



**Uses of Montessori pedagogy in Brazil:
actions of Piper de Lacerda Borges and Eny Caldeira¹**

Usos da pedagogia Montessori no Brasil:
as ações de Piper de Lacerda Borges e de Eny Caldeira

Usos de la pedagogia Montessori en Brasil:
acciones de Piper de Lacerda Borges y Eny Caldeira

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Abstract

In this article we seek to understand the pedagogical actions of Piper de Lacerda Borges and Eny Caldeira in favor of the circulation of the Montessori method in Brazil from the end of the 1940s onwards. In order to do this, we conceive that pedagogical models are constructed in specific times and places, they circulate through different mediators and supports and on different scales, apart from being appropriated in educational systems. The sources used are written texts published in educational journals and newspapers. Piper and Eny had a common interest in the Montessori method, but they used it in a specific way: Piper appropriated the Montessori method in light of Theosophy and the Social Service field, where she worked as a teacher, and Eny in the pedagogical field.

Key words: Montessori method; Piper de Lacerda Borges; Eny Caldeira; Use.

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Resumo

Neste artigo busca-se compreender as ações pedagógicas de Piper de Lacerda Borges e Eny Caldeira em prol da circulação do método Montessori no Brasil a partir do final dos anos 1940. Para tanto, concebe-se que os modelos pedagógicos são construídos em tempos e locais específicos, circulam por meio de diferentes mediadores e suportes e em diversas escalas, bem como são apropriados nos sistemas educativos. As fontes utilizadas são formadas por textos escritos publicados em periódicos educacionais e jornais. Piper e Eny tinham em comum o interesse pelo método Montessori, mas o usavam de modo específico: a primeira apropriou-se do método montessoriano à luz da Teosofia e do campo Serviço Social, onde atuava como docente, e a outra no campo pedagógico.

Palavras-chave: Método Montessori; Piper de Lacerda Borges; Eny Caldeira; Uso.

Resumen

En este artículo se busca comprender las acciones pedagógicas de Piper de Lacerda Borges y Eny Caldeira a favor de la circulación del método Montessori en Brasil desde fines de la década de 1940. Se entiende que los modelos pedagógicos se construyen en épocas específicas y lugares, circulan através de diferentes mediadores y soportes y en diferentes escalas, además de ser apropiados en los sistemas educativos. Las fuentes utilizadas son textos escritos publicados en revistas y periódicos educativos. Piper y Eny tenían un interés común por el método Montessori, pero lo utilizaron de una manera específica: la primera se apropió del método Montessori a la luz de la Teosofía y del campo del Servicio Social, donde ella trabajó como profesora, y la otra en el campo pedagógico.

Palabras clave: Método Montessori; Piper de Lacerda Borges; Eny Caldeira; Uso.

Received: 2024/10/11

Approved: 2024/02/22

Introduction

The Rio de Janeiro newspaper “A Noite”, on July 21, 1950, published an article entitled “*viajam para a Europa as diretoras da Associação Montessori*”, reporting that, the day before, educators Piper de Lacerda Borges and Eny Cadeira had flown to Rome with the aim of giving a course on the Montessori method in Perugia, from July to September of that year. They were the two main experts on the famous Italian pedagogue’s proposal for educating children in our country, who would be visiting European countries to meet and listen to Maria Montessori (Viajam..., 1950, p. 6). During the course they attended, they had the privilege of listening to lectures by several experts on the Montessori method and conferences by its creator on child psychology. That year, on July 20, in Perugia, the *Centro de Studici Pedagogici* was created with the purpose of establishing a national center for Montessori studies, but open to other countries (Trabalzini, 2022). At that historic moment, in addition to acting as a herald of peace among peoples, Maria Montessori, who had returned to Europe in 1946, was making efforts to rebuild her pedagogical work, which had been repressed by the fascist regime since 1934 and practically rendered unfeasible by the Second World War (Seveso, 2020).

Piper de Lacerda and Eny Cadeira were not the first educators to use Montessori ideas in schools for children in Brazil. Since the mid-1910s, the *Escola Normal da Praça*, located in the city of São Paulo, used this pedagogical perspective from the United States in its early childhood education institution, on the initiative of Ciridião Buarque and Mary Buarque; and in the state of Paraná, legislation was created for preschool education that cites aspects of the Montessori method. In Curitiba, in 1924, teacher Joana Falce Scalco began to use Montessori materials imported by Lysímaco Ferreira da Costa as General Director of Public Education for the State of Paraná, at the *Jardim da Infância Emília Ericksen*. At the *Primeira Conferência Nacional da Associação Brasileira de Educação (ABE)*, held in 1927 in the capital of the state of Paraná, Curitiba, theses based on Montessori pedagogy were presented. These specific essays would continue until the end of the 1940s, when a more articulated movement for the use of the Montessori method began to occur, which gained national visibility, facilitated by the climate of redemocratization experienced in Europe and Brazil (Campos, 2017). With the end of World War II and the overthrow of the Estado Novo dictatorship in Brazil, events that occurred in 1945 also contributed to the revival of the ideas of *Educação Nova*.

Thus, this paper aims to understand the pedagogical work of Piper de Lacerda Borges and Eny Caldeira in promoting the Montessori method in Brazil before and after their trip to Europe to deepen their knowledge of this pedagogical proposal. With a university degree in Chemistry, the former was a teacher at the *Escola Técnica de Serviço Social* – later transformed into a college of the same name – and, together with her husband, Lourenço de Mattos Borges, participated in the *Sociedade Teosófica do Rio de Janeiro*, having founded the *Associação Montessori do Brasil (AMB)* in 1949 in that city, which was then the capital of Brazil. Eny Caldeira graduated from the *Escola Normal do Paraná* and the *Faculdade de Pedagogia*, both based in Curitiba. As a polyglot, she had access to readings about Maria Montessori's ideas and experiences, especially in French. In 1952, after returning from her study abroad in Europe, she became director of the *Instituto de Educação do Paraná*, the first woman to hold the position at this institution. Despite belonging to different professional fields, the lives of Piper de Lacerda Borges and Eny Caldeira intertwined in the dynamization of the *Sociedade Montessori do Brasil* and in the trip they took together to Italy (Campos, 2017).

In order to better understand the circulation and appropriation of the Montessori method in Brazil through the initiatives of Piper de Lacerda Borges and Eny Caldeira, we adopt the perspective of the history of transnational education. Appropriation, based on the

conceptualization given by Chartier (1992), is an operation of use of cultural goods by specific individuals or social groups in particular space-time markings in connection with different contexts. In the school field, Carvalho (2003) proposes taking a multifaceted look at pedagogical models, seeking to understand how they are constructed in specific times and places, how they circulate through different mediators and supports and are appropriated in different instances of educational systems. Roldán Vera and Fuchs (2021) reflect about the circulation and use of school education at a transnational level, seeking to perceive pedagogical connections beyond national borders, as it is the case with the issue that concerns us we are discussing in this paper. The sources analyzed include reports from the *Instituto de Educação do Paraná*, educational periodicals, documents from the *Associação Montessori do Brasil*, newspaper articles, and writings by Piper de Lacerda Borges and Eny Caldeira.

In short, this text is divided into two parts. The first explores Piper de Lacerda's initiatives, with emphasis on the founding of the *Associação Montessori do Brasil*. The other explores Eny Caldeira's work in disseminating the Montessori pedagogical proposal in the training of teachers for the education of children, with emphasis on her management at the head of the *Instituto de Educação do Paraná*.

Piper de Lacerda Borges and the *Associação Montessori do Brasil*

As president of the *Loja Teosófica Lumen* in Rio de Janeiro, Piper de Lacerda Borges presented the thesis “*a influência do método Montessori na formação da personalidade humana e no apuro da raça*” at the *VII Congresso Nacional de Teosofia*, held from November 15 to 21, 1949, in Salvador (state of Bahia) – published in the newspaper “*O Teosofista*” (Borges, 1950). She begins the text by noting Maria Montessori’s relevant pedagogical contribution to educators, parents and psychologists, based on scientific assumptions. Regarding the core of the Italian teacher’s method, she states: “There is a complete graduated order in the physical and psychological environment of a Montessori school. The essential thing is to ensure that the child has complete freedom of movement and attitude. This requires that we provide him with sufficient space for the various activities in which he must engage” (Borges, 1950, p. 15). She elaborates on the environment so dear to Montessori pedagogy, indicating that the physical space of the classroom should be twice the usual size and well ventilated; the furniture should be made of wood in a light color and proportionate to the height of the students; and the educational material should be specific. She also draws attention to teacher training in the Montessori pedagogical proposal because the educator must have a scientist’s attitude, marked by the preparation of the environment and educational materials, by detailed observation and by respecting the rhythm of each child. In conclusion, the conference invited the congressmen to disseminate and use the ideas about children defended by Maria Montessori not only in schools but also in families and other educational institutions, and to support the *Associação Montessori do Brasil*.

Created and chaired by Piper de Lacerda Borges that same year and headquartered at the *Escola Técnica de Serviço Social* in Rio de Janeiro, where she worked, the *Associação Montessori do Brasil* (AMB) aimed to disseminate the pedagogical ideas of the Italian pedagogue, particularly through conferences and courses and the translation of her works. The establishment of the *AMB* was a very important event because it proposed to have national scope with state chapters, differentiating itself from the isolated experiences carried out in the first half of the 20th century. The excerpt from the *AMB* statutes, published by Piper de Lacerda Borges, makes this purpose clear when it states:

Founded in this capital, where it has its headquarters and jurisdiction, for an indefinite period, with its social fund and unlimited number of members (who are not necessarily responsible for social obligations), and its purposes are:

- a) to disseminate the educational methods advocated by Mrs. Maria Montessori, in her admirable pedagogical work;
- b) to spread as much as possible in our midst the idealism advocated by Mrs. Montessori, in relation to children and the attitude, towards them, of parents, teachers and adults in general;
- c) to promote the translation and publication of Mrs. Montessori's works, published or yet to be published [...].

The Association will be administered by a Board of Directors consisting of a President; Vice-President; Secretary; Treasurer and Technical Assistant. Given the important services provided to the dissemination of the work of Mrs. Maria Montessori in Brazil, the first President and founder of the *Associação Montessori do Brasil*, Mrs. Piper de Lacerda Borges, will serve for life as President of the Association. (Borges, 1950 apud Campos, 2017, p. 245-6)

According to Campos (2017), Piper de Lacerda Borges certainly had contact with Maria Montessori's ideas in various ways, such as through her husband's professional circle and her relationship with Érika Mayer. Lourenço de Mattos Borges, a public prosecutor and Piper's husband, was very close to his colleague Carlos Susseking de Mendonça, including in support of social initiatives of the judiciary of Rio de Janeiro. Carlos' brother, Edgar Susseking de Mendonça, was married to Armanda Álvaro Alberto, who founded the Escola Regional de Meriti in 1921, inspired by the pedagogical ideas of Maria Montessori (Mignot, 2010). The Borges couple actively participated in the *Sociedade Teosófica do Rio de Janeiro*; both held important positions in this association and gave lectures on diverse scientific, artistic and pedagogical topics, which were published in newspapers and appreciated by an intellectualized fraction of the elite and middle classes (Campos, 2017).

On the other hand, Piper de Lacerda's relation with Érika Mayer, an Austrian daughter of Brazilians who arrived in Brazil in 1948 and was soon naturalized Brazilian, proved to be of capital importance for the start of the dissemination of Montessori pedagogical ideas in Rio de Janeiro (Naturalização..., 1948, p. 2). Érika had pedagogical training in educational institutions in the Netherlands, including with Maria Montessori, so she had consistent knowledge of the new method created by the Italian educator (Campos, 2017). Thus, in October 1949, Piper de Lacerda Borges and Érika Mayer taught an introductory course about the Montessori method at the *Escola Técnica de Serviço Social* in Rio de Janeiro, promoted by the *Associação Montessori do Brasil* (Campos, 2017).

In December 1949, Piper de Lacerda Borges taught a course on the Montessori method for educators in Curitiba, the first outside the federal capital. On this occasion, she encouraged the creation of the Paraná section of the *Associação Montessori do Brasil*, which was then chaired by Eny Caldeira, a professor at the *Instituto de Educação do Paraná*. In April and May of the following year, Piper de Lacerda Borges returned to the capital of Paraná to teach teacher training and mothers' education courses, as announced by the city's *Gazeta do Povo* newspaper:

Now, once again, Professor Borges Lacerda returns to Paraná, this time to teach a course to train kindergarten monitors to our state's teachers. This course, which consists of presentation, psychology and practice of the Montessori method, will last one month and is sponsored by the *Secretaria de Educação e Cultura*. [...] The Director of the Paraná Section, in a meeting that will be held tomorrow at 5:00 p.m. in the Main Hall of the *Instituto de Educação*, will outline the plans related to the course, its schedule and inaugural class. This entity, which in Paraná makes the benefits of Montessori methods available to the highest popular social interests of our people, announces a special early childhood education course for mothers from Paraná for the month of May. (Formação..., 1950, p. 8)

It is important to reflect on the fact that the *Secretaria de Educação e Cultura do Estado do Paraná* promotes the Montessori courses of Professor Piper de Lacerda Borges, highlighting the role of its head, Erasmo Pilotto. A professor at the *Instituto de Educação do Paraná* in the 1930s and 1940s, Pilotto advocated self-education as an educational proposal, with his pedagogical foundation anchored in Tolstoy, Pestalozzi, Gentile and Montessori. In 1943, with a friend, he created the *Instituto Pestalozzi* in Curitiba, whose experience of comprehensive education for disabled children up to 14 years of age was reported in the work *Escola Serena* (Campos, 2017). In 1949, he became the head of the *Secretaria da Educação e Cultura do Estado do Paraná* and coordinated the officialization of pedagogical programs for primary education (1949) and kindergarten (1950). Regarding the primary education program, Botelho (2011, p. 115) notes the appropriation of the Montessori method when he states:

- Language: 1st and 2nd grades: "Exercises about the formation of words by derivation, according to the Montessori technique" (p.12). "The very important exercises on the formation of words by derivation, according to Montessori, are found in her Scientific Pedagogy, 2nd volume, in the chapter about grammar" (p.13). -Language: 3rd and 4th grades: "Complete Montessori material for teaching grammatical categories, etc., related to grammar. When this material is not available, the teacher should try to supply it with improvised material, but strictly follow the Montessori technique. This seems to us to be the ideal process for systematic language teaching (p.13-14). -Arithmetic (2nd grade): "To study numeration, adopt the Montessori process or another that is similar to it".

It was not without reason that the *Secretaria da Educação e Cultura do Estado do Paraná* promoted courses for teachers on the Montessori method of Piper de Lacerda Borges in 1949 and 1950. Regarding the course of the latter year, Leal (1950) asserts that "the whole of Curitiba listened to the educator from Rio de Janeiro, and the Paraná Section of the Association is continuing the work carried out not only in the capital, as well as in the interior, maintaining correspondence with teachers throughout the state and continuing the general dissemination of Montessori teachings". Thus, in addition to teaching courses in Curitiba to a large audience, Piper de Lacerda Borges gave lectures about the Montessori method in other important cities in Paraná, such as Paranaguá and Londrina. And the *Secretaria da Educação e Cultura do Estado do Paraná* helped teacher Eny Caldeira to travel to Europe, in the company of Piper de Lacerda Borges, to participate in the Montessori teacher training course in Perugia and to complete internships in innovative educational institutions in several European countries (Campos, 2017). After Piper de Lacerda Borges' initiatives in Rio de Janeiro, Paraná was therefore consolidated as the main state in the Brazilian federation to promote the Montessori method.

After her trip to Europe, Piper de Lacerda Borges resumed the dissemination of Montessori's pedagogical ideas in other Brazilian cities. In March 1951, he was in Porto Alegre, capital of Rio Grande do Sul, where he gave a lecture entitled “*Influência do Método Montessori para a formação da mentalidade humana*,” which was publicized by the *Secretaria da Educação e Cultura do Estado do Rio Grande do Sul* for its state teachers. On that occasion, he announced the holding, with the help of the Brazilian Ministry of Education, of the *XXX Curso Internacional Montessoriano* in October 1951, in Rio de Janeiro, with the presence of Maria Montessori (Campos, 2017). On the other hand, on March 9, 1952, the newspaper *Diário de Notícias*, from Rio de Janeiro, announced the existence of enrollments with the following title: “*Jardim de Infância – Método Montessori – Professora Piper de Lacerda Borges*” (Jardim..., 1952, p. 4). Maria Montessori's arrival did not occur due to her sudden death and, to my knowledge, this kindergarten had a short life, but Piper de Lacerda Borges continued to spread the pedagogical ideas of her Italian teacher.

Eny Caldeira and the training of Montessori teachers

Eny Caldeira's trajectory in the Brazilian pedagogical field was unusual due to her higher education, her transnational involvement and her work in favor of teacher training. After graduating as a teacher at the *Instituto Estadual do Paraná*, Eny enrolled in the Pedagogy Course at the *Curso de Pedagogia da Faculdade de Filosofia, Ciências e Letras da Universidade Federal do Paraná*, having completed it in 1941. Her drive for continuing education led her to complete a specialization in *Orientação Educacional* at the Universidade de São Paulo (USP) in 1947, and the USP *Curso de Educadores Saneadores da USP* the following year. After a short period as a primary school teacher, she joined the *Instituto de Educação do Paraná* as a teacher, being the first teacher with a degree in Pedagogy. It was as a teacher at the *Instituto de Educação do Paraná*, in 1949, Eny became the president of the Paraná section of the *Associação Montessori do Brasil* and, the following year, organized the course given by Piper de Lacerda Borges in Curitiba for teachers in the public school system of the state of Paraná (Silva, 2015).

Her membership in the *Associação Montessori do Brasil*, her openness to pedagogical innovation by the *Secretaria da Educação do Estado do Paraná*, and her determination to improve her teaching career led her to undertake internships at several cutting-edge educational institutions in Europe from mid-1950 to early 1952. The fact that Caldeira was multilingual, because she came from a wealthy family and had studied at the Lapa boarding school run by the *Irmãs de São José de Moutiers* – of French descent – made it possible for her to study in Italy, Switzerland, the Netherlands, and France (Silva, 2015). Together with Piper de Lacerda Borges, in mid-1950 she participated in the *XXIX Curso Internacional Montessori*, held at the University for Foreigners in Perugia, about which she stated: “I had the happiness of meeting Maria Montessori, of stroking her hands, and of listening to her so many times in her classes, full of simplicity and wisdom” (1952a, p. 3). In Italy she also visited Rome, Florence, Venice, Padua and Milan, where she made observations about art, and at the University of Rome she developed pedagogical studies. Eny then did internships in schools and pedagogical institutions, which she briefly describes as follows:

[I completed] an internship at the Jean Jacques Rousseau Institute in Geneva, under the supervision of B. Inhelder, at the Maison de Petit de Claparède, at the École Experimental de Maill under the direction of Robert Drottens, an observation internship at the Child Psychology Laboratory directed by Andre Rey, and a visit to the Child and Youth Guidance Clinic in Lausanne, under the supervision of Pierre Bovet. I then traveled around Europe, completing a study internship at the École Decroly in Brussels, at Montessori schools of different levels of education in Amsterdam, and finally in Paris under the supervision of R. Zazzo, at the Laboratory of Psycho-Biologie de l'Enfant; University of Paris, the last internship during my stay in Europe, covering two periods in total, 1950/1951 and 1951/1952 (Caldeira, 1974).

After completing internships at the main centers of pedagogical innovation in Europe, Caldeira returned to Brazil in early 1952 and took over as director of the *Instituto de Educação do Paraná*, which had been headed by men since its founding. His tenure at the main institution for training primary school teachers in the state of Paraná, from 1952 to 1955, was marked by pedagogical innovations. The first of these was the restructuring of the Institute's kindergarten, based on the Montessori method. Aiming to spread this experience to kindergartens in the public school system, Caldeira teamed up with teacher Joana Scalco, a Montessori educator who held the position of director of the Pre-Primary Education Division at the *Secretaria da Educação E Cultura do Paraná*. In this sense, Ratacheski (1953, p. 72) states: “Great enthusiasm for kindergartens is once again reigning in the [state] of Paraná. The Department of Education has already ordered Montessori materials from Italy for most of them and is making suitable furniture.” Thus, teachers Eny and Joana taught courses on the Montessori method for kindergarten teachers in the public school system, a significant initiative in Brazil, whose education system still gave little importance to early childhood education (Silva, 2018).

However, in relation to teacher training for primary education, teacher Eny's main initiative, as director of the Paraná Institute of Education, was the creation of the *Escola Experimental Maria Montessori*. Located in Vila Tingui, in the suburbs of the city of Curitiba, this school was inaugurated on September 3, 1952, and began operating at the beginning of the following year. Its purpose was to train teachers for primary schools in rural areas, which had grown significantly in recent decades due to the expansion of the agricultural frontier, particularly in the west and north of the state of Paraná. Linked to the Instituto de Educação do Paraná, the *Escola Experimental Maria Montessori* was inspired by the pedagogical ideas of its patroness and, by serving a socially vulnerable clientele, is reminiscent of the first *Casa dei Bambini*, but located in a rural neighborhood (Silva, 2015). According to Campos (2017), considering that the Montessori method was only appropriated in kindergartens and primary schools in urban areas, this was the first Montessori school experience carried out in the countryside. With children and the land as its thematic axes, the Maria Montessori Experimental School contributed, in an unprecedented way, to the training of teachers for primary education in rural areas and was a factor in the mobility of its social environment, including by offering an adult literacy course.

On the other hand, Professor Eny disseminated Maria Montessori's pedagogical ideas through the publication of pedagogical articles in the “*Boletim da Secretaria de Educação e Cultura do Estado do Paraná*”, an educational periodical that circulated from 1951 to 1953, aimed at teachers, principals, inspectors and employees of public schools in Paraná (Silva, 2018). In this official periodical, a section dedicated to the world of kindergartens was created, the first article of which, published in the 7th issue of May/June 1952, was written by Professor Eny and entitled “*Material de vida prática: ensino montessoriana – seção pré-primária*” (Caldeira, 1952b). When providing guidance on practical life in kindergartens, Caldeira (1952b, p. 246) based her work on the *XXIX Curso Internacional Montessori*, which she held in 1950 in Perugia, stating:

In addition to the classes that we were able to actually attend, the practical life material was a great delight for us at the “*Casa dei Bambini*”, where we were doing our internships. The little children were very interested in the practical life exercises. It is a delight to be able to observe them through correct attitudes, doing everything that adults do not give them the opportunity to do. And the child is happy to be able to perform movements that condition practical life exercises, and that adults do not understand, frustrating the little ones every time they do they feel eager to do so. Thus, an admirable social life full of energy and lively activity develops; and, amid peaceful joy, children solve for themselves various problems of social life that free and multifaceted activity presents at every step.

That same year, on the occasion of Maria Montessori's death, Caldeira (1952a) published the article “*Maria Montessori: a maior educadora do século*”, in which she reflects on the relevant contribution of her Italian teacher to the scientific study of child development that reinvented childhood.

In 1955, Professor Eny left the direction of the *Instituto de Educação do Paraná* and began working at the *Centro Brasileiro de Pesquisas Educacionais* (CBPE), created that year by Anísio Teixeira as president of the National Institute of Pedagogical Studies (INEP), linked to the Ministry of Education and Culture. The result of a partnership between the Brazilian government and UNESCO, CBPE was an educational research center with an international perspective, which included prominent Brazilian researchers and educational experts from Europe and the United States. Five years later, she joined the Federal University of Paraná, where she also began working with the psychogenetic perspective of Jean Piaget, whom she had met during her stay in Europe in the early 1950s (Silva, 2018). As a university professor, she presented her thesis for her post-doctorate degree, “*Maria Montessori: imagem da criança e modelos educativos*” (Caldeira, 1974), the result of research she conducted in Amsterdam in 1973, at the *Associação Montessori Internacional* (AMI). In this way, Professor Eny crowned her academic career with a new study about Montessori pedagogy.

Final considerations

Piper de Lacerda Borges and Eny Caldeira had in common an admiration for Maria Montessori's pedagogical ideas. In 1949, they combined their professional energies in the *Associação Montessori do Brasil*, founded by the former, with its section in the state of Paraná presided over by the latter. In the middle of the following year, they traveled together to Perugia to participate in the *XXIX Curso Internacional Montessori*, which was attended by the Italian teacher. After this course, they studied and visited Montessori schools and innovative institutions, which gave them even more prestige in the Brazilian pedagogical field. However, the uses of the Montessori method by these two pedagogues were unique because while Piper de Lacerda Borges appropriated the Montessori method in light of Theosophy and the field of Social Service, where she worked as a teacher, Eny Caldeira adopted this pedagogical perspective in the pedagogical field. The former stood out as a great promoter of Maria Montessori's ideas, on which she gave lectures and courses, as well as for the initiative of founding the *Associação Montessori do Brasil*. As a teacher and director of the *Instituto de Educação do Paraná*, Caldeira became famous for her training of primary school teachers, particularly with the establishment of the *Escola Experimental Maria Montessori*, and for the publication of pedagogical articles on the work of the Italian teacher.

It is important to note that Piper and Eny's actions in favor of the dissemination of Maria Montessori's pedagogical ideas, starting in the late 1940s, occurred at a historical moment of redemocratization of Brazilian society, which began in 1945, and of intensified appropriation of pedagogical matrices of *Educação Nova*. They produced greater dissemination of the Montessori method through the publication of several texts, the training of teachers with the vision of the Italian teacher and, above all, through the establishment of the *Associação Montessori do Brasil*. Thus, the moment of dissemination of the Montessori method in Brazil carried out by Piper and Eny differs from the specific initiatives that occurred previously – since the 1910s – by creating a national Montessori institution, as occurred in other countries, and by the transnational mobility of these two teachers in European countries. It also differs from the dissemination of the Montessori perspective carried out from the mid-1950s by the French Jesuit priest Pierre Faure through teacher training courses that he taught – promoted by the *Associação de Educação Católica do Brasil* (Makowiecki, 2023). The Montessori ideas that Faure disseminated in our country were reinterpreted by the Catholic vision of Lubienka de Leval, with whom he worked in Paris.

Finally, the actions in favor of the circulation and appropriation of Maria Montessori's pedagogical ideas, put into motion by Piper de Lacerda Borges and Eny Caldeira, had a significant impact on the construction of a new vision of childhood that continues to this day, in which the Italian teacher played a pioneering role.

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