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## CÁTEDRA PAULO FREIRE AT PUCSP<sup>1</sup>

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[...]hen Paulo Freire published the Pedagogy of the Oppressed, he did more than offering a disturbing book about education because in it we can find a epistemology, a pedagogy and a sociology of education linked to a call in favour of the democratization of society and school: an audacious programme which establishes a link between the classroom and the policies of power in society which has instigated educators and students to change themselves in the history and in the way they teach, giving origin to an international movement of educators who want to transform the societies in which they teach...[...]

Ira Shor

Paulo Freire was a teacher at PUCSP, in the programme Education: Curriculum since his coming back from the exile for a period of 17 years (1980-1997). After his death, in his honor, PUCSP created in the second semester of 1998, the Cátedra Paulo Freire under the direction of the Programme of Education (Curriculum).

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<sup>2</sup> This text was written by Ana Maria Saul to be discussed by teachers of the Programme on April, 26<sup>th</sup> 2006.



The Cátedra has been understood far beyond as a place to pay tribute to a personality. At PUCSP and in this Programme in particular, we understand The Cátedra as a special space for the development of studies and researches about and or on Paulo Freire's work, focusing its theoretical repercussions and practices for education and its potential for raising new thoughts. In other words, we pay a tribute to Paulo Freire in the way we understand he would like to have been remembered, studying his thought with rigor to understand it and to re-create it.

To study and research Paulo Freire's thoughts at PUCSP nowadays places the Programme Education: Curriculum next to a great number of academics and centers that have elected Paulo Freire's thoughts as the object of their theoretical investigations and/or inspiration for their practices. (1)

The modernity of Paulo Freire's thought has been asserted by the multiplicity of developed experiences taking his thoughts as reference in different areas of knowledge around the world. The increasing number of publication of Paulo Freire's work in dozens of languages, the multiplying of forums, Cátedras and research centres created to research and debate Freire's legacy point out the great vitality of his thought.(2)

Such projection imparts on the whole of his work the character of a universal work to the totality of his production.

The contribution of Freire's work has been pointed out highlighted in the literature, in the important author's writings in different countries and in the growing number of researches that have as a basis Freire's references.

In recent research, to subsidize his Master Dissertation, Mauricio Carrara (4) found in the period from 1987 to 2003, in Portal Capes, 431 titles of defended dissertations and theses in different areas of knowledge, which used Freire's references. Among them, 90 titles focus on the educational area.



## **The designs taken on by the Cátedra**

The first of those set by the Programme for the working of the Cátedra, consisted of the creation of an academic space to debate important themes on Freire's thoughts, lasting 15 weeks with legitimacy to give credits to be equivalent to an optional discipline to post graduate students. The Cátedra was not linked specifically to any nuclei of the Programme, which characterized it as a space that cut through the Nuclei and disciplines of the Programme, being able to offer contributions to researchers from different Programme research lines.

To coordinate the work outside-teachers were invited for each semester whose productions were in accordance to Freire's thought. For the first two semesters, respectively Ana Maria Araújo Freire and Miguel Arroyo were invited. The Programme defined the following themes to be worked in each of these semesters: "Paulo Freire: 30 years of Pedagogy of the Oppressed" and "Paulo Freire: the contemporary pedagogical matrixes, history and process".

In the evaluation of this design and its working, in the second semester of 1999, the professors of the Programme recognized the important contribution of the work developed by the invited teachers but demanded at a more permanent presence of the teachers who conducted the work of the Cátedra, in the sense of having this work more articulated with what the Programme was developing. Because of this evaluation, we searched for a new design in order to allow more effective work integration with the research lines of the Programme.

The Professors of the Programme concluded a teacher who belonged to the staff who knew about Freire's thought should coordinate the Cátedra. Ana Maria Saul (5) was the teacher elected to coordinate it from the first semester of 2000 with the cooperation of Ivonne Khoury, also a member of the staff.



From that time onwards, The Cátedra is being programmed yearly in both semesters.

### **Evolving the understanding and the practice of the "pedagogical doing" in the Cátedra Paulo Freire - A new design**

In the beginning of this new phase of the Cátedra, the main difference between the former design was that the responsible teacher for running the Cátedra belonged to the permanent staff of the Programme and, being so, a greater link was established between the proposal and the everyday life of the Programme. As a consequence of this alteration, the coordinator of the Cátedra assumed responsibility for the theme to be developed each semester. It was also decided that the Cátedra would organize Special Seminars (6) that later would be of a different format: "Dialogues in the Cátedra Paulo Freire" to which outside teachers were invited. These events were opened to all students of the Programme and of the University in order to widen the debate upon Paulo Freire's thought.

Within the body of this new design of the Cátedra, the first developed theme to be studied that semester was " Paulo Freire and teacher's education: theory and practice". Although a specific call geared towards teachers' education was launched, students from two nuclei of the programme took part. (7).

We started understanding the Cátedra Paulo Freire in depth as a space in which:

- a) The building of knowledge is done collectively and cumulatively, not to be only a "passing stage" for the students where they build/search knowledge, taking away what they consider important but a space in which, at the same time, they 'bring' and 'take' the produced knowledge for future projections.

For this reason, it was necessary to think about the registering, the systematization and the spreading of experiences and productions.



b) The teaching, the research and some types of work articulated with the building of knowledge.

c) The relationship between teaching and learning are coherently linked to the building of knowledge in Freire's own pedagogy.

✓ Respect for the students' knowledge,

✓ Dialog (interaction- sharing),

✓ Collective building of knowledge,

✓ Building of critical -transforming knowledge.

d) The enriching of teaching and research with the participation of invited teachers provided it does not become a "pure space" through which the lecturers pass by in order not to change it into a "shopping window".

e)The duty to spread the produced knowledge also taking into consideration organizational ways to attend to the demands for intervention together with the State School System.

### **Work methodology in the Cátedra Paulo Freire**

The Cátedra Paulo Freire has been developing a work methodology that contemplates "multiple ways". This means that different work foci are developed simultaneously according to the interest and demands of the students' investigation, with reference to Freire's pedagogy.

The first moment in this methodology is the 'thematic investigation' when the participants' interest in research are raised, what they have been developing /intending to develop, (their dissertations and theses) and their reasons to take part in the Cátedra.



The second moment consists of their being immersed in Freire's thought for the first time. The researchers are invited to have a close contact with Freire's work. Here the researchers can choose a book from the bibliography recommended by the teacher or re-visit a book they are already acquainted with. The first threat presented to them, having this as a criterion, is to find concepts relevant to their themes/ research problems when reading Freire's texts.

The third work moment consists of socializing and discussing, in class, the inventory of concepts raised by the participants of the Cátedra. Here we have the starting point of analysis of the understandings coming from the readings and at the same time, each participant justifies his own choice of concepts in relation to his investigation.

The fourth moment consists of mapping out the concepts found by the group, having the class working collectively in accordance with the criteria of choice, interest and possible approximations to the themes and concepts, with the objective of defining the participant's "paths of research" each semester.

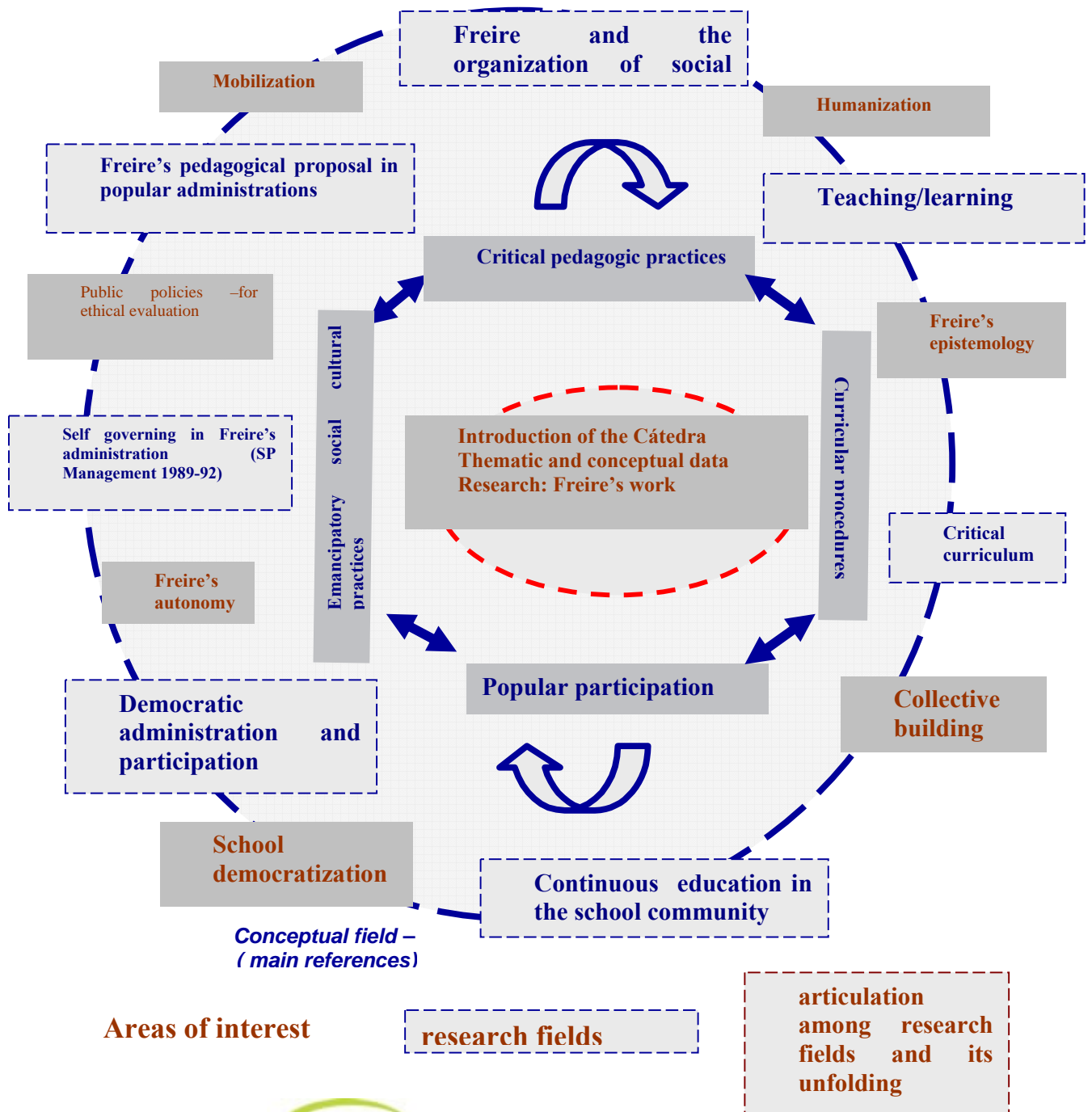
The fifth moment is characterized by the studying of the concepts in depth by each sub-group in class, putting together concepts and grand theme. In this moment, specific books written by Freire are pointed out to each sub-group to have the selected concepts thoroughly studied.

When this stage is reached, the objective is a written production that is socialized and discussed in class. This production has had many destinations. One of them is the post-graduate student own research who takes part in the Cátedra (dissertation or thesis). The second destination has been the acceptance and presentation of texts produced and discussed in the Cátedra in national and international events. The publication of books on this production, organized by the Cátedra is the third possibility for the spreading of it. In this case, the texts have been submitted to a committee for analysis (with pedagogic characteristics) who can send it back to the author for revision or complementation.



The chart presented on the following page pinpoints some moments of the understanding that are developed in the Cátedra showing a conceptual/thematic path which took place in one of the working semesters.

**CÁTEDRA PAULO FREIRE**



## **The Research in the Cátedra Paulo Freire**

The Cátedra has been developing a cumulative research on the influence of Paulo Freire's thought and work in the Brazilian State School systems envisaging contributing to the re-creation of political and educational practices in a critical-emancipatory perspective.

### **Objectives of Research**

1. To subsidize the "pedagogical and political doing" in the State School net engaged in the democratization of Education.

2- To identify and analyze Paulo Freire's influence in the public teaching systems in Brazil.

3- To build a data bank on the different administration in the public net in Brazil under the influence of Paulo Freire.

4. To be well documented, publish the research results and insert them into the Cátedra Paulo Freire site so as to allow permanent interaction among educators interested in them.

5. To articulate researchers and post graduate students from various parts of the country and from abroad who research on the influence of Paulo Freire in education and especially, in the public systems of teaching.

6. To spread the research results at national and international events.

### **The productions of the Cátedra**

For 7 years, the Cátedra has been publishing books and producing articles for national and international Congresses.

The texts written by the participants were responsible for the launching of three books. The book " Paulo Freire and educator's education - multiple looks", organized by Dr. Ana Maria Saul was launched in September, 2000, in Evora, Portugal, in an international Congress "A look upon Paulo Freire" and later, in very important editing companies in Brazil. This book was also published in Mexico and Spain in Catalan. "The





pedagogy of freedom in Paulo Freire", a book organized by Dr. Ana Maria Araújo Freire was launched in March, 2001, in the Cátedra Paulo Freire, at PUCSP. The third book, "Paulo Freire: a contemporary thought to understand and research on problems of our time" organized by Ana Maria Saul was launched in November, 2005.

In the second semester of 2000, the work of the Cátedra focused its attention on the collective creation of a site- an informative and interactive space about the Cátedra Paulo Freire which, since then, has been complemented every semester and which has been helping research and dissertations. The site is <http://www.pucsp.br/paulofreire/>

Participants in national and international events presented the works produced by the Cátedra.

The International meeting "A look upon Paulo Freire" which took place in September, 2000 in Évora - Portugal where a great number of articles were presented (8), International colloquiums Paulo Freire, in Recife, every two years, (1997-2005), the performance of the Cátedra in the organization of the Colóquio Paulo Freire (Coordenadoria de Educação de Santo Amaro - Secretaria Municipal de Educação de São Paulo -2004) were those which among them, stood out.

Also as a production of the Cátedra, it is worth mentioning that the Cátedra organized The Paulo Freire Chorus in 2001 where 17 participants prepared songs that Paulo Freire liked most and a video clip with excerpts and images of Paulo Freire taken from videos, which were presented together with the singing. The Chorus, stimulating the insertion, the socialization and the integration of the participants by means of another form of knowledge and expression sang at the final ceremony of the III **Colóquio Paulo Freire**, under the auspices of Municipal Secretary of Education of São Paulo, at Anhembi, and in an event sponsored by students from Mozambique, at PUCSP.

The organization of new publications with the registering of work productions by the participants of the Cátedra is a proposal that has been derived from actions in the classroom.

### **Cátedra Paulo Freire: The Richness of the Findings**

Looking back on these past events it is of prime importance to underline the points we think are of great value and that ought to be systematized and studied in depth. This will allow us to add reflexions on Freire's thought in the national and international literatures.

1. The establishment of "bridges" that reveal/articulate/and dive into the Pedagogy of Paulo Freire in connection with the area of knowledge of the Curriculum.

2. Explicitness about the analysis and deep study of Paulo Freire's thought as a subsidiary to the area of public policies and in special, introducing its contribution to formal education.



3- A proposition in building conceptual networks having as a starting point Paulo Freire's concepts that may constitute themselves in articulated referentials for research (building of networks, conceptual trees developed from the concepts selected by the researchers).

4- The articulation of concepts in the work of Freire with themes and fields of research.

5- The possibility of developing research, from Paulo Freire's thought in areas that have not been dealt with by him, such as environmental education, new educational technologies.

6- The possibility of systematize the contribution of Paulo Freire's thought from the production of new researches and the rescuing of the ones already developed.

Perspectives:

Goals (short and medium term)

1- Prepare and guide the production of works on Freire's thought for national and international events. The next event, already settled for this year (September, 2006) is the V International Paulo Freire Forum, in Valencia, Spain. In September, 2007 the VI Colloquium Paulo Freire will take place in Recife.

2- To go on with the research project: The influence of Paulo Freire's thought in the public Brazilian systems of teaching for financing it as a Thematic Project (FAPESP).

3- Loading the Cátedra Paulo Freire site, turning it into an important and dynamic tool for communication, research and registering of the multiple activities developed by the participants collectively.

4- Articulate researchers and post-graduate students from many parts of the country and from abroad who do research on the influence of Freire in education and, in special, in the public system of teaching.

5. Build a project for the preparation of teaching material - thematic videos and DVDS- for educator's education.

6- Prepare and publish a new book with themes produced by the Cátedra.

7- Prepare and publish a new book with the research results that are developed by the Cátedra.

8- Document and publish partial and final research results and insert them into the Cátedra Paulo Freire site so as to allow a permanent and everlasting consultation and interaction among the educators interested in them.



8.1 Map dissertations and theses that take Paulo Freire as reference in the area of education and insert the mapping into the site.

8.2 Keep the data bank updated as to the different management at the public nets of teaching in Brazil under the influence of Freire's thought.

8.3 Disseminate the results of research in national and international events.

9. Promote a seminar for administrators from de public nets for presenting and debating the research results.

10. Claim for a physical space for The Cátedra Paulo Freire.

11. Look for a sponsorer to re-activate The Paulo Freire Choir.

#### **Notes:**

1- Michael W. Apple, Professor at University of Wisconsin - Madison, one of the most known international specialists in the area of curriculum and in the analysis of educational politics and one of the main speakers in favour of Freire's work in the United States, points out that the great number of works by Freire has served various generations of critical educational work. He is important to all this multitude in many countries who/which recognized that our task is to give the world a name, building collectively an education which is simultaneously anti-homogeneous and starts from the vastest battlefield about what literacy means, who should control it and how critical literacy (what he called awareness) is linked to real fights by real people in real communities.

For Antônio Nóvoa, Professor of University of Lisbon, Portugal, who has written many scientific works in the educational domain; the life and the work of Freire are inscribed on the pedagogic imaginary of the XX century constituting an obligatory reference for many generations of educators. Distinct groups who re-placed them in many social and political contexts used the proposals launched by him. From an educational conceptualization of his own which trespasses the social theory, the moral duty and the political participation, Paulo Freire himself is an outstanding asset of pedagogical reflexion nowadays. His works functions as a kind of critical consciousness that prompts us to side against the unpolitical educational thought and pedagogic reflexion.

2- The works of Paulo Freire which include more than 20 books written by himself alone, plus books written as a co-author, books and articles by other writers on his work, already exceed seven thousand in number. His most important book, *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, has been translated into more than twenty languages. Only in English, more than five hundred thousand copies of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* have been published.

3- In the book "Paulo Freire: a bibliography, organized by Moacir Gadotti (1995) one can find an extensive and meaningful group of Brazilian and foreign researchers on Freire's work who analyze his life and work emphasizing the value of his contribution.

4- Mauricio Carrara is finishing his Master Degree under my supervision where he builds a technological tool for the registering of research under the influence of Freire's thought in public politics in education.



5- Dr. Ana Maria Saul belonged, together with Paulo Freire, to the teaching group in the teaching of classes in the *Núcleo Educação para os Excluídos da Escola*.

6- Almerindo Janela Afonso (Universidade do Minho - Portugal), Carlos Nuñez Hurtado (Cátedra Paulo Freire de Guadalajara- México), Licínio Lima (Universidade do Minho-Portugal), Lisete Regina Arelano (USP), Maria Eliete Santiago(UFPE), Pedro Pontual (CEAAL), Pillar Ubilla (Mestrado em Educação Popular - Uruguai), among others, took part in the Special Seminars and in "Diálogos in the Cátedra Paulo Freire".

7- In the semesters that followed, other themes gave north to the development of the Cátedra: ' Paulo Freire and the social movements'; 'The Influence of Paulo Freire's thought in the public systems of teaching in Brazil'; 'Paulo Freire's thought in the scenario of public education in Brazil: policies, theory and practice'; 'Paulo Freire: reference for analysis and building of educational politics'.

8- In these events we have been counting on the cooperation of the teachers from PUCSP post graduate course Education: Curriculum that have been taking part as lecturers or members in round up sessions: Alipio Casali, Ana Maria Saul, Antonio Chizzotti, Ivani Fazenda, Mário Sérgio Cortella, Mere Abramowicz.

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