

HISTORY OF EDUCATION AND MATERIALITIES: collecting and selecting researches

História da educação e materialidades: escolhas e recolhas em pesquisa

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IN THE MIDST OF HISTORICAL RESEARCHES, THE MATERIAL CULTURE PRESENTS ITSELF

The proposal of the current dossier entitled 'History of education and materialities: collecting and selecting researches' was created with collective support and is the result of investments by groups and universities dedicated to the subject. School material culture and its multiple nominative derivations occupy a consolidated space in historiography — not only in Brazil, but in other countries¹ — and bring together studies from the north to the south of the country, mobilizing investigative networks, such as the 'Research and Experience Groups on School Material Culture' (*Grupos de Pesquisa e Experiências sobre Cultura Material Escolar*), which, since 2020, facilitates dialogue and partnership between research groups in Brazil around the theme of the history of education and material culture², emphasizes both the survey and analysis of empirical documentation, as well as proposes spaces for the study, dissemination and theoretical and technical strengthening of research groups.

The research on school material culture contributes greatly to investigations in the field of school culture insofar as they corroborate with a more detailed look at the ways in which school machinery enters the institution and the ways in which subjects use it, by making meanings and re-signifying it in different spaces and times. From

¹ You can access the national and international mapping of this theme through the following productions: Gaspar da Silva, Souza, Castro (2018). In 2023, the e-book edition of this book was published by *Editora da Universidade do Maranhão*, as well as a bilingual edition (Portuguese and Italian) (Gaspar da Silva, Souza, Castro, 2023). Another relevant work is the dossier 'The material turn in the history of education (2000-2020)', organized by Gaspar da Silva, Meda and Souza (2021), and published in the journal *Educació i Història: Revista d'Història de l'Educació*.

² The group is composed of the following national institutions: UFPR, UDESC, UFSC, UNICAMP, UFPel, UNB, UFAC, UFMA, UNESP, IFC, UFS. International institutions: CEINCE/Spain, UNIMC and UNITO from Italy. The work of this group has been subsidized with resources from the research public notice from PRPPG/UFPR and some productions derive from this investigative movement, for example, the book *A teia das coisas: cultura material escolar em rede* (Cordeiro, Garcia, Kincheski, & Kanazawa, 2021), which has a printed edition published by CRV and NEPIE in 2021. In the same year, the e-book edition was commissioned by NEPIE/UFPR.

this perspective, it is possible to face the school's 'black box' (Julia, 2001), analyze and understand the specifics of the elements that constitute the school culture, with emphasis on the daily practices of the school (Chartier, 2002). The articles presented below give a glimpse of this universe.

This dossier brings movements of researchers in the field of history of education and school material culture, who, in recent years, have been dedicated to mobilizing sources — from those already established in historiographical studies, to new empirical endeavors —, as well as proposes other investigative looks, by highlighting the educational materialities beyond nuances and details. In addition, this dossier inserts these materialities as the scope of research and from them, reaches analyzes that help understanding the historical-cultural phenomena.



Figure 1 - An advertisement about school material.
Source: Hemeroteca Digital da Biblioteca Nacional.

Figure 1 highlights an advertisement published in the magazine *O Malho*³, from 1912, which portrays the 'school material' and the objects available for sale, which came from the Volckmar trading house, in Leipzig, Germany, and were available in Rio de Janeiro, by the importer Louis Hermann, who conveys the image of the

³ The political satire magazine began to be published on September 20, 1902 and was founded by Luís Bartolomeu de Souza e Silva (Fundação Casa de Rui Barbosa). The mentioned advertisement is published in the edition of July 27, 1912, n. 515, on page 60. This image was extracted from the Hemeroteca Digital da Biblioteca Nacional.

Pedagogium⁴ exhibition to represent both the current dimension of active pedagogy and the ability to disseminate and commercialize teaching goods and teaching objects considered as, at that historical moment, recommendable for the process of schooling. The advertising image, here converted into a source, as an analytical exercise, “[...] classifies the text, suggests a reading, builds a meaning. It is a reading protocol, identifying evidence”⁵ (Chartier, 2002, p. 133) and, in this sense, it makes it possible to examine — together with other empirical evidence — the objects that were in circulation and were considered essential for the teaching of modern pedagogy, such as the sociability network of merchants and importers of these teaching materials and the transnational, commercial and pedagogical strategies launched to publicize and facilitate access and acquisition of school materials in the country.

This direction marks the area's efforts to contribute to the historiographical debate of schooling processes, digging and examining, through materialities, subjects, proposals, institutions, teaching materials, catalogs, advertisements, books, magazines, manuals, exhibitions, conferences, films, by creating links and establishing plots that articulate statements, enunciators and cultural practices. The abundance of artifacts and technologies produced by and for the school, and the processes through which this materiality gains space, circulates, and competes for places of representation, have provided a thriving research in the history of education. This means that, with the refinement of the analyzes and the growth of the field through exchanges between researchers, new readings have led to the meanings of the educational past, always mediated by the relationship between people, things and images. As indicated by Roger Chartier (2002, p. 136) “[...] the history of cultural practices must necessarily consider intricacies and reconstruct complex trajectories, from the uttered word to the written text, from the writing read to the gestures made, from the printed book to the reader word”⁶. This means including, in this composition, the notion of appropriation, because, according to Chartier, “[...] creative invention is postulated at the very core of reception processes”⁷. But such an assertion does not renounce present and rooted social differences, on the contrary, it advocates the characterization of “[...] practices that appropriate differently the materials that

⁴ To learn more, we recommend the book organized by Ana Chrystina Mignot. *Pedagogium: símbolo da modernidade educacional republicana*, published in 2013 and also the doctoral thesis by Camila Marchi da Silva, entitled *História do Museu Pedagógico Nacional: Pedagogium – um museu de grandes novidades (1890-1919)*.

⁵ TN. “[...] classifica o texto, sugere uma leitura, constrói um significado. Ela é protocolo de leitura, índice identificador” (freely translated from Brazilian Portuguese).

⁶ TN. “[...] a história das práticas culturais deve considerar necessariamente intricacões e reconstruir trajetórias complexas, da palavra proferida ao texto escrito, da escrita lida aos gestos feitos, do livro impresso à palavra leitora” (freely translated from Brazilian Portuguese).

⁷ TN. “[...] postula a invenção criadora no próprio cerne dos processos de recepção” (freely translated from Brazilian Portuguese).

circulate in a given society⁸” (p. 136). In line with this theoretical framework, the perspective of school material culture here is packed with the understandings expressed by Castro, Vidal, Peres, Souza and Gapar da Silva (2013, p. 276-277), which point to the following:

From the school museums of the 19th century to the electronic whiteboard of the 21st century, a wide range of materials invaded the school and started to have a place there. They testify to competing pedagogical conceptions and different expectations about the social place of school and schooling, shared by different groups and built from the most diverse interests, which extend from the claims of social strata to state demands and large commercial and industrial conglomerates. At the same time, this materiality is differently appropriated by school subjects in their various hierarchical levels and institutional positions, and sometimes produces unexpected effects. Capturing these movements makes it possible, in the study of the school, to manifest the complexity of social relations⁹.

Investments in research and studies on the subject of school material culture can be seen in a consistent and broad production, occupying different spaces and vehicles¹⁰, such as books, national and international journals, catalogs of photographic exhibitions¹¹, lives, integrated research projects, etc.

The *Revista Brasileira de História da Educação*, through this dossier, recognizes and disseminates the commitments that have been undertaken by research groups regarding the theme of the history of education and its relationship with school material, and what is shown here is just a portion of a much larger set of studies that

⁸ TN. “[...] práticas que se apropriam de modo diferente dos materiais que circulam em determinada sociedade” (freely translated from Brazilian Portuguese).

⁹ TN. “Dos museus escolares do século XIX à lousa eletrônica do século XXI, uma ampla gama de materiais invadiu a escola e nela passou a ter assento. Testemunham concepções pedagógicas concorrentes e diferentes expectativas sobre o lugar social da escola e da escolarização, partilhada por distintos grupos e construídas a partir de interesses os mais diversos, que se estendem das reivindicações de camadas sociais a demandas estatais e de grandes conglomerados comerciais e industriais. Ao mesmo tempo, essa materialidade é diferentemente apropriada pelos sujeitos escolares em seus vários níveis hierárquicos e posições institucionais, e produz efeitos, por vezes, inesperados. Captar esses movimentos possibilita, no estudo da escola, manifestar a complexidade das relações sociais.” (freely translated from Brazilian Portuguese).

¹⁰ The article by Gaspar da Silva, Meda and Souza (2021) 'Material school culture: a look at Brazilian production (2000-2020)', published in the *Educació i Història: Revista d'Història de l'Educació* journal, contains a survey and analysis of the presence of this theme in several of the contexts of production and training: articles, books, congresses and in themes linked to the lines of research of the Graduate Programs in Education in Brazil.

¹¹ Prof. Marcus Levy Bencostta is an exponent of this action, having already organized a significant number of photographic exhibitions that, through school architecture, places materiality as an analytical axis.

have been developed in Brazil and in other countries. The community of researchers whose historiographical sensitivity results in a deep look at the objects to extract the secrets of practices and disputes around the educational phenomena of a given time and space is represented in the diversity of themes addressed in this dossier, which is traversed by the desire to discuss a history of education that became material. Thus, it is understood that, in the manuscripts presented here, there is a “[...] thirst for history and [...] struggle to understand the ways of living and thinking of the past¹²” (Davis, 2006, p. 172), a thirst to understand the educational and school processes conducted and provoked by the various materialities that not only interfere with, but constitute the history of education.

The unequivocal contribution of this dossier to the RBHE is the result of the proposal made by Gizele de Souza, Andrea Cordeiro and Marcus Bencostta to the journal, which was embraced by the group of authors who promptly submitted their texts, and which is anchored in the dedicated and accurate work of the evaluators ad hoc and also the incessant investment of the editorial team with the participation of Ana Clara Nery. There were 35 articles sent to the Dossier, 2 of which were written by 2 foreign authors and the others by 60 researchers from various regions and universities across the country.

Investigations into school culture find, in the first pages of the initial issue of RBHE, translated by Gizele de Souza – in 2001, still a young doctoral student at PUC/SP –, a fertile place for the development of numerous studies in this approach throughout Brazil. This is the article ‘School culture as a historical object’ (‘A cultura escolar como objeto histórico¹³’), by Dominique Julia, and exhaustively quoted by several authors.

In 2007, the magazine published the dossier ‘Material culture in the history of education: research possibilities’ (‘A cultura material na história da educação: possibilidades de pesquisa’), whose presentation was written by Rosa Fátima de Souza and, among other authors, we point out Gizele de Souza. In 2017, a dossier was published which, although it does not have school material culture as an axis, has as keywords school culture and material culture, which permeate some of the articles published there. This dossier, ‘Traveling words: circulation of pedagogical knowledge in school manuals (Brazil/Portugal, from the mid-nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century)’ (‘Palavras viajadoras: circulação do conhecimento pedagógico em manuais escolares - Brasil/Portugal, de meados do século XIX a meados do século XX’), organized by Vera Valdemarin and Vera Lúcia Gaspar da Silva (2017), also contains the collaboration of other researchers, such as Rosa Fátima de Souza, a reference in the subject in Brazil, as well as an interview conducted by Gladys Teive

¹² TN. “[...] sede de história e [...] luta por compreender as maneiras de viver e pensar do passado” (freely translated from Brazilian Portuguese).

¹³ This text is a translation of the article ‘La culture scolaire comme objet historique’. *Paedagogica Historica. International Journal of the History of Education*, 1(suppl.), 353-382. Coordinator A. Nóvoa, M. Depaepe and E. V. Johanningmeier.

and Maria Alvarez with one of the exponents of School Culture, the Spanish researcher Agustín Escolano Benito. This last set already has a greater number of articles than the previous one, which denotes an increase in research with this approach.

From the set of participation of national and foreign researchers in the RBHE on the theme of school material culture, Vera Gaspar da Silva, the French Anne-Marie Chartier (2002), with her seminal text 'A device without an author: notebooks and binders at school primary' ('Um dispositivo sem autor: cadernos e fichários na escola primária'), and the Portuguese Margarida Felgueiras¹⁴. School culture and school material culture have appeared on the pages of RBHE since its launch and has been present in just over 25 articles over its 22 years.

This time, the current dossier, distinct from the two previous ones, demonstrates that research on school material culture has advanced greatly in the field of History of Education and already occupies a consolidated place in themes and academic-professional investments in educational research. If the idea came from the group of researchers from the Federal University of Paraná¹⁵, who signed the dossier and who for several years have been carrying out their investigations based on the premise of material culture, the set of texts in the dossier expresses the representativeness of other institutions and research groups involved and engaged in the theme.

Therefore, the organization of this publication consisted of the writing of twelve unpublished articles, which are the result of research strongly identified with approaches and dilemmas that problematize the importance of the contribution of School Material Culture to contemporary debates in the History of Education. And to open this contribution to historiography, the article by Francesca Davida Pizzigoni, 'Italy also had its South Kensington Museum: the educational collection of the Royal Industrial Museum of Turin in 1862' ('A Itália também teve seu Museu South Kensington: a coleção didática do Museu Real Industrial de Turim de 1862'), positions the discussion on the topic of pedagogical museums and their importance in the context of debates dealing with historical, educational and cultural heritage. When investigating the materiality of a rare collection of books and teaching materials aimed at Italian primary and secondary schools, the investigation did not let the didactic and educational objectives of this institution go unnoticed, which were marked by a profound 19th-century positivist character and were attentive the technical and scientific training of diverse student populations.

Wiara Alcantara, in her study: 'Across lands and seas: the lucrative French market for school objects (19th-20th century)' ('Por terras e mares: o lucrativo mercado francês

¹⁴ It should also be highlighted the organization of the dossier 'Archives, objects and educational memories: inventory practices' ('Arquivos, objetos e memórias educativas: práticas de inventário'), by Vera Lúcia Gaspar da Silva and Margarida Louro Felgueiras (2011).

¹⁵ This proposal was anchored in a collective research project, previously mentioned, 'Research and Experience Groups on School Material Culture' ('Grupos de Pesquisa e Experiências sobre Cultura Material Escolar') - an action that includes universities and researchers from all regions of Brazil.

de objetos escolares - Século XIX-XX'), shows how the school context was the target of commercial interests in the sale of materials that should meet the teaching practices of natural sciences. From the author's analysis, it appears, from the centrality of the experience of the companies Maison Deyrolle, which operated in several western countries, and Maison Paul Rousseau & Cie, which had a very close commercial relationship in the provision of objects and materials for the São Paulo schools, that the circulation of their products is one of the evidences of the phenomenon of the transnationalization of school material culture as an element of the educational modernity of the second half of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century.

Then, the article by Solange Aparecida de Oliveira Hoeller and Maria das Dores Daros, 'Rites and materialities in the surroundings of educational conferences' ('Ritos e materialidades nos entornos das conferências educacionais'), as its title suggests, investigates a set of sources that help readers to understand how the manifestations of festive and solemn sociability and how the records of these materialities were an inherent part of conclaves of this nature that took place in the 1920s, which occurred in the states of Rio de Janeiro, Paraná, Minas Gerais and Santa Catarina.

Still on the subject of events related to the educational context, the authors Juarez Jose Tuchinski dos Anjos and Etienne Baldez Louzada Barbosa, in their article 'In the conferences carried out in the pedagogical exhibition, the traces of representations about the school desk (1883)' ('Nas conferências efetuadas na exposição pedagógica os vestígios de representações sobre a carteira escolar - 1883'), look at the conferences held during the months of installation of the Pedagogical Exhibition, organized in the city of Rio de Janeiro in the context of the second half of the 19th century. One of the concerns of the article was the analysis of representations extracted from the press resulting from this event that made references to the furniture recommended for educational institutions, in particular, school desks. Among them, the issue of pedagogical hygiene of school furniture, the discussion provoked by the lecturers on the importance of thinking about the organization of schools, classrooms and their materiality stand out.

Returning to the Italian context, the dossier has the contribution of Mirella D'Ascenzo: 'La contribución de las escuelas al aire libre a la innovación tecnológica del pupitre entre tradición y modernidade' ('The contribution of the schools to free air to the technological innovation of the pupils between tradition and modernity'), which centers her argument on the importance of the school desks/tables for the international movement of outdoor schools, which are institutions designed to provide educational assistance to children and adolescents affected by tuberculosis. With theoretical articulations arising from the use of sources and references from the recent historiography, the author does not fail to elaborate an interesting discussion between the technological innovation of the materiality of furniture suitable for open-air schools and the renewing didactic practices marked by pedagogical activism guided by the medical science and hygiene.

To conclude this group regarding the historicity of school furniture, the following article is presented: 'School desks in the material school culture of Bahia's education: teaching knowledge, medical-hygienist knowledge (1880-1885)' ('Carteiras escolares na cultura material escolar da instrução baiana-saber docente, saber médico-higiênico - 1880/1885'), by Ione Celeste Jesus de Souza. As the title suggests, the 19th-century Bahian context was chosen to problematize teaching and medical hygienist knowledge with regard to arguments about the effectiveness of the materiality of school desks installed in normal schools and in some public classes, without detaching attention from the discussions that were taking place in other educational realities. In the article, the author draws attention to issues that deal with the composition of aesthetic sensibilities concerning class and social place in a slave-owning society.

The articles 'The long, concrete, and imaginary presence of the history of education foreign textbooks in Brazil (1930-1980)' ('A longa, concreta e imaginária presença dos manuais de história da educação estrangeiros no Brasil - 1930-1980') and 'The book as an artifact of school material culture and element of professionalization of teaching' ('O livro enquanto artefato da cultura material escolar e elemento de profissionalização da docência') — the first by Roberlayne de Oliveira Borges Roballo, and the second by Raquel Lopes Pires and Sara Raphaela Machado de Amorim — are the results of investigations that dialogue with each other, especially in the investigative sphere of printed material, in aspects that involve the circulation and repercussion of books and manuals in the scenario of teacher training. When dealing with the works of renowned educators, in the first article, the American Paul Monroe (History of Education) and the Spaniard Lorenzo Luzuriaga (History of Education and Pedagogy), in the second article, the Swiss Adolphe Ferrière (The biogenetic law and the school activa), his writings, in addition to highlighting the historical value of such productions for Brazilian pedagogical thought and the contribution to the knowledge that dealt with the history of education, also establish points of view about the pedagogical doctrines and education that circulated in the educational debate of the 20th century.

To improve the set of ideas about printed devices, Rodrigo Pereira dos Anjos da Silva and Maria Rita de Almeida Toledo present the article entitled 'The Escolar Magazine as a space for dispute and legitimation of discourse: convergence in the divergence of ideas' ('A Revista Escolar como espaço de disputa e legitimação do discurso: convergência na divergência de ideias'). In it, the authors analyze the editorial policy of *Revista Escolar* (1925-1927), an organ financed by the General Directorate of Public Instructions from São Paulo, which, in the face of criticism from intellectuals to the educational model adopted in that state of federation, elaborated a school press that should understand itself as a reading model recommended to all teachers, in order to become a discursive tool that circulated representations that strengthened the exaltation of the São Paulo republican school, its pedagogical precepts and educational, hygienic and sanitary models.

Continuing the analyzes in the discursive field of printed material culture, Andressa Caroline Francisco Leme and Ana Laura Godinho Lima are the authors of the article 'Materiality of a suitable literacy environment: an analysis of pedagogical discourses (1930-1990)' ('A materialidade do ambiente adequado à alfabetização: uma análise dos discursos pedagógicos - 1930-1990'). The focus of this investigative attempt was the suggestions for adapting the school environment to children's literacy, extracted from books published for education professionals in Brazil, which were initially influenced by New School thinking and, later, by conventions arising from constructivism. In both aspects, the authors' analyzes converge to the understanding that the pedagogical discourse about the child's ways of learning and what is the best environment for this to happen with quality are not dissonant, as they are discursive updates that admit agreements about the educational reality of Brazilian schooled childhood.

To finish this dossier, two discussions inserted in the field of imagery materiality that problematize the recording of school practices are presented. The first is present in the contribution of the article "Dear mommy, dear daddy": the invention of a school practice (1964 - 1980) ("Querida mamãe, querido papai": a invenção de uma prática escolar), developed by Vania Grim Thies and Joseane Cruz Monks. In this work, the approach to the theme is implemented by the authors through the analysis of the aesthetic and discursive materiality of a set of cards that mention the festive dates that remind Mother's Day and Father's Day, between the years 1964 and 1980, which were made by students from schools in the rural area of the city of Pelotas (in Rio Grande do Sul). The surprising use of an atypical and unusual source in research on the History of School Material Culture qualifies the responsibility of translating a universe of sensibilities that generate meanings of the relationship between the worlds of school and family life. The authors who bring the second discussion are Daniele Marques Vieira and Rochele Allgayer, authors of "Pelo Paraná Maior": school material representations on a 1920s film ("Pelo Paraná Maior": representações da cultura material escolar exibidas em película nos anos 20'). In this article, the highlighted historical source is a filmic production from 1927, commissioned by the State of Paraná as a propaganda piece of the government regarding completed constructions and constructions in progress, such as educational establishments. The filmic and historical analyzes adopted by the researchers explore the visual trails that recorded the image of countless vestiges of Paraná school material culture, such as furniture, uniforms, architecture, rites and solemnities.

Therefore, we, the organizers of this dossier, could not fail to thank, especially, the authors who believed in their proposal by submitting their manuscripts to the RBHE. Also the ad hoc consultants and the entire editorial team of the *Revista Brasileira de História da Educação*, which, from the very beginning, showed an academic interest in encouraging us to present a proposal of this magnitude and to

participate in the history of this important journal, which was always present in the consolidation process of studies and research in the History of Education.

Thus, we wish the readers a pleasant, constructive and formative walk through the articles of this dossier.

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