

# Childhood and school culture: textbooks and the marks of the Civil-Military Dictatorship from 1964 to 1985

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**ABSTRACT.** The research in question, based on historical documentary sources and textbooks, as well as supported by bibliographical sources and educational legislation, addresses an important problem surrounding childhood and school culture marked by the period of civil-military dictatorship from 1964 to 1985 in Brazil. The aim was to establish a correlation between the school as a means of operationalizing and, consequently, strengthening the ideology of the Brazilian civil-military dictatorship. Methodologically, the discourse was taken as the category of analysis whose materiality was printed in the textbooks of the period analyzed. Thus, the methodology used was dialectical in nature and based on a constructive analytical procedure using the content analysis technique. Organized into three specific moments, the research 1) problematizes school culture and the textbook; 2) illustrates themes in History and Social Studies textbooks and, 3) correlates the objective of the research by discussing Moral and Civic Education textbooks. In line with the objectives of the text, specific legislation on the subject was analyzed, which contributed significantly to the method of analysis and epistemic foundation of the conclusions reached. The results show evidence of the great influence of the school as a space conducive to the operationalization of discursive strategies that converge with the interests expressed in the context of the dictatorship and, therefore, the use of the school as a vehicle of that dominant civil-military power.

**Keywords:** school culture; civil-military dictatorship; textbooks.

## A infância e a cultura escolar: livros didáticos e as marcas da Ditadura Civil-Militar de 1964 a 1985

**RESUMO.** A pesquisa em epígrafe, com base em fontes documentais históricas e livros didáticos, bem como respaldada por fontes bibliográficas e legislação educacional, aborda uma importante problemática em torno da infância e cultura escolar marcadas pelo período da Ditadura Civil-Militar de 1964 a 1985, no Brasil. Objetivou-se estabelecer uma correlação da Escola como meio de operacionalização e, consequentemente, fortalecimento do ideário da Ditadura Civil-Militar brasileira. Metodologicamente foi tomado discurso como categoria de análise cuja materialidade foi impressa nos livros didáticos da época analisada. Assim, a metodologia utilizada foi de natureza dialética e baseada em procedimento analítico construtivo com base na técnica de análise de conteúdo. Organizado em três momentos específicos a pesquisa 1) problematiza a cultura escolar e o livro didático; 2) ilustra temáticas dos livros didáticos de História e Estudos Sociais e, 3) correlaciona o objetivo da pesquisa discutindo os livros didáticos de educação Moral e Cívica. Em consonância com os objetivos do texto, foi analisada a legislação específica sobre o assunto, o que contribuiu, significativamente em método de análise e fundamentação epistêmica às conclusões obtidas. Os resultados apresentam a evidência de grande influência da escola enquanto espaço propício para a operacionalização de estratégias discursivas que convergem para os interesses expressos no contexto da ditadura e, portanto, o uso da escola como veículo daquele poder civil-militar dominante.

**Palavras-chave:** cultura escolar; ditadura civil-militar; livro didático.

## Infancia y cultura escolar: los libros de texto y las marcas de la Dictadura Cívico-Militar de 1964 a 1985

**RESUMEN.** La investigación antes mencionada, basada en fuentes documentales históricas y libros de texto, así como apoyada en fuentes bibliográficas y legislación educativa, aborda una importante cuestión en torno a la cultura infantil y escolar marcada por el período de la Dictadura Cívico-Militar de 1964 a 1985 en Brasil. El objetivo fue establecer una correlación de la Escuela como medio de operacionalización y, en

consecuencia, fortalecimiento de las ideas de la Dictadura Cívico-Militar brasileña. Metodológicamente, se tomó el discurso como una categoría de análisis cuya materialidad quedó impresa en los libros de texto del período analizado. Así, la metodología utilizada fue de carácter dialéctico y se basó en un procedimiento analítico constructivo basado en la técnica del análisis de contenido. Organizada en tres momentos específicos, la investigación 1) problematiza la cultura escolar y el libro de texto; 2) ilustra temas de libros de texto de Historia y Estudios Sociales y, 3) correlaciona el objetivo de la investigación discutiendo libros de texto de Educación Moral y Cívica. En línea con los objetivos del texto, se analizó la legislación específica sobre el tema, la cual contribuyó significativamente en método de análisis y fundamentación epistémica a las conclusiones obtenidas. Los resultados evidencian la gran influencia de la escuela como espacio propicio para la implementación de estrategias discursivas que convergen a los intereses expresados en el contexto de la dictadura y, por tanto, la utilización de la escuela como vehículo de ese poder cívico-militar dominante.

**Palabras clave:** cultura escolar; dictadura cívico-militar; libro didáctico.

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## Introduction

Throughout the 20th century, Brazil experienced two dictatorships: the first, known as the Estado Novo, lasted from 1937 to 1945. The second, which lasted a little longer, was characterized as a Civil-Military Dictatorship that lasted from 1964 to 1985. Both used a variety of strategies to consolidate, maintain, and legitimize themselves, strategies that left their mark on Brazilian society. In this text, we focus on the marks of the Civil-Military Dictatorship (1964-1985) on childhood and school.

Thus, the text starts from the premise that the school ended up being one of the operational institutions of ideological strengthening and naturalization of the dictatorial context, leaving marks on childhood from the school culture, being one of the places of reception and source of dissemination of the discursive ideology that guided the State of exception. This was the case during the period of the Civil-Military Dictatorship from 1964 to 1985:

[...] we can say that education, just as it had been under the Vargas dictatorship (1937-1945), but on a larger scale, was organically instrumentalized as an ideological apparatus of the state. Under a dictatorship that persecuted, imprisoned, tortured, and killed opponents, schools were one of the most effective means of spreading the ideology that supported the military regime (Ferreira Junior & Bittar, 2006, p. 14-15).

It seems that the school has established a materiality of ideological ratification, in line with the project that won the 1964 coup. But how did the school end up materially serving to strengthen the ideology of the Civil-Military Dictatorship? To a large extent the school culture, through its procedures, rites, routines, regulations, curricula, and teaching materials, was rooted in the discourse of the time.

Hence, the text seeks to establish itself in the discussion about the marks of the Civil-Military Dictatorship on schooled childhood, taking the school and school culture as a means of operationalization and consequent strengthening of the dictatorial ideology, adopting as a category of analysis the discourse, understood as "[...] a set of statements that rely on the same discursive formation" (Foucault, 1986, p. 135).

We also start from the historicity of the discursive productions of the period, adjoined to "[...] a set of anonymous, historical rules, always determined in time and space, which defined, at a given time and for a given social, economic, geographical or linguistic area, the conditions of exercise of the enunciative function" (Foucault, 1986, p. 136).

In this article, we consider schooled childhood to be the process of formal education that works with children up to the age of 10, taking into account the laws related to the delimitation of the childhood age group in force during the period under study.

When the Civil-Military Dictatorship began, we were under the authority of the 1927 Minors' Code (Decree No. 17.943-A, 1927), which used the term 'childhood', but did not stipulate what age group it would be. This decree remained in force until it was replaced by the Minors' Code of 1979 (Law No. 6.697, 1979), which was also silent on determining what childhood was, mentioning only minors as children and adolescents up to the age of 18. However, at times it separated children up to the age of 10 from adolescents (articles 50, 53, and 102).

The second Minors' Code, sanctioned during the dictatorship, was in force until 1990, when it was replaced by the Statute of the Child and Adolescent, which states: "Art. 2: For this law, a child is considered to be a person up to twelve years of age" (Law No. 8.069, 1990).

To draw up the narrative, the research was based on a dialectical methodology, with an analytical-reconstructive procedure, where the premise is surrounded and examined (the possible marks of the Civil-Military Dictatorship on schooled childhood, taking the school and school culture as means of operationalization) and then reconstructed in a textual and critical narrative, carried out through the technique of content analysis.

The technique used to examine the documentary corpus was therefore content analysis, defined by Bardin (1977, p. 38) as "[...] a set of techniques for analyzing communication, using systematic and objective procedures to describe the content of messages".

Among the procedures used was thematic analysis, where the "[...] theme is the unit of meaning that emerges naturally from an analyzed text, according to criteria related to the theory that guides the reading" (Bardin, 1977, p. 105).

In addition, the steps described by Bardin (1977) as elements of a content analysis procedure were followed: 1) pre-analysis (or choice and organization of the documentary corpus); 2) analytical description (investigation of the material); and 3) inferential comments or glosses.

The documentary corpus consisted of a set of eight (08) historical documents and textbooks, that were treated as indicative of the school culture that permeated the schooling of children during the period of the Brazilian Civil-Military Dictatorship (1964-1985).

**Table 1.** Historical documents and textbooks analyzed.

Referência Reference	Localização Location
Dornelles, L. W. (1971). <i>Pátria e Cidadania: EMC. 4º ano</i> . Rio de Janeiro, RJ: Ao Livro Técnico.	Acervo Pessoal Personal Collection
Dornelles, L. W. (1971). <i>Pátria e Cidadania: EMC. 4º ano</i> (Guia do Professor). Rio de Janeiro, RJ: Ao Livro Técnico.	Acervo Pessoal Personal Collection
Dornelles, L. W. (1971). <i>Homeland and Citizenship: EMC. 4th year</i> (Teacher's Guide). Rio de Janeiro, RJ: Ao Livro Técnico.	Acervo Pessoal Personal Collection
Garcia, E. C. (1972). <i>Educação moral e cívica na escola de primeiro grau</i> . São Paulo, SP: LISA.	Acervo Pessoal Personal Collection
Garcia, E. C. (1972). <i>Moral and civic education in primary schools</i> . São Paulo, SP: LISA.	Acervo Pessoal Personal Collection
Santos, T. M. (1967). <i>Brasil, minha Pátria!</i> Literatura Infantil e Matérias Escolares. 3º Livro, Rio de Janeiro: Livraria Agir Editora.	Laboratório de Ensino e Material Didático – História, LEMAD/ USP ( <a href="https://lemad.fflch.usp.br/">https://lemad.fflch.usp.br/</a> )
Santos, T. M. (1967). <i>Brazil, my homeland!</i> Children's Literature and School Subjects. 3rd Book, Rio de Janeiro: Livraria Agir Editora.	Laboratory of Teaching and Learning Materials - History, LEMAD/ USP ( <a href="https://lemad.fflch.usp.br/">https://lemad.fflch.usp.br/</a> )
Comissão Nacional de Moral e Civismo. <i>Educação Moral e Cívica como disciplina obrigatória nos três níveis de ensino. Prescrição sobre currículos. Programas básicos</i> . (1970). Ministério da Educação e Cultura. Imprensa do Exército.	Laboratório de Ensino e Material Didático – História, LEMAD/ USP ( <a href="https://lemad.fflch.usp.br/">https://lemad.fflch.usp.br/</a> )
National Commission for Moral and Civic Education. <i>Moral and Civic Education as a compulsory subject at all three levels of education. Regulations on curricula. Basic programs</i> (1970). Ministério da Educação e Cultura (Ministry of Education and Culture). Imprensa do Exército. (Army Press).	Teaching and Learning Materials Laboratory - History, LEMAD/ USP ( <a href="https://lemad.fflch.usp.br/">https://lemad.fflch.usp.br/</a> )
Decree-Law No. 869 of September 12, 1969 (1969, September 12). Provides for the inclusion of Moral and Civic Education as a compulsory subject in schools of all levels and modalities in the country's education systems, and makes other provisions. <i>Diário Oficial da União, Brasília</i> . (Federal Official Gazette, Brasília).	(Planalto Palace legislation portal) ( <a href="http://www4.planalto.gov.br">http://www4.planalto.gov.br</a> )
Decree No. 68.065, of January 14, 1971 (1971, January 14). Regulates Decree-Law No. 869, of September 12, 1969, which provides for the inclusion of Moral and Civic Education as a compulsory subject in schools of all levels and modalities of educational systems in the country, and makes other provisions. <i>Diário Oficial da União, Brasília</i> (Federal Official Gazette, Brasília).	(Planalto Palace legislation portal) ( <a href="http://www4.planalto.gov.br">http://www4.planalto.gov.br</a> )
Law No. 5.700, September 1, 1971 (1971, September 1). Provides for the form and presentation of the National Symbols, and makes other provisions. <i>Federal Official Gazette, Brasília</i> .	(Planalto Palace legislation portal) ( <a href="http://www4.planalto.gov.br">http://www4.planalto.gov.br</a> )

Source: Author's organization (2023).

To develop the narrative, the text will be structured in four sections: a first section that minimally problematizes school culture, addressing it as a potential conductor or operational means of the dictatorship's discursive ideology. A second section will discuss the possible marks of the Civil-Military

Dictatorship on school-age children, examining the so-called civic-patriotic practices (or the rites assumed by everyday school life). A third section again discusses the possible marks of the Civil-Military Dictatorship on school-age children, but this time focuses on teaching materials from the period, especially textbooks. Finally, there is a concluding section.

## School culture: theoretical contributions

Despite being a relatively new category - with the first texts dating back to the 1980s (Silva, 2006) - school culture is a research category that has been sufficiently recognized in different fields, especially in the field of research on the history of education (Julia, 2001; Faria Filho, Gonçalves, Vidal, & Paulilo, 2004; Saviani, 2005; Munakata, 2016) (among others), defined as "[...] cognitive and symbolic contents which, selected, organized, 'standardized', 'routinized' under the effect of didactic imperatives, usually constitute the object of deliberate transmission in the context of schools" (Forquin, 1993. p. 167, emphasis added). More specifically, school culture can be translated as

[...] a set of norms that define knowledge to be taught and behaviors to be inculcated, and a set of practices that allow this knowledge to be transmitted and these behaviors to be incorporated; norms and practices that are coordinated with objectives that may vary according to the era (religious, socio-political or simply socialization objectives). Norms and practices cannot be analyzed without taking into account the professional body of agents who are called to follow these orders and therefore to use pedagogical tools to facilitate their application, namely primary school teachers and other teachers. But beyond the confines of the school, we can try to identify, in a broader sense, ways of thinking and acting that are widespread within our societies, ways that do not conceive of the acquisition of knowledge and skills except through formal schooling processes (Julia, 2001. p. 10-11).

Therefore, "[...] the school as a unique institution, which is structured by processes, norms, values, meanings, rituals, ways of thinking that constitute its own culture" (Silva, 2006, p. 205). Despite the originality of school culture, the current social context - among other factors - remains the channel of information that also shapes school culture, since school organization is temporal and therefore historical and dated.

Thus,

Whether we take the word 'education' in the broad sense of the formation and socialization of the individual, or whether we restrict it solely to the field of schooling, it is necessary to recognize that if all education is always the education of someone, by someone, it also necessarily involves the communication, transmission and acquisition of something: knowledge, skills, beliefs, habits, values, which constitute what is precisely called the 'content' of education (Forquin, 1993, p. 10, emphasis added).

As such, school culture is shaped by the current social context, which also plays a role in its daily life. Pedagogical practices, procedures, rites, routines, regulations, curricula, teaching materials, and speeches are spaces that reverberate the external - and historical - context in which they are produced, because the school also assumes a 'reproductive role' (Saviani, 2005) of the society in which it is inserted, doubly, representing and being represented by it.

Furthermore, if we consider that the elements of school culture are not just topical conditions, but are susceptible to "[...] practices, appropriations, attributions of new meanings, resistances that produce multiple and varied configurations that occur topically in the school" (Munakata, 2016, p. 122), we infer that the school plays a relevant role in the configurations through which the external context will be understood.

In the school culture, there are also peculiarities constituted in practices and artifacts that are inherent to the institutional space and its daily life, and one of these artifacts "[...] specific to the school is precisely the textbook. It can certainly be found in other places, such as in the library of an eccentric collector, in the offices of the evaluator or the textbook researcher, but its existence is justified only in and by the school" (Munakata, 2016, p. 122).

Legislation and teaching guides (or instructions) are organized around the textbook, which are powerful devices for indexing this artifact with the context in which and on which it is produced, and which also set the parameters for the broader actions of teachers and school administrators.

Furthermore, "[...] the textbook is, primarily, the carrier of school knowledge, one of the explicit components of school culture. In general, the textbook is the transcript of what was taught, or what should be taught, at each moment in the history of schooling" (Munakata, 2016, p. 123), so these artifacts play an important role in school culture, being able to condense "[...] its rhythms and rites, its language,

its imaginary, [...] its own regime of production and management of symbols" (Forquin, 1993, p. 167), forming part of the artifacts "[...] that define the knowledge to be taught and the behaviors to be inculcated" (Julia, 2001, p. 2).

The textbook "[...] is characterized as a carrier of accumulated knowledge, selected and systematized by agents of a society and to be taught in specific school subjects" (Gusmão & Honorato, 2019, p. 9). In this way, it remains an artifact that goes beyond simply supporting the teaching process, becoming the consolidation of the knowledge and interests of a given historical society, in other words, teaching itself.

The textbook reveals traces of the social culture that produced it; it spells out the aims of a school subject designed to train individuals in society. When analyzing it, it is possible to observe transformations related to the socio-historical context, since one of its purposes is the dissemination and consolidation of sociocultural and political contents and values that were desired to be highlighted and practiced in a given time and space of school culture (Gusmão & Honorato, 2019, p. 9-10).

Therefore, one of the most effective operational means of penetrating ideological discourses and positions in the school and from the school culture would be precisely the textbook, especially since 1966, when the government created the Technical Book and Textbook Council (COLTED), through Decree No. 59.355 (1966).

During the Civil-Military Dictatorship, textbooks were subsidized by the federal government through agreements between, for example, between the Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the National Book Publishers Association (Snel). These agreements have led to a significant increase in the production, purchase, and distribution of books. Through the programs of the Technical Book and Textbook Commission (Colted), [...] thousands of textbooks have been delivered to Brazilian schools, which has also boosted the publishing market (Gusmão & Honorato, 2019, p. 10-11).

On March 11, 1970, the Ministério da Educação, a Portaria no 35 (Ministry of Education issued Ordinance No. 35), responsible for implementing the book co-publishing system with national publishers, with resources derived from the National Book Institute - INL (Decree-Law No. 93, 1937). In 1971, the National Book Institute took over the National Primary School Textbook Program (PLIDEF) and, on June 9 of that year, Decree No. 68.728 (1971) abolished the Technical and Textbook Commission (Colted).

Years later, on February 4, 1976, Decree 77.107 (1976) created the National Educational Material Foundation (FENAME) which, with the extinction of the National Book Institute (INL), also took over the publication and distribution of textbooks.

In the dance of the chairs of textbook publishing and distribution, and still, during the period of the Civil-Military Dictatorship, the Student Assistance Foundation (FAE) replaced the National School Material Foundation (FENAME) in 1983 and, at the end of the period, Decree No. 91.542 (1985) created the National Textbook Program (PNLD), which replaced the National Primary School Textbook Program (PLIDEF).

This dance of the chairs, or the constant change in the spaces responsible for the production and regulation of the textbook, shows the centrality of this artifact in the school culture of the period and, therefore, its potential as a discursive tool of the Dictatorship, since "[...] no one enters the order of discourse if they do not meet certain requirements or if they are not initially qualified to do so" (Foucault, 2013, p. 35).

## **The Civil-Military Dictatorship and Schooled Childhood: School Culture and its Rites**

The traces of the civil-military dictatorship on childhood took, as one of the feasible paths, the organization of schooling, where children pass in their schooling process, being at the mercy of the school culture (procedures, rites, routines, norms, curricula, didactic material).

Concerning the possible imprints on childhood, it is interesting to note that:

In most different eras and political systems, those in power have resorted to a variety of strategies to gain and maintain their position of command. These processes are accompanied by the problem of legitimacy, a complex issue that is a cornerstone of political thought and attracts interested parties from different fields of study. The principle of legitimacy is directly associated with the justification of power or the right to command (Santos & Quadros, 2019, p. 17).

Regarding the organization of school education, when the Civil-Military Dictatorship began in 1964, LDB 4.024 was in force (Law No. 4.024, 1961), and school education was divided into primary education (art. 25), for children from seven years of age and organized into four to six grades (art. 26) and middle school studies,

or High School, aimed at training adolescents (art. 33), taught in two cycles, gymnasium and high school (art. 34). In the following LDB (Law No. 5.692, 1971), school education was divided into primary school, from seven to fourteen years old (art. 20) and secondary school, in three or four annual grades (art. 22).

It happens that, the education of children was made compulsory in both LDBs, with primary education being compulsory from the age of 7 (art. 27) (Law No. 4.024, 1961) and, in the following LDB, primary education was made compulsory from the age of 7 to 14 (art. 20) (Law No. 5.692, 1971).

School education for children under the age of seven was not compulsory and references to its institutionalization are quite modest in both LDBs so the 1961 LDB only provided that "Art. 23. Pre-primary education is intended for children up to the age of seven, and will be provided in nursery schools or kindergartens" (Law No. 4.024, 1961) and the 1971 law is even more evasive, stating that "Art. 17 [...] § 2. 024, 1961) and the 1971 law is even more evasive, stating that "Art. 17 [...] § 2 The educational systems shall ensure that children under the age of seven receive an adequate education in nursery schools, kindergartens and equivalent institutions" (Law No. 5.692, 1971).

Therefore, we will consider schooled childhood as the schooling of children between the ages of seven (07) and ten (10), according to the legislation in force.

In continuity, by examining some elements of the school culture of the period, we will be able to infer marks of the Civil-Military Dictatorship on schooled childhood, taking the school and school culture as means of operationalization and consequent strengthening of the dictatorial ideology, because:

Culture constituted a kind of coherent aggregate of behaviors, norms, and values that gave cohesion to social life, both on a collective level and in terms of subjectivity. This was particularly visible in the order of structures, when viewed from a community point of view; and habits thus guaranteed the replication and predictability of the patterns that shaped the whole culture. If these parameters were transformed beyond their immediate pragmatism into the content of a tradition - through the permanence over time of the forms of behavior - their constituent elements became part of the cultural memory of a collective and the subjects who were part of it (Escolano, 2017, p. 110).

The first element of school culture that had the effect of uniquely marking school-age childhood during this period were 'civic-patriotic practices' (Ferreira & Zimmermann, 2023), characterized by 'civic hours' or civic moments, as well as the commemorative dates of the National Civic Calendar (Ferreira & Zimmermann, 2023). Ritualistic spaces present in Brazilian schools, and civic-patriotic practices were based on legal determinations, embodied nationally by Law No. 5,700 (1971), which regulated the form and presentation of national symbols.

This law made it compulsory to fly the national flag "[...] on days of celebration or national mourning, in all public offices, educational establishments and trade unions (Law No. 5,700, 1971, Art. 14). This obligation was even more specific concerning schools where: "In public or private schools, the solemn hoisting of the National Flag is obligatory, during the school year, at least once a week" (Law No. 5.700, 1971, Art. 14. Sole paragraph).

The 'solemn' and at least weekly hoisting of the national flag was the stage for the civic events that accompanied it, with the playing of the national anthem and all sorts of patriotic demonstrations by the students, including presentations - poems, readings, and eventually, dramatizations and sermons - of a ufanistic nature.

In this sense, the commemorations of civic events and civic dates "[...] included in the National Civic Calendar played a strategic role [...], contributing to the attempt to disseminate behavioral patterns aligned with governmental purposes, expressed through ceremonies of an exalting nature" (Ferreira & Zimmermann, 2023, p. 4).

In the classroom, manifestations of Ufanist patriotism were encouraged by the same law, which stated: "It is compulsory to teach the design and meaning of the national flag, as well as the singing and interpretation of the lyrics of the National Anthem in all educational establishments, public or private, of the first and second grades" (Law No. 5,700, 1971, Art. 39).

These civic-patriotic practices had the "[...] function of collectively reliving events considered representative of identity and [sought] to generate mechanisms of temporal continuity: of the past to be remembered, of the present to be lived and of the future as an 'ideal' social project" (Ferreira & Zimmermann, 2023, p. 3, emphasis added).

The routine, discipline, and discourse that accompanied these civic-patriotic practices remained because "[...] they brought together a broad investment in the process of commemorating civic dates that, due to their relevance from a historical point of view, contribute to the process of ritualizing memories" (Ferreira & Zimmermann, 2023, p. 11), so that the naturalization of the rite preceded the implicit acceptance of what it meant in the order of discourse.

In addition, civic-patriotic practices set a precedent for the creation of other instances within schools, helping to disseminate the current discourse, such as "[...] extra-class institutions" (Decree No. 68.065, 1971, art. 31) and, above all, the School Civic Centers (art. 32).

The seemingly ritualistic terms, such as 'solemn'; 'obligatory'; and 'meaning' make up the same statement, appropriate to the historical moment, being part of the same discursive set where "[...] a statement belongs to a discursive formation, just as a sentence belongs to a text, and a proposition to a deductive set" (Foucault, 1986, p. 135).

Therefore, civic-patriotic practices cannot be classified as a formality, but first and foremost as a component of an organized discourse as a compulsory formative ingredient of schooled childhood.

## **The civil-military Dictatorship and School-age Children: school culture and teaching materials**

Another important argument for understanding civic-patriotic practices is the document *Educação Moral e Cívica como disciplina obrigatória nos três níveis de ensino - Prescrição sobre currículos e Programas básicos* (Moral and Civic Education as a compulsory subject at the three levels of education - Prescription for curricula and basic programs), written by the Comissão Nacional de Moral e Civismo (National Commission on Morals and Civics, 1970), which has an entire section dedicated to primary education.

On page 13 starts Chapter III - Basic Program in Primary Education (Comissão Nacional de Moral e Civismo, 1970, p. 13) begins on page 13, with the specific objective of "[...] adapting the subjects to the age conditions". The contents related to morality in primary education (children between the ages of 7 and 10) include 'respect for God and love for the family'; the 'need for religion'; 'forming and perfecting character' and 'spiritual and moral values', among others.

About civics, we have contents such as 'love of country'; 'national figures'; 'national symbols'; 'civic rights and duties'; and 'socio-political-economic organization of the country' (Comissão Nacional de Moral e Civismo, 1970). The document also provides for activities to commemorate "[...] important civic dates" (Comissão Nacional de Moral e Civismo, 1970, p. 15), as well as "the veneration of national symbols" (Comissão Nacional de Moral e Civismo, 1970, p. 15).

These civic-patriotic practices were associated with moral and civic education, not as a curricular subject, but as the very engine of contemporary school culture, where...

Moral and Civic Education would not take place in a limited time through the execution of a specific program, as a subject, but would result, at every moment, from how all the programs that gave rise to this objective were executed and, in general, from the process of school life itself, which should take place in all activities and circumstances, in terms of high dignity and patriotic fervor (Santos & Quadros, 2019, p. 140).

Therefore, the second element of school culture that had the effect of uniquely shaping school-age childhood in this period was the textbooks and teaching materials, associated (or not) with Moral and Civic Education classes.

The subject of Moral and Civic Education was introduced in schools at the end of the government of Marshal Arthur da Costa (1967-1969) and the beginning of the government of General Emílio Garrastazu Médici (1969-1974), through Decree-Law No. 869 of September 12, 1969.

Signed by the Ministers of the Navy, of the Army, and of the Military Air Force, who declared that they were using "[...] the powers conferred on them by Article 1 of Institutional Act No. 12, of August 31, 1969, combined with paragraph 1 of Article 2 of Institutional Act No. 5, of December 13, 1968" (Decree-Law No. 869, 1969), the Decree-Law announced in its art. 1 that the subject in question "[...] shall be introduced instituted, on a compulsory basis, as a subject and also as an educational practice, Moral and Civic Education, in schools of all levels and modalities, of the educational systems in the country" (Decree-Law No. 869, 1969).

Furthermore, article 2 of the Decree-Law defines the objectives of the EMC, highlighting the following:

- a) the defense of the democratic principle, by preserving the religious spirit, the dignity of the human person, and the love of freedom with responsibility, under the inspiration of God;
- b) the preservation, strengthening, and projection of the spiritual and ethical values of the nation;

- c) the strengthening of national unity and the sense of human solidarity;
- d) the veneration of the homeland, its symbols, traditions, institutions, and the great figures of its history;
- e) the improvement of character, based on morality and dedication to family and community;
- f) understanding of the rights and duties of Brazilians and knowledge of the socio-political and economic organization of the country;
- g) the preparation of the citizen for the exercise of civic activities based on morality, patriotism, and constructive action for the common good;
- h) the cult of obedience to the law, fidelity to work, and integration into the community (Decree-Law no. 869, 1969).

The Decree-Law also stated that Moral and Civic Education should be compulsory in "[...] all levels and branches of schooling" (Art.3, BRASIL, 1969) and that in High School, in addition to EMC, the subject of "Brazilian Social and Political Organization" would be taught (Decree-Law nº 869, 1969, Art.3º, § 1º) and, in Higher Education - including postgraduate studies - the subject of "Studies of Brazilian Problems" (Decree-Law nº 869, 1969, Art.3º, § 1º). We can see, therefore, that the subject has been present throughout the entire schooling, starting from elementary school.

Thus, the subject of Moral and Civic Education was consolidated as one of the most palpable presences of the Civil-Military Dictatorship in Brazil, both because it was directly paired with the state of exception, stimulating discourses and operationalizing perspectives to guide the period,

Although the discussion of Moral and Civic Education has been present at various times in the history of Brazilian education, under different formats and nomenclatures according to the school curricula of each state of the federation, it was in the years between 1960-1980 that this subject gained greater visibility, representing a societal strategy in the school environment to inculcate precepts of civility in authoritarian times. In the context of the Civil-Military Dictatorship (1964-1985), the subject of EMC was used as a tool to condition the behavior of individuals to situate them within specific ideals of civilized man (Gusmão & Honorato, 2019, p. 5-6).

Leny Werneck Dornelles' manual on the compulsory nature of Moral and Civic Education, aimed at the 4th year of primary school and therefore targeting children in the age group of 10, took this position:

The ultimate purpose of the institution of Moral and Civic Education as a compulsory subject and educational practice in the Brazilian educational system is related to the need to strengthen, through the school, the instruments necessary for the formation of a social conscience for effective citizenship, that is, to instrumentalize the individual, so that he may become a conscious citizen, capable of practicing effective citizenship. Developing in each individual their ability to think about the problems that surround them, as a person and as a member of society, creating solutions for each situation that is presented to them, understanding and responding appropriately to the appeals that social and emotional life offers them is the challenge that is placed before the school, it is its part in the formation of the conscious citizen (Dornelles, 1971, p. I).

Moral and behavioral rules were the guidelines for teachers, indicating that teachers should also adopt the discourse of the period to be more effective in school agendas and practices.

We can see this guidance in the teacher's guide, aimed at teachers working with 10-year-olds...

People learn by what they live and do, not just by what they hear and read, directed by a single other person, especially regarding the values implicit in the formation of citizenship. We believe that, in this matter, the example of the adult generation is of particular importance in the education of young people (Dornelles, 1971, p. III).

Dornelles' book (1971) has four main chapters: 'Symbols of the Homeland'; 'Money is for Spending?'; 'Millions of People', and 'Who Rules? Aimed at 10-year-olds, the ufanist, and patriotic tone was accompanied by 'tips' on life in society and the extreme need to maintain the current order.

Because of this focus, one of the topics covered was the function of laws: "To ensure that people live well, there are certain rules, or norms, or regulations that we call laws. Laws are made by people to help people live well together" (Dornelles, 1971, p. 70).

Another textbook for younger children - aged 9 and 10 years old - is Moral and Civic Education in Elementary School, by Edília Coelho Garcia. In 329 pages, the book follows the script of pointing out and guiding behaviors and references to society in the state in which it found itself, in which "[...] the type of citizen desired by those in power, the good Brazilian should be religious, obedient to the government and patriotic" (Santos & Quadros, 2019, p. 147).



In that work, the adaptation to the dictatorial context in force was accompanied by a rhetorical cunning in which the concept of democracy deviated from direct elections and was based on the alternation of subjects in elective mandates:

The fact that elections are direct or indirect is not what characterizes a democracy. For a regime to be truly democratic, elective mandates, i.e. the exercise of governmental positions, must be for a fixed period. Only in dictatorships do leaders remain in office forever and never relinquish it to others (Garcia, 1972, p. 59).

Entretanto, um dos excertos mais interessantes da obra discorre sobre a organização familiar e os valores a serem cultivados em tal instituição, bem como seu emparelhamento com os regramentos da sociedade:

However, one of the most interesting excerpts from the book discusses the organization of the family and the values to be cultivated in this institution, as well as its pairing with the rules of society:

Grandpa is a real authority here at home. What he says is what he says, no one argues because he's always right. He has a way of speaking that even Dad gives in to! And our father is a leader. A lot of what Grandpa says comes from what Grandma thinks. I've noticed this: some think, others say: some command, others obey. It's like the rotation we do in a ball game: sometimes one group is in charge and the other group takes the orders, sometimes it's the other group's turn to be in charge. I think my turn to be in charge will come when I'm a father and the boss of something [...] In our house there is a division of power - as my father says - "every monkey on his branch!" There are no fights. Mom asks us to do what's good for us and for the group [...]. In the country, says Uncle Pedro, there are different authorities with their own powers. [...] Marisa thought of one that should be written down. Uncle Pedro explained many of the things I wrote above when she said: - And nobody is in charge of the President of the Republic? [...] I thought Uncle Pedro would get upset, but he laughed and said: - In Brazil, where there is a democracy, the president also obeys the laws and makes sure they are obeyed [...] the president can also make laws, especially when Congress is in recess - that is, not working (Garcia, 1972, p. 54-55).

We can see that, methodologically, the book uses storytelling: ufanistic and regulatory contents are dealt with through everyday stories, in an interesting narrative that also serves as a behavioral guide for the children. A 'know-it-all' uncle, confronted with nephews who ask questions to clarify any points of social criticism ("Marisa made up a story that needs to be written down", "I thought Uncle Pedro would get in the way"), leads the narrative in a light-hearted way, didactically aimed at children's understanding.

In terms of content, we have the elaboration of a certain family archetype, on which arguments are built that legitimize the maintenance of society in the state it was in, indicating a supposed rotation of powers only when the child is of age and 'emancipated'.

The text also contributes to the patriarchal ("Grandpa is a real authority here at home", "our father is a leader") and capitalist ("when I'm [...] the boss of something") reading of the society in force at the time, as well as presenting a subordinate role for the female figure ("a lot of what Grandpa says comes from what Grandma thinks. I've noticed that: some think, others say: some give orders, others obey"). Here, too, we can see that the norm is subtle. It works more through tacit persuasion and identity than through fear or repression.

The book 'Brasil, minha Pátria!' (Santos, 1967) has 306 pages. Page 2 presents all the works already published by the same author, dedicated to primary education. Page 3 informs us that the book has been approved for use by the Ministry of Education and Culture. Registration No. 2.606' and that it is dedicated to children's literature and school subjects. Page 7 of the book, states that it is intended for the third year of elementary school, for children aged 9.

The chapters are structured in the form of a narrative in which Grandpa Miranda, with his pipe lit, tells stories to his grandchildren José and Marli. The different stories told in each chapter are accompanied by a vocabulary lesson, a quiz, grammar, exercises, including writing, and a short text that complements the information.

The book is divided into six chapters: the first is dedicated to Brazilian 'tales and legends'; the second chapter describes the 'great adventures' of national heroes, such as Zumbi, Maria Quitéria, and Tiradentes. A third chapter describes 'famous voyages', ranging from the discovery of the New World to the flight of Dom João VI, while the fourth chapter is dedicated to 'illustrious lives'. In the fifth chapter, students are introduced to 'types and landscapes': cowboys and cattle drivers; canoes and rafts; mills and sugar cane plantations; farms and coffee plantations; miners and prospectors, ending with rubber tappers and herb farmers. The sixth and last chapter is devoted to school subjects: Arithmetic and Geometry; Natural Sciences and Hygiene; History of Brazil; General Geography; Geography of Brazil; and Geography of the States and Territories.

The work has a clear focus on patriotic ufanism, and the author introduces us to his writings by stating that "[...] it was with my thoughts turned toward the enhancement of the Homeland that I wrote this book, moved by the hope of awakening in the new generations a love and admiration for the conquests and achievements of Brazilian civilization" (Santos, 1967, p. 07).

Reading the works presented here, it is possible to infer a certain strategic character that the school and school culture assumed in the context of the Brazilian Civil-Military Dictatorship, constituting competent discursive apparatuses for maintaining the state of exception as a 'natural', strategic and patriotic condition.

In the scripts produced by the books, the role of the school is identified as a moralizing and parameterizing institution, which informed an acceptable way of life within the context of the time, responsible for the content and the development of civic and moral spirit, paired with a logic of maintaining the process that began in March 1964. So,

It is through discourse and action that the agent reveals himself. When we look at the discursive principles of alterity, influence, and regulation, we see the predominance of the principle of influence. Dictatorships have a horror of the other, of opponents, in short, of the plurality that constitutes politics (Germano, 2008, p. 320).

This is due to the strong tone of pride related to the concept of 'Homeland', since "[...] the exercise of power, or its conquest, requires an incessant search for legitimacy" (Germano, 2008, p. 315). Thus, the ufanistic and praising cult of the Homeland had two main pillars in the books examined:

- a) pride in a past painted in the colors and arguments of the time, supported by 'heroes' and 'deeds'; and
- b) the regulatory logic of maintaining society in its present state.

Both pillars refer to a discursive strategy that Foucault calls disciplinary normalization, which

[...] it consists of first placing a model, an optimal model that is constituted according to a certain result, and the operation of disciplinary normalization consists of trying to make people, gestures, and acts, conform to this model, where the normal are precisely those who are capable of conforming to this norm and the abnormal are those who are not. In other words, what is fundamental and first in disciplinary normalization is not the normal and the abnormal, but the norm (Foucault, 2008, p. 75).

By presenting children with elements such as 'love of country', 'family' (nuclear model), 'heroes', and the importance of obedience (to laws and hierarchies), an edifying narrative is constructed that, in a capillary and subtle way, blocks present and future arguments of contestation regarding the context in force at the time. This discursive strategy reminds us that:

The key is the power of prohibition. Now, I think that this is a negative, strict, and skeletal notion of power that, strangely enough, everyone has accepted. If power was only repressive, if it did nothing but say no, do you think it would be obeyed? What keeps power alive and accepted is simply that it doesn't just weigh as a force that says no, but that it actually penetrates, produces things, induces pleasure, forms knowledge, and produces discourse. It must be seen as a productive network that runs through the entire social body, much more than a negative instance whose function is to repress (Foucault, 2013, p. 8).

Therefore, as society was inserted into the context of discourse, it is made and remade through different means, where "[...] the separation between true and false is neither arbitrary, nor modifiable, nor institutional, nor violent" (Foucault, 2013, p. 14) and, in such a discursive context, the school and school culture played a relevant role in the formation of children in compulsory education.

## Final considerations

Different operational means were used by the protagonists of the Brazilian Civil-Military Dictatorship between 1964 and 1985, to inculcate a legitimizing discourse and to construct a socially accepted narrative about the period. One of these means is the school, through school culture.

The marks forged in schooled childhood permeated school culture and were located in the dissemination of discourses of the Civil-Military Dictatorship, discourses understood - in the scope of the text - as "[...] practices that systematically shape the objects of which they speak" (Foucault, 1986, p. 56).

To organize the narrative, the text was structured into four sections: The first section problematized school culture, addressing it as a potential conductor or operational means of the dictatorship's discursive ideology.

A second section discussed the possible marks of the Civil-Military Dictatorship on school-age children, examining the so-called civic-patriotic practices (or the rites assumed by everyday school life).

A third section again discussed the possible impact of the Civil-Military Dictatorship on school-age children, but this time focusing on educational materials from the period and, finally, a final section dedicated to concluding arguments.

The education of children during the Brazilian Civil-Military Dictatorship, through instruments such as civic-patriotic practices and textbooks, also proved to be an operational tool of the state of exception, as...

During the Brazilian military dictatorship, the symbolic and ritualistic devices associated with the commemoration of civic dates were based on narrative patterns of a patriotic and ultranationalist nature. This means that the elements provided by history supported a framing of memory in the authoritarian government (Ferreira & Zimmermann, 2023, p. 17).

Therefore, expressing, annotating, and problematizing the discursive and operational strategies of the period, especially about the compulsory education of children, seems to be a commitment to remember a context in which "[...] struggles, victories, injuries, dominations, servitude, through so many words whose use has long since reduced their harshness" (Foucault, 2013, p. 8).

The text concludes, in the inferences limited by the documentary corpus, that it is possible to perceive records that show school culture as a space for the operationalization of discursive strategies and pedagogical practices with features that uniquely marked school childhood in the period, emphasizing values such as 'family'; 'common good'; 'rights and duties'; 'national unity'; 'worship of the homeland, its symbols, traditions, institutions and the great figures of its history' and 'obedience to the law' - excerpts taken from Decree-Law no. 869 (1969).

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