

# Presentation dossier "100 years of Paulo Freire": the possibilities to be more!

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Created in 1994, the journal *Comunicação & Educação* published its 10<sup>th</sup> issue the year Paulo Freire left us, 1997. The magazine reached, in this year of 2021, its 26<sup>th</sup> volume, reaching the 66<sup>th</sup> issue. Along this way, Paulo Freire and his ideas followed the path of editors and authors. In the first issue of this year, Freire was remembered, for example, with the publication of an article by Livia Freo Saggin and Jiani Adriana Bonin, entitled "Theoretical explorations to think about the interrelationships between educommunication and community communication." And it was precisely to identify Freire's contribution to the interface between Communication and Education that the editors decided to launch a call for articles aimed at composing a special volume that would configure a contribution of the Department of Communications and Arts of ECA/USP to the centenary commemorations of the Patron of Brazilian Education.

This volume – dossier *100 anos de Paulo Freire* – adds, therefore, to the tribute paid to the philosopher of education, communication theorist, popular educator, university professor and public figure Paulo Reglu Neves Freire (1921-1997). After all, Freire is – for his perspicacity and the universality of his thought – the most cited Brazilian intellectual reference in the world. His extensive work is marked by his commitment to a Philosophy of the emancipation for the popular classes through education.

We remind that the Brazilian educator is also a fundamental reference for communication theories in Latin America, an influence recognized by the main researchers in the area. His ideas continue to inspire and guide the practice of liberating communication in various institutions and social movements, in formal, non-formal and informal education around the world.

Freire's praxis in the communication and education interface became, more specifically, the basis of the thought that contributed to the emergence and consolidation, in Ibero-America, of the concept and practice of educommunication. Furthermore, Freire is also an international reference for the different theoretical strands that think and practice critical education for media and information.

Paulo Freire graduated in Law and became a Portuguese language teacher in elementary schools. He directed adult literacy experiences in the popular government in Brazil, prior to the 1964 military coup. During his period of exile, he lived in Bolivia, Chile and Switzerland, with passages in the United States and many trips on behalf of African and Asian societies. Freire obtained 35 Doctor Honoris Causa degrees between 1988 and 2013 at recognized universities in 11 countries (Germany, Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Cuba, Spain, United States, Italy, Portugal, San Salvador, Sweden). After his death, his ideas became a central theme of study and reference for projects by 32 organizations based in continents like Africa, Europe, Asia, the Middle East and the Americas, including 19 "Institutos Paulo Freire".

As of April 13, 2012, by the Law No. 12,612, Paulo Freire was officially recognized as a patron of Brazilian education. However, the figure of Freire is not a unanimous reference in his own country. Traditionalist sectors try to delegitimize the educator's work, especially due to the impact it has on the formation of youth increasingly committed to justice, environmental protection and freedom of expression. It is worth noting that Freirean indoctrination and Freirean pedagogy are things that do not mix, on the contrary, they are mutually excluding, like oil and water. With the pedagogical awareness that reading the world precedes reading the word, Freire states that we are all subjects with stories and experiences. Once we have the capacity for speech and critical thinking, there is not a cultural hierarchy in a dialogical relationship that underlies the pedagogical-communicative act.

This was evidenced in the content of the 60 texts that – in response to the call for articles by the *Comunicação & Educação* journal – presented themselves as candidates to compose the dossier *100 anos de Paulo Freire*. The contributions

came from different locations in Brazil and the world, from different areas of knowledge, which attests, on the one hand, to the uniqueness of Freire’s work and, on the other, the permanence of scientific interest in the work of the Brazilian thinker, its validity for dealing today with economic, philosophical, political, social, and cultural challenges for a liberating education. The high-quality of the submitted articles also highlights the range of researchers dedicated to deepening and finding new perspectives and ways to produce knowledge based on Paulo Freire’s theoretical-epistemological foundations, as well as discussing the emancipatory experiences and impacts of his pedagogy.

## THE STRUCTURE OF THE DOSSIER

The 14 articles approved for this edition of the dossier were divided into five thematic axes: *Paulo Freire’s Pedagogies, dialog and communication*; *Contributions of Freirean pedagogy to decolonization and native peoples*; *Paulo Freire’s pedagogy and engagement in praxis*; *The cultural dimension of Freire’s thought: between theory and praxis*; and *Paulo Freire’s thought: between the international and the regional, the urban and the rural*. The thematic axes are preceded by an interview with Moacir Gadotti, retired professor at USP, disciple and partner of Freire from the time of his exile in Geneva, in the 1970s, until the installation and consolidation of the Paulo Freire Institute in São Paulo, throughout the 1990s, of which he is the current Honorary President.

We now present the axes with their respective chapters, facilitating an overall view of the contribution offered by this collection.

Opening the first thematic axis – *Pedagogies of Paulo Freire, dialogue and communication* –, the reader is faced with the article by Fabiana da Costa Pereira and Ivete Fossá, under the title “Pedagogies of Paulo Freire: educating for citizenship with protagonism in communication”, which makes theoretical approaches and articulations between Paulo Freire and Mario Kaplún to think about a liberating education, based on the pedagogy of communication and on the subject’s autonomy to achieve citizenship. The second article – “The production of knowledge and the constitution of subjects: dialogues with different Vygotsky, Bakhtin and Freire” – by Joana d’Arc Vasconcelos Neves, Sandra Nazaré Dias Bastos and Gislene da Silva Oliveira, in turn, discusses the production of knowledge through the interactionist perspective, based on the “bridge dialogue” established between Freire, Vygotsky and Bakhtin. The researchers seek to understand the production of knowledge as dialogic processes between knowing, unfinished subjects, and their constitution and transformations through interactions, dialogue and language. Finally, the article “Twenty years of Freire’s foundation in the production of the Intercom Communication and Education Research Group,” under the responsibility of Rose Mara Pinheiro and Ana Luísa Zaniboni Gomes, analyzes the presence of Paulo Freire as a theoretical foundation in the scientific production generated

by the aforementioned Group of Research, between 2001 and 2020. For this purpose, the 847 articles presented at National Congresses and available in the Annals of the events on the official Intercom website were investigated. As a result, the survey shows that, in 41% of the texts, the authors make references to the Brazilian educator, especially to the works *Extension or Communication?* (1969), *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1974) and *Pedagogy of Autonomy* (1996).

The subsequent axis – *Pedagogy of Paulo Freire and engagement in praxis* – consists of two articles. In the first – “Paulo Freire and the legacy of a partisan education in favor of the praxis of the oppressed” – Lucia de Fatima Valente and Thalles Valente de Paiva assume a political position in today’s education debate, having as their main target the project “School without a Party.” The researchers rely mainly on the works *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (1987), *The importance of the act of reading* (1989) and *Pedagogy of autonomy* (2002) to confront the perspective of supposed neutrality in education and defend that Freirean legacy is a partisan and that politics is intertwined to education, since it involves the defense of points of view. The second article in this axis is by Joana Salém Vasconcelos, entitled “Pedagogy of the oppressed: document of agrarian reform in Chile.” The text turns to the best known book by the patron of Brazilian education, understanding it as a historical document, which reflects Freire’s praxis, with a focus on peasant literacy, during the agrarian reform in Chile. The author postulates that hypotheses formulated by Freire before the civil-military coup in Brazil in 1964, with emphasis on the “adherence to the oppressor”, the “culture of silence” and the “tension between dialogue and anti-dialogue” are confirmed during the Freire’s exile and his praxis in the Latin American country.

With the article by Antônio Joaquim Severino, entitled “The emancipation of colonized peoples in the Freirean educational proposal: decolonization and interculturality,” the third thematic axis begins – *Contributions of Freirean pedagogy to decolonization and the original peoples*. Prof. Severino highlights Freire’s pioneering contribution by pointing to the need for awareness of the condition of persistent cultural coloniality in peripheral societies worldwide, defending interculturality as an essential element of educational practice, in favor of the emancipation process of colonized peoples.

The axis continues with a work by Josélia Gomes Neves, dedicated to the theme of original communities in Brazil, under the name “Paulo Freire: a loving look at Indigenous School Education.” The article resulted from the analysis of a document that reproduces part of a dialogue between Paulo Freire and the participants of the 8<sup>th</sup> Regional Assembly of the Indigenous Missionary Council (CIMI), which took place in June 1982, in Cuiabá, State of Mato Grosso. According to the author, the analysis of the document allowed us to understand the pioneer thinking of Paulo Freire by the articulation of class/ethnicity. In general – concludes the author – the meeting provided an important reflection on otherness, punctuated by considerations and questions specific to dialogical experiences and the confrontation of tensions between asymmetric cultures.

In turn, researchers Fabricio Valentim da Silva, Marc-André Éthier and Stéphanie Demers, in responding for the third article in the axis, analyze the notion of emancipation present in textbooks inspired by Freire – “A textbook content analysis for emancipatory adult literacy in the postcolonial educational context. The case of the Brazilian Amazon in the 1980s”. The text addresses adult literacy in the context of postcolonial education in Northern Brazil, between the 1960s and 1980s. In its conclusion, the text verifies that the contents of the didactic subsidies favorable to the emancipatory literacy implemented in the period was defined from the profile that identifies and characterizes the citizen oriented to justice or to the practice of participative citizenship.

From a didactic perspective, contextualized in the transition from high school to higher education, Zilda Martins Barbosa and Renata Nascimento da Silva address, in the text “Community of learning in graduate studies: preparatory courses in a dialogue that is born in solidarity”, the notions of emancipatory education and dialogic pedagogy, integrated to the learning community in favor of decolonizing thinking, taking as object of analysis the collective actions proposed by the Preparatory Courses for Graduate Studies (CPP’s). The authors understand that student mobilizations question Eurocentric epistemologies and meritocracy as dominant thoughts and methods.

The fourth thematic division – *The cultural dimension of Freire’s thought: between theory and praxis* – contributes with two texts. From the first one – “Reflections on culture circles from the Freirean perspective: a space-time to communicate-form social subjects” – researchers André Gustavo Ferreira da Silva and Allan Diêgo Rodrigues Figueiredo focus on Culture Circles, spaces where the origins of Freire’s praxis, in his literacy experience in Angicos (Municipality in the State of Rio Grande do Norte, Brazil), understood as a counterpoint to banking education, as a dialogical-communicative space-time in the formation of social subjects. The categories of dialogicity and communication underlie the dynamics of the Circles as a collective educational practice. The second text, by Carlos Henrique Silva and Filomena Bomfim, entitled “The theater in adult literacy: Paulo Freire in times of pandemic,” presents an adult literacy experience that uses theater as an educommunicative method and practice, and adds the WhatsApp group as a communication device. The developed methodology articulates the student’s experiences, culture circles, vocabulary expansion and work with generative words, at different levels, involving media literacy, literacy through narratives and the construction of fictional characters, as well as literacy built from the relationship with the other and with the world.

The fifth thematic axis turns to the mobilizing dimension of Freire’s work – *Paulo Freire’s thought: between the international and the regional, the urban and the rural*. Silvia Maria Manfredi, as president of the Paulo Freire Institute – Italy, recovers and analyzes, in the article “Crossing borders – Freire’s works and legacy in Italy,” the times of Paulo Freire’s stay in Europe, during exile, between 1970 and 1980, when his works began to be translated and known in different countries of the old continent, definitively conquering Italy.

The author understands that Freire's presence in that country can be identified in two periods: the 1960s/70s, in which Freire's experiences in Latin America illuminate debates around the emancipatory struggles of Italian social and cultural movements, relying for this on the support of progressive sectors of the Catholic Church. During this time, Freire and his advisors developed, in partnership with leaders of the Italian trade union movement, the so-called *Project of 150 Hours*, a fight for the right to study. While in Geneva, Freire also established a dialogue with Italian pedagogists involved in collective actions based on emancipatory values. After an interval of two decades (the 1980s and 1990s), Freire's pedagogy began to have a new wave of interest and diffusion driven by the realization of the II International Forum of Paulo Freire, in 2000, at the University of Bologna. After the creation, in 2005, of the Paulo Freire-Italy Institute, this association, in a network with other Freirean institutes, assumes the task of guarding, diffusing, and reinventing the Freirean legacy in different continents.

Next, this last thematic unit turns to the Northeast of Brazil, with two case studies that portray the insertion of the Freirean proposal in its mobilizing mission on territories dominated by archaic structures of social practices in the states of Paraíba and Bahia. The first movement was described by Claviano Nascimento de Sousa, Thaynara Policarpo de Souza Gouveia and Diogo Lopes de Oliveira, in a text entitled "The people who pronounce their world: Paulo Freire and the overcoming of the culture of silence in the semiarid region of Paraíba." The study places popular communication and social movements in opposition to the status quo that imposes on marginalized classes practices of silent coexistence with their living conditions. The object of analysis is the actions of the Working Group on Communication of the Semi-Arid Articulation (ASA) developed between 2020 and 2021, with the objective of promoting dialogue between farmers, technicians from social organizations and social scientists to confront what Freire defines it as the Culture of Silence, having the Liberation Theory as its driving force. The sample, composed of seven actions developed in the period, points to encouraging results in the sense of overcoming the oppression of the right to the praxis of dialogue and to the process of communicative emancipation, benefiting the people of the Northeast.

The third text of the thematic unit focuses on "Paulo Freire and his marks in the São Francisco Valley," in an article written by Francisco de Assis Silva, based on his doctoral thesis, defended in an interinstitutional cooperation program involving ECA-USP and the University of the State of Bahia (UNEB). It addresses Paulo Freire's contributions to the implementation of a popular education project in Bahia. The object of the study is the continuing education work offered in the 1980s by Freire and his team, serving popular leaders from municipalities affiliated to the Diocese of Juazeiro, on the banks of the São Francisco River, administered by the then-known "bishop of the excluded", Dom José Rodrigues de Souza. The unfolding of the actions carried out in this process generated new possibilities for the construction of knowledge that

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are reflected today, based on the work of young people trained by Freire and who nowadays adopt new paradigms for local work, such as educommunication, with a Freirean orientation, used within the UNEB itself, in the training of future teachers and social communicators.

Throughout the 14 articles which the reader have on screen, the Freirean researchers pronounce the dialectical and dialogical world, whose historical and social conditionings (since Freire does not recognize them as determinations) are discussed, faced and thought about in terms of their possibilities of being more. We hope that Freire's unshakable faith that women and men can read and transform the world is present in every word of this dossier and in the struggles for freedom.

**A good read!**

São Paulo, 2021, December.