

# Editorial

THE COMMITMENT to reflect upon the situation of the primary and secondary education has been one of the keynotes of the Institute of Advanced Studies since the first years of its existence. As a means of expression and communication of the Institute, ESTUDOS AVANÇADOS journal has been supporting the interest in education, to which it has already dedicated more than one issue. They are: issue 12, in which we have published the article about the pedagogy of repetition — which, nowadays, is considered a classic —, written by the much-missed Sérgio Costa Ribeiro (a visiting professor at the time); and issues 13 and 42. The latter rested on a dense one-day seminar that covered fundamental aspects of the impasses confronted by the educators around the country.

The topic remains up-to-date and it now focuses on the problem of the quality of primary and secondary education. There is a consensus about the insufficiency of elementary and middle instruction in all states of Brazil. After reaching the goal of offering access to primary education to nearly all school age children, there is still the need to face the even greater challenge of providing the students with good quality teaching.

The articles gathered here present the common thread of experience, which may not be replaced. They are reflections that yielded from the familiarity with initiatives by educators that have been striving for changes in public teaching practices in their states. The challenge of quality is being faced in many municipalities. We have published texts that account for successful experiences in Rio Grande do Sul, São Paulo, Minas Gerais, Bahia and Ceará. We are grateful to the professors Sonia Penin and Elba Sá Barreto for the suggestions that have made the attainment of these texts possible.

As to the teacher, the axis of the system, its “fragile link”, it has received the due prominence thanks to a research oriented by the editors. Data on the salary situation and on life and working conditions of the chalkboard worker — the primary teacher of the city of São Paulo — have been collected.

We have continued the session Food and Education, which brings relevant contributions about the nutritional deficiencies of a high number of children and adolescents.

The publication of texts about Bertolt Brecht, Graciliano Ramos, Luiz Gama and Hannah Arendt is tuned by the diapason of committed culture, one of the distinctive features of this and other issues of ESTUDOS AVANÇADOS.