

# Editorial

*Sisyphus – Journal of Education* is a new editorial initiative undertaken by the Institute of Education of the University of Lisbon, an institution that since 2009 has been devoting itself to the development and increase of the potential for debate and inquiry in the fields of Education and Training. This publication embodies the legacy of two previous scientific journals, each of them connected to a former institute of this University, from which it inherits both the heading and subheading: *Sísifo – Educational Sciences Journal*, from the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, with 12 issues from 2006 to 2010 (<http://sisifo.fpce.ul.pt>); the *Revista de Educação* [Journal of Education], published by the Department of Education of the Faculty of Science, with 37 issues between 1986 and 2011 (<http://revista.educ.fc.ul.pt>).

The release of an English edition – available online for free – is part of a plan of action promoting new ways of dialogue, trade and exchange beyond national borders, aiming at the important task of globalizing the modes of production and expansion of scientific knowledge. By underlining the significance of creative processes and the shaping and dissemination of scientific knowledge, this project is inclined to value multiple networks and methodologies involving researchers from a variety of disciplines. As a result, this new publication will pursue an extensive research agenda, embracing the opening of new conceptual positions and criteria according to present-day international tendencies and challenges within the global educational arena. *Sisyphus*

– *Journal of Education* offers a locus for debate on political, social, economic, cultural, historical and organizational aspects of education.

I believe this proposal brings us closer to the stimulating gesture that has been a vital and integral part of academic tradition since the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This attitude can be summarized as the infinite task of thought and truth telling, proclaiming an *unbreakable relationship between research and education*. In other words, this particular task identifies the academic universe with the idea of a contract that binds both the State and the people to a specific work ethic that structures, produces, stores and diffuses a varied array of knowledge with its respective methods, procedures and techniques. What brings us together is this basic principle that postulates the infinity of scientific research; the desire to question indisputable principles and fundamental axioms, as well as consensual and immediate truths, in a social field as tense and unstable as the contemporary field of education. In *Sisyphus - Journal of Education* we seek to reflect on diagnoses, resources and practices inscribed in this particular field of knowledge, but no longer with the intent to produce «good» statements or «adequate» ideas – be they denotative, prescriptive or evaluative in nature. The ambition is to open up the debate in order to convene and add original thoughts to the collective imagination in the educational arena.

*Sisyphus - Journal of Education* assumes the relevance and central role of the critical questioning of *doxa*. It is therefore essential to assert the ethics of academic work as deriving from a major impediment: the creation of a *corpus* of systematic knowledge, the description of a unitary sum, the production of a totalizing and all-encompassing narrative. We believe this impairment is mostly performative, as it imposes the idea of deficit or incompleteness as the core value of our craft, the open range which makes all scientific practice possible. The Greek myth that lends its name to the journal invokes the necessary status of *difference* corresponding to the link between unity and discontinuity in the practice of all social sciences. In contrast with the traditional idea of a meticulous and systematic search for the be-all and end-all «solution», our task will no longer be to solve a problem, but merely to expand the process of inquiry, to relaunch explanations, to continually displace the threshold of research. Let us reiterate our predecessor Rui Canário's justification for the use of the name Sisyphus. Like the mythical king of Ephyra, forced by the gods to endlessly resume the same task, we would also be *condemned* to question, to accept that the constant pursuit of truth can only be exercised «by means of empirically falsi-

fiable, permanently temporary and conjectural knowledge.» In line with this train of thought, Maurice Blanchot can be heard echoing the same principle:

To question is to seek, and to seek is to search radically, to go to the bottom, to sound, to work at the bottom and, finally, to uproot (...). The question starts a type of relation characterized by openness and free movement (...). The question awaits an answer, but the answer does not appease the question (...). To question is to make a leap in the question. The question is this call to a sault that does not let itself be held back by a result. In order to leap there must be a free space, there must be firm ground, and there must be a force that, starting from a secure foothold, changes the movement into a jump. The freedom to question is a leap starting from, and moving away from, all firmness.<sup>1</sup>

It is for the aforementioned reasons that *Sisyphus - Journal of Education* intends to publish papers displaying original research – theoretical studies and empirical analysis – and expressing a wide variety of methods, in order to encourage the submission of both innovative and provocative work based on different orientations, including in the political front. Consequently, it does not represent or favor any particular paradigm; on the contrary, it proposes and supports the possibility of multiple approaches and commends diversity.

Jorge Ramos do Ó

<sup>1</sup> Blanchot, Maurice (2003). *The Infinite Conversation (Theory and History of Literature)*, vol. 89, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, pp. 11-19.

