


## Different perspectives on the reception and appropriation of Piagetian ideas in the Brazilian context


### Diferentes perspectivas na recepção e apropriação das ideias piagetianas no contexto brasileiro

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#### Abstract

The recently released book *The transnational legacy of Jean Piaget: a view from the 21st century*, published by Springer Nature, aims to internationally disseminate the studies carried out by the Helena Antipoff Documentation and Research Center (CDPHA) at the Federal University of Minas Gerais. Organized and edited by Regina Helena de Freitas Campos and Erika Lourenço (UFMG), in partnership with Marc J. Ratcliff (Université de Genève), the book has 19 chapters that explore various aspects of Piaget's influence. Among the topics covered, the following stand out: the clinical method for monitoring and intervening in the demands of children and adolescents; the historical-critical method for analyzing the interaction between internal and external factors in the History of Science; the right to education as a basis for intellectual and moral development; the promotion of peace; and multiculturalism as a tool for facilitating communication between different perspectives.

**Keywords:** developmental psychology; Piaget's clinical method; multiculturalism; peace promotion.

#### Resumo

A obra recém-lançada *The transnational legacy of Jean Piaget: a view from the 21st century*, publicada pela editora Springer Nature, visa divulgar internacionalmente os estudos realizados pelo Centro de Documentação e Pesquisa Helena Antipoff (CDPHA), da Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais. Organizado e editado por Regina Helena de Freitas Campos e Erika Lourenço (UFMG), em parceria com Marc J. Ratcliff (Université de Genève) o livro conta com 19 capítulos que exploram diversos aspectos da influência de Piaget. Entre os temas abordados, destacam-se: o método clínico para acompanhar e intervir nas demandas de crianças e adolescentes; o método histórico-crítico para analisar a interação entre fatores internos e externos na história da ciência; o direito à educação como base para o desenvolvimento intelectual e moral; a promoção da paz; e o multiculturalismo como ferramenta para facilitar a comunicação entre diferentes perspectivas.

**Palavras-chaves:** psicologia do desenvolvimento; método clínico de Piaget; multiculturalismo; promoção da paz.

**Book reviewed:** Campos, R. H. F., Lourenço, E. & Ratcliff, M. J. (2023). *The transnational legacy of Jean Piaget: a view from the 21<sup>st</sup> century*. Springer.

The publication of Jean Piaget's transnational legacy, with a keen eye on the major transformations and changes underway in the 21st century, reflects the quality and excellence of the studies promoted by the Helena Antipoff Research and Documentation Center (CDPHA, in Portuguese). The book comprises works presented at the *Jean Piaget International Colloquium in Brazil and Latin America*, which marked the *38th Helena Antipoff Annual Meeting*. The event was supported by the Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais (UFMG) and the Archives of Jean Piaget / University of Geneva. The activities took place remotely due to the pandemic and were coordinated from Belo Horizonte, MG, Brazil, from March 29 to 31, 2021.

This series of meetings is inspired by Helena Antipoff (1892-1974), an educational psychologist who contributed enormously to establishing a modern and adequate education system in Brazil. At the same time, it reveals the historical links between pioneering psychology educators in Brazil and renowned psychologists from Europe and the United States. Among the foreign interlocutors of this exchange were Édouard Claparède (1876-1940) and Pierre Bovet (1878-1965) from the Jean-Jacques Rousseau Institute in Geneva; and John Dewey (1859-1952), William Kilpatrick (1871-1965), and Edward L. Thorndike (1874-1949) from Teacher's College, Columbia University, in New York. Thanks to these exchanges, Brazil welcomed the educator and psychologist Helena Antipoff in 1929 to teach at the School for the Improvement of Teachers at the invitation of the State of Minas Gerais, Brazil. With Antipoff, came the contributions of her university colleague, Jean Piaget.

The book is organized into four parts. In the first, the authors analyze Piaget's role as a builder of an international network in Psychology, Education, and the promotion of peace. In the second, the chapters present stimulating dialogues, conflicts, and controversies between Piaget and his contemporaries such as Henri Wallon (Chapter 9), Carl Rogers (Chapter 12), Jürgen Habermas (Chapter 8), and especially Helena Antipoff (Chapter 11). In the third part, the attention turns to the development of Piaget's works and ideas in the Brazilian context. In the fourth and final part, the book justifies the need and relevance of Piaget's contributions to the 21st century. A list of renowned professors from different countries, specialists in Piagetian studies, authored the 19 chapters that make up the work. The studies presented in this book build upon and advance the recognized contributions of Jean Piaget, highlighting the relevance of his thinking in the face of the great changes we are facing in the 21st century.

Piaget's epistemological legacy is an example of how fruitful relationships between areas of knowledge, methodology, and theoretical formalization can be. All these aspects are clearly presented and analyzed in the various chapters of the book. Piaget was a researcher who knew how to move between philosophy, logic, and mathematics and understood that to monitor child development, he would

need a new method. In part, this method resulted from his observation of the procedures used by psychometricians in constructing their instruments and from the psychoanalysts' fluctuating attention when listening to their patients. Piaget, with his epistemological sensitivity, understood that the interplay between qualities and quantities would bring new dimensionality to the understanding of the object under study. He demonstrated in his practice that a scientific investigation requires different methods to reach reliable conclusions.

Among the concepts debated and well-articulated in this book are the positions of Piaget and Lev Vygotsky regarding the path of human development, whether through continuities, stages, or dialectics. Once again, we are faced with concepts that are reversed and characterized as facets of human development. In fact, identity, transitivity, and opposition are part of human empowerment in the search and construction of meaning. The concept of empathy is among the most surprising discussions this book offers us. What is the issue? Is empathy the result of social learning or a basic human manifestation? This discussion highlights the significant investment of educational administrators in the past and emphasizes the originality of Helena Antipoff's thinking (Chapter 11).

The relevance of Piaget's work for educators is emphasized by Hofstetter and Schneuwly (Chapter 4), and by Loureiro (Chapter 14), who describe the construction of a researcher network around the International Bureau of Education (IBE), with a deep influence on the process of educational systems' internationalization. The network was organized in defense of the education rights for all children and promotion of the educators' and students' participation in educational systems' deliberations. This movement, strongly promoted by Piaget during the period he directed the IBE, faced opposition from authoritarian political tendencies throughout the 20th century (as exemplified by the work of Patricia Scherman and Laura Vissani in the case of Argentina, Chapter 13), and it remains strongly necessary for the present time. Marilene Souza (Chapter 5) recalls how Piaget supported educators with knowledge about the psychological dimension of human beings to help them face the challenges of educating children and young people in a period of crisis and profound social transformations.

Crises and challenges always accompany, sharpen perspectives, and improve means and techniques of human action. In this 21st century, these crises and challenges have become greater, certainly due to population growth, migration problems, conflicts between nations, strong interference of social networks, and severe climate change. The available and improved means to understand and manage such changes lie in the expansion of scientific knowledge. In this sense, Piagetian epistemology has a lot to offer: the clinical method to monitor and effectively intervene in the demands of children and adolescents; the historical-critical method to understand the interaction between internal and external factors in the history of science; the educational right application for intellectual and moral development;

and the inclusion of multicultural studies to facilitate communication between different points of view and promote peace.

*The transnational legacy of Jean Piaget: a view from the 21st century* is a relevant book for researchers from different areas of the human and social sciences, such as developmental, educational, and school psychologists; educators; philosophers; and historians interested in understanding how Piaget's progressive ideas contributed to the development of psychological and educational sciences in Europe and Latin America.

### References

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