

Currículos de Educação Física: (re) montagem a partir de fragmentos historiográficos

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Resumo

O artigo em questão objetiva relacionar os currículos de Educação Física com algumas questões históricas e epistemológicas que os influenciaram. Para tanto, recorre aos estudos sobre currículos ou tendências pedagógicas, relacionando a história da Educação e da Educação Física com os contextos sociais, econômicos, políticos e culturais que as atravessaram. A historiografia de inspiração antifundacionalista aqui produzida rejeita explicações totalizantes e supostamente neutras; ao invés disso, acena para os efeitos das transformações do campo pedagógico-curricular em pauta, desde a sua irrupção nas escolas brasileiras. Ambiciona-se defender a ideia de que a história da Educação Física pode ser melhor compreendida quando se considera a multiplicidade de práticas discursivas a seu respeito. Os resultados indicam, ainda, um número acentuado de campos epistemológicos e teóricos influenciando o componente curricular ao menos desde o último quartel do século XX, favorecendo a produção de novas experimentações curriculares.

Palavras-chave: Currículo; Educação Física; Epistemologia; Historiografia.

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Physical Education Curriculum: (re)assembly from historiographical fragments

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Abstract

This article aims to relate the Physical Education curricula with some historical and epistemological issues that influenced them. To do so, it resorts to studies on curricula or pedagogical trends, relating the history of Education and Physical Education with the social, economic, political and cultural contexts that crossed them. The anti-foundationalist historiography produced here rejects totalizing and supposedly neutral explanations; instead, it points to the effects of the transformations in the pedagogical-curricular field in question, since its irruption in Brazilian schools. The aim is to defend the idea that the history of Physical Education can be better understood when considering the multiplicity of discursive practices about it. The results also indicate a marked number of epistemological and theoretical fields influencing the curricular component at least since the last quarter of the 20th century, favoring the production of new curricular experiments.

Keywords: Curriculum; Physical Education; Epistemology; Historiography.

Currículos de Educação Física: (re)ensamblaje a partir de fragmentos historiográficos

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Resumen

El artículo en cuestión pretende relacionar los currículos de Educación Física con algunas cuestiones históricas y epistemológicas que influyeron en ellos. Para ello recurre a estudios sobre currículos o corrientes pedagógicas, relacionando la historia de la Educación y la Educación Física con los contextos sociales, económicos, políticos y culturales que las atravesaron. La historiografía de inspiración antifundacionalista que aquí se produce rechaza las explicaciones totalizadoras y supuestamente neutrales; en cambio, apunta a los efectos de las transformaciones en el campo pedagógico-curricular en cuestión, desde su irrupción en las escuelas brasileñas. El objetivo es defender la idea de que la historia de la Educación Física puede comprenderse mejor al considerar la multiplicidad de prácticas discursivas sobre ella. Los resultados también indican un número marcado de campos epistemológicos y teóricos que inciden en el componente curricular al menos desde el último cuarto del siglo XX, favoreciendo la producción de nuevas experiencias curriculares.

Palabras clave: Currículo; Educación Física; Epistemología; Historiografía.

Introduction

The curricular debate in the field of Physical Education has become increasingly plural and diversified. Many studies address new curricular issues and present the characteristics and potential of different theoretical frameworks (NEIRA; NUNES, 2009; NEIRA, 2018; VIEIRA, 2020; BONETTO, 2021). However, such transformations are not recent aspects in the field, which has since its emergence been a site of political, social, economic, and cultural intervention by various institutions and interests (SOARES, 2012; CASTELLANI FILHO, 2007; BRACHT, 1995; BRACHT, 1999; NEIRA; NUNES, 2009). In this regard, we agree with Melo (1996), who asserts that historiography can shed light on the past of Physical Education.

We are aware that this endeavor is not innovative, as many works have undertaken similar efforts. However, given the landscape of intense and ongoing transformations, recent investigative elements justify new historiographical explorations. Thus, this article aims, based on existing literature, to (re)construct the historical trajectory of the component. This (re)construction is, therefore, a methodological procedure of Foucauldian inspiration.

In broad terms, the notion of (re)construction refers to the operationalization of the archival gesture, as formulated by Foucault (1997, 2006, 2008) and some of his theoretical interlocutors (FARGE, 2009; DIDI-HUBERMAN, 2012). In line with this endeavor, it is pertinent to establish dialogues between multiple and heterogeneous sources, with the aim of identifying the discontinuities and regularities in the analyzed archive. As methodological inspiration, we also follow Rago's (1999) principles, who proposes a "new" Brazilian historiography.

Additionally, our goal is to relate curricula and experiences with Physical Education teaching to broader narratives emerging from the field of education and social contexts. The outline is based on our belief that studies inspired by the field of History have much to contribute to Brazilian Physical Education, allowing interpretations of its processes and paths over time, shedding light on contemporary discussions and, more importantly, contributing to envisioning the future in various ways.

Methodological Inspirations

According to Rago (1999), Brazilian historiography experienced a significant leap in the mid-1970s, despite the democratic restrictions of the period. After a phase heavily influenced by Marxism, other European influences and the need to engage with local issues led to the creation of a "new Brazilian historiography," with the English historian E. P. Thompson considered by the author as the

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first major reference later also becoming a significant influence in the development of the field known as Cultural Studies.

Unlike Marxist currents, the historiographical production that began during this period did not focus on the universal philosophical subject, nor did it attribute the production of materiality to structures. Instead, it sought in cultural dynamics the forces that produce social relations. Subjectivity as a historical construction and the understanding of knowledge as a production mediated by disputes are, therefore, the basic premises from which our analyses depart.

For Rago (1999), Thompson's work, along with other references, opened up new ways of producing history as a scientific activity. In the author's words, it allowed for "thinking differently about the field of history" (RAGO, 1999, p.79). Perhaps the most significant of these new theoretical influences is the French philosopher Michel Foucault, who introduced issues into the field of history such as the power-knowledge relationship, micropower, the docilization of bodies, the materiality of discourse, and modes of subjectivation, to name a few. There is no longer a historical totality or verifiable discovery, but rather the production of regimes of truth immersed in power relations.

As previously mentioned, another notion from Foucauldian thought that we employ as a methodological tool in this study is (re)montage. In general terms, it is a gesture that attempts to recreate the documented "reality." In this sense, the historiographical archival operation follows a dynamic of remounting, "with a view to proposing a map of the discourses that were possible in a given time and specific place" (AQUINO; VAL, 2018, p. 49).

In Didi-Huberman's conception, (re)montage...:

[...] escapes teleologies, making visible the survivals, anachronisms, and the encounters of contradictory temporalities that affect each object, each event, each person, each gesture. In this way, the historian abandons the idea of telling "a story," but in doing so, manages to demonstrate that history is nothing other than all the complexities of time, all the layers of archaeology, and all the dotted lines of destiny (DIDI-HUBERMAN, 2012, p. 204).

Still according to Rago (1999), in addition to the foucaultian influence, in the same 1980s the works of Deleuze and Guattari, both equally French philosophers, also propelled in Brazil a myriad of historical researches focused on the production of subjectivity, with the shift of the analytical centralization of power, typical of Foucault's thought, to an analysis of the desired production, central in the thought of the aforementioned duo.

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The introduction of the philosophy of differences⁴ into the field of History challenged the scientific remnants of traditional historiography. Given this, any historical study that aligns with a linear cause-and-effect perspective or allows a priori ideological inferences to obscure the specificity of its contribution is potentially dangerous.

In an effort to move beyond classical models, we also turn to Melo (1996), an author who, among other topics, investigates the history of Physical Education. We seek ideas that help us overcome a common practice in the field, where history is treated as a sequence of new positivist readings of the past, marked by loss and resurrection, memory lapses, and revisions driven by the relentless pursuit of universal truth and objectivity. Perhaps a bit more skepticism and a bit less linearity and unanimity could be very useful to us.

Starting from the propositions of Rago (1999) and Melo (1996), as well as the concept of (re)montage (DIDI-HUBERMAN, 2012; AQUINO; VAL, 2018), we engage in cross-references and (re)montages of academic texts from the fields of Physical Education historiography, curricular texts, and texts related to the didactic field. In this way, we aim to present their regimes of truth.

19th and 20th Centuries: Emergence and Transformation of a Field

According to Silva (1995), the school, guided by ideals of justice, equality, and distributiveness, not only embodies these principles, purposes, and modern impulses but is also the institution responsible for transmitting and generalizing them, making them part of common sense and popular sensitivity. Tomaz Tadeu da Silva also asserts that public education becomes intertwined with the very project of modernity, as it synthesizes the ideas and ideals of modernity and Enlightenment. It is, therefore, the quintessential modern institution:

It [the school] embodies the ideas of constant progress through reason and science, belief in the potential for developing an autonomous and free individual, universalism, political and social emancipation and liberation, autonomy and freedom, expansion of public space through citizenship, leveling of hereditary privileges, and social mobility (SILVA, 1995, p. 245).

Souza (2008) states that in Brazil, the formation of the modern and republican citizen was anchored, on one hand, in the creation of distinct educational experiences, shaped by various types of educational institutions and differentiated modes of distribution and appropriation of knowledge. On

⁴ According to Gallo (2013), the term is the most appropriate to refer to contemporary French thinkers who are heirs of Nietzsche.

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the other hand, it was anchored in the possibilities of social integration through the cultivation of civic-patriotic education and the affirmation of the nation as a political project. According to Mate (2002), the Brazilian educational reality before 1920 was neither standardized nor regulated. The existence of different cultural groups meant different orientations, methods, content, and social ways of living, which made it very difficult to organize the educational experiences of individuals both in workplaces and in other spaces.

In general, the primary school of the time was intended for the majority of the population and was supposed to disseminate basic knowledge and the rudiments of physical, natural, and social sciences. Meanwhile, secondary school served the ruling elites and the rising middle class, remaining the guardian of general culture with a humanistic character (SOUZA, 2008). Within this configuration, Physical Education was also seen as fundamental in the education of the modern man. As a systematic practice in the form of school-based education, it emerged in Europe at the end of the 18th century, under the influence of educators and philanthropists⁵. Grounded in positivist philosophical principles, they proposed the practice of physical exercises as a way to control bodies and positively influence what they called the "integral" education of individuals, based on the triad: body, mind, and spirit.

In Brazil, it began to enter the education system in the first half of the 19th century⁶. It was known as "Gymnastica," and its practice was initially restricted to Military Schools, which were exclusive to the children of privileged classes in society. The aim was to develop the full potential of individuals who would assume leadership positions, namely, the children of the bourgeois elite.

Castellani Filho (2007) and Soares (2012) report that the formation of the field was initially strongly influenced by the military institution and, from the second half of the 19th century, by medicine. Influenced by liberal thought and hygienism⁷, Physical Education was based on the acquisition of hygiene and health habits, relating diet, clothing, physical exercises, and orthopedics as a means to combat physical degeneration and promote physical and moral development (NUNES; RÚBIO, 2008).

⁵ For example, Johann Bernhard Basedow, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Guts Muths, and Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi.

⁶ In 1882, Rui Barbosa, an eminent legal advisor of the Empire, requested in the Chamber of Deputies the establishment of a special session for Gymnastics in normal schools (first clause), the equal ranking and authority of Gymnastics teachers with those of all other subjects (fourth clause), and the inclusion of Gymnastics in school curricula as a subject of study, scheduled at different times from recess and after regular classes. For his efforts, he earned the title of "Champion of Physical Education in Brazil" (CASTELLANI FILHO, 2007).

⁷ Taking as a reference the curricular theorization of Physical Education proposed by Neira and Nunes (2006; 2009), the hygienist perspective was based on gymnastic methods, which allowed it to be referred to as the "gymnastic curriculum".

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At the beginning of the 20th century, with the advancement of the industrial economy and the emphatic manner in which science penetrated industry by associating with technology, the education of the masses gained undeniable practical value. The goal was to produce strong and subservient individuals who would sell their labor in the production of goods and understand the fundamentals of industrial society. It was only during this period that Physical Education began to be offered in schools that served the working-class population.

[...] It was believed that through physical exercises, and without changing the material living conditions to which the workers of that time were subjected, it would be possible to acquire the healthy, agile, and disciplined body demanded by the new capitalist society. (CASTELLANI FILHO et al., 2012, p. 35).

Regarding the teachers of that time, they were considered instructors due to the practical nature of the activity. Their theoretical foundation was based on the biological sciences, and students were separated by gender. While men performed exercises focused on strength, endurance, and acrobatic skills, women engaged in calisthenics exercises⁸.

The reasoning was simple: strong and healthy women would be more capable of bearing healthy children who, in turn, would be better suited to defend and build the nation, in the case of boys, and to become robust mothers, in the case of girls. (CASTELLANI FILHO, 2007, p. 56).

Regarding how Physical Education classes were organized during this time, the systematization of physical exercises followed the models of European Gymnastic Methods. In Brazil, the major influences were the German method⁹ (developed by Friedrich Ludwig Jahn), the French method¹⁰ (proposed by Francisco Amoros y Ondeano), and the Swedish model¹¹ (created by Pier Henrich Ling).

Nunes and Rúbio (2008) state that the gymnastic curriculum aimed to shape identities that would embody the roles of patriotic, courageous, obedient subjects, prepared to fulfill their

⁸ The Swedish gymnastic method emphasizes simple exercises focused on flexibility, muscular endurance, and physical agility.

⁹ The first method to be introduced in Brazil, inspired by military activities, proposed that a period of the day be dedicated to physical exercises such as running, jumping, throwing, wrestling, gymnastic exercises, rhythmic movements, and the use of equipment inspired by wartime situations.

¹⁰ Brought by the French Military Mission, this gymnastics model was military in essence. It was designed with the goal of providing a comprehensive education for the human being, based on physical exercises that established connections between physical and moral development.

¹¹ It is characterized by an anatomical conception, focusing on corrective gymnastics, based on the principles of biological sciences that were incorporated into the education system. Swedish gymnastics emphasized correct execution to improve health, body worship, and preparation for work. It was introduced into Brazilian schools around 1901, approximately at the same time as the French Method, leaving the German model as an exclusive practice for the military.

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professional responsibilities and defend the nation. These objectives encompassed eugenic, military, hygienic, disciplinary, and moral functions, in line with the educational project determined by the Estado Novo and the interests of the elites.

From the 1920s onward, the signs of modernization in Brazilian society were very noticeable¹². According to Carvalho (1997), from this period onward, it is also possible to notice a subtle shift in the pedagogical discourse that had been asserting itself since the late 19th century in Brazil¹³.

In 1924, the Brazilian Association of Education (ABE) was founded, bringing together the leading representatives of new ideas in education. In 1932, the "Manifesto of the Pioneers of New Education" was launched. In 1934, during the debates surrounding the Constitution, educational positions became polarized between the liberals, represented by the advocates of the New School movement, and the Catholics, who defended the traditional position in education. From the 1930s onward, under the influence of the New School movement, Brazilian education underwent various transformations as it sought to transmit a model more aligned with the modern and urban social behavior of the time (MATE, 2002). During this period, the Brazilian educational system expanded into a much broader project of societal reeducation. According to the author, this was a movement towards the rationalization of education: a "reformulation of production spaces, focused on principles such as efficiency, productivity, objectivity, predictability, measurement, statistics, and control" (p. 22).

Influenced by liberal principles, this period saw the introduction of compulsory and free public primary education, as a formal commitment by the government to expand educational opportunities through the multiplication of schools and an increase in enrollment numbers. The secular nature of the modern public school was also established, along with the model of grade progression by series and levels, and the formation of more homogeneous classes based on the classification of student groups by advancement levels.

Regarding pedagogical issues, there was a more systematic and regulated organization of the curriculum, with the distribution of content by series, assessment mechanisms, and detailed time-control measures, thereby determining "what" and "how" to teach at each moment. With increasingly

¹² Urban growth, the remodeling and beautification of cities with the paving and widening of streets, the extension of avenues, the construction of public buildings and skyscrapers, the establishment of green spaces with parks and public gardens, the implementation of electric lighting, and the installation of factories (SOUZA, 2008).

¹³ The institutionalization of primary public schools in Brazil at the beginning of the 20th century occurred through a process of multiple differentiations. The pace of expansion was highly uneven from a regional perspective, leading to disparities in material conditions, types of educational institutions (such as school groups, isolated schools, and consolidated schools), and the education provided (depending on the location, whether in urban or rural areas, or in the center or periphery of large cities).

Physical Education Curriculum: (re)assembly from historiographical fragments systematized curricular measures, teachers had to expand their knowledge to be able to teach, which in this case led to the division of teaching work into subjects. This model, where teachers formed groups according to their disciplines, had been in vogue in European countries and the United States since the mid-19th century¹⁴.

Regarding teaching methods, according to Souza (2008), they were essentially intuitive, synthetic, analogical, and active; in the subjects, a practical sense dominated, guided by application. There was also a strict rational grading of studies. During this period in Brazilian education, the production and publication of textbooks began, but their use largely followed an encyclopedic consultation model.

In terms of lesson planning during this period, various intervention tools were employed, such as tests¹⁵ (to address, for example, the problem of heterogeneity in learning styles), educational films (to build a sense of nationality by showcasing images of Brazilian territory), and special pedagogical techniques (to combat the repetitive and routine practices diagnosed in teachers' methods). Among the most widely disseminated methods and techniques in progressive education were centers of interest, directed study, didactic units, the project method, educational worksheets, and teaching contracts.

Analyzing the period, Mate (2002) asserts that the overarching goal behind the reform was to promote the standardization of a Brazilian school culture. According to the author, the model of the New School movement, which was becoming increasingly dominant in pedagogical discourse during those years, furthered a more uniform mode of education: "eminently technical and detached from social and political reflection" (MATE, 2002, p. 16).

Two other major criticisms of the 1930 reform lie in the supposed political neutrality that underpinned the selection of teaching content and the subjects addressed by this proposal. Critics argue that, in general, the content remained largely the same as that promoted by the Catholic Church. While the methods and teaching approaches changed, the content did not. Regarding the subjects, the so-called "democratic hierarchy" based on a biological conception of each student's abilities merely masked the unequal opportunities between social classes in accessing universities and liberal

¹⁴ What might seem essentially positive the specialization of teachers in specific content areas actually led to a certain loss of autonomy and submission to a school hierarchy and bureaucracy. This was compounded by the role of the School Inspector, who oversaw schools by correcting teaching techniques, monitoring student discipline, and assessing the integrity, attendance, and efficiency of teachers.

¹⁵ Pedagogical psychotechnical tests were used for measuring and classifying degrees of learning capacity. The most famous of these, the "ABC Tests," included eight assessments designed to logically and objectively identify mental variety (SAVIANI, 2007).

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professions. For these reasons, the bourgeois social order remained unshaken, leading Saviani (2007) to describe the reform as a form of "conservative modernization" ¹⁶.

In the realm of Physical Education, Mate (2002) asserts that pedagogical activities became a means to direct the body's automatic centers and subject them to the control of the psychic centers, to the will, thereby correcting and disciplining habits. Nunes and Rúbio (2008) state that the New School movement strongly criticized gymnastic methods, advocating for the moving body as an educational means for other dimensions of development. As a result, the inclusion of games became a hallmark of this period of curricular transition. A new practice, visualized by an active pedagogy, took a predominant place in the curriculum—games—redefining principles and objectives, freeing itself from the limits imposed by biological scientism, and presenting itself with optimism regarding the power of education. These new approaches moved away from strict rationality and became mediated by psychological science, inspired by the spirit of modern life and the new industrial and technological citizen. In other words, the assumptions underlying the function and action of the subject fully corresponded to the capitalist logic and the pursuit of development.

It is important to note that the New School movement was the first to assign a significant and systematic role to Physical Education within the school curriculum. Its goals aimed at the comprehensive education of the student by adapting methods and content to the stages of human growth, as well as ensuring better hygiene and health conditions for students (NEIRA; NUNES, 2009, p. 70).

In the mid-1960s, during a period of increasing urbanization and economic development, Brazilian education came under the influence of another pedagogical trend, American educational technicism¹⁷, which was also strongly mediated by technological and industrial development. It is important to highlight that the social function of the school continued to be the formation of docile individuals, with initiative and the ability to work effectively.

An important milestone in these technicist-oriented studies is the book *The Curriculum* by Franklin Bobbit¹⁸, originally published in 1918. Inspired by the Taylorist factory process, Bobbit

¹⁶ Saviani (2007) asserts that the reform could be interpreted in the following way: conservative, due to the tense relationship between the proposals of the Catholic Church, and modern, regarding the participation of the reformers. However, it resulted in a "State of compromise," where the government positioned itself as an agent of the emerging industrial bourgeoisie.

¹⁷ This was primarily reflected in the proposal by Franklin Bobbit (1918), which was inspired by administrative theories and industrial processes.

¹⁸ Dewey had already written a book in 1902 in which the term curriculum appeared in the title, *The Child and the Curriculum*. However, Silva (2011, p. 23) states "that Dewey's influence would not be reflected in the same way as Bobbit's in the formation of the curriculum as a field of study".

Physical Education Curriculum: (re)assembly from historiographical fragments proposed that the school should operate like a business, following a model clearly aimed at qualifying industrial labor and with the primary objective of social control. From this perspective, the curriculum involves the specification of objectives, procedures, methods, and precise forms of evaluation (SILVA, 2011).

In addition to the work of Franklin Bobbit, the studies of Ralph Tyler¹⁹ and Robert Mager²⁰, also gained prominence in Brazil, with their curricular paradigm centered on the rational and objective organization, development, and evaluation of teaching activities. From this perspective, the ways in which teachers designed their lessons were based on technical-instrumental knowledge. Teachers were responsible for ensuring that students assimilated the content, often by reproducing pre-prepared texts, textbooks, or handouts, as well as telecourses that were frequently uncritical and often disconnected from the social realities of the students.

During this period, didactic formalism was emphasized through lesson plans developed according to predetermined norms. Educational planning proposed an organizational structure designed to minimize any subjective interference that might destabilize the process. With pre-established objectives, the instructional action could be mechanized to avoid any risk. In Physical Education, there was a proliferation of works and manuals that provided step-by-step instructions, ready-made lessons, and the first textbooks; thus, the teacher's role was reduced to merely minimizing disciplinary or structural problems and "putting into practice" the ideal curriculum (NEIRA; NUNES, 2009).

Doctrinal formulations and methodological prescriptions formed a network of knowledge about each subject, and a normative pedagogy fed teacher training courses, inspired the production of texts, and fostered an editorial market for specialized educational books and journals. (SOUZA, 2008, p. 21).

Nunes and Rúbio (2008), in agreement with Carvalho (1997), explain that the emergence of the nationalist-developmental ideology in the 1920s reached its peak only in the 1960s. As a result, in the Physical Education curriculum, there is a clear shift from concerns about orthopedics and hygiene to a focus on physical performance efficiency.

Conceived from the perspective of social control, sports became the main means of intervention in Physical Education, as it not only taught regulations, specialization, role conformity, competition, and efficiency, but also introduced notions of neutrality and the scientification of knowledge.

¹⁹ In Brazil, the most impactful work was *Princípios Básicos de Currículo e Ensino* (Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction)

²⁰ In Brazil, the most impactful work was *Análise de Objetivos* (Analysis of Objectives).

The program, therefore, would enhance the development of active and engaged men and women, dynamic and versatile, respectful of rules and universal moral principles, ready to solve all kinds of problems, and endowed with a tremendous physical and psychological capacity to face challenges, driven by the best competitive spirit. (NEIRA; NUNES, 2009, p. 75).

This perspective, known as the "technical-sports curriculum" (NEIRA; NUNES, 2006), reached its peak in the 1970s. As previously mentioned, this model became hegemonic during a time of political repression, as it symbolically embodied the ideas of perseverance, struggle, victory, patriotism, and national development.

Also in the 1970s, due to the strengthening of scientific theories in psychology, human behavior, and development through technicist pedagogy, and the widespread dissemination of research in Motor Development and Motor Learning, two other proposals gained prominence in the Physical Education curriculum. The psychokinetic method, or "psychomotor curriculum" (NEIRA; NUNES, 2006), is based on the work of Jean Le Boulch²¹ and focuses on the "integral" development of students by working at the intersection of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor processes.

According to Castellani Filho et al. (2012), the psychomotor approach in Physical Education within Brazilian schools was the first more articulated movement beginning in the 1970s. In this conception, Physical Education no longer had the function of producing and selecting sports talents, nor was it tasked with developing healthy and hygienic bodies through gymnastic methods. Its objectives and content became broader, aiming to integrate the multiple dimensions of the human being.

In this context, the first pedagogical materials such as "how-to manuals" for lesson planning and books like "1001 Playful Activities for Physical Education Classes" began to emerge. These materials contained activities to be "applied" indiscriminately in any school. According to Neira and Nunes (2006), this perspective was strengthened by the replacement of exercises with games and the adoption of a constructivist approach to learning. By focusing on problem-solving, students would develop "holistically" due to the interrelationship between the moving body, intellect, and emotions.

Without becoming a subsidiary discipline of others, Physical Education needs to ensure that physical activities and the logical-mathematical concepts that children will use in school activities and beyond are properly structured (FREIRE, 2009, p. 21).

²¹ He was one of the pioneers in the use of psychomotor education in Physical Education classes and states that the educational current of psychomotricity emerged in France in 1966 because Physical Education teachers were unable to develop a holistic education of the body.

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According to Neira and Nunes (2009), Physical Education from the perspective of psychomotricity is characterized by the adoption of games and problem-solving situations as teaching strategies, with special emphasis on proposals for Early Childhood Education and the early years of Elementary Education. Among its objectives, it stands out for preparing students to act effectively in the world through tools based on the development of basic psychomotor functions, specifically, body schema and space-time orientation.

Nunes and Rúbio (2008) state that Physical Education in this concept of 'education through movement' aims to contribute to the child's development, which in turn affects their personality and academic success. In other words, it sought to prevent school difficulties and develop functional aspects of learning through mechanisms regulating the interaction between the individual and their environment.

Another technicist proposal from that period is the so-called "developmental curriculum" (NEIRA; NUNES, 2006). This approach aimed to ensure the motor, cognitive, and affective-social development of students by teaching motor skills that respect the characteristics of each stage of motor development²². Therefore, activities should follow a sequence based on complexity, from the simplest, termed fundamental, to the more complex, referred to as specific (TANI et al., 1988). For its proponents, movement is both the primary means and the end goal of Physical Education.

The fundamental position in this work is that if there is a normal sequence in the processes of growth, development, and motor learning, it means that children need to be guided according to these characteristics, as only in this way will their actual needs and expectations be met. (TANI et al., 1988, p. 2).

Traditional pedagogies²³ began to face their first challenges around the 1960s with the questioning of the so-called "New Sociology of Education" and the early influence of critical theory in the field of education. Notable are the works of English sociologist Michel Young, who focused on the connection between knowledge and power, and the essays by French theorists Louis Althusser, Pierre Bourdieu, Jean-Claude Passeron, Christian Baudelot, and Roger Establet. In these analyses, the capitalist school was generally seen as a mechanism for preserving the privileges of dominant social groups and oppressing minority social groups. According to Bourdieu and Passeron's Theory of Social Reproduction (2010), the social function of the school is to reproduce class conditions. This is because the school curriculum is based on the dominant culture and language, transmitted through

²² They drew on the developmental theories of Jean Piaget and the studies of David Gallahue.

²³ This includes religious, progressive, and technicist pedagogies.

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qualities that are unevenly distributed among social classes, specifically cultural capital and the relationship with culture and knowledge (BOURDIEU, 1998).

Theoretical perspectives from the so-called critical-reproductive framework, such as those by Baudelot and Establet (1971), support the view of the bourgeois school's role, emphasizing its function in allocating individuals to job positions based on their social status, either as the exploited or the exploiters. In this context, critical theories highlight both the historical and social dimensions of school knowledge. They argue that the school curriculum is not neutral, as it includes certain content at the expense of others, making the curriculum historically constructed and embedded in power relations.

According to Silva (2006, 2011), critical theorists shift the focus from merely pedagogical concepts of teaching and learning to questions regarding which knowledge is linked by school curricula, referencing concepts of ideology, reproduction, and power. These critical-reproductive analyses do not present specific pedagogical proposals, as they argue that schools alone cannot drive social transformation.

In the social and political context of Brazil in the 1980s, with the end of the military dictatorship, the country's redemocratization, and the consolidation of Physical Education in the academic field²⁴, various criticisms of the prevailing educational models of the time were formulated. Influenced by this generation of critical-reproductive thinkers, new discourses on education began to emerge, now considering the possibility of social transformation through emancipation and liberation.

In the 1980s Brazil, amidst the transition from military dictatorship to democracy, and with the consolidation of Physical Education in academia, there was a significant shift in educational discourse. Influenced by critical-reproductivist thinkers, new perspectives emerged focusing on social transformation through emancipation and liberation. This era saw the development of influential critical pedagogies, such as Historical-Critical Pedagogy by Dermeval Saviani, Liberating Pedagogy by Paulo Freire, and Critical-Social Pedagogy of Contents by José Carlos Libâneo. These approaches led Physical Education researchers to explore a new social function for the subject, emphasizing "body expression as language" or bodily culture of movement²⁵.

In the context of Physical Education, the core issue was the very identity of the subject as a curriculum component, caught between two paradigms: the biological and the cultural. This clash of

²⁴ The emergence of applied sports sciences and the increase in the number of research conducted in postgraduate programs outside the field.

²⁵ We acknowledge that the discussion around the concept of body culture or body movement culture, among other variations, is complex and controversial; however, we will not delve into this topic at this moment.

Physical Education Curriculum: (re)assembly from historiographical fragments perspectives was referred to by Bracht (1996, p. 23) as the “crisis of identity in school Physical Education.

The discipline, previously understood as education “of” and “through” movement, under the critical theory perspective, comes to be seen as responsible for addressing “the themes of body culture,” that is, body expression as a social and historically constructed language, including sports, gymnastics, games, combat sports, dance, and mime (CASTELLANI FILHO et al., 2012): “From the perspective of body culture reflection, body expression is a language, a universal knowledge, a human heritage that also needs to be transmitted and assimilated by students in school” (p. 29).

The proposal by Castellani Filho et al. (2012), from a Marxist orientation, known as critical-overcoming, is fundamentally based on the historical-critical pedagogy developed by Dermeval Saviani. According to these authors, sports, physical fitness, and developmental standards have historically contributed to defending the interests of the ruling class, maintaining the structure of capitalist society. Through understanding the social conditions of its development and valuing its own segment of culture, termed “body movement culture,” the methodological principles of the critical perspective aim to provide the dominated culture with conditions to free itself from the domination and alienation imposed by capitalist ideology.

Another critical perspective of Physical Education is the critical-emancipatory, proposed by Kunz (1994) and inspired by Jürgen Habermas’s Theory of Communicative Action. It proposes a communicative didactics that should underpin the function of clarification and the rational predominance of all educational action.

Nunes and Rúbio (2008) describe that, generally, these critical perspectives assert that the education-society relationship is dialectically influenced, marked by power relations; that is, the school is influenced by society, and society can also be influenced by the school.

In the 1990s, under the effects of a highly complex social and economic configuration based on capitalism, the significant development of information technologies, globalization, and especially neoliberal rationality, the field of education and, consequently, Physical Education, undergoes important transformations. According to Libâneo and Oliveira (1998), the influence of neoliberalism on education has had intense effects. Generally, it has led the educational field to adopt constant quality evaluation systems, establishing rankings of education systems and schools, classification and increased competition among schools, emphasis on management and school organization through the adoption of total quality management programs, administrative decentralization, and financing

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through partnerships with businesses and the transfer of state functions to the community (parents) and companies.

In the didactic-methodological aspect, the impact of neoliberalism leads to an excessive emphasis on subjects such as mathematics and natural sciences due to global technological competitiveness that tends to favor them. Additionally, it results in the establishment of “innovative” forms of teacher training, such as distance education, private schools, and public networks contracting pre-packaged teaching systems, aiming at preparation for selection tests, external evaluations, and entrance exams.

In summary, under the strong influence of the neoliberal project, education is viewed once again through a technicist, uncritical, and homogenizing lens. According to Silva (1997), schools become more directly regulated by market and economic rules, with their organization increasingly governed and evaluated by technical criteria of efficiency and productivity. In other words, from the perspective of neoliberal governance, individuals view education as a commodity, and the school has become just another business where payment is made for the service received. Generally, the aim is to shape individuals into entrepreneurs and consumers, with key concepts being competitiveness, globalization, flexibility, adjustment, privatization, deregulation²⁶ and market.

In response to such social, political, and economic contingencies, a new curricular perspective emerges in school Physical Education, with objectives centered on individual health care and the establishment of an active lifestyle. Physical Education guided by the discourse of health aims, on the part of students, not only at engaging in physical exercise but also at acquiring knowledge related to the relationship between physical activity, regulated diet, and improved health.

In this conception, classes are designed based on physical abilities (strength, muscular endurance, cardiorespiratory endurance, and flexibility) and body composition balance. Neira and Nunes (2009) state that this perspective, known as the "healthy curriculum," is based on a common life project for all, promising happiness, a sense of well-being, and increased self-esteem if certain habits are adopted. Such identification with neoliberal goals, particularly those related to individual responsibility and the supposed reduction of public spending, suggests that this social function associated with health promotion is increasingly reflected in common sense, becoming nearly hegemonic when it comes to the purposes of Physical Education classes.

²⁶ Hall (1997) states that it is not merely a matter of replacing public and state regulation with private and market regulation. For the author, this process sometimes involves a return to regulation and, in other areas, deregulation, which should never be understood as total or pure freedom.

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Furthermore, based on the historiographical conception adopted here, it is important to note that these different curricular conceptions coexisted at various historical moments, and some continue to coexist to this day. The years and periods mentioned indicate a "discursive emphasis" or a direct relationship between the teleology sought by the curricular perspective and the prevailing social project of the historical period. Therefore, it is essential to consider the field in light of its numerous influences, transformations, and (dis)continuities over the past centuries.

In the 21st century, the field is facing new epistemologies and new curricular possibilities

Considering the impact of these social transformations, triggered by the effects of neoliberal governance in its social, economic, and political aspects, along with the influence of technological advancements, transnational communication channels, and the so-called globalization, many thinkers argue that we no longer live in the Modern Age. By the late 1980s, the field of education began to be influenced by these societal discussions.

Different authors have assigned various names to this potential new social configuration ²⁷. One of the most influential descriptions of the post-modern condition was elaborated by Jean-François Lyotard. According to this philosopher, the hallmark of what is called post-modernity is the 1950s, when there was a shift in the status of knowledge alongside the transition of society into the post-industrial phase and the advent of post-modern culture. In this perspective, knowledge begins to be produced and disseminated at an enormous speed and volume, with information technology and telecommunications as its main means of circulation. Lyotard (1989) further asserts that under these new conditions, a different logic emerges, which is skeptical of what he calls "meta-narratives"²⁸.

In the face of this accelerated pace of knowledge production and dissemination, new research and conceptions of Physical Education have emerged, drawing from a variety of theoretical fields:

²⁷ Among some terms we can mention: Post-modernism or Post-modernity (LYOTARD, 1989); Post-modern Condition (HARVEY, 1996); Post-modern Culture (CONNOR, 1992); Liquid Modernity (BAUMAN, 1997); Crisis of Modernity (VATTIMO, 1985); Hypermodernity (LIPOVETSKY, 2004); Late Capitalism (JAMESON, 1991); and Flexible Capitalism (BAUMAN, 2001), among others. It is clear that, from the perspective of these authors, these differences in nomenclature reflect, at least in part, the divergent emphases on various aspects that are part of the transformation of modern societies. It is also important to note that, for some, these transformations signify a rupture, while for others they refer to a continuity or acceleration, for example, of capitalism or modern rationality. The descriptions of each conception are not crucial in the development of the current field of research. Thus, we prefer to use only the term Post-modernity, taking it in a very general sense and based on its potentialities and implications for the field of education.

²⁸ Other authors refer to these as metadiscourses or metanarratives. These are totalizing discourses that, in certain power relations with other discourses, have become what Michel Foucault described as "regimes of truth," to the point of being naturalized as absolute.

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Postmodernism, Feminist Studies, Postcolonialism, Poststructuralism, Cultural Studies, Multiculturalism, Queer Studies, and others, strongly linked to social movements and anti-rationalist philosophical currents²⁹. Alongside the previously mentioned critiques from critical theories, numerous researchers and research groups have advanced in proposing alternative ways to think about the field.

As an example, we cite that the discursivity established by Professor Tomaz Tadeu da Silva (2011) regarding the post-critical curricular vision intersects with the work of Neira and Nunes (2006), who, in an attempt to overcome modern biases, along with a group of teachers, delved into creating a new curricular perspective for the field of Physical Education, referred to as the cultural curriculum of Physical Education. It was in the 21st century that Physical Education began to align with what are known as post-critical theories.

This does not mean that the notion of a post-critical curriculum or cultural Physical Education has become a homogeneous and stable experience. On the contrary, it remains always open to new reformulations and contributions, so that theories and pedagogical procedures are not treated as rigid foundations or technocratic didactic-methodological sequences. The attempt is to avoid falling into metanarratives, essentialist subjects, modern teleology, or classical explanatory models of knowledge.

In diametrical opposition to the previously mentioned modern conceptions of curriculum, research revisions on the cultural curriculum have shown that, as a perennial theorization influenced by various theoretical fields, philosophical concepts, and interlocutors, cultural Physical Education embodies a continuous process of transformation. What is presented, therefore, is far from being a norm, but rather an invitation, as Sandra Mara Corazza (2006) aptly stated. For example, recent research includes Augusto (2022), who brings feminist studies and queer theory to the forefront; Reis (2021), who connects pedagogical practice with cultural curriculum to Afro-Brazilian philosophies, the pedagogy of crossroads, and decolonial epistemologies; Santos Júnior (2020), who followed theoretical trails through the decolonial studies of the Latin American Modernity/Coloniality group, Boaventura de Sousa Santos' epistemologies of the South, and Indian Homi Bhabha's post-colonialism; and Bonetto (2021) and Vieira (2022), who explore the concept of cultural Physical Education in relation to Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's philosophy of difference.

²⁹ Based largely on the thought of Friedrich Nietzsche, Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, Julia Kristeva, Gilles Deleuze, and Félix Guattari, these philosophers have explicitly challenged any notions of metanarratives, totalizing truths, and other ideas of essence and reality.

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Expanding our analysis regarding the cultural curriculum, it is undeniable that, with the opening of so many theoretical fronts, the field of Physical Education curriculum, in general, multiplies through new epistemologies and curricular possibilities. The critical curricular theories, initially grounded in structuralist analyses from the historical-dialectical materialism, are reterritorialized and begin to broaden their problematizations, including identities beyond social class. Although fundamentally supported by modern teleologies, a brief review of recent research shows that there is a (re)conceptualization of critical theories within Physical Education, incorporating issues related to differences such as ethnicity, gender, religion, and sexuality (ALMEIDA, 2006; MALDONADO, 2020). Similarly, even though it may seem inconsistent, the very technocratic and acritical theories are starting to face pressure to adopt more inclusive practices, such as pedagogical discussions in sports teaching (COSTA, SOUZA, 2004; SOLER, 2005; REIS et al., 2015; REVERDITO et al., 2022).

Given this context, it is premature to measure the impacts related to the new epistemologies in the Physical Education curriculum field, or to understand whether (and how) such influences will produce significant effects on pedagogical conceptions in the school routine. However, it is certain that these transformations provide a breath of fresh air amid the numerous challenges faced by the educational institution and, more broadly, by Brazilian society.

In conclusion, it is worth reiterating that the historical narrative presented here is directed diametrically opposed to an evolutionary and homogeneous logic regarding the theories of the Physical Education curriculum. It is simply a (re)assembly of discursive traces from the past, based on studies that have focused on a common object Physical Education yet from different temporalities, scopes, and theoretical-methodological references. In this sense, it engenders,

" "An archaeology is always to risk putting together traces of surviving things, necessarily heterogeneous and anachronistic, as they come from separate places and times divided by gaps. This risk is called imagination and montage." (DIDI-HUBERMAN, 2012, p. 2011-212).

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