovating school culture, emphasizes its meteoric existence, so that by the early 1970s they had been incorporated into the state's regular school system from São Paulo. In this renovating wave, he refers to the work of Paulo Freire, who was distinguished by the formulation of an adult literacy method, refining what Saviani (2008) calls the 'Popular New School'. In conclusion, he affirms that the progress of pedagogical renewal in the 1960s had different developments:

This movement of radicalization of the renovating ideas in the pedagogical field has manifested up in a triple unfolding: to the left, it resulted in the movements of popular education and the pedagogy of liberation [...]; to the center, resulted in the non-directive pedagogies that were expressed in the divulgation of the ideas of Karl Rogers, of A. S. Neill with the Summerhill school and of some experimentation essays based on the institutional pedagogy, inspired by Lobrot and Oury; to the right, technical pedagogy will be articulated (Saviani, 2008, p. 339).

The last pedagogical model mentioned by the author would have been embodied in the so-called 'MEC-USAID agreements' and would predominate during the military regime.

Experimental secondary classes were only effectively studied in the master's thesis entitled *Um núcleo pioneiro da renovação da educação secundária brasileira: as primeiras classes experimentais do estado de São Paulo (1951-1964)* (Vieira, 2015). This work on the history of school education was carried out with historiographical rigor and, at the same time, with a microscopic look at the renovating school culture of the experimental secondary classes.

On the one hand, the text sheds light on the appropriation that, from 1951, Luiz Contier made of the nouvelles classes at the Instituto Alberto Conte, located in São Paulo, certainly the lesser known face of the renewal of secondary education in the 1950s. To illuminate it, the pedagogical missions of the Brazilian educators are explored at the *Centre International d'Études Pédagogiques*, pioneered by Professor Contier - considered 'the father of the experimental'.

On the other hand, in an unprecedented way, the text presents a reflection on the experimental classes of the Narciso Pieroni Institute in the municipality of Socorro, State of São Paulo, coordinated by Maria Nilde Mascelani, Olga Bechara and Ligia Forquin Sim. This was a reference renovating experience of the junior high school in the State of São Paulo. More than in the Alberto Conte Institute, the new didactic strategies adopted at School in Socorro are explored, such as teamwork, curricular integration, the use of active methods and, particularly, the study of the environment through which the critical awareness of the students in relation to their social context was worked. In addition, the leadership of Maria Nilde Mascelani is highlighted in the experience of the experimental

classes of Socorro, which is why she was led in 1961 to take over the direction of the vocational junior high schools project promoted by the Education Department of the State of São Paulo.

Finally, since the political opening, the historiography of the Brazilian education has treated the secondary classes in a tangential way, largely because of the importance given to vocational junior high schools as a historical object. The affirmation of redemocratization and its reckoning with the military regime highlighted the experience of the vocational junior high schools because they were suppressed by the State of exception. Thus, rigorously, it is only the recent work of Vieira (2015) that seeks to understand the renovating pedagogical experience represented by experimental secondary classes in the 1950s - a period marked by pedagogical traditionalism and elitism in secondary education.

Final considerations

The memories of the renovating pedagogical essays in secondary education, made in the 1950s and 1960s, were produced differently by the Brazilian historiography. The experimental secondary classes, which emerged in the State of São Paulo in the early 1950s and spread nationally as of 1959, had particular visibility until the adoption of the Law on Guidelines and Bases of National Education (1961), since this legislation allowed the operation of experimental courses and schools. At the same time, in this historic moment, in the State of São Paulo, the vocational junior high schools began to be implanted, which inherited the renovating tradition of the experimental secondary classes and gave them a more critical perspective on the social world, inspired by Catholic principles of the left and Marxist principles. In 1969, after the hardening of the military regime made possible by the AI-5, the vocational junior high schools, considered as revolutionary strongholds, were annihilated and many of their leaderships were persecuted and arrested by the regime of exception. Until the late 1970s, with political openness, both experimental secondary and vocational junior high schools were silenced or recalled in a timely and/or general way, as in the book of Lima (1975), which emphasizes the renovating experiences in Rio January and in the northeast.

From the 1980s onwards, the collective memory of the renovating essays in secondary education began to be built more and more, and was announced by the collection organized by Garcia (1980). This movement was in line with the production of master's theses and doctoral theses defended in São Paulo universities with clear asymmetry. Such scholarly

works, generally transformed into scientific articles and books, focus largely on vocational junior high schools, while experimental secondary classes are cited *en passant*. This historiographical preference is largely due to the fact that vocational junior high schools have had a politically and socially more critical proposal, and especially because they were aborted by the military regime and its mentors, persecuted and imprisoned - particularly Maria Nilce Mascellani. Further, although they have been disseminated in several states, the experimental secondary classes recalled are generally those applied in public schools in the State of São Paulo. The forgetfulness is also due to the fact that much of the experience of experimental secondary classes was carried out in confessional schools, especially those that were part of the Catholic network.

The experimental secondary classes were effectively transformed into a historical object through the work of Vieira (2015), who studied their pioneering in the State of São Paulo, the process of making them official by the Secondary School Board of MEC, as well as the junior high school culture at the Alberto Conte Institute, headed by Professor Luiz Contier, and at the Narciso Pieroni Institute, led by educator Maria Nilde Mascelani. This work, founder of research on experimental secondary classes, can be deployed on different fronts, such as a comparative study, involving the implementation of this renovating wave of secondary education in different states of the federation in public schools, where the appropriation of the French matrix of the nouvelles classes occurred in Catholic schools, in which the personalized pedagogy of Priest Pierre Faure was used, as well as in other confessional and private schools. This historical reading of the different configurations of the experimental secondary classes set in motion in the 1950s and 1960s can produce subsidies and support the challenge of overcoming the bottlenecks and weaknesses of the current high school.

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