

**WAYS OF SAYING, WAYS OF SEEING  
PUBLIC IMAGES OF TEACHERS  
(19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> Centuries)**

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*The article is organized into three main sections:<sup>1</sup>*

*– In the first section, inspired by the work of Martin Jay, I try to show the denigration of vision in historical thinking, suggesting that images are demanding new theoretical and methodological approaches susceptible of elucidation in their own terms.*

*– In the second section, I attempt an analytical interpretation of a collection of public images of teachers, dating from the second half of the nineteenth century, in order to show the heuristic potential of this material in the historical treatment of educational matters.*

*– Finally in the third section, I outline some trends of historiographical renewal, giving attention to the way images can help to reshape the remembering-imagining and the space-time relationships in the History of Education field.*

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The model of “reading texts”, which served productively as the master metaphor for postobjectivist interpretations of many different phenomena, is now giving way to models of spectatorship and visibility, which refuse to be redescribed in entirely linguistic terms. The figural is resisting subsumption under the rubric of discursivity; the image is demanding its own unique mode of analysis.<sup>2</sup>

Reflection about images is vast and often inconsistent. The visual, the iconographic, and the pictorial cross with the analysis of images (graphic, mental, verbal...) and give rise to symbolic, metaphorical, and conceptual links (among many others). We end up with a mixture of ideas that tend to confuse rather than clarify. Inspired by the work of W.J.T. Mitchell, I am concerned here with the ways in which images in the strict or literal sense are related to notions such as social imagery, or social construction of images, and the concept of society as an image and as a maker of images.<sup>3</sup>

It is not possible to ignore that our “civilisation of the image” is changing our philosophies, which until now have been dependent on the “Gutenberg galaxy” – i.e. the dominance of typography and written communication over the mental or iconic image (painted, designed, sculptured, photographed figures, etc.). However, at the same time, we cannot fail to realise that this very “civilisation” reveals a large iconoclastic mistrust that “destroys” the images or, at least, renders them suspicious.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Martin Jay, “Vision in Context: Reflections and Refractions,” in Teresa Brennan & Martin Jay (eds.), *Vision in Context: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on Sight* (New York, Routledge, 1996), p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> W.J.T. Mitchell, *Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology* (Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1986), p. 2.

<sup>4</sup> Gilbert Durand, *L'imaginaire - Essai sur les sciences et la philosophie de l'image* (Paris, Hatier, 1994), pp. 3-4.

Without ignoring the array of images that permeate our ways of thinking and talking, I concentrate here on the *iconographic*. In this sense, I approach my subject as an analyst of images, trying to understand the role that they have played in building the teaching profession. But my concern is with an historical approach of images, concentrating on “documents” that have been traditionally neglected by historians. I am aware of the difficulties, because, as Sterling Fishman put it, “the analysis of the visual past for historical research, does not possess a satisfactory methodology” and “historians have normally employed visual materials for anecdotal or illustrative purposes.”<sup>5</sup> The analysis of images is not specifically defined, and tends to generate a kind of academic folklore instead of proposing new patterns of interpretation and historical understanding.

It is impossible to produce any explanation outside a linguistic frame, because images are displayed and interpreted in social, institutional and political fields, that are discursively saturated. But, at the same time, it is necessary to acknowledge the irreducibility of image to text (and vice-versa). That is why the linguistic and the discursive have not been “simply replaced by the pictorial and the figural but rather in complicated ways infiltrated by them,” and “viewing texts” and “reading pictures” are now chiasmically intertwined.<sup>6</sup>

After working in recent years on the consequences of the *linguistic turn* for the historical research in education,<sup>7</sup> I would like to draw attention in this article to the importance of the *pictorial turn*:

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<sup>5</sup> Sterling Fishman, “The Double-Vision of Education in the Nineteenth-Century: the Romantic and the Grotesque,” in Barbara Finkelstein (ed.), *Regulated Children/Liberated Children* (New York, Psychohistory Press, 1979), p. 97.

<sup>6</sup> Martin Jay, “Vision in Context: Reflections and Refractions,” p. 3.

<sup>7</sup> See, e.g., António Nóvoa, “On History, History of Education, and History of Colonial Education,” in António Nóvoa, Marc Depaepe & Erwin V. Johanningmeier (eds.), *The Colonial Experience in Education: Historical Issues and Perspectives* (Gent, Paedagogica Historica - Supplementary series, vol. 1, 1995), pp. 23-61.

Whatever the pictorial turn is, it should be clear that it is not a return to a naive mimesis, copy or correspondence theories of representation, or a renewed metaphysics of pictorial “presence”: it is rather a postlinguistic, postsemiotic rediscovery of the picture as a complex interplay between visibility, apparatus, institutions, discourse, bodies, and figurality. It is the realisation that *spectatorship* (the look, the gaze, the glance, the practices of observation, surveillance, and visual pleasure) may be as deep a problem as various forms of *reading* (decipherment, decoding, interpretation, etc.) and that visual experience or “visual literacy” might not be fully explicable on the model of textuality.<sup>8</sup>

The theoretical posture of W.J.T. Mitchell is central to my argument. To a certain extent, it constitutes the background of my analysis of public images of teachers, even if the pictorial turn – as well as the linguistic turn – cannot be reduced to one dominant model. Playing with the complex network of imagetic spaces, I want to underline new possibilities for educational historians. To use a Rousseau metaphor, reinterpreted by Jean Starobinski, we need to become “a vivid eye.”<sup>9</sup>

I want to understand the role of images in the governing of the teaching profession – i.e. the social and political definition of norms, rules, beliefs, convictions and “truths” about what it means to be a “good” and “reasonable” teacher. As such, I need to ask *why* some images exist in a given period of time and *how* they are appropriated by different social groups. But I also want to understand the “presence” of teachers in this process of production and circulation of images about themselves. In doing so, I will be looking at the “struggling for the soul” of teachers, a collective soul that it is not separated from individual and personal regulations.<sup>10</sup> In fact, the eye is not only, as the familiar clichés would have it, a “window of the world”, but also a “mirror of the soul.”<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> W.J.T. Mitchell, *Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation* (Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1994), p. 16.

<sup>9</sup> Jean Starobinski, *L’Oeil vivant* (Paris, Gallimard, 1961), p. 20.

<sup>10</sup> See Thomas S. Popkewitz, *Struggling for the Soul: The Politics of Schooling and the Construction of the Teacher* (New York, Teachers College Press, 1998). See also Nikolas Rose, *Governing the Soul* (New York, Routledge, 1989).

<sup>11</sup> Martin Jay, *Downcast Eyes: The denigration of vision in the twentieth-century French thought* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1994), p. 10.

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- In the second section, I attempt an analytical interpretation of a collection of public images of teachers, dating from the second half of the nineteenth century, in order to show the heuristic potential of this material in the historical treatment of educational matters.
- Finally in the third section, I outline some trends of historiographical renewal, giving attention to the way images can help to reshape the *remembering-imagining* and the *space-time* relationships in the History of Education field.

## **1. THE DENIGRATION OF VISION IN HISTORICAL THINKING**

In his remarkable book, *Downcast Eyes*, Martin Jay explains the denigration of vision in twentieth-century Western thought. The central theme of his argument can be transposed onto the historical debate, as for example in the manifestations of hostility to visual primacy in the work of successive generations of historians. Jay argues that the long tradition of ocularcentric bias – patently obvious in the linkage between lucidity and rationality, which gave the Enlightenment its name – culminated in a profound suspicion of vision and its hegemonic role. This idea may seem surprising, but its interpretative consistency is generated precisely from its paradoxical character.

Martin Jay examines the antiocularcentric discourse in detail, defining it as an often unsystematic, sometimes internally contradictory texture of statements, associations, and metaphors that never thoroughly

cohere. Hence, we see in Western culture, simultaneously, a hypertrophy of the visual – the modality of the visible is always present, not merely as perceptual experience, but also as a cultural trope – and its denigration.

The construction of a “civilisation of the image,” from the nineteenth century onwards, leads to a general lack of confidence in the value of the image in furthering scientific knowledge. We look at images as something of lesser value, a tracing, a copy, a poor imitation of reality: “the word *image* is looked upon poorly because we believe a design to be a tracing, a copy, a secondary object, and that the mental image is nothing more than a design of the same mould kept in our private bric-a-brac.”<sup>12</sup> At the same time, images nourish all kinds of imagination and fantasies, creating the illusion of an open field of meanings and interpretations.

Western thinking wanted to be the inheritor of a unique “truth,” denying the plurality of meanings (and readings) of images. It is fundamental to highlight the paradox of a civilisation that promotes enormous development in techniques of production, reproduction and communication of images, yet, at the same time, never lets go of an endemic iconoclasm. The image cannot be reduced to a formal “true” or “false” argument, and so is devalued as a tool of furthering understanding.<sup>13</sup>

Jonathan Crary explains the history of this process well, demonstrating that the dissociation of touch from sight occurs within a pervasive “separation of the senses” and industrial remapping of the body in the nineteenth century:

This autonomization of sight, occurring in many different domains, was a historical condition for the rebuilding of an observer fitted for the tasks of “spectacular” consumption. Not only did the empirical isolation of vision allow its quantification and homogenisation but it also enabled the new objects of vision (whether commodities, photographs, or the act of perception itself) to assume a mystified and abstract identity, sundered from any relationship to the observer’s position within a cognitively unified field.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Merleau-Ponty, *L’Oeil et l’Esprit* (Paris, Gallimard, 1964), p. 23. See also Louis Marin, *Des pouvoirs de l’image* (Paris, Seuil, 1993).

<sup>13</sup> See Gilbert Durand, *L’imaginaire*, pp. 4-5.

<sup>14</sup> Jonathan Crary, *Techniques of the Observer: on vision and modernity in the nineteenth century* (Cambridge, MIT Press, 1992), p. 19.

The achievement of that kind of optical neutrality, the reduction of the observer to a supposedly rudimentary state, was a condition for the formation of a “new” observer : “The visual culture of modernity would coincide with such techniques of the observer.”<sup>15</sup>

This argument is crucial for the understanding of history and its formation as a nineteenth century discipline. On one hand, historians fulfil the role of *observers* of past facts, legitimising their work as an objective exercise that separates the “true” from the “false.” The eye of the historian looks to be neutral and exterior, recording only what is there. To achieve this, it is necessary to ignore its very position as observer – that is, its own beliefs, opinions and ideas –, to pretend that the “grand narrative” of which s/he is the bearer is to be constructed under the register of objectivity and universality. The metaphor of the historian as a *photographer of the past* fits well into this concept. But to achieve this it is necessary to reduce the photographic image to a mere cliché and believe in a teleology of history.

The historian of the 19<sup>th</sup> century refuses to enter into the game of images, into the game of multiple interpretations and of contested narratives. S/he does not accept the polysemy, the plurality of viewpoints. S/he does not look at images as “producers of meanings,” but only as mere “register of facts” or a “portrait of reality”.

Nowadays this attitude is difficult to sustain. If postmodernism teaches anything – as Martin Jay says – it is to be suspicious of single perspectives, which, like grand narratives, provide totalizing accounts of a world too complex to be reduced to a unified point of view. In the case of postmodernism and vision, no monocular, transcendental gaze will do: “postmodernism may be understood as the culminating chapter in a story of the (enucleated) eye. Or rather, it may paradoxically be at once the hypertrophy of the visual, at least in one of its modes, *and* its denigration.”<sup>16</sup> Instead of calling for the exorbitation of “the eye,” it is better to encourage the multiplication of a thousand eyes, in what we could

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<sup>15</sup> Ibidem, p. 96.

<sup>16</sup> Martin Jay, *Downcast Eyes*, p. 546.

designate as a multifaceted dialectics of seeing.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Ibidem, p. 591.



A good example of this change can be taken from looking at the theoretical issues surrounding the Rodney King incidents. The whole trial of the Los Angeles policemen who assaulted Rodney King was based on the exhaustive viewing of a video which lasted about one minute. Over several months, two distinct and contradictory arguments were constructed, not as consequence of ignoring the video, but rather of reproducing it within a racially saturated field of visibility. This showed that the visual field is not neutral to the question of race and that, quite the opposite, is itself a racial formation, an episteme, both hegemonic and forceful.<sup>18</sup> The video itself has no evidentiary status, it is not an “objective” proof: “Both the perception of the tape as showing a ‘reasonable exercise of force’ and the perception of the tape as showing ‘racist brutality’ depend, not simply on the physiology of visual perception, but rather on *interpretation*, on the mediation of perception with background narratives that give visual images meaning.”<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Judith Butler, “Endangered/Endangering: Schematic Racism and White Paranoia,” in Robert Gooding-Williams (eds.), *Reading Rodney King/Reading urban uprising* (Routledge, New York, 1993), pp. 15-17.

<sup>19</sup> Kimberlé Crenshaw & Gary Peller, “Reel time/Real justice,” in Robert Gooding-Williams (eds.), *Reading Rodney King/Reading urban uprising*, p. 66.

In moving from the singular “eye” to the plural “eyes,” a change is undertaken from the singular vision of panopticism, with its idea of an objective vision of control through visibility, to the stereoscopic vision of more pluralistic techniques of observation that have emerged in the twentieth century: “These techniques of the observer suggest that perspective can be multiple.”<sup>20</sup> This is equivalent to saying that surveillance and spectacle cannot be as clearly separated as someone like Foucault would wish, and that the objectification of the viewed subject is the product of a *discipline* of observation which has its own history as well.<sup>21</sup> As stated by Jonathan Crary, Foucault’s opposition of surveillance and spectacle seems to overlook how the effects of these two regimes of power can coincide: “Using Bentham’s panopticon as a primary theoretical object, Foucault relentlessly emphasizes the ways in which human subjects became objects of observation, in the form of institutional control or scientific and behavioral study; but he neglects the new forms by which vision itself became a kind of discipline or mode of work.”<sup>22</sup>

The opposition between “surveillance” and “spectacle,” as presented by Michel Foucault, is not accurate for providing a fruitful understanding.<sup>23</sup> The consolidation of a “civilisation of the image” in the twentieth century invites us to look at the development of “spectacular surveillance,” as well as emerging forms of “surveillant spectacles.” On the one hand, surveillance is exercised through an exposure (a surexposure) of images, that provokes a visual inflation and the emergence of a “market of the eye.” On the other hand, spectacle is submitted to rules of surveillance and control (indicators, standards, rates, etc.) that define its own characteristics on the basis of the consumption of images.

Games of showing and hiding are not different, but include processes that create illusions and suspicions. In this sense, it is interesting

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<sup>20</sup> Thomas Dumm, “The New Enclosures: Racism in the Normalized Community,” in Robert Gooding-Williams (eds.), *Reading Rodney King/Reading urban uprising*, p. 186.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 187.

<sup>22</sup> Jonathan Crary, *Techniques of the Observer*, p. 18.

<sup>23</sup> See, e.g., Michel Foucault, *Résumé des cours, 1970-1982* (Paris, Julliard, 1989).

to remember the thesis of Pierre Bourdieu: “Image is literally the negative of the presence.”<sup>24</sup> But we cannot forget that images can always be recycled and reused and therefore are open to an infinity of meanings and interpretations. There is no harmony in this “world,” but vision and visuality in their rich and contradictory variety “can still provide us mere mortals with insights and perspectives, speculations and observations, enlightenment and illuminations, that even a god might envy.”<sup>25</sup>

New analysis of images needs to be theoretically grounded, and cannot avoid a sophistication of methods and approaches. The will to look and to show is inseparable from the will to know, and it is necessary to establish a cartography of vision if we wish to apprehend the production/reproduction of images in the field of visuality.

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<sup>24</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *Un art moyen : essai sur les usages sociaux de la photographie* (Paris, Les Editions de Minuit, 1965), p. 295.

<sup>25</sup> Martin Jay, *Downcast Eyes*, p. 594.

This is what we are confronted with, leading to the need for a theory that allows us to understand that “images are not just a particular kind of sign, but something like an actor on the historical stage, a presence or character endowed with legendary status, a history that parallels and participates in the stories we tell ourselves about our own evolution from creatures ‘made in the image’ of a creator, to creatures who make themselves and their world in their own image.”<sup>26</sup> Or as Hélène Védrine writes: “Between science and fiction, the imaginary works-up on language, and on the boundaries that separate raw facts from the discourse of the proof. There is no imagination without interpretation, without the *mise en scène* of a space to play, without positioning a difference.”<sup>27</sup>

The elaboration of an historical approach to the analysis of images needs to take into account the theoretical issues opened by the “pictorial turn.” A myriad of possibilities can be imagined by historians, even if we need to be cautious against any dissolution of historical thinking in “discourse” or in “image.” In this sense, as Roger Chartier affirms, “it is important to vigorously assert that history is commanded by an intention and a principle of truth, that the past that it has as an object is an exterior reality to the discourse and that its knowledge can be controlled.”<sup>28</sup> Today it is difficult to speak in the singular, but even so we must be able to mark the boundaries of the “acceptable,” the “likely,” and the “verifiable.” In other words, put in lay terms: accepting that history contains a narrative dimension (literary or graphic) does not mean denying the establishment of truth(s), even if provisional and contextualised.

This perspective gains meaning in the light of two essential movements: on the one hand, the *remembering-imagining* pair that establishes new relations in historical time; on the other hand, the definition of space (although often a virtual space) as an essential reference of historical work. The excess of images gains importance as the excess of memory (and

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<sup>26</sup> W.J.T. Mitchell, *Iconology*, p. 9.

<sup>27</sup> Hélène Védrine, *Les grandes conceptions de l'imaginaire* (Paris, Librairie Générale Française, 1990), p. 9.

<sup>28</sup> Roger Chartier, *Au bord de la falaise: L'histoire entre certitudes et inquiétude* (Paris, Albin Michel, 1998), p. 16.

forgetfulness) and the excess of places (and non-places) are revealed. Never before in the history of humankind has there been such a strong sensation that we are the “producers of history.” The speed and closeness of news makes us accomplices in a “world of images” in which we include our own portrait. It is of little surprise therefore, that our society is impregnated with an excess of meanings or, more precisely, an excessive search for meanings.

In a text originally written in 1967, Michel Foucault talks of history as the great discovery of the nineteenth century, adding that the current epoch tends to turn itself to space: “We are in the epoch of simultaneity, in the epoch of juxtaposition, in the epoch of closeness and distance, side by side, of dispersion. (...) Nowadays emplacement substitutes extension that, in turn, had to be substituted by localisation.”<sup>29</sup> In this perspective the “mirror” is defined as a utopia (a place without place), but also as a heterotopia: “the mirror becomes the place that I occupy, absolutely real, in connection with the space that surrounds me, and absolutely unreal, given that its perception is only possible by moving to a virtual point that is on the other side.”<sup>30</sup>

This quotation allows me to clarify the spatial sense of my research, in a juxtaposition of times that raise doubts about some deep-rooted convictions of historians. The reference to the *imagined communities* related by Benedict Anderson consolidates this option: “In fact, all communities larger than primordial villages of face-to-face contact (and perhaps even these) are imagined. Communities are to be distinguished not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined.”<sup>31</sup> Thus, collective beliefs and convictions are grouped together, merged by conflicting representations and juxtaposed layers of historical times.

It is this line of research that I am going to follow in the analysis of public images of teachers. The necessity to outline clearly my work and the limits of my interpretation leads me to explore only three aspects of the

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<sup>29</sup> Michel Foucault, *Dits et écrits* (Paris, Gallimard, 1994), vol. IV, p. 752.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 756.

<sup>31</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London, Verso, 1983), p. 6.

“pictorial turn” within the scope of historical research: the image as a means of expression, images as relationships, and the construction of an archive of (all) past images. These are the three dimensions that organise my narrative.

*The image as a means of expression.* According to Paul Klee image does not imitate the visible, it “renders visible,” which leads Henri Michaux to write: “probably, before Klee, nobody made a line dream.”<sup>32</sup> In fact, image is not an image *of* something anymore that brings to the present a determined absence, but is a means of expression that is directed at somebody. This idea belongs to the young Michel Foucault who considers that, in this way, the image meets up again with the register of history, marking the significance of the movement remembering-imagining for the historian’s work.<sup>33</sup>

*Images as relationships.* It is necessary to underline the importance of images as relationships, and not as things. Guy Debord had already affirmed in the sixties that: “The spectacle is not a collection of images, but a social relationship between people, mediatized by images.”<sup>34</sup> This idea outlines not only the diverse communities of producers and consumers of images, but above all their relationship. Nowadays, our attention shifts from the analysis of iconographic materials to the use we make out of them.<sup>35</sup> In this sense, the functioning of an image is explained through the role played by those to whom it is destined in their understanding and interpretation. It is in this process of appropriation and in the relationship that the “reader” establishes with the images, that the field of visibility is organised.

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<sup>32</sup> See Merleau-Ponty, *L’Oeil et l’Esprit*, p. 74.

<sup>33</sup> Michel Foucault, *Dits et écrits*, vol. I, p. 118.

<sup>34</sup> Guy Debord, *La société du spectacle* (Paris, Gallimard, 1992), p. 16.

<sup>35</sup> Roger Chartier, “Images,” in André Burguière (ed.), *Dictionnaire des Sciences Historiques* (Paris, PUF, 1986), p. 347.

*The construction of an archive of (all) past images.* Today, imagery has acquired an enormous importance. In its most simple form, it is like an archive of all past and possible images. This idea of “museum of images” emerges in the following story told by Pierre Jacob:<sup>36</sup>

The physicist Szilard one day told his friend Hans Bethe that he had decided to write a diary:

– I do not intend to publish it: I am simply going to record the facts so that God be informed.

– But, replied Bethe, do you not think that God already knows the facts?

– Yes, replied Szilard, He knows the facts but He does not know this version of the facts.

This archive must be understood not only as a *corpus*, but also as a network of relationships. The historical relevance of images is granted by this “traffic” between individual and collective beliefs, social and cultural representations, memoirs and imagination.

*Expression, relationship, archive.* These are the three poles that organise my narrative concerning public images of teachers. What I find interesting is to suggest a theory that conceives the image as an act of thinking, as a production of *visuality*. What I find interesting is to put myself in a position where I can be instructed by images.

## **2. FROM THE FUNCTION OF THE IMAGES TO THE IMAGES OF THE (TEACHING) FUNCTION**

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<sup>36</sup> Pierre Jacob, *L'empirisme logique* (Paris, Les Editions de Minuit, 1980), p. 279.

In collecting public images of teachers, I have brought together designs and pictures, cartoons and photographs, engravings and drawings, paintings and book illustrations. As such, I have organised an “archive” gathered from different countries. I looked for banal everyday images, and considered mainly their expressive dimensions. It was not my intention to compare such disparate examples, but this miscellaneous and heterogeneous array constitutes a kind of *metapicture* that is fundamental to my understanding of teachers’ images.<sup>37</sup> The excess of meanings widened my field of visibility, creating, however, the need to control the production of interpretations. The images select themselves and reject themselves mutually, or in other words, there are always images that confirm or contradict other images.

The choice of the second half of the nineteenth century arose naturally, given that it was during this period that the development of the first mass education systems came about, which created the conditions for the professionalisation of teachers. In underlining the idea of “public” images, I intend to understand the game of social mirrors that marks the teaching profession in an epoch of strong social beliefs and convictions on the idea of school as a central institution for progress and citizenship. Here the conflict between opposing images of teachers and the relationships they provoke both inside and outside the profession becomes more obvious. My observation, especially focussing on primary school teachers, becomes transfixed on these new “artisans of citizenship.”

But the selection of this period was also dictated by the success that the images – in particular the photographs, but also the caricatures and paintings – enjoyed in societies of the nineteenth century. During this period, an immense playing field based around the images opened up, as Michel Foucault clearly shows: imaginary games – fabrication, transformation and circulation of images – sophisticated, but often popular games.<sup>38</sup> The *Buisson Dictionary* no less, reveals this new interest in images, dedicating several entries to this theme, and even proposing that a school reward system consist “of good prints, of different dimensions, which would be a weekly reward until the completion of a picture reproducing

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<sup>37</sup> W.J.T. Mitchell, *Picture Theory*, p. 82.

<sup>38</sup> Michel Foucault, *Dits et écrits*, vol. II, p. 708.



one of the works of art from the Louvre, which would allow a bit of the museum to enter into the most humble of homes.”<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> See F. Buisson (ed.), *Dictionnaire de Pédagogie et d'Instruction Primaire* (Paris, Librairie Hachette, 1887), vol. I (tome II), p. 1320.

In fact, this deployment of the image is contemporaneous with the invention of the “museum,” both of which participate in the formation of an idea of history (archive and memory) that contributes to the diffusion of new forms of art. As Roland Barthes recalls, “the same century invented History and Photography” in their functions as claims of truth and hierarchies of proof.<sup>40</sup> At this moment, a significant change occurred in the visual depiction of education:

Visual depictions of tender teachers, devoted pupils, and commodious surroundings not only represent a new set of artistic images, but also signify the creation of a totally new set of popular myths and beliefs concerning one of the most important areas of human activity, education. Art and life are closely linked. The artist not only renders a vision of perceived reality, but it also engaged in mirroring and forming popular ideals.<sup>41</sup>

The choice of images valued the expressive dimensions, namely in engravings, paintings and drawings, but, in particular, the caricatures of anonymous teachers. The purpose is to indicate the importance of this visual source for historians because the caricaturist usually intends to reach a large viewing public and, hence, favours the understanding of relationships: the relationship of the image with the public; the relationship of the public with portrayed situations. The caricature accentuates the gesture, the attitude, the expression, the event; it plays with grandeur, reducing it from the outside, and in so doing shows the difficult and minuscule “truth.”<sup>42</sup> Therefore, at a time in which a “public space,” which we would later call “public opinion,” is consolidated, separate from the family and neighbourhood circles, this option proves the biggest aid in understanding the processes of production, circulation and appropriation of the images.

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<sup>40</sup> See Sarah R. Stein, “Visuality and the image,” *Journal of Communication*, 48 (2), 1998, pp. 170-177.

<sup>41</sup> Sterling Fishman, “The Double-Vision of Education in the Nineteenth-Century,” pp. 100-101.

<sup>42</sup> Michel Foucault, *Dits et écrits*, vol. III, p. 11.

A profession cannot stop looking after its own image, even if no corporation can presume to entirely control its public image.<sup>43</sup> This is the game that I find interesting, a game of images produced, accepted or rejected, returned, negotiated, and transformed. The public images displayed (presented, promoted) by the teachers and their organisations; the images with which they feel comfortable or uncomfortable; the images produced by the press, opinionated or humorous. Before proceeding, I would like to know *why* certain images exist, the conditions that lead to their production and the functions that they carry out. The search identifies the regularities and discontinuities, the “shared” and “contested” images, and the arrangements of images in this game space.

Régis Debray opens his book on life and death of the image with a curious story: “A Chinese emperor one day asked the chief painter of his court to erase the waterfall that he had painted on the palace wall because the noise of the water prevented him from sleeping.” The story fascinates us and makes us uneasy. What images prevent teachers from sleeping? And which are those that comfort them in their sleep? I will aim to give some partial answers on the following pages, suggesting a vertical sequential reading (i.e. read all the text before viewing the images, or vice-versa) or a horizontal comparative reading (i.e. simultaneously take in each paragraph of the text and the respective images). For obvious reasons, the “text” is very simple and contained, limited to pointing out one or other idea, so as not to saturate with interpretations and relegate the images to the status of mere illustrations (see Methodological Appendix).

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<sup>43</sup> Philippe Perrenoud, *Enseigner: agir dans l'urgence, décider dans l'incertitude* (Paris, ESF éditeur, 1996), p. 69.

## **World-wide Diffusion of Teachers' Images**

A glance at the corpus of images enables three general ideas to be put forward. The first illustrates the permanence of the images of teachers that have been transmitted since at least the seventeenth century. Despite all the changes that have taken place, the teachers often appear portrayed in the same way, at least up until the twentieth century. It is true that they are situated in a scene (the class) that is undergoing constant change, in particular with the introduction of simultaneous teaching. On the other hand, the architecture together with the organisation of the space and didactic materials underwent many alterations. However, it is possible to detect the continuation of the same “grammar of schooling”: the secondary school teachers often appear associated with their respective school subjects and the function of pupil assessment; the primary school teachers are more marked by the relationship with their pupils, very often with scenes of unusual violence. Through the analysis of the images, it is difficult to identify the ruptures constructed by the historiography of education, established chiefly through the study of texts of the educators and school reform laws.

The second idea signals the production of images at moments of pedagogical renovation, arising from political reforms in education or from the introduction of new teaching methods. In contradiction to a certain common sense that associates these moments with great upheaval and disorientation, the images tend to transmit serenity and organisation. They function as strategies of “propaganda” that aim to soothe consciences and suggest a more radiant future... The graphic representations concerning the monitorial system at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the kindness that runs through the images of infant education at the end of the nineteenth century or the forms of representation of the brochures containing new teaching methods at the beginning of the twentieth century are good examples of this reality. The designs that show the New Education, particularly post World War I take this tendency to the limit, eradicating the teacher from the images: harmony reigns in the classroom, even with the absence of the teacher; an “absence” that constitutes, needless to say, an extremely strong presence.

The third is the existence of world-wide images of education that reinforce the thesis of mass schooling as a “normative principle” and an “organizational reality” permeating, in different ways, all countries and regions. My analysis is influenced by Western cultures and by my own experience in regions like Southern Europe or South America. I want to acknowledge the limits of my interpretations, but even so, make it perfectly clear, at times, it is the same caricatures, the same cartoons that circulate, confirming that education is probably one of the most powerful world-wide institutions. There is the same intent and the same relationship between images and teachers (and vice versa), even if the “picture” appears in a different context and, at times, with evidence of local artifacts or national icons. Again here, our history, almost always embedded with national references, needs to open itself to the world-wide diffusion of the school model, which has been in place a long time before we begin to talk about the process of globalisation...

**An Ambiguous Status:  
Neither Bourgeoisie  
nor Plebeian**

The second half of the nineteenth century is a key period for understanding the ambiguity of teachers' positions, as well as the improvement in their socio-economic status. Access to the teaching profession was transformed into an aspiration for different social classes and as a means to social improvement. To become a primary school teacher was to manage an escape, it was to escape other conditions marked by images of pain and poverty. Usually coming from underprivileged social groups, primary school teachers felt superior to the villagers because of their knowledge. Nevertheless, their pitiful remuneration made it impossible for them to adopt a middle-class lifestyle. The sociological isolation of teachers was similar to that of priests. It was crucial to maintain relations with everyone without favouring anyone. The fact that they were portrayed in a poverty-ridden (and ridiculous) situation should not be wrongly interpreted. The caricature highlights these features, exaggerating them to such an extent that they become unsupportable. It is a way for teachers to exorcise these images and to lay claim to a new professional situation. In times of strong political rhetoric concerning the school, an improvement in the status of teachers became a social necessity.

The great historical operation of schooling would never have been possible without the confluence of several factors, but it is important not to forget that the agents of this enterprise were the teachers. At the moment in which the school was imposed as a privileged instrument of social stratification, teachers were invested with an enormous power: from then on they held the keys to social ascension (and stagnation). It is interesting to highlight the gulf between the high expectations of the teachers and their low economic status. Teachers are always compared with other professions – university professors, businesspeople, doctors, politicians, etc. – but their salaries are always lower. This gulf constitutes an ambiguous relationship between the idealised images and the real-life images of the teaching profession. The situation of secondary school teachers is completely different. Coming from more privileged backgrounds, they were, until the middle of the twentieth century, that is to say until the period of educational expansion, part of the local elite. Their university training, their salaries, and the fabric of the social, cultural and political relations that they maintained favoured this insertion, which marked an obvious divide between primary and secondary school teachers.



The situation of women is different. For one thing, it is rare that they are caricatured. Obviously there are caricatures of female teachers, some with extremely harsh satirical features, but they are less frequent. Curiously – and despite the fact that women continue to earn lower salaries than their male counterparts in several regions of the world – they appear dressed in a more sober and less abject manner than the male teachers. There seems to have been a certain chastity in the public portrait of the women and the need to protect a woman’s “body” from outside eyes. There is a decided austerity, which indeed was imposed by law in many countries, as was the case of the “Rules for Teachers” in force in Sacramento, California, United States of America, in the year 1915: “You may not dress in bright colors, You may under no circumstances dye your hair, You must wear at least two petticoats, Your dresses must not be any shorter than two inches above the ankle, etc.” Later, in the period between the two World Wars, it is even possible to begin to see portraits of teachers dressed in a “middle class” manner. It is here that a certain change in the display of images regarding teachers begins to occur, which would be consolidated in the second half of the twentieth century.

### **The “Heart” of the Teaching Profession: Discipline (and Punish)?**

The continuous feature in the images of teachers – mainly of elementary teachers – is the relational element. Education is always head-to-head in a field of communication. It becomes obvious in the caricatures and in the drawings, even if this signifies (as is often the case) overzealous authority or even violence. In truth the relationship between the teacher and the student is always mediated by disciplinary tools. Even in calm situations teachers do not dispense with the stick, the cane, the ferule, the whip, or any other instrument used to administer corporal punishment. It is as if these objects are an extension of their very body, like a kind of “prothesis,” and part of the *habitus* of the profession. It is of course an “extreme” portrait, but we cannot fail to question ourselves about the stability of this image of teachers, at least until the middle of the twentieth century, which contradicts the majority of the pedagogical literature produced since the end of the eighteenth century. And this representation is not the object of rejection on the part of teachers and their associations, who have accepted it without fuss until recent times...

More than a means of the didactic repertoire, punishment seems to be a constituent element of the professional identity and “social imagery” with regard to teachers. Under the entry “Punishments” of the new edition of the *Buisson Dictionary* (1911) it is written that “the utilisation of the stick was an attribute to education just as the sceptre was the power of the monarchy” and it became a “prerogative of the schoolmaster” that transformed it into a didactic procedure. Thirty years before, in the first edition of this *Dictionary* (1882), once again the condemnation of the pedagogues (not the teachers) is referred to with regard to the use of the whip, and it is affirmed that “it is an archaeological question, given that nobody now thinks of defending such ridiculous and primary behaviour.” Meanwhile, only from the moment of the spread of some movements, such as the New Education, is it that the “mirrors” begin to develop other images of teachers. The situation in secondary school teaching is a little different. Here, the changes begin earlier, due in part to the existence of a student public originating above all from middle class levels. The “pedagogic” violence is marked more by the symbology of the exam (the dimension of the school subjects) than by the corporal punishment (the relational dimension).

There is a clear difference between the image representing male teachers and that of female teachers. It is rare for drawings of female teachers to depict them administering corporal punishment to their pupils even when they represent an imposing figure demanding respect and obedience. This hesitancy may suggest the need to protect the woman, making her image more “private” and safeguarded, which helps reinforce the mothering ideology. On the other hand, in several countries the law is more explicit in forbidding punishment for females, as the *Buisson Dictionary* (1911) reveals: “Girls must only be struck under exceptional circumstances and with the greatest of care taking into account feminine frailty.” In the same book it is also written that “the part of the body to be struck varies according to the sex and, at times, the age of the pupils.” Evidently, there are images in which the female teachers appear with a repressive demeanour, even illustrating an extreme and unusual violence. There is nothing to indicate that practices of the female schoolteachers were any gentler than those of their male counterparts. However, the majority of the images that circulate tend to reinforce ideologies of punishment discipline on the masculine side and caring discipline on the feminine side.

## **The Long Process of Accommodation of the Teaching Profession to its Feminine Identity**

Traditional sociological explanations, especially the inference that the teaching profession is devalued because it is predominantly feminine (and vice-versa) are insufficient to understand the complexity of the feminization of the teaching body. It is necessary to underline the contribution women have made to the professional definition of teachers. For a long time, *public* images of women teachers were very rare. The dominant images were always *masculine*, which seemed to be a better fit with the image of teachers as professionals. During the first half of the twentieth century, female teachers' autobiographies testified to the difficulties of living as a woman in a "masculine" environment. It is true that there were some feminine images, but these were often "private" images (the teacher with her students, or in her class). You only have to go through the school books or the official instructions to read this: "It falls upon you, men, to instruct as masters, while your female partners teach as mothers." The more "useful" image, especially in reference to union struggles and the search for greater social recognition, remained masculine. The feminine dimension of teaching was recognized, but did not constitute a central element for professional identity.

After World War I, the continuation of a tendency towards feminization gives the question of gender a fundamental role in the professionalization of teachers. Avoiding classical arguments, it is perhaps more interesting to pose another question: Are we not confronted with an essential change in the teaching profession? But simultaneously teachers were to be removed, little by little, from the forefront of the public exposure. This retreat was accompanied by a rhetoric which reinvented conceptions of mission, or of religious vocation, adapted to the female universe. Along with this transition, we can also see a reinforcement of apparatuses for controlling teachers which, especially in the case of women, had an impact not only on professional factors, but also on private dimensions. Primary school teachers became the objects of a close surveillance which put into place policies which were discriminatory towards women's work. Mona Ozouf – interviewed in *Le Monde*, April 25, 1995 – is right when she states that the *imagery* of the profession resisted for a very long time the effective feminising of the teaching body. At the same time, in many countries, the inspection – that is the right to observe – can only be carried out by men.

It is after World War II that we see an emergence of public images that reconciles women with the teaching profession. It is true that they are stylised images, but they at last begin to recognise femininity. Images provide ways of understanding this process because they depict gender in explicit forms. They reveal the contradictions of a profession that has been predominantly feminine for approximately a century, but which only now is beginning to produce images that reflect this reality. Recent advertising campaigns for teacher recruitment carried out, for instance, in France and the United Kingdom clearly show that a significant change has occurred in the visual depiction of teachers. On the one hand, men have lost their disciplinary character, and now appear more to demonstrate their leaning towards sensitivity or technology. On the other hand, women have appeared on the public stage, emphasising their feminine identity, and even coming up with the following slogan built up in France for a teachers' recruitment campaign: "And if we were to speak about the pleasures of teaching?" It is the achievement of a long process of accommodation of the teaching profession to its feminine identity.

The images exist and are part of the configuration process of the teaching profession. Images of poverty alarm teachers. The ridicule contained in many caricatures shows them to be also unbearable for society. Images of authority are more comfortable for teachers and also for the pupil's families. Nevertheless, if the extension of the male teachers' body is manifested by the cane, the ferule or the whip, the female teachers' body seems more suited to the book or blackboard. The "public" feminine images are, for a long time, hidden. Portraying men seems to be more useful for the struggles associated with teachers. The teaching profession is slow to accommodate feminine identity.

The narratives "mix themselves up" and give rise to new questions. I follow the line of the recent work from W.J.T. Mitchell, *The Last Dinosaur Book*, a book in which texts and images are woven into complex patterns, the images telling stories of their own.<sup>44</sup> It is true that "iconology" turned out to be not just the science of icons, but the political psychology of icons, the study of iconophobia, iconophilia, and the struggle between iconoclasm and idolatry.<sup>45</sup> There is a crossing of autonomous and comparative readings of the text and the images, which mark here and there, the search for knowledge. The images give new forms to the messages and enable us to bring to light other angles of knowledge. What interests me with regard to the images of teachers is neither the exotic nor the exceptional; it is, on the contrary, the banal, the usual, the everyday. The way in which images of teachers are subject to an "alchemy" is transforming the ways of saying and seeing in the teaching profession.

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<sup>44</sup> W.J.T. Mitchell, *The Last Dinosaur Book* (Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1998).

<sup>45</sup> W.J.T. Mitchell, *Iconology*, p. 3.



### 3. RENOVATION PERSPECTIVES OF THE HISTORICAL STUDIES IN EDUCATION: A BRIEF OUTLINE

The interest of the analysis of the images is in the *remembering-imagining* that is at the centre of the historian's work. The relationship between images and history needs to be stressed, in as much as both seek a balance between "reproduction" and "construction," between passive surrender to the facts and active reshaping of them into a coherent picture or story. It is not a case – as suggests Valéry – of looking at images as supplemental and corrective to history, but first giving value to the relationships that can be established between diverse narratives:

Just as the meaning of the past is the prerogative of the present to invent and choose, the meaning of an image does not come intact and whole. Indeed, what empowers an image to represent history is not just what it shows but the struggle for meaning we undergo before it, a struggle analogous to the historian's effort to shape an intelligible and usable past.<sup>46</sup>

In this sense, it is eventually possible to rephrase and to "complete" the formulation of Hayden White, saying that history is not only an object that we can study, but also the way we study it; it is also and even primarily a certain kind of relationship to the past mediated by a distinctive kind of written or *visual* discourse.<sup>47</sup> This idea allows us to briefly outline three questions that are related with the renewal of historical studies in the educational field.

*Images, Education, and History.* The first question looks to relate the origin of the so-called "civilisation of images" with the consolidation of a historical thinking and an educational society. These three realities were born and developed in the same time period, as is clearly shown with an attentive analysis of the definitions given in the *Buisson Dictionary*. You only have to cite, for instance, the excerpt written by one of the emblematic

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<sup>46</sup> Mathew Brasy & Walker Evans, *Reading American Photographs: Images as History* (New York, Hill and Wang, 1989), p. xvii.

<sup>47</sup> See Hayden White, *Figural Realism: Studies in the Mimesis Effect* (Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), p. 1.

figures of this time, Gabriel Compayré, who defines representative imagination as the faculty to produce images/memories, or the entry written by Georges Dumesnil where he proposes the concept of *imaginative memory*, linking the “field of experience” and the “horizon of expectation.” This is what reveals the emergence of a conception of history that, as Michel Foucault explains, breaks from a cyclical vision to adopt a philosophy of progress.

At the same time an important reorganisation of the observer occurs in this period, that originates from new disciplinary techniques of the subject that evolve as a consequence of the fixing of quantitative and statistical *norms* of behaviour.<sup>48</sup> The formation of an *educated subject* is the project that is to be undertaken by pedagogy, that one shoulders as a governing of the self, but also as a process of social regulation: “The new patterns of governing in the nineteenth century focussed power on persons in everyday life. Social policy and expert knowledge focussed on the regulation of individual self-reflection, self-examination, and consciousness.”<sup>49</sup> That is to say – as Nikolas Rose puts it – we are inhabitants of regimes that act upon our own conduct in the proclaimed interest of our individual and collective well-being, “we are governed in our own name.”<sup>50</sup> My intention is to stress the role played by images in this process of governing, and mainly in the governing of the teacher.

In the nineteenth century, this triad – images, history and education – is the bearer of a linear conception of time that situates the subjects in a permanent logic of remembering-imagining. The chronological perspective of time is used to build the historical science in a past-present-future sequence. However – and this is my second question – does this perspective remain useful to us in thinking about historical work at the end of twentieth century?

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<sup>48</sup> See Jonathan Crary, *The Techniques of the Observer*, p. 15.

<sup>49</sup> Thomas S. Popkewitz, *Struggling for the Soul*, p. 23.

<sup>50</sup> Nikolas Rose, *Powers of Freedom: Reframing political thought* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 284.

*Historical Reflection and Space-Time Relationships*. I am convinced that we have to introduce more complex conceptions to historical reflection that allow us to understand the coexistence of distinct dimensions of time. "History is not a time period, it is a multiplicity of time periods that are linked to and contain each other. It is necessary to substitute the old notion of time with the notion of multiple duration."<sup>51</sup> Our discipline cannot fail to take into account the enormous developments that this debate has seen in recent decades. We are witnessing at the end of the century, a compression of space and time, with the world within easy reach in an increasingly instantaneous moment time: "The present being dramatised as much as the past seems a cause without effect and the future an effect without cause."<sup>52</sup> One of the main tasks of the historian is to make an effort to unfold space and time opening up vision to new understandings.

Harold Silver is right when he writes that the history of education looks to imagine past alternatives at the same time as it reflects on forms of thinking for the future. It is basically a question of overcoming the gulf between *experience* and *expectation*, conceiving historical research as a constant production of meanings.<sup>53</sup> Or, in other words, as an immense playing field defined by the necessity to produce sound and rigorous statements, and, at the same time, being open to an infinity of interpretations. My preoccupation is identical to that of Niklas Luhmann when he looks to identify the ways in which the future in the present is presented.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Michel Foucault, *Dits et écrits*, vol. II, p. 279.

<sup>52</sup> Boaventura de Sousa Santos, "No Verão com exposcópico," *Visão*, August 13, 1998.

<sup>53</sup> Harold Silver, "Existe un futuro en el pasado?," *Revista de Educación*, 296, 1991, pp. 7-21.

<sup>54</sup> Niklas Luhmann, *Complejidad y modernidad: De la unidad a la diferencia* (Madrid, Editorial Trotta, 1998), pp. 155-166.

The question has already been put forward by Reinhart Koselleck, in his work on *The future past*, where he raises as a hypothesis that, in determining the difference between past and future (or between experience and expectation), we create conditions to perceive the *time of history*: “We saw throughout the centuries a time construction of history, that led to this singular form of acceleration that is characteristic of the current world.”<sup>55</sup> This comes about as there is past in the present, not only as a “before” and as an “after”, but as a “during” that resides in the present of several modes. It does not reside as a “physical action,” but as a complexity of memories and projects that builds senses of identity.

Today, we have to think of historical work in the framework of a shattering of traditional conceptions of the space-time relation. Space does not refer, fundamentally, to physical dimensions, but to the multiple occupations that move/relocate our references, affiliations and identities. A fixed vision of space is contradictory to the “interpretative theories” that attempt to understand the subjective nature of reality and the sense that diverse people give to it. Time is no longer defined as an organised sequence of events, but as an individual or collective appropriation of a set of co-ordinates that position us with regard to our state. The predominance of “chronology” prevents the opening up of historical work for questions that are not marked by the rigidity of temporary frames. These changes are accompanied by a new vision of the historical object. It is no longer the reconstruction of the past, but precisely the opposite, of understanding the way in which the past is brought to the present, influencing our way of thinking and speaking. Attention is switched to the construction of meanings, in other words, to the amalgamation of performances and discursive practices that define a particular knowledge, historically formed, that consecrates certain ways of acting, feeling, speaking and seeing the world.

Fundamentally, I am questioning the logic of the “lessons of the past” and proposing that we concentrate on the way that *lived images* make up part of our habitus. I am also questioning the idea of the future as something that is going to happen, suggesting that we look more closely at the way that the *imagined images* inhabit the present. Both movements

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<sup>55</sup> Reinhart Koselleck, *Le futur passé: Contribution à la sémantique des temps historiques* (Paris, Éditions de l'École des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, 1990), pp. 20-21.

contribute towards a greater conceptual fluidity and, above all to putting an end to the denigration of vision in historical thinking. In this way, we can better understand the profound historicity of educational processes. And it is this aspect that is very important, in as much as the school institution is born precisely in this breach that authorises the thinking of the *future past*, in a game of experience and expectation that regulates our individual and collective behaviours.

*The Will to Understand, The Will to Show.* I arrive at the third question concerning one of the main challenges facing historians and historians of education today: to articulate the discursive construction of the social with the social construction of the discourse.<sup>56</sup> I mean *discourse* in the widest sense of the word, not only in its written or verbal forms. The *images* constitute discursive practices of great significance, that, in the case of teachers, regulate the processes of professional identity and representation.

I originally thought of giving this article the title: *The Will to Understand, The Will to Show.* My intention was to explain how the *will to understand*, in this case the will to understand the history of teachers, is inseparable from the *will to show* – i.e. from the images of teachers that are produced and that they themselves produce. It seemed to me that this idea was more appropriately explained in the title – *Ways of Saying, Ways of Seeing* – in establishing the images as discourse, positioning them in the historical game of readings and interpretations.

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<sup>56</sup> Roger Chartier, *Au bord de la falaise*, p. 102. See also Ian Hacking, *The Social Construction of What?* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1999).

Nowadays everybody knows that it is not the *facts* but the *historians* who dominate the debate. They are tireless producers of coherence and meanings that compose a kind of “fiction” on the basis of “true” elements.<sup>57</sup> This does not mean that history is only a “fiction-making operation,” to use the expression of Hayden White, but – and this *but* is extremely important – that it is dependent on rigorous processes, on consistent proofs and on adequate conceptualisation. The writing of history nears the “literature genre” but does not dissolve, nor does it exhaust itself, in literature. Historians are seekers of a “workable truth” communicable within an “improvable society”: “The democratic practice of history here advocated needs a philosophical grounding compatible with its affirmations. We find that grounding in a combination of practical realism and pragmatism, that is, in an epistemological position that claims that people’s perceptions of the world have some correspondence with that world and that standards, even though they are historical products, can be made to discriminate between valid and invalid assertions.”<sup>58</sup>

Education is also something we imagine. It is something we talk about, something we must talk about. In a certain way, we can say that education is the least understood thing, the worst understood, precisely because it assumed to be the most clearly understood, and by everybody.<sup>59</sup> The same can be said of the hegemonic role of images in our societies which create a profound suspicion concerning vision. As for education, we also have to establish a theory of the common sense for the historical treatment of images.

Imagining education is one way of taking control of future events. Memories are part of a whole imaginary which define our relationship with the past, building up our own way of talking about schools and education. Images create a game of possibilities (and impossibilities), of visions and looks, that show the historicity of educational space. For this reason images

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<sup>57</sup> Lucian Boia, “Histoire et Imaginaire,” in Joël Thomas (ed.), *Introduction aux méthodologies de l’imaginaire* (Paris, Ellipses, 1998), p. 264.

<sup>58</sup> Joyce Appleby, Lynn Hunt & Margaret Jacob, *Telling the Truth About History* (New York, W.W. Norton & Company, 1994), p. 283.

<sup>59</sup> Daniel Hameline, *L’éducation, ses images et son propos* (Paris, Éditions ESF, 1986), p. 202.

are so important. They cannot continue to be the *terra incognita* of our intellectual work.

## METHODOLOGICAL APPENDIX

For the purpose of this research, I adopted a six-step methodology:

1. Collection of the highest number possible of “public” images of teachers: caricatures, drawings, paintings, engravings, photographs, etc. Serialisation and classification of these images following usual procedures, taking into account the following aspects: i) date and country; ii) place and way in which it was published; iii) author; iv) style/type; v) content; vi) intention/function. Approximately 600 images were registered in total.
2. Impressionistic analysis of this disparate corpus, taking a sweeping look at the whole of the collected material. Organisation of “families of images,” fundamentally using the criterion of *intention/function*, enabling the detection of continuities and ruptures in the production of visuality with regard to teachers.
3. Selection of images, taking into account their “expressive” characteristics and the outlining of three main arguments related to *status*, *discipline* and *gender*. A corpus of around 100 images was constituted, essentially portraying primary school teachers, having as a reference point, the period between the emergence of mass education systems (second half of the nineteenth century) and the World War II.
4. “Intensive” analysis of the images, concentrating on their “expressive” dimension, the way in which they were appropriated individually and collectively and the processes of recording (past experiences) and imagining (future projects) that they induce. The analysis aimed, step by step, to relate the images with the social and professional dynamics surrounding teachers. In this sense, the concept of “public image” showed itself to be essential. The criterion of “visual saturation” was used to establish the interpretation of the images.
5. Construction of a graphic narrative, based around the three lines of argument with the following question always present: Why do these images exist? Or, put in other words, what is their intention/function? The main preoccupation was always to find out the way in which diverse social and political groups used the images to define a determined *vision* of the teaching profession and, at the same time, the way in which teachers turned to (i.e. accepted, contested, produced, divulged, etc.) the images to express their own *idea* of the profession.
6. Presentation of the research, with recourse to a limited number of images, adopting a page layout that suggests either reading all of the text before viewing the images – the written and graphical narrative being arranged in two vertical columns – or simultaneously taking in the text and the accompanying images. The written text is as simple and economical as possible, only pointing out one or other reflection, so as not to “suffocate” the graphic narrative. There was the preoccupation to ensure an autonomous reading or a reading that confronts the image and the text, of the *imagetext* to use the expression of W.J.T. Mitchell.



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New methods - Drawing (in M. Borges Grainha, *Método intuitivo*, Lisboa, 1911).
18. Spain 1933  
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## **BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE**

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