

The School Manual Within the Framework of Cultural History: towards a historiography of the school manual in Portugal

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ABSTRACT:

Concomitant with the construction of new epistemic objects, cultural history, as it has developed within the framework of historiographical renewal since the eighties of the 20th century, has brought another fundamental prerogative: making an object's limitation and comprehension dependent on the historiographical operation as a total epistemic act, thus, reinforcing, on the one hand, an idiosyncrasy between the research and construction of the object and, on the other, causing the notions of complexity and multifactoriality to emerge. On this level, the history of the schoolbook operates through contraposition, among other aspects, towards the book as merchandise and an editorial product, representing and configuring a cognoscent order and authorial mark; through closeness to the pedagogical and didactic reality — since the schoolbook is the main ordainer of school culture, memory and action; through becoming a part of the written culture. However, as far as this denomination and registration are concerned, in a broader cultural and pedagogical framework, the schoolbook, in its internality, as the main support of school culture and product of a dialectic between discourse and *episteme*, suggests, and is in need of, a specific approach based on ordering and making an ethno-historiography in which historicism, which tends to determine the sense and orientation of the research, stands out.

In order to justify these digressions, in this text I also wish to establish a line of research regarding the schoolbook, that will acknowledge its specificity but also be open to multifactoriality and the crossing of diachronic and synchronic dimensions. All of this is part of the broader framework of a historiography that encompasses the material, cultural, social, school and pedagogical, in an epistemic complex that contemplates the basic triangle of cultural history: the book, the text, reading.

KEYWORDS:

school manual, school culture, cultural history, ethno-historiography.

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The development of the history of the school manual has been based on three conceptual strands, which correspond to different areas of approach: an ethno-history (the school manual as the privileged didactic and pedagogical means in the structuring of school culture); an approach within the framework of economic and social history; an approach within the framework of cultural history. The possibility of applying these perspectives suggests that the history of the school manual, as a book and cultural object, goes beyond the double entry research project (economic history and social history) conceived and systematized by Lucien Febvre.

The school manual is a product/merchandise with profound repercussions in the Sociology of knowledge; its construction as a cultural object/product is also a question of the order of knowledge, of the order of the book and the order of cognition. An epistemology of the school manual presents a conceptual challenge. Its complexity, which may be extended to the history of the book, basically centers on a dialectic between discourse and *episteme*. In books, and particularly in the school manual, there are epistemic and gnoseological dimensions, scientific and discursive dimensions and socio-anthropological dimensions, regarding pedagogy and psychology, which are not confined to documentalism and library economics.

The school manual, as a didactic resource and symbol of the pedagogical field, the production of which corresponds to a complex configuration of text, form and discourse, is a combination of wis-

dom/knowledge/information/education. On this level, the history of school manuals is a fundamental contribution to the history of the book, through representation and plans of approach, in other words, of knowledge as wisdom and information as knowledge. Taken as information, the school manuals present an internality, in which the basic plans are symbolization, cognition and semiotics, including the following dimensions: the manuals as reading matter/ the projected reader, the guided reader; the manuals as the structuring and orientation of the reading act and reading experience; the school manuals as intellection/action; the manuals as the signification and construction of the world. School manuals are a specific case in the broader framework of written culture, also as a representation in epistemic, scientific, pedagogical, sociological and anthropological fields.

To construct the history of the school manual means investigating its origin, nature and the most profound meaning and symbolization of wisdom and knowledge; it means examining the materiality and meaning of the book(s) as a text, in the quality of the order (support and unit) of wisdom and knowledge; furthermore, it means analyzing the book as discourse (configuration, form/structure, specialization, authorship); finally, it means investigating wisdom as knowledge and knowledge as information and education.

In theory, and although sounding rather extreme, it may be said that the school manual presents an overlapping between text and knowledge and writ-

ing and reading. This is due to the fact that the logic of its construction is negation, or rather, the illegitimacy of interpretation, as a cognoscent process. In other words, within the school manual framework, the degree of freedom of interpretation, based on complex hermeneutic operations, is not only unadmitted *a priori*, but also illegitimate *a posteriori*. If there is room for variations of interpretation, they are looked upon either as faults resulting from the reader's inability or conditioning, or as perverse and ideological acts. In neither case should they be the object of legitimacy.

What kind of configuration should the manual adopt in order to assure (take precaution for) a (single) version of reading? If this question is taken as the basis of a school manual historiography, the answer will correspond to the following plans of approach:

a) In conformity with the specialization of the discourses, the manuals may be in the form of inventories, in series, classified and presented by scientific fields that are areas of knowledge. This is the central function of library economics, through which classifying, descriptive, informative and expansive systems, such as the universal system CDU, have developed.

b) Presenting marks of suitability (configurative, gnoseological, discursive) to the receiver and, in an operational manner, being involved in a specific stage of the teaching/learning process, the manuals may, by rule, be ordered/ hierarchized from the simple to the complex, according to their didactic-pedagogical suitability.

c) The manuals may even be ordered /hierarchized, using the nature and epistemic status of the text, in other words, within the framework of the universal encyclopedia of knowledge: dissertations, summaries, *mementos*, rudiments, reading book, exercise book.

If reading is taken as the referential, action and process, its perspectives, its inductive and ordering marks (through the creation of a combination that configures and relates factors/categories of authorship, with scientific /curricular categories, with categories relative to form / structure, with categories relative to function/location in the pedagogical/didactic act),

the manuals may be inventoried, ordered, systematized and analyzed in their specificity. In theory, the manual written by a scientist, a learned person or a teacher, or a manual of modules (thematic and didactic-pedagogical), or even a manual/compilation of lessons or composite of texts, inform and shape interpretation differently, putting equally different visions of the world into perspective.

A specific approach towards manuals would not be justified without acknowledgment of this principle, in the more general framework of the text, the book and reading— that is, in the framework of written culture. In this sense, the historiography of the school manual is an exercise which, by recovering an important basis of library economics, is oriented towards the essayist and (re)conceptualization, within the framework of cultural history.

The school manual has materiality; it is a sample and it is an authorial, editorial and mercantile product, it is merchandise and an industrialized and commercialized product with its own characteristics, which accomplishes specific aims on scientific, social and cultural levels. Its forms of production and circulation involve a chain of agents and they are conditioned by a series of prerogatives: authorial dimensions; techniques and factory materials and reproduction; processes and productive courses; circumstances and conditioning of commercialization, circulation, diffusion and access. In this framework, an approach based on a broadened economy has to include a production technology, made up of factors related to: locations; licenses and patents; property and copy rights; circulation and the reproduction of originals; mechanization, stylization and/or originality in the printing, editorial, authorial and stylistic plans. The socio-economic study of the production and distribution processes is consequently broadened from the strictly economic, financial and technical aspects to factors of agencying, specialization and professionalization levels, organization, forms of control and power.

However, as well as the social and economic aspects of commercialization, distribution, circulation, acquisition and loan, the schoolbook market is also affected by regulation factors and by historical circumstances, as far as curricular policies, among others, and the mediation of access by school teacher and institute intervention are concerned. Despite

the protective policies of copyright, re-edition, translation, adaptation and the existence of censorship prior to publication and mediation, the book in general, and the school manual in particular, as a counterfeit, censored and controlled object, is not free of falsification, duplication or plagiarism.

Effectively, in the specific case of school manuals, it was mainly in order to prevent the high level of copyright infractions and to guarantee the normalization and suitability of information for the different types of readers, that other basic means of controlling circulation and use were associated with the existence of the former censorship. They are structures based on norms regarding publication, mercantilization, forms of expression, nature and suitability for the readers on cognitive, moral and ideological levels. Furthermore, the scientific and discursive demands are also taken into account.

However, the historical consequences have stemmed from the fact that the application of these regulating instruments was not sufficient to overcome socio-economic conditioning. This may be inferred from the example of the Portuguese schools at the time of the general inspections in 1863 and 1875. A considerable number of the elementary schools inspected during this period used books that were not included in the list of manuals recommended by the *Conselho Superior de Instrução Pública* [State Education Board]. Given that, according to teachers and inspectors, this situation was mainly owing to economic reasons, there were still obvious irregularities which, in spite of not overtly being a strategic diversion from superior recommendations, were still very frequent. The most used books were, in fact, those books or manuals that existed in families or schools, or the ones the teacher kept to lend pupils. The reduction of production cost criteria was also used, in a number of circumstances, to justify the use of a single book.

On economic and social levels, there are socio-professional dimensions that may be structured according to two main arguments:

1) inventory, description and hierarchization of agents and socio-professional segments involved in the processes of authorship, legitimacy, publication and circulation of the school book, its methods and forms of organization, mobilisation, professionalization, association;

2) analysis, characterization and evaluation of intertextualities, cultural-scientific bases, linguistic and meta-narrative resources.

It is the combination of these marks, some regarding locations, spaces and defined times and others relating to a projected and imagined future which establishes, enriches and hierarchizes the verbal, graphic and objectual information of the school manuals.

Notwithstanding its didactic-pedagogical function, the manual, a main source of information, knowledge and legitimacy of written culture and scholarly action, has evolved at the same rate as the general history of the book, as far as arrangement and meaning, the vehicle of wisdom and knowledge are concerned. However, it adjusts itself to the circumstances and prerogatives of educational policies. Indeed, analyzed for itself and as a representation of culture and schooling, on the socio-economic levels of circulation, diffusion and suitability, the manual presents a specificity which requires suitability of the general criteria of library economics in order to be noted.

Within the framework of library economics and epistemology, it has been reaffirmed that the school manuals, as a result of their general characteristics, are capable of becoming a single bibliographic genre, if they are taken in their specificity, they present a great diversity of types. As far as the hard core of library economics is concerned, namely the authorial and editorial information and branch/field of knowledge, the school manual is not a specific case, since it is usually treated in the general framework of rules and practices of each classification system. Nevertheless, in so far as it symbolizes a cultural construction, structures the act of knowledge, materializes the pedagogical relationship and configures the epistemic-pedagogical field of school culture, the manual constitutes a particular case of bibliographical production and challenges a specific historiography. The acknowledgement of the complementariness between the history of the book and the history of the schoolbook justifies a serial approach to manuals.

The historiography of the school manuals is a part of the general history of the book and reading,

which means that its particularization does not bring about a double-level historiography — based on the general and the specific. Nevertheless, since the inclusion of manuals in the framework of cultural history, particularly in the fields of the history of the book and reading, does not wear out the historiography of the manual, one cannot but question what the history of the book and reading add. The phenomena and, by force of reason, the cultural or pedagogical facts are socio-historical constructions containing materiality, representation, recruitment and suitability. It is due to the ability of the manuals to respect and adapt to the profound nature of educational reality that they are a specific object in the framework of cultural history and, consequently, in the framework of the book and of reading.

Taken in a dynamic and very general sense, culture, and most specifically written culture, is a complex action of dialogue, information and education, based on a text, supported by a discourse/book, whose message is transmitted and captured/appropriated by reading. Therefore, the text, book and reading are the basic elements of written culture and correspond to an educational action. The library economic operations including the inventory of books, authorship of texts and classification of discourses according to scientific fields and levels of knowledge, have proved sufficient for an intellection and rationality of cultural practices, as far as the production, representation and circulation plans of the book are concerned. Indeed, the approach to the schoolbook allows the texts to be ordered by levels of difficulty and complexity in relation to the organization and transmission of the message, as well as by order of depth, as regards the production of wisdom and the fields of knowledge.

Nevertheless, it is in the context of guided reading, forms, practices and metamorphoses of the reader that cultural history benefits from being exposed to the specific case of school manuals. As far as production, authorship, publication and circulation are concerned, the school manuals, despite their ability to present specific marks, are not a good reference of library economics, since such variations frequently derive from authorship errors and faults regarding intellectual property which is due, by rule, to the adaptation of content to the abilities of the readers and the aims behind the educational action.

Consequently, school manuals are a fundamental contribution, if not the only one, to cultural history, first of all, as an example of adapting contents, theories and concepts of a purely scientific source to apply to school reality and, secondly, as the representation and form of access to reading practices and asking pupils to read.

The aesthetics of reception theories have granted the reader the status of determinant factor in the reading act, giving value to the processes of learning and appropriation, as being the ones that best characterize reading as an educational process, and allowing the understanding, explanation and evaluation of the different forms of reception and use of written messages. In this context, the serial study of school manuals is a fundamental contribution to the clarification of some of the more complex and profound issues of cultural history, from a dynamic and evolutionary perspective. The manuals are inventoried and organized by criteria which allow for the characterization, hierarchization and comparison of the different degrees of complexity and depth of the act of knowing, through the action of the reader/learner and the different attitudes and implication forms, of the teaching/mediation of the teacher and reading animator, as well as the register and analysis of the different types of manuals as far as structure, composition and authorship are concerned.

Acknowledgement of the specificity of manuals, as a cultural product and object of knowledge and diffusion/education, gives rise to the reference and clarification of conflictuality (articulation/ distinction) between the criteria that rule the gnoseological classifications and classifications of library economics. Effectively, it is in the light of the former that the term manual makes sense and the vast paraphernalia of manual types is organized and articulated. Through the nature of the texts and structure of the books, the manual is a specific cultural product and epistemic object — the Manualistic scientific field. It is, equally, the criterion study of the several types of manuals which enables an approach to the forms of use, reading practices and giving pupils reading material, cognoscent behaviour of the reader and reader communities, freedom of interpretation levels, processes of reading variation, legitimacy plans of the possible text versions, in other words, symbolic interaction.

It is in this vast framework that the series construction process gains meaning, made up of remissive and comparative banks, in some cases, computerized, of several types of school manuals, either alone or with other types of manuals or with books in general. The construction of progressive, interactive, gradual and selective series is a starting point and fundamental reference for history and the historiography of the book and reading. It is more than considering the school manual an application and specification of the history of the book and reading. Being extreme, it could be said that the literary novel (even though its narration is translated in a plurifaceted configuration which orders and gives meaning to the act and experience of reading), is the opposite of the school manual, since it does not present any specific pedagogical or didactic orientation in its conception or appropriation. With the school manual, the reciprocal, however, is not true, since the learner/reader may acquire substantially relevant and meaningful knowledge and information by reading a good literary novel without it having to be considered a manual. In other words, the literary novel, in its configuration, language, contextualization and action development, its search for the harmonization and implication of the reader in the construction and untangling of the plot, does not contradict the structuring marks of the school manual in any way whatsoever, thus, making it possible to establish a *continuum* which goes from the novel to the manual.

The book is involved in a process parallel to that of school subjects. The different branches of knowledge have been structured on the curricular subjects as they came to correspond to the needs, prerogatives and historical circumstances of the school culture and pedagogy in general. The historical evolution of the book has undergone an identical process.

The serial approach to the schoolbook aims to treat it as a cultural product geared towards a subject reader, in the process of education and growth and whose reading activity should be guided and ruled by specific aims. Corresponding to the pragmatics that integrate, in an articulate manner, different aims and a diversity of facets regarding morphology and content, school manuals are a specific bibliographical genre with a configuration that may be translated into several types.

In this sense, and contradicting some of the criteria of library economics, it is possible to accept as a book, a small sized manual, with less than forty pages, perhaps, but which corresponds to a thematic, pedagogical or simple module. By belonging to a single genre, the several types of manuals translate the degree of reader orientation and complementariness among the scientific, didactic and curricular dimensions.

As well as a history of merchandise and a production method, the history of the book, just like that of the school manual, is also a history of judgments and cultural conflictualities, of groups, resources and socio-cultural processes. Among all of them, the latter are the most studied and, perhaps, the most significant and well-known in the hierarchical plans and in the exercise of power hegemony and, furthermore, in the plans of definition and relation between the public and private, urban and rural fields. Indeed, whether owing to the bureaucracy they are subjected to during the development of the processes of production, legitimacy, approval and teaching or through their centrality within culture and school actions, one of the most relevant socio-cultural marks in the analysis of school manuals is the specification of judgments on contents, places, figures and characters. Logics of authority and truth underlie the school manuals, which are not common to other books or cultural productions, even within the school culture. The school manual, is not only a means of acculturation and alterity, it is the factor of affirmation and cultural domination.

In Portugal, for example, the Cartilhas [Catechism/Reading books], as well as the Manuals and School Compendiums (the latter already in use in the 18th century), were produced in corporations or notable structures such as the Court, the University of Coimbra, the Dioceses, the Monastic and Religious Orders, the Royal Schoolmasters. Corporative and control factors have existed since the 18th century and they put a particular type of pressure on the production, approval and circulation of school manuals and even on how to report them. There is, on the other hand, a continued sociology of use, circulation and appropriation in the circuits of production.

As has already been mentioned, there is an ethno-historiography of the book and school manual, in

which the focus on economic and social factors aims to inventory and understand, through the creation of long lists and series, the specificity of the nature and history of the book as a cultural and saleable asset — bookshop, publisher and distributor catalogues; library catalogues; censored, banned, donated or inventoried book rates; collections. This historiography is organized by the articulation of two differentiated logics:

— transversal systematization in series, based on a reference — a cultural or educational institution, a bookshop, a library, a documental collection, a specific library;

— vertical systematization in series, oriented by an evolutionary and diachronic historicism, based on the same conceptual or material strand — the school manual, the hour book, the popular libraries, as a collectable *continuum* of progressive and expansive books or titles, in the plans of knowledge and information.

The application of these logics to the school manual has given rise to large-scale research projects which, in addition to a systematic inventory, has fomented the construction of the Manualistic scientific field and brought about comparative approaches.

In this context, French historiography, precisely since the EMMANUELLE project, and the MANES project, the most recent Iberian-American historiography, have given rise to great inventories as the basis of the school and educational use of manuals. These inventories are based on an identity card for each published specimen and a criterion table for censusing and discriminating the universe of the collected copies, classifying them according to the degree of specialization, function, status and use as a school manual.

The approach from the perspective of library economics, although extremely lengthy and with a high level of material manipulation, does not respond to the challenges of a total historiography of the book, since its focus continues to be production and demand, confining itself to the type of cultural relations that are established (or expected to be established) between the socio-professional sector of the authors/publishers and the target readers. Unless by inference, it will not accept omitting the issues of demand, use and appropriation. As Roger

Chartier has pointed out, a challenge of this nature, which is one of the aims of the Sociology of texts as a condition of the integration of the history of the book and reading in cultural history, is founded on an analysis of the formal variations of a text, whether on the innovations they contain or in terms of their accommodation and adaptation to new readers, as well as within reader communities. Finally, the basic triangle of cultural history: the book, the text, reading.

How can the reader and reading be reached through research that focuses on the production, circulation and demand of the text or book? Aesthetics of reception underlies the aesthetics of production and representation: how can it be recognized and how can they be related? It is here that new challenges are raised as far as the historiography of the school manual is concerned.

Owing to its reading orientation marks, projection and knowledge of target readers and the normalization of the reading act (reading practices and experiences) within the framework of school culture, the manual could become a segment of bibliographical production in which the characteristics and products of reading and appropriation would be entirely known to all. Nevertheless, there is nothing more misleading and possibly more difficult to research. In the framework of school culture, reading activities are mediated by the teacher and by the group of pupils and function in accordance with the purposes and aims of the school and schooling, itself. How can the forms and meanings of reading be inferred from the exams and learning acquisition? Even though school learning and didactic practices are, by rule, reading and writing practices, what, in fact, is the pedagogical and anthropological relationship that underlies school reading and writing? If the reading orientation marks, which are included in the manuals, can only indirectly be taken as information on reading forms and practices, then the transference from reading to school writing (or from school writing to reading) can also only occur indirectly. The teacher is between the text and the child; the programme is between the teacher and the text.

School reading is a manipulated reading. So, to what extent is the manual a carrier of marks that indicate and orientate manipulated reading? The

school manual is different to other books in its construction because it presents explicit orientations regarding reader behaviour. The school manual is pro-active and disciplines the reading act. How can these marks be collected, characterized and organized, within the framework of research? Furthermore, these marks are what grant the school manual a status and make it into a bridge and the mediation between reading and pedagogy.

The serial approach, with the use of hermeneutics supported by this very approach, makes it possible to construct large analytical categories that include and overlap school casuistry. It is in the framework of large serial constructions that it becomes possible to project a territoriality and temporality that underlie certain pedagogical experiences. Moreover, it also becomes possible to accompany and trace the geography, itinerary and destination of a pedagogical model, an author or schoolbook. This is the comparative work that will be made possible by the use of databases, through large geographical and socio-cultural proximities and great pedagogical trends.

Opposite to this generalization and search for the main tendencies, only the casuistry, focused on observations applied to certain types of public, institutions, territories, geographical and historical circumstances and specific text or manual use, can reconstitute scenes and reading experiences or speak about appropriation. It is the articulation between particularization and the large serial approach categories that brings about a complex and in-depth approximation to the history of manuals, the book and reading.

So, if the case study becomes necessary for a consequent approach of the Sociology of reading, as an act of knowledge and reading experience, an anthropological configuration, a sign of a solid didactic experience, then, in order to accomplish these objectives, to what extent is it necessary to broaden these library economics databases found in the various documental collections? On a practical level, this is the crucial question.

Indeed, the library economics bases in libraries only take into account a projection of demand, based on the detailed reference to supply, but are not open to appropriation. From this perspective, some of the basic manualistic dimensions that have

been more developed are the following: title, author, reader/readers, publisher, subject (thematic classification), genre — text/discourse (scientific/humanistic, didactic /pedagogical), legitimacy factors and agencies, forms of use, diffusion and acquisition. They are a set of fairly uncommon descriptors in the framework of library economics which are not satisfied with a broadening of the number of fields or with greater attention to the different types of manual, publishing mechanisms, re-edition and circulation or legitimacy forms.

Nevertheless, and in the same way, none of those bases refer to the different versions of the same text nor do they seem to be aware of the mechanisms of conditioning and orientation regarding forms of use and appropriation. How should the different configurations of a single manual be referred to? What is the text of the Author and the adapted text? What is the role of illustration? What is the role of reading and verification support (questionnaires, order of texts)? These are some of the questions, among many other possible ones, that need to be put as far as the study of school manuals within a cultural history is concerned.

The progressive specialization of the historiography of the book over the last few decades has been marked by systematic lines of research, namely on the part of the *Institute National de Recherche Pédagogique* (France). Among the more prominent historiographical productions, as well as several catalogues written in French and English, the *Histoire d'Édition Française* (4 volumes); *Historia Ilustrada del Libro Escolar en España* (2 volumes) stand out.

In Portugal, the EME project, organized by the University of Minho, made possible the inventory of Portuguese Language and Philosophy manuals in the *Biblioteca Pública de Braga* [Public Library of Braga] and in the *Biblioteca do Antigo Liceu Sá de Miranda* [Former Sá da Miranda School Library]. In the context of the project, several cultural events took place and international contacts were made, giving rise to studies and publications on the various epistemological dimensions of the schoolbook: gnoseological, linguistic and discursive, didactic, sociological, historiographical. Furthermore,

the school manual has been the object of several Masters and Doctoral dissertations, in the context of which, many types of inventories have been produced, with a view to a systematization, according to teaching levels and degrees, fields of knowledge, formats and discursive types. A third approach to the school manual is based on the study of resources, models and the teaching/learning processes applied in the Portuguese school. These last approaches have been based on the inspection reports and those from school governing bodies or lists of the regulating and legitimizing structures, namely, the *Real Mesa Censória* [Royal Censorship Committee], the *Conselho Superior de Instrução Pública* and the *Junta Nacional de Educação* [National Education Board]

As far as primary school teaching in Portugal is concerned, even though it is possible to refer to several inventories included in the studies on levels of education and didactic objects, a more selective and systematic inventory of the Portuguese manuals has not yet been accomplished.

Using primary education as a reference, from the wall-panel to the encyclopedic manual and from the latter to the reading manual and the reading and writing manual, the historical progression of the school manual corresponds, overall, to the schooling process of the Portuguese society — from alphabetization to Complementary Primary Education, with the eventual creation of a Graduated Primary School, corresponding to Primary/Fundamental Education and later the first cycle of Basic Education.

In this process, the school manual became the main pedagogical resource. In the final stages of the Old Regime, under the Enlightenment, the school and school manual overlapped but this changed during the course of the 19th century as the school system became structured and the reading function became autonomous in relation to the traditional catechistic methods. Over a broad period of time the school manual served an encyclopedic function, containing all the material that was not only part of primary education, but was also of great use and importance throughout life since it could be consulted at any time.

In the transition of the 19th century during the development of the *Escola Nova* [New School], containing an expansion, diversification and complexification of the school manual (reinforcing an active pedagogy, based on saying and doing), the school reading manual, as well as the specific manuals, brought an introduction, an opening of ways, a basic structuring of reasoning with a view to a broadening and deepening of information, referring to other readings and sources of knowledge. For a while, the status and function of the school manual emerged clearly relativized and restricted, both in the context of a progressive process of knowledge and education, as well as a representation and structuring of school culture and pedagogy. The school culture, based on ritualization, gestuality, socialization and education which is not translated in the manual, tended, nevertheless, to be, directly or indirectly, confirmed, contextualized and metaprojected by it. The school manual was one of the entries into life and culture.

The progressive overlapping of teaching and schooling and schooling and education during the first decades of the New State, based on an elementary and minimalistic logic, converted the school manual into a single book and a basic anthropology. The school manual ordered and permitted the internalization of a view regarding the world. The school manual anthropologized the reader/pupil.

The centrality of the school manual and its didacticization (accomplished through questionnaires, general guidance, structuring) are a source of research on pedagogical reality. This type of research may be organized directly or through deconstruction, since parts of the school culture have not been considered by the manual, and the pedagogization of the manual has not always worked in the same way with the same emphasis on the history of schooling.

The status of the school manual gives it fundamental importance in the structuring of thought, in the conceptualization and in the method of construction and appropriation of knowledge. How should the status of the school manual be reported? Through legal frameworks? Based on the epistemology of school knowledge or other types of knowledge? Based on the inspection reports or other regulating power structures? Opting for a serial

approach, what epistemic value do the bases constructed from the author and publisher catalogues or the biographical collections of the educational institutes or even the public libraries have?

As already mentioned, as regards the process of schooling in Portugal during the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, and generally, the status of the school manual underwent a series of variations:

a) in the framework of the Enlightenment and reading/pride, the school manual was identified with the school as method and discipline and, later, as an encyclopedia;

b) in the framework of an appraisal of the written culture as symbolization and action, the school manual was an introduction, a conceptualization, a remission;

c) in a strictly (pre)educational framework, the school manual, under the modalities of a single and unified book, functioned as an anthropology, a complete and organized vision of the world.

This evolving, and also recurring, dialectic may refer to the actual legal framework and history of the school: the first phase spread to the third quarter of the 19th century; the second phase marked the end of the 19th century and the First Republic; the third phase marked the New State up to the sixties, when a progressive tension around the single book was observed. There were many transgressions in school practices and a simplification, or even a reduced use of the school manual particularly in the 19th century. As far as secondary and technical professional education was concerned, where authorship marks and the autonomy of the teachers were more well-known, these historical phases are less clear, even though they may still be a reference point.

8. It is within the framework of an ethno-historiography of the school manual that databases have been developed that complement and specify the data of library economics. Besides the inventorization and characterization of the school manual, its typology, production and circulation methods and evolution, it is a historiography which opens a way to evaluating and becoming acquainted with the function of the manual as a didactic tool and as a representation in the pedagogical field. However, an approximation to the manual's pedagogical-didactic fields of application has only become possible through case studies.

The registration of the history of the school manual in cultural history, open to production/conversion, the configuration of various text types, in pedagogical/didactic discourse in the form of a book/manual, the projection and structuring of ways of reading and reader behaviour and, furthermore, the characterization and evaluation of appropriation forms, among others, challenges a complex epistemology that implies a crossing of different methodological instruments. This historical operation is also a strict historiographical application that coherently and consequentially articulates the historicism of written culture, school culture and schooling and the place and function of the schoolbook, with the contexts of rupture, transformation and inflexion in the historical sense. As an epistemic, cultural and pedagogical object, the schoolbook has its own historical time and course. Its meaning, sense and evolution, representation and appropriation are registered, understood, explained and narrated in the framework of cultural history.

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