

TEACHER TRAINING SCHOOLS IN COIMBRA (1901-1974)

*ESCOLAS DE FORMAÇÃO DE PROFESSORES EM COIMBRA (1901-1974)*

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**ABSTRACT:** The article provides a historical synthesis of a set of regional institutions for training primary school teachers in Coimbra, Portugal, from 1901 to 1974. The approach aimed to understand the evolution of the school spaces and buildings, the administration and teaching staff, and the curriculum, from the study plan to educational practices. All available archives, memory, and museology sources were mobilized and subjected to documentary and content analysis. A triangulation of sources was conducted to ensure a more comprehensive and holistic analysis. The results allowed for understanding the winding nature of the evolution, with advances and setbacks, and identifying changes and continuities.

**KEYWORDS:** Teacher education. Normal education. Primary teaching.

**RESUMO:** O artigo apresenta uma síntese histórica de um conjunto de instituições regionais de formação de professores do ensino primário em Coimbra, Portugal, de 1901 a 1974. A abordagem visou compreender a evolução dos espaços e edifícios escolares, da administração e do corpo docente e do currículo, desde o plano de estudos até as práticas educacionais. Todas as fontes disponíveis de arquivos, memória e museologia foram mobilizadas e submetidas à análise documental e de conteúdo. Foi realizada uma triangulação de fontes para garantir uma análise mais abrangente e holística. Os resultados permitiram compreender a natureza sinuosa da evolução, com avanços e retrocessos, e identificar mudanças e continuidades.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** Formação de professores. Ensino normal. Magistério primário.

**RESUMEN:** El artículo constituye una síntesis, de carácter histórico, sobre un conjunto de instituciones para la formación de profesores de educación primaria, a nivel regional – Coimbra, Portugal –, en el período de 1901 a 1974. El enfoque tuvo como objetivo comprender el significado de la evolución de los espacios y los edificios escolares, la dirección y el profesorado, así como el currículo, el plan de estudios y las prácticas educativas. Se movilizaron todas las fuentes en el campo de los archivos, la memoria o la museología, sujetas al análisis documental y de contenido. En el sentido de un análisis más completo y holístico, se triangularon las fuentes. Los resultados permitieron aprehender el carácter sinuoso de la evolución con avances y retrocesos, así como captar los cambios y la permanencia.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** Formación docente. Enseñanza normal. Enseñanza primaria.

## Introduction

This article constitutes a historical synthesis of non-higher education institutions at the local and regional levels, specifically in Coimbra. These schools were created with the purpose of training and professionalizing teachers for primary education, covering the first 3 or 4 years of schooling, depending on the period. The monographic approach, considering the limitations and possibilities of existing evidence, was based on the prior definition of categories to be addressed in the analysis: the spaces and buildings of the schools, the teaching staff and school administration, as well as the curriculum, from study plans to educational practices. In this sense, the existence and trajectory of each of the schools from 1901 to 1974 *are investigated: The Normal School for males and the Normal School for females (1901-1910), the Primary Normal School (1910-1930), and finally, the Primary Teaching School (1930-1974), which continued to exist until 1989. However, our analysis, due to its scope, concludes with the events of April 1974.* This text is an excerpt from a study dedicated to public primary normal education institutions in Coimbra.

The historical course and its motivations result, to a large extent, from the peculiarities of each of the schools, which distinguish them from other contemporary educational institutions. Differentiation from other educational institutions in Portugal, considering similar establishments and others existing in each period over an extensive period, is based, first and foremost, on the recipients of these schools, whether in terms of chronological age, gender, or geographical and socioeconomic origin. These indicators alone bring a high degree of variation in the composition of students, conferring a potential for differentiation from other schools. The initial effort of the State in each period, aiming to homogenize through criteria for approval and admission exams, should not obscure the presence of distinct cultures and values that, regardless of proximity or distance from the official school culture, contributed to the adaptation of the pedagogical project of each school in general, and each of the normal schools in Coimbra from 1901 to 1974, in particular.

The recognition of diversity among educational institutions (SANFELICE, 2006) is highlighted, which also applies to normal schools in different periods, as training institutions that transmit school culture but also produce their own cultures, giving them a "historical identity" (MAGALHÃES, 2004, p. 125). These institutions, as educational establishments, are a reality within another reality, framed within an (inter)national scale through educational policies and structures, which leads to their identity update (MAGALHÃES, 2004) occurring in the dialectical relationship between the actions of agents (freedom and autonomy) and the

structure (reflected in bureaucratic norms), resulting in "normative infidelities" (LIMA, 1998, p. 176), shaped by contextual changes, such as economic, political, and social factors, which lead to alterations, sometimes circumstantial, and offer a range of opportunities that constitute a field for the development of particularities arising from the historical vicissitudes experienced by schools (MOTA; FERREIRA, 2012).

This interpretation seeks to reconcile an approach to the relationships established by schools with their geographical and sociocultural environment and the analysis of their internal reality as institutions, organizations, and communities influenced by their material and symbolic conditions of existence. Sources from different domains, such as archives, memory, and museology (MAGALHÃES, 2004), are summoned to achieve this goal.

As an initial observation, it is worth noting the disorganization of the archives of the Portuguese educational system or, in some cases, their destruction, which poses insurmountable difficulties for historical research. In the case of Coimbra, the continuous dilapidation of the educational heritage of normal schools has been a challenging reality to assimilate. The lack of a proper archive at the central level, the absence of a historical archive in the institution responsible for the pedagogical and educational legacy, along with the dependence on the central authority that keeps the documentation away from municipal and district archives—especially the Archive of the University of Coimbra—has made this endeavor a laborious challenge (MOTA; FERREIRA, 2018). The triangulation of scarce documentation with evidence found in periodicals and collected oral testimonies allows for identifying significant moments and understanding some processes that marked the existence of these schools.

Although the historical reality of normal education and the proven efforts for its institutionalization in Portugal date back to the second half of the 19th century, with the legislation of Rodrigo da Fonseca Magalhães in 1835 aiming to create a network of primary normal schools, it was only in the new century that the schools in Coimbra were established for the training of primary school teachers. Their establishment occurred in 1901, one intended for males (FREITAS, 1905) and another for females (COIMBRA, n.d.).

## The spaces and buildings of the school

**Figure 1** - Building of the Primary Normal School of Coimbra (Largo da Sé Velha)



Source: Private collection

The schools, between 1901 and the first half of the 1940s, were housed in a rented building in the parish of Sé Nova, in Largo da Sé Velha, facing the imposing gate of the Cathedral. The building was located at the corner of Cabido Street (Figure 1<sup>1</sup>). Although we do not have any documentary evidence before 1910, this building had likely been housing the primary teaching establishments in the city since 1901. The normal schools operated on the upper floors. In the center of the second floor, in this photograph from the 1980s, it is still possible to identify the mast where the national flag was raised. The annexed application schools operate on the ground floor, where a well-known restaurant in the city now has an open door after the building's renovation.

From the beginning, the facilities were considered cramped, and especially in the early 20th century, resource limitations compromised the pedagogical objectives of the institutions. The furniture was reduced to the bare minimum. Additionally, between 1901 and 1910, *the annexed school could not meet* the demand and handle the volume of admission requests from children due to space limitations—a small-sized classroom (FREITAS, 1905).

The establishment of the Republic and the creation of the Primary Normal School, which operated on a coeducational basis, did not change the situation. The new school in the same building *naturally* resulted in the same problems. Since the 1920s, there have been demands for constructing a new building specifically designed for normal education in Coimbra. Álvaro Viana de Lemos, a professor at the Primary Normal School of Coimbra, presented arguments about its necessity, guidelines, and criteria, including pedagogical aspects, for the construction of new facilities for the Primary Normal School of Coimbra in an article in

<sup>1</sup> The photo, from the 1980s of the 20th century, was kindly provided to us in 2006 by Mr. Architect Adriano Lucas, grandson of the former owner.

the magazine of the normal students in Coimbra in 1926 (LEMOS, 1926). However, the overall state budget and subsequent sociopolitical transformations postponed the issue. The matter would only regain visibility in 1947.

**Figure 2** - View of Quinta da Rainha (Celas). EMPC building in the center at the bottom



Source: Anonymous photograph, undated. ImagoTeca. Municipal Library of Coimbra.

In fact, at the end of the first five-year period of the 1940s, after the partial remodeling of the building that previously housed the girls' high school, the Coimbra Primary Teacher Training School (EMPC) moved to a more peripheral area of the city amid urbanization. From Sé Velha, near the University, in the city center, the school was transferred to Quinta da Rainha, near Cruz de Celas (Figure 2). According to student-teacher accounts, there was a purer air and broader horizons (MAJOAL, 1949).

Prominent aspects included the small dimensions of the building—only two classrooms—which reflected the overall reduction process that all teacher training went through, such as the duration of the program and the curriculum, as well as the concern for gender separation, evident by the existence of two waiting rooms for students. The adaptation works of the building were still ongoing, and the conversion of the gymnasium for mixed-use at the EMPC was excluded. The annexed application school continued to operate in Sé Velha. The purer air and the new horizons did not eliminate the inadequacy of the equipment and classroom spaces, which the student-teachers denounced (ENVERGONHADA, 1956).

**Figure 3 - Visit to the construction site of EMPC**



Source: Anonymous photograph. Imageteca, Municipal Library of Coimbra.

As Viñao Frago pointed out, a school as a physical location requires a stable and fixed space designated explicitly for teaching. It is a space with its nature, planned, designed, constructed, and used exclusively for this purpose (VIÑAO FRAGO, 2001). However, despite the desires of the teacher trainees and some inhabitants of Coimbra, it was necessary to wait until the second half of the 1950s for the EMPC to be installed in a purpose-built building. On October 20, 1958, classes began in the new EMPC building (Figure 3). Its inauguration would occur almost two years later, on October 16, 1960. The building met the needs from the description and contemporary reception (MOTA; FERREIRA, 2012).

The building would house the EMPC until its demise. From 1986 onwards, the Escola do Magistério Primário de Coimbra would share the building and space with a higher education institution, the Escola Superior de Educação. In 1989, the Escola do Magistério Primário de Coimbra was definitively abolished. Over six decades after receiving its first classes, it is in this building that the Escola Superior de Educação, an organic unit of the Instituto Politécnico de Coimbra, operates today. This situation, at least, demonstrates how school facilities have a long duration, persisting beyond the reforms and the technical and pedagogical choices that were part of their origin (VIÑAO FRAGO, 2001).

### **From the teaching staff to the school administration - a possible characterization**

The teaching staff of the normal schools was selected through public competitive exams, and according to the legislation, the team of the normal schools consisted of 7 permanent teachers (PORTUGAL, 1902). The designation of different types of teachers, such as "tenured" or "temporary," "permanent," and "assistant," among others, varied throughout the existence of the institutions (PINTASSILGO; MOGARRO; HENRIQUES, 2012). At the beginning of the

20th century, the legislator established that to teach in normal education in Portugal, it was necessary to possess a legal qualification for teaching, which implied that primary school teachers would be exclusively professionals in the field (PORTUGAL, 1902). The regulation of the decree published the following year, was more specific, determining that only individuals with a diploma of approval in the course of normal schools or a teaching qualification could apply for the competitions (PORTUGAL, 1903). However, despite the limited available information, this situation was not verified in the normal schools of Coimbra between 1901 and 1910.

Regarding the Coimbra Normal School, for males, seven permanent teachers were identified, five of whom were bachelors. In addition to the director Agostinho Viegas da Cunha Lucas, Carlos da Silva Oliveira, Macário da Silva, José Falcão Ribeiro, João dos Santos Donato, and Father Ricardo Simões dos Reis were also present. Furthermore, two contracted teachers were mentioned, Augusto da Costa Martins and Francisco Lopes Lima de Macedo (FREITAS, 1905).

Their stability is evident with a teaching staff comprising at least 78% permanent teachers, and 71% of the teachers held university degrees. This demonstrates a teaching staff with a high level of scientific preparation for the time, although one could question the adequacy of their academic training and their reflective involvement in education in general and teacher education in particular.

As an indicator, it is noted that, except José Falcão Ribeiro, none of the other teachers are listed in the Dictionary of Portuguese Educators (NÓVOA, 2003). He had a diverse education, studying Natural Philosophy in 1896 and Law in 1903. Committed to education and teaching, he worked as a teacher at the primary, complementary, and secondary levels, assuming the learning of the Pedagogy course in normal education from 1903 onwards. Additionally, he was involved in educational journalism, directed educational institutions, and held the position of director of public instruction in Angola (NÓVOA, 2003).

The director was appointed by the government, selected from the teachers of the school who were or had been engaged in higher or secondary teaching. Alternatively, they could hold a diploma from the course of the normal schools and have served as teachers in one of the three normal schools for males. This role was assigned to Alfredo de Freitas, a doctor and professor at the Normal Superior School attached to the University of Coimbra. He taught subjects such as Special Methodology of Mathematical Sciences (1916-1917) and Special Methodology of Drawing (1923-1924, 1927-1929), besides being a teacher at the José Falcão High School. As



a central figure in the school's life, he had the power to supervise and oversee the school community. As stated in his report, the director's main objectives were to ensure punctuality and attendance in school exercises, maintain discipline inside and outside the classroom, and ensure the full implementation of the curriculum, even though he criticized its excessive development and lack of content coherence, while respecting the didactic proposals contained within them (FREITAS, 1905).

For various reasons, the Normal School for Female Teachers faced a more significant variation in its teaching staff, although it maintained (practically) the same number of permanent teachers. Among them, Adriana Josefina Martins Ribeiro Saraiva stands out, who joined the school in 1908, coming from the District School of Primary Teaching Qualification in Castelo Branco (HENRIQUES, 2012); António Augusto Cortezão, a physician and son of Jaime (Zuzarte) Cortezão, a prominent figure in Portuguese politics and culture in the 20th century; António Cândido D'Almeida Leitão (since 1907); António Couceiro Martins; Francisco Adolpho Manso Preto (until 1906); Guilhermino Augusto de Barros; Ismael de Moura Tavares, a law graduate; and Father José Correia Marques Castanheira (since 1908)<sup>2</sup>, although he only fulfilled the legal requirements in 1908. The teaching staff included three contracted female teachers: Ester D'Azevedo Pestana, Maria Eliza da Silva (since 1904), and Palmira da Cunha Sequeira.

Regarding the qualifications of the teaching staff, it is noteworthy that there were five bachelor's degree holders and one licensed teacher, although not all of them coincided during their time at the school. This educational institution permanently employed five teachers with university degrees, which placed it in a similar situation to the corresponding male school. Among this teaching staff, Francisco Adolpho Manso Preto deserves special mention as the most qualified member, holding a Doctorate in Mathematics (PINTO, 2012), being a professor at the Central Lyceum of Coimbra, a member of the Astronomical Observatory of Coimbra, and the author of approximately twenty publications, covering both the field of mathematics (PRETO, 1873) and textbooks for normal (PRETO, 1903), lyceum (PRETO, 1881), and primary education levels (PRETO, 1881).

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<sup>2</sup> Author of a set of normal and primary education textbooks: **Compendium of moral and Christian doctrine, rights and duties of citizens, domestic economy**. Coimbra: University Press, 1904; **Christian doctrine and morals**: for use by students of primary schools in accordance with the official programs. Coimbra: University Press, 1903; **Elements of moral coordinated harmoniously with the official program for normal and district schools**. Coimbra: University Press, 1902.

As the director, Guilhermino Augusto de Barros was appointed in 1901. He was the son of the writer, poet, judge, and politician of the same name and held other public positions. However, he was professionally committed to education and teaching. In addition to being a permanent teacher at the Industrial and Commercial School of Avelar Brotero, he also taught at the university level as a professor of Methodology and Historical-Geographical Sciences at the University of Coimbra.

In the last quarter of 1910, the regime change resulted in natural changes, including replacing the management of the normal schools in Coimbra. António Cândido d'Almeida Leitão was appointed as the director of both schools, overseeing the transitional period until the new teacher training institutions were created. The most notable aspect of his leadership was, first and foremost, longevity. With the Republican revolution, he took over the leadership of both schools and was responsible for merging the two normal education institutions. He led the Primary Normal School of Coimbra, of which he was part of the organizing committee until its closure, thus serving two decades as the director of the city's normal education institution(s). He also demonstrated determination and initiative by taking advantage of the legislative measures of 1914 by then Minister of Education, Sobral Cid, to create the first Primary Normal School in Coimbra, which operated until the official establishment and commencement of primary normal schools (MOTA; FERREIRA, 2012) — the one in Lisbon in 1918, and those in Coimbra and Porto in 1919.

**Figure 4 – Teachers of the Primary Normal School of Coimbra (1919-1930)**

Name	Period	Observations
Adriana Josefina Martins Ribeiro Silva	1919 – 1926	Higher Primary School (12 - 1922)
Agostinho Jorge da Silva	1919 - 1930	Dr. José Falcão Central High School (12 - 1922)
Alberto Cardoso Pires de Figueiredo	1919 – 1930	Dr. José Falcão Central High School (12 - 1922)
Alice Baptista de Figueiredo e Oliveira	1919 - 1930	(12 – 1922)
Álvaro Viana de Lemos	1919 – 1930	(12 – 1922)
António cândido de Almeida Leitão	1919 - 1930	Director 1919 - 1930
António Lopes de Morais Silvano	1919 - 1930	National School of Agriculture of Coimbra (12 – 1922)
Armando Augusto Leal Gonçalves	1919 - 1930	Commissioner General of Police
Augusto César Gomes Soeiro	1919 – 1930	School Doctor (12 – 1922)
Bernadino da Fonseca Lage	1919 - 1930	Dr. José Falcão Central High School (12 - 1922); attached since 1923
Carlos da Costa Mota	1919 – 1930	Higher Primary School of Coimbra (12 – 1922)
Ema Alves das Neves	1924 – 1930	Monday assistant at the Faculty of Medicine (12 – 1922)
Ema Vidal Pinheiro	1927 - 1930	
Henrique António das Neves Bravo	1919 – 1930	On commission from the Lisbon Primary Normal School (6 - 1926)
Henrique Videira e Melo	1919 – 1930	Appointed in June 1926
João Vasco de Carvalho	1919 – 1930	Agricultural engineer (12 - 1922)
Joaquim Afonso Fernandes Duarte	1919 – 1930	Infanta D. Maria High School in Coimbra (12 - 1922)
Joaquim Simões Pereira	1919 – 1930	Évora High School (12 - 1922)
José de Menezes Torres	1919 – 1930	
José Falcão Ribeiro	1919 – 1930	Higher Primary School of Coimbra (12 – 1922)
José Rodrigues Costa	1923 - 1927	
José Tomás da Fonseca	1919 – 1930	(12 – 1922)
Manuel Pina de Almeida	1927 - 1930	
Sílvio Pélico de Oliveira Neto	1919 – 1930	Coimbra Commercial School (November 25, 1922); Commercial and Industrial Institute; appointed in June 1926.

Source: Elaborated by the authors

The renewal of schools and their purposes entailed profound changes in the curriculum, which could only be accomplished through an increase in the teaching staff, as can be observed here (Figure 4)<sup>3</sup>. Among the teachers of the Primary Normal School of Coimbra, only about 21% come from the previous school before 1919, namely: Adriana Josefina Martins Ribeiro Saraiva, António Cândido d'Almeida Leitão, Bernardino da Fonseca Lage, José Falcão Ribeiro, and José Tomás da Fonseca. This represents a significant renewal of the teaching staff, indicating the concern of the political power to improve the quality of education offered in normal education, either through the reduction to only three normal schools or the quality of the teaching staff.

<sup>3</sup> Table compiled based on the following documents: PORTUGAL. Coimbra Primary Teaching School. **Payroll Notebook of the Coimbra Primary Teaching School 1919-1925**. Coimbra: Depository of the School of Education, 1919-1925; PORTUGAL. Coimbra Primary Teaching School. **Payroll Notebook of the Coimbra Primary Teaching School 1926-1930**. Coimbra: Depository of the School of Education, 1926-1930.

When analyzing the absence of records of their concepts, educational actions, and practices during this period, especially considering the nine hundred educators listed in the Dictionary of Educators edited by António Nóvoa, it is noted that only 25% (six) of them have biographies in the book (NÓVOA, 2003). For comparison, during the same period of existence, the Higher Normal School (1915–1930) of the University of Coimbra has 75% of its teaching staff mentioned in the Dictionary above (FERREIRA; MOTA, 2013). Even more significant in assessing the true extent of the qualitative transformation of the teaching staff of normal primary education in Coimbra is that out of these six teachers with biographies, two were already teachers at the Normal Schools of Coimbra at the beginning of the century, as in the case of António Cândido d'Almeida Leitão and José Rosa Falcão Ribeiro, and four, including Bernardino da Fonseca Lage and José Tomás da Fonseca, were already teaching at the former Primary Normal School (1914–1919), representing 16% of the teaching staff of the new school. However, this analysis serves only as an indicator and should be used as a starting point for reflection on this aspect. Finally, the profound restructuring of the normal education school network and the modifications in the curriculum introduced a definite improvement in the quality of the education offered.

In the development of the political process initiated on May 28, 1926, the Coimbra Primary Teaching School (EMPC) was established in 1930 following the abolition of primary normal schools. The evolution of its teaching staff necessarily and naturally accompanied the processes of transformation in Portuguese social formation, the consequent educational policies, and the objectives assigned to educational institutions of its nature. A general trend for its expansion spanned the entire second half of the 20th century, driven by the massification of the education system and the social demand for education. However, the first six-year period of its existence constituted a period of transition and replacement of political legitimacy, during which normal education became the subject of a series of often contradictory decisions (MOTA; FERREIRA, 2012). The new Coimbra School was at the center of events, with its educational project and the pedagogical actions of its teachers being publicly and politically questioned at both local and national levels, leading to an inquiry that resulted in the suspension of enrollments for the 1st year in 1936 (MOTA, 2007).

Reopening school enrollment in 1942 solidified the school model as the most suitable for initial teacher training. During the Estado Novo period, the teaching staff of the Coimbra Primary Teaching School remained stable, with the number of teachers ranging from eight to twelve between 1943 and 1954 and between eleven and fourteen from 1962 to 1974.

Since 1942, the school has had two directors. The first was Mário dos Santos Guerra, who held the position until 1946. He was a secondary school teacher and later became the principal of one of the high schools in the city. The second director was Francisco de Sousa Loureiro, who led the institution until the social and political changes resulting from April 1974.

During these 28 years, the EMPC had shared leadership between the director and José Maria Gaspar, the professor of Special Didactics. The legislation already highlighted these two positions in primary teaching schools, with the director focusing on teaching Pedagogy and the professor of Special Didactics being responsible for the connection with educational practice. This latter professor, in particular, played a role of great importance that went beyond this specific assignment.

Francisco de Sousa Loureiro (NÓVOA, 2003) had a degree in Letters and served as the director of the EMPC from 1946 to 1974. He was one of the key figures in the construction of the normal education system in Portugal from the 1940s onwards, advocating for an education with a nationalist character. Furthermore, he was also the author of works on education, including *Lições de Pedagogia e Didática Geral* (LOUREIRO, 1950), which supported his activities as a teacher and for his students' study.

On the other hand, José Maria Gaspar (NÓVOA, 2003) had a more diverse background, having completed preparatory studies in Philosophy and Theology at the Seminary. He held a diploma in primary teaching and a course in Pedagogical Sciences. A Catholic and nationalist, he had deep connections with the Estado Novo (New State) and the Church. He served as a member of the National Education Board and participated in the work of the World Union of Catholic Educators. Additionally, he was a frequent contributor to specialized education and teaching publications, authoring books on various topics, including special didactics (GASPAR, 1959), reflecting his lectures, primary and primary teaching legislation, and adult education.

In an accumulation regime, recruiting teachers to teach at the EMPC was done at the city's high schools, especially at the D. João III Normal High School, for Physical Education, Moral, and Civic Education, as well as for Music and Choral Singing. At the Infanta D. Maria National High School, recruitment focused on selecting female teachers for the Physical Education area. Later on, two teachers from the D. Duarte High School also started teaching at the Teacher Training School in the subjects of Drawing, Crafts, and Physical Education. The lack of permanent teachers at the EMPC and the dependence on recruitment from secondary

education institutions may have hindered the development of professionalism and the construction of professional identities for primary education teachers.

### **The curriculum, from study to educational practice**

The curriculum established by decree (PORTUGAL, 1901) in 1901 and the subsequent regulations (PORTUGAL, 1903) defined a three-year course and established the following subjects in the study plan: 1st Portuguese language and literature; 2nd French language; 3rd Practical arithmetic and elementary geometry, notions of commercial and agricultural writing; 4th Moral and Christian doctrine, rights and duties of citizens, domestic economy; 5th Geography, chronology, and history, with a special focus on Portuguese history; 6th Calligraphy, linear and ornamental drawing, map copying; Elements of natural sciences and their applications to agriculture and hygiene; notions of practical agriculture; 7th Pedagogy and, in particular, methodology of primary education, legislation of the Portuguese Primary School; 8th Physical Education; 9th Music; and in the normal school for females, an additional 10th Needlework and crafts (PORTUGAL, 1903). The study plan shows an effort to aggregate and reduce the topics of some subjects; however, the course maintained its theoretical character. The workload was approaching current standards, ranging from 25 to 29 weekly hours, with variations between classes and between the normal school for males and females (PORTUGAL, 1903).

The specialty and general education science component, representing about 90%, maintains an excessive weight, and the disciplines have a predominantly academic nature, even losing emphasis on practical exercises. With minor variations, the pedagogical aspect continues to be emphasized. In the normal schools in Coimbra, classes took place from Monday to Saturday, from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. For example, we can observe the weekly schedule of the 1st and 2nd grades of the Normal School for males (Figure 5).

**Figure 5** - Weekly schedule of the 1st and 2nd grades of the Normal School for males (the academic year 1903-1904)

Hours	Classes	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
9H00 – 10H00	1º	Pedagogy	French	Ethics, Rights, and Duties	French	Pedagogy	French
	2º	French	Pedagogy	French	Pedagogy	French	Ethics, Rights, and Duties
11h15 – 12h15	1º		Geography	History		Geografia	History
	2º	Arithmetic		Arithmetic	Practice in the attached school	Arithmetic	Arithmetic
12H30 – 13H30	1º	Arithmetic		Arithmetic			History
	2º		Geography	History	Practice in the attached school	Geography	
13H45 – 14H45	1º	Portuguese	Portuguese	Drawing	Geometry	Portuguese	Drawing
	2º	Natural Sciences	Music	Natural Sciences	Physical Education	Natural Sciences	Portuguese
15H00 – 16H00	1º	Natural Sciences	Physical Education	Natural Sciences	Music	Natural Sciences	Portuguese
	2º	Portuguese	Portuguese	Drawing	Geometry	Portuguese	Drawing

Source: Freitas (1905)

The articulation between the teaching of educational science and the practice of teaching, that is, what is learned in the normal school and what is applied and practiced in the annexed school, is the central concern in teacher education. The delay in regulating the teaching practice, more than two years after the publication of the Regulation (PORTUGAL, 1905), required an additional effort in the organization (and improvisation) of *practical exercises in special methodology and processology*. These practical exercises were considered fundamental and received careful attention, as highlighted by Alfredo de Freitas. In Coimbra, a temporary solution was found by conducting them on Thursdays (Figure 5), as they were supervised by the teacher from the application annexed school. Despite the precariousness in execution, the school director ensured, in his report, that the exercises covered different disciplines of the primary instruction program and were considered useful, in addition to providing second-year students with the opportunity to demonstrate pedagogical skills (FREITAS, 1905).

*The Instructions* marked the beginning of regulating the teaching practice, establishing the purposes, guidelines, participants and their respective roles, activities, schedule, and evaluation methods. They outlined the professional profile, describing them as someone with knowledge of pedagogical doctrines and a *particular vocation for educating and teaching*. The

practice aimed to provide normal school students with practical experience in school life, preparing them to perform executive, organizational, and interactive teaching functions. In the third year, the student-teacher already supervised a class, being responsible for developing a schedule or lesson plan, subject to approval by the Pedagogy teacher. The importance of the Pedagogy teacher and the recognition of the teacher's practical knowledge from the annexed school are aspects of great importance. However, the detachment of teachers from the specialty and general education subjects worsened the lack of connection between theory and practice and impoverished education (BAPTISTA, 2004).

The curriculum, in effect from 1920 (SAMPAIO, 1975), is based on the structure established by the decree of May 10, 1919 (PORTUGAL, 1919a). It includes subjects of educational sciences or formal subjects for the teacher, such as History of Popular Instruction in Portugal, Experimental Psychology and Pedology, General Pedagogy and History of Education, Notions of Hygiene and School Hygiene, Methodology and Legislation of Primary Education (GOMES, 1996). Additionally, a good number of other subjects can be categorized as follows:

i. Within the scope of "applied or instructive" sciences or disciplines, we have those related to "aesthetic education," such as Modeling and Drawing, Manual Work, Music and Choral Singing, Physical Education, Sewing, and Needlework. These subjects were considered essential in the republican reform, as they were seen as the basis of learning in the active school.

ii. In the domain of "social sciences," subjects such as the History of Civilization related to National History, Notions of Common Law and Social Economics, Notions of Domestic Economy, and Social Education were included. These subjects were justified by the diversity of social functions attributed to Republican teachers, both within and outside the school.

iii. In the "intellectual education" field, the emphasis was on Physical-Chemical and Natural Sciences, General Geography, the Chorography of Portugal and its Colonies, Portuguese Language and Literature, Elementary Mathematics, and Notions of Agriculture and Rural Economy.

iv. Teaching Practice (PORTUGAL, 1919a).

A curriculum structure that reflected the desire to keep up with the scientific and pedagogical movement in Europe conferred a new professional and social status upon primary school teachers. This situation provided them with an education based on innovative



approaches, grounded in the scientific discoveries of modern pedagogy, and a piece of vast encyclopedic knowledge as a foundation for acquiring a set of indispensable scientific and pedagogical competencies and skills for the teaching profession in a society oriented towards progress.

Influenced by the spirit of the New Education, the curriculum programs embodied the Sciences of Education, encompassing five major approaches: pedagogical, psychological, sociological, historical, and methodological. Each program contained pedagogical instructions to be followed during its development to emphasize the professional nature of teaching in normal schools. These instructions consisted of guidelines and pedagogical principles underpinning their application in primary school programs. As a result, subjects were organized around three axes: a review of acquired knowledge, a deepening of understanding, and a teaching methodology of the subject.

Overall, the pedagogical component assumes a significant weight of 23%, and pedagogy claims a scientific status by studying educational facts. The objective is to empower teachers for qualified and competent pedagogical intervention, seeking to scientifically understand four aspects: the purposes, the means to be mobilized, the contexts, and the recipients.

In the field of Pedagogy, assessed here through the reading of the "Elementos de Pedagogia" by the school director, António Cândido d'Almeida Leitão, the study is structured into three parts. The first part addresses the general organization of the school, dealing with topics such as education in general, material organization and furniture of the school, school diseases, pedagogical organization, and discipline. In the second part, the author dedicates himself to the study of methodology and the process of primary education and Psychology, focusing on understanding psychological facts, such as intelligence, affectivity, and will. It concludes with the topic of comprehensive education and the history of pedagogy and Portuguese popular instruction, briefly addressing Pestalozzi, Froebel, and Spencer, limited to the 19th century. Finally, the study of Portuguese popular instruction, starting in 1772, addresses its evolution up to the 1901 reform. Regardless of the treatment given to each topic, which may be more or less superficial, it is challenging to consider that the eight weekly hours throughout the course are sufficient for a thorough study that allows for effective articulation with educational practice, especially regarding methodology and the teaching process (LEITÃO, 1918).

Nevertheless, Pedagogy, perceived as the science of education, a science that aggregates and mobilizes knowledge—such as Psychology and Methodology—is the foundation of

education. As an essentially professional educational institution, the normal school should focus on studying facts based on observation. This perspective highlights the positive and experimental teaching method, in which teachings should start from observed facts to ideas (theory). In this context, teaching methods acquire particular importance, emphasizing the relevance of methodology.

Among the analyzed teaching activities and reflections, the book "Vinte e Oito Lições de Metodologia" (Twenty-Eight Lessons of Methodology) by Bernardino da Fonseca Lage stands out, which comprehends the creation of a "methodized professional spirit" (PORTUGAL, 1919b). From Lage's preface, it becomes clear that the objective was to provide students with a book to assist in acquiring knowledge and facilitating their technical preparation. He acknowledges the central position that Methodology has acquired in normal education. However, Bernardino Lage did not fail to express his distance from the official program, considering it inadequate for the level of education it was intended for and poorly structured, which, in his opinion, resulted in unnecessary repetitions of subjects.

The discipline of Methodology was divided into 36 and 32 lessons for the 1st and 2nd semesters, respectively, in the 1st grade. In light of this, the teacher divided his studies and the introduction into two parts. In the introduction, consisting of three lessons, he discusses Methodology, its relations with logic, and the general method. In the first part, titled "Metodologia das Ciências", he analyzes the classification and order of the sciences, the sciences and practices, and the various forms of the sciences throughout nine lessons. The remaining sixteen lessons comprise the 2nd and final part, "A Metodologia da Educação ou Metodologia Pedagógica". The first five lessons are dedicated to methodological problems, addressing the different aspects to be known about the child and the importance of mastering this knowledge. He then discusses the general pedagogical method and explains the history of education methods, from the 16th century to Ferrer and the "rational" method. From lessons twenty-two to twenty-six, he delves into essential methodological elements in educational practice. The last two lessons are dedicated to the Methodology of maternal, primary, and higher primary education (LAGE, 1922).

**Figure 6 - Curriculum of Primary Teaching Schools**

Disciplines	1942				1960				
	1° S	2° S	3° S	Total	1° S	2° S	3° S	4° S	Total
Pedagogy and General Didactics [and History of Education]	5	-	-	5	4	4	1	1	10
Psychology Applied to Education	3	6	-	9	4	3	3	2	12
Special Didactics of Group A	-	6	6	12	3	2	2	2	9
Special Didactics of Group B	-	-	-	-	3	2	2	2	9
School Hygiene	3	-	-	3	2	2	2	1	7
Physical Education	2	2	2	6	2	2	2	-	6
Drawing and Educational Crafts	2	3	2	7	-	2	2	2	6
Feminine Education	2	2	2	6	-	2	1	-	3
Music and Choral Singing [Music Education]	2	2	2	6	2	1	-	-	3
Legislation and School Administration	-	-	3	3	2	2	-	-	4
Political and Administrative Organization of the Nation	2	-	-	2	2	2	2	-	6
Moral and Civic Education [Moral Education]	2	-	-	2	2	2	2	-	6
Pedagogical Practice	5	8	8	21	2	4	8	-	14
<i>Total</i>	28	29	25		28	30	27	10	

Source: Developed by the authors using current legislation.

The Estado Novo (New State) investment in the school model for initial teacher training was reflected in practice through the reopening of enrollments in primary teaching schools from 1942 onwards. Considering the legally defined curricula, we can identify two sub-periods between that date and 1974: 1942 to 1960 and 1961 to 1974. The first sub-period corresponds to the curriculum that took effect in 1942, and the second sub-period is described in the plan approved in 1960. However, even with the transformations in Portuguese social formation, the recognition of the need to reform primary teaching schools, and the increase in schooling, the force programs continued to be approved in 1943 (PORTUGAL, 1943).

In addition to reducing the course to three semesters (PORTUGAL, 1943), the curricula were reduced to two years almost two decades later (PORTUGAL, 1960) in a timid attempt at correction. The pedagogical culture subjects were maintained but were "purged" of what was considered excessively complex and superfluous for the profession. The objective was to avoid what was termed as pedantry, following the idea that a teacher is not a doctor and therefore

does not need excessive knowledge that could hinder their teaching performance. The programs were based on moral and national Catholic principles. In addition to the expressive disciplines, there was a third group of disciplines with pronounced ideological nature, such as Political and Administrative Organization of the Nation or Female Education.

The changes introduced by the 1960 decree were little more than hesitant. Maintaining the programs gave the changes a character that was almost, but not entirely, nominal (Figure 6 - changes in bold). Additionally, some teachers were authors of their textbooks or handouts at the Primary Teaching School in Coimbra, a practice that remained unchanged. Essentially, they continued with what had always been done.

Nevertheless, some changes were introduced. The workload of pedagogical culture subjects increased at the expense of expressive disciplines due to reduced allocated hours and the creation of the 4th semester. The most significant changes occurred in the internship. In 1942, the internship took place outside the environment of the teaching school, in official primary schools, from March 1st to July 31st, under the guidance of highly competent primary school teachers. The distribution of internships was the responsibility of the directors. With the 1960 decree, the internship began to be carried out in the practice schools attached to the primary teaching schools, which had previously been reserved for pedagogical practice. The teachers in these schools were appointed as internship supervisors. A council of practice schools was established, chaired by the director, and composed of the teachers from these schools and the teachers of Special Didactics. These teachers were responsible for coordinating the work carried out by the two institutions.

We can outline an understanding based on the bibliographic production of some of its teachers, as little information is available about the classes due to a lack of sources or records. Francisco de Sousa Loureiro, in his *Lessons* (LOUREIRO, 1950), divides the content into two parts: one dedicated to Pedagogy and the other to General Didactics. He begins the lessons with the notion of Pedagogy - *the science and art of Education* - and emphasizes the comprehensive nature of formation. In the following chapters, he explores the necessity, possibility, and limits of Education, different educational conditions, means of Education, and habits. In the study of General Didactics, they start with the concept of didactics - *the science and art of learning* - and then address issues related to Education, its laws, motivation, learning curves, and organization. They then become familiar with different methods, from Herbart's formal steps to projects or Dewey's method, including the use of games, centers of interest, and the acroamatic method, carefully adapted to the values of the New State. Regarding Didactic

Processology, issues such as student distribution in the classroom, schedule and textbooks, lesson preparation, school, and didactic material, school trips, exercises and exams, and the teacher's attitude are addressed.

In the classes of Special Didactics taught by José Maria Gaspar, students began by becoming aware of didactics as a way to *conduct and receive teaching*, and they understood that Didactics, along with Psychology, Hygiene, Morals, and other sciences, established the norms that should guide their action in Education. After discussing the place of Didactics among the sciences of Education, distinctions between General Didactics and Special Didactics were addressed. They then studied the general conduct of lessons, including planning and phases. The central part of the study focused on the didactics of specific knowledge domains of primary Education, such as Arithmetic, Mother Tongue, Geography, History, Manual Work, and Drawing (GASPAR, 1959).

### Final Remarks

In terms of an outline, we begin by highlighting how the material conditions of existence leave an indelible mark on our perspective of education and any educational experience. However, the analysis of the evolution of spaces and buildings, combined with the study of curriculum plans, illustrates the importance of symbolic conditions in giving meaning to education development.

It is noteworthy how the professionalization of teaching and the development of teacher training institutions occurred in close collaboration with the State. This, coupled with the traditional centrality of the State in education in Portugal, resulted in an extreme sensitivity of the institutions to the political transformation process of Portuguese society. The permeability of the State to be influenced and controlled by elites led, in addition to natural changes in the objectives pursued by the institutions, to the replacement of actors, as can be observed. However, it is essential to emphasize that although standardized by the education system in which they were embedded and situated in a specific time with particular material and symbolic conditions - such as political, cultural, or socioeconomic factors - they continued to thrive, resulting in the management and experience of a predestined fate with a unique identity.

The disconnection between norms and social practices is inevitable. In Coimbra, its first institution was only established in the 20th century, almost a century after the first legislative act aimed at its creation. In the early schools established in 1901 and 1902, a significant number

of teachers did not have a primary normal teaching diploma, as required by law. The period of the First Republic, marked by a voluminous and enthusiastic legislative production, coexisted with an almost non-existent correspondence in the social practices of primary teacher training in Coimbra. Furthermore, what was established was far removed from educational reflections and scientific production in Educational Sciences at the time. The Estado Novo, with its brutal reduction and dramatic control, only further accentuated this lack of coincidence. Even so, altering the curriculum plan in 1960 changed little or nothing in pedagogical practices and the content taught.

Therefore, it is essential to emphasize that the process of constructing teacher education in Coimbra and the rest of the country is not linear, characterized by advances and setbacks, such as the transition from the Primary Normal School to Primary Teaching School. Changes are always accompanied by elements of continuity, such as the constant increase in the importance of educational sciences in teacher training.

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