



## Reading and writing in governing men and things. Province of São Paulo – 19th century<sup>1</sup>

Leitura e escrita no governo de homens e coisas.  
Província de São Paulo - Século XIX

Lectura y escrita en el gobierno de hombres y cosas.  
Provincia de São Paulo - Século XIX

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### Abstract

This paper presents preliminary research considerations about the use of reading and writing by the State, based on a study that mapped the development of educational practices disseminated in the Province of São Paulo between 1836 and 1880. We concentrated on reports of the presidents of the Province of São Paulo as source and object of study. In addition, based on cultural history, more specifically in the writings of Roger Chartier, we present aspects that point to the uses of reading and writing as essential in governing men and things. We used the description of three events, namely, the formation of provincial statistics during the period, the introduction of the police inquiry by the Judicial Reform of 1871, and the use of reading and writing in the moral regeneration of sentenced persons, to show there is promising evidence to deepen the examination of State writings and to consider such hypothesis in future investigations.

**Keywords** History of education. Reading and writing. State writing. Province of São Paulo. Cultural History.

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## Resumo

O artigo apresenta considerações preliminares de investigação sobre os usos da leitura e da escrita pelo Estado a partir de estudo que mapeou o desenvolvimento de práticas educativas disseminadas na Província de São Paulo entre 1836-1880. Privilegiando como fonte e objeto de estudo os relatórios dos presidentes da Província de São Paulo e com base na história cultural, mais especificamente nos escritos de Roger Chartier, apresentamos aspectos que apontam para os usos da leitura e da escrita como imprescindíveis no governo de homens e coisas. A partir da descrição de três eventos: a formação da estatística da província durante o período, a introdução do inquérito policial pela Reforma Judiciária de 1871 e o uso da leitura e da escrita na regeneração moral de sentenciados, demonstramos haver solo fértil para aprofundar o exame da escrita do Estado e considerarmos tal hipótese em investigações futuras.

**Palavras-chave** História da educação. Leitura e escrita. Escrita do Estado. Província de São Paulo. História Cultural.

## Resumen

El artículo presenta consideraciones preliminares de investigación sobre los usos de la lectura y la escritura por el Estado a partir de un estudio que mapeó el desarrollo de prácticas educativas diseminadas en la Provincia de São Paulo entre 1836-1880. Privilegiando como fuente y objeto de estudio los informes de los presidentes de la Provincia de São Paulo y con base en la historia cultural, más específicamente en los escritos de Roger Chartier, presentamos aspectos que apuntan a los usos de la lectura y de la escritura como imprescindibles en el gobierno de hombres y cosas. A partir de la descripción de tres eventos: la formación de la estadística de la provincia durante el período, la introducción de la encuesta policial por la Reforma Judicial de 1871 y el uso de la lectura y la escritura en la regeneración moral de sentenciados, demostramos haber suelo fértil para profundizar el examen de la escritura del Estado y considerar tal hipótesis en investigaciones futuras.

**Palabras clave** Historia de la educación. Lectura y escritura. Escrita del Estado. Provincia de San Pablo. Historia Cultural.

## Introduction

Research in History of Education makes use of an extensive set of primary sources: it explores public, private archives, makes use of oral history, exploits newspapers and other printed matter; its privileged source is the texts written in various supports and of varied origins.

Governmental sources make up a special collection for history in general and for the history of education in a particular way, by allowing access not only to the agreed contents as referred to education or public education, but also to an appreciation in context, giving to see in the documentary set in which they present the very constitution of the educational field immersed in the events in each epoch. If, on the one hand, government sources, because of their privileged preservation, can be seen as restrictive, on the other hand they provide us with a singular entry into the field of education, challenging us as to the uses we make of them and to what extent stressing them, interrogating the texts not only as sources, but also as objects<sup>2</sup>.

In this article we present notes from the exercise of taking as a source and object of research the Reports of the Presidents of the Province of São Paulo from 1836 to 1880, focusing on the aspects that involve reading and writing as tools of government, seeking to emphasize its uses and forms of appropriation by the State, located in the mechanics of governing the Province in the context of an illiterate population.

We hypothesize a possible dimension of interference of this indispensability in school teaching models of reading and writing, giving them powers that normalize school practices in favor of the established order and prepare for obedience. Thus, the relationship between the proliferation of official state-produced texts in the nineteenth century - such as laws, norms, regulations, reports, and the many demands arising from the formation of statistics in the empire - and the necessary reading and writing skills on the part of their agents, constitute a scenario that causes to consider, as a field of research, the writing of the State as a cultural artifact that operates relations of power far beyond its prescriptive contents.

In dealing with the construction of the modern state in western Europe and the cultural forms that characterize this state, Chartier (1990, p.218) addresses the presence of writing, presenting three great ruptures in the way the state makes known its wishes or registers of its subjects: the one that replaces the oral declaration by the written fixation, which replaces the recourse to the notary for the development of the chancelleries and the one that makes the manuscript go back to the printed text.

This last rupture offers an important key for us to think about the proliferation of orders, laws, regulations and prescriptions of government practices present among us during the nineteenth century and the corresponding demands of reading and writing from the state. This retreat of the manuscript in favor of printed texts, according to Chartier, changes the scale of circulation of official documents and other writings. Accompanying the systematic production of the reports of the provincial governments of São Paulo and sporadically the ministerial reports and of other provinces and countries, we can affirm that this circulation of the printed ones was intense between the provinces, since they are mentioned and commented in the reports, being able to find in them excerpts copied from reports from other provinces.

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<sup>2</sup> The sources cited here are available at <http://ddsnext.crl.edu/brazil> Center for Research Libraries. The Latin American Materials Project (LAMP) of the Research Libraries Center (CRL) digitized serial documents of executive power issued by the national government of Brazil between 1821 and 1993, and by its provincial governments from the first available to each province until the end of the first Republic in 1930. Additional information on this project is available on the LAMP web pages.

News of the progress of institutions in other provinces and in other countries - usually nominated as "more cultured nations" - also appear in reports on operations comparing the degree of progress in conducting business in the province. It is not uncommon to find transcribed excerpts of public administration forms in the most relevant fields, such as: modern correctional models, modes of administration of justice, administrative organization of public instruction, teaching methods, inspection of public education among others. In illustrating this statement, we can highlight the use of examples of measures adopted in other states to solve similar problems to our own, when families are obliged to teach: "[...] The great nations that should be our guides compel families to send the children to learn to read and write "(1864)<sup>3</sup>

In this way, the circulation of the printed matter also produces circulation of driving models of the various branches of administration, as well as impacting the forms of records that build protocols of communication and transmission of written information, establishing a common pattern that can be found while examining government reports from other countries in South America and Europe. We highlight here the circulation of these governmental forms as bearers of the policy-inducing function, both internationally and locally.

Chartier (1990, p.219) states that "Measuring the production of State writing implies that the cultural competencies of the populations, agents or subjects of the State, who exercise or apprehend the power of command and justice through texts which are intended to be read. "Here we have a sufficient provocation to investigate the proliferation of State writings throughout the nineteenth century and the possible impacts of this writing model on the conformation of the reading practices that develop in the first letter schools; this exercise may give visibility to practices of schooling that lead us to search for the meanings of reading and school writing as practices exposed to more general and unprotected interference from political disputes that try to establish order and pacify the populations.

In this sense, and as an initial incursion, we consider this inspiring hypothesis to investigate the writing of the State and the reading practices demanded by it.

### **Cultural artifacts of power**

The written production of the Brazilian imperial state can be considered an artifact of the governmental culture that gives visibility to the process of institutionalization of mechanisms of power in which the ways of reading and the ways of writing assume unequivocal functions of construction and maintenance of the instituted order.

To rediscover the practices of reading in the thickness of these cultural artifacts of government indicates a necessary return to print with a specific itinerary that makes it possible to interrogate the texts in the sense proposed by Chartier regarding the cultural competencies of the agents for which they are intended but also attentive to tensions and subversions revealed by the texts themselves. Our exercise here was to revisit the series of reports of presidents of the province of São Paulo from 1836 to 1880 and to highlight indications of these reading and writing practices that, located outside the school, may have produced widespread demands to be captured by a model that was intended to be a model of exemplary civilization.

Intended for the legislative power and the transfer of the position to another president, the reports are configured as a means of organization and ordination, a device of control of the administration on the life of the citizens and of the State itself. The texts produced in this operation basically originate from the observation, gathering and transmission of information,

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<sup>3</sup> Report on the Public Instruction of St. Paul in 1864 presented to the Illustrious and Honorable Counselor João Chrispiniano Soares, President of the Province by the Inspector General of the same Public Instruction Diogo de Mendonça Pinto.

the organization of a statistic, necessary for large-scale government action and that allow strategic shifts in the way of conducting phenomena involving the population of the province.

In this series of reports, we can verify the tension that announces a process of transition in the own ways of governing of the patrimonial state in which the government, supported in fidelity relations, is no longer enough to order the social and the written orders assume more and more spaces of exercise of power. The movement of specialization of institutions throughout the nineteenth century and the regulations necessary to control the various branches of public performance of the State in the Provinces multiply the edition of regulations to be read and seized to conform the practices, especially from 1850, year in which we locate the creation of the Public Instruction Office in the Province and the rearticulation of another series of services already established - such as the Seminars of Educandos, confessional Private Colleges, Internships and Liceus - that form a network to be observed and governed with greater rigor.

Not only does the branch of public education specialize; other areas of activity are subject to regulation or have more detailed rules of operation. The field of public health in the period is another example, with the creation of central control structures on vaccination; asylums, prisons, hospitals, and other agencies will receive new impetus for the sophistication of control modes, receiving regulations that will force constant records of their movement.

Taken as objects, these forms are configured as extension and presence of the sovereign in all the provinces of the empire. Regulated, themselves, based on the dynamics of government established by the Political Constitution of the Empire, present devices for ordering the speeches and for the adequacy of the texts that offer important indications for the perception of the tensions around the ways of governing the province.

The systematic examination of the reports reveals the incorporation of aspects resulting from the changes resulting from the specialization of the institutions, from a rationalization movement which results in the expansion of the treatment of the province's businesses, materialized in a set of information that appears in aggregate form; which are linked to the president's main report, other specialized reports from various institutions appear as annexes, and these, in turn, can often also present attachments with similar functions and hypertext outlines. Until the mid-1870s, the presence of public agents who act as an extension of the President and of the State itself is growing and mediated by the publication of norms, regulations and inspection practices (GIGLIO, 2001, p. 28).

In this framework, prescriptive government forms - such as laws and regulations - and their consequent demands for control mediated by written records, can singularly offer a social reading context that suggests considering the "**writing and reading**" relationship in the format of "**Order and obedience**"; it is a set of texts that circulate in specific spaces and operate strategically in order to erase textuality in order to produce, in practice, specific behaviors or behaviors. In the space of the erasure of textuality, the power of the State gains visibility, shaping a type of reading that we could call reading reverence capable of, by its own signs, to differentiate and identify the writing of the State, giving it permanent authority.

Another function of the printed in this scenario is to organize control networks and institute authority figures that will compose a general formula of vigilance exercise that aligns to the written word the look of agents - inspectors - that exercise their power supported in the legal texts and regulations

The writing must correspond to a vigilant and observant reading of the orders and the look, in general of these inspectors, will occupy the spaces of rupture of the written order extending the physical authority of the State and making visible resistances that become, in turn, matter for the necessary revision of these same prescriptive texts that will aim to recompose the order - a typical case of the edition and revision of regulations in different scopes and with varying degrees of specificity. To follow the movement of constitution of the

institutions in this corpus documentary from the ordinary narratives and the edition of regulations allows to verify the evolution of a complex network of flows of power<sup>4</sup> and in this network reading and writing plays a fundamental role.

By linking a set of complex control devices, it enables the transit of a government carried out by the predominance of oral over writing to its opposite, with the proliferation of ways of managing from written rules, norms, laws, control of administrative practices that are based on the written records - source of information for the permanent development of strategies of government of men and things. Reading and writing are essential knowledge in the constitution of nineteenth-century government practices, are vehicles of order and promoters of civilization.

### **Reading and writing as governing instruments**

The transition from a way of governing and administering from the predominance of the oral to the writing corresponds to a process that established writing as a condition of institutionalization of the State, a process that increasingly required a body of officials capable of handling written information, competent reading and produce written information.

The transition in the ways of governing also meant the institution of new technologies of government that allowed to move from a model of paternal surveillance on the province to a model informed by science. The statistic is this technology, "the science of social facts" that allowed the government to know in a new scale its territory. Thus, records the report of the President of the Province of São Paulo in 1852:

How can you legislate, and manage without a statistic? In the exercise of your important functions you will feel the same difficulty, which, as administrator, I have felt, embarrassed at every step by ignorance of the facts, which aliases recorded, compared, observed and moralized would enable to legislate and administer with certainty, with knowledge of the cause, not information based on data, which by the urgency and urgency of the occasion are poorly collated, false, or inaccurate.<sup>5</sup> (Sic)

The image of the statistician as a new geometer is treated by Jacques Revel in tracing the movement of formulation of a statistic that occurred in France in the first half of the nineteenth century as a movement of dominion over the territory as a political problem and mobilization against internal and external to the State.

Revel (1998, p.103-158) draws attention to the statistical effervescence of the first half of the nineteenth century and to the fact that this effervescence is not confined to the scope of public initiatives, rather it appears multiplied in individual experiences and by individuals interested in social utility and practical applications. "Somewhat throughout, statistics are expected to provide the elements of a general study of society. [...] The statistician, as a new

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<sup>4</sup> Inspection in Public Instruction is part of a pyramidal organization instituted in the Province and certainly identifies a "chief", a central point, but it is the whole that produces "power" and distributes individuals in this permanent and continuous field. The extension of this technology to other fields of administration, exemplify the network of relations from above but also from the bottom up and laterally, as in a network that sustains the whole and the perpasses of effects of power that rely on one another: fiscal permanently inspected. Foucault. Watch and Punish p.148.

<sup>5</sup> Address with which the Most Illustrious and Dr. José Thomaz Nabuco d'Araujo, president of the province of São Paulo, opened the Provincial Legislative Assembly on May 1, 1852. São Paulo, in the type of government leased by Antonio Louzada Antunes, 1852.

geometer, becomes with the doctor, another face of organizing science, the great social specialist capable of measuring all things."

In these forms the need for statistics to know the empire has been present since the 1830s, however, formulating a statistic entailed the construction of networks of informants, leading to a process of increasing differentiation of both the actions and the establishment of standards of observation, classification, forms of registration, protocols, in short, that would make it possible to organize what was dispersed and give visibility to what might be hidden.

From this movement of improvement of statistics, we can infer what reading and writing skills are expected of the state agents, the scale of controls needed to obtain information. We can affirm that in the series of analyzed papers and, from the statistical maps contained in the reports, a movement of disciplining of the institutional registers occurred through the adoption of printed models, regulations and direct surveillance. This is a process that implied special reading and writing skills, which materialized the pairs: writing-order and reading-obedience, therefore skills related not only to the domain of codes, but which incorporated reverence to texts. From the collection of the information to the elaboration of the statistics there are resistances narrated in these artifacts materialized by the records of complaints about not sending reports, of information, breaking the chain of transmission of information.

In 1855, a regulation establishes the rules of organization and classification for the work of the statistical officer of the Province, based on Provincial Law no. 30 of May 10 of the same year, detailing the data to be checked by the provincial statistics officer, Article 3 of the regulation provides that, in addition to the penalties established by provincial law, "the President of the Province may impose a fine of between one hundred and two hundred thousand reais"<sup>6</sup> on those who by negligence fail to comply with orders concerning the organization of the province's statistics. The presence of this article is indicative of the resistances and tensions that permeated both the production of written information and the transmission of this same information, frustrating a mechanic conceived in the format of networks.

Gradually the reports present aspects of the formation of this Statistical of the Province to be perfected and highlight the need to specialize this activity from the uses of data and information considered as not satisfactory in quantity, quality and temporality, the latter relative to agility in the making of the same to intervene in reality and measure the evolution of events in the province, indicating the transition from a paternal government model to another informed by science, making the actions of state agents more complex and specialized.

The need for the production of official statistics by governments was international. According to Botelho (2005, p.331)

[...] the necessity of official statistics for the government of peoples was universally proclaimed, and nations seeking to advance in the vanguard of civilization regarded it as one of the important branches of public service. In the International Statistical Congresses, rules were recommended for all civilized peoples: "official statistics are no longer just a necessity of the nations, it is morally an almost international commitment, one day to be regulated by conventions among the States in the interest of civilization.

Both the effect of this more general movement of establishment and regulation of official statistics and the circulation of official forms of ministerial and provincial governments among and within provinces reveal the role of reading and writing in the construction of this

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<sup>6</sup> Documents with which the Honorable Dr. José Antonio Saraiva, President of the Province of S. Paulo, instructed the report of the opening of the Provincial Legislative Assembly on February 15, 1855. St. Paul, Typ 2 December, Antonio Louzada Antunes, 1855

desired civility. In the field of public education there is evidence of European data collection initiatives for the creation of a World Map of Popular Education in 1880, whose forms for the collection of information are written in several languages, a fact that suggests initiatives of the same kind carried out in others areas of government during the period<sup>7</sup>.

The information transmission chains in the construction of statistics are also an architecture that distributes readers in a hierarchy of reading and writing skills that may have shaped reading models for different audiences. It would be useful here to deepen the analysis on the school reading practices and to verify if there are impacts of these skills expected by the State writing in the ways of teaching reading and writing in schools, associating the different ways of teaching to the different target audiences.

### **Government through the word: read, understand, perform.**

We will take here the case of the public forces and the reading skills that are required of these agents of the State as a result of the practices of government and administration of justice. The Judicial Reform of 1871, which instituted the police inquiry as a preliminary criminal investigation procedure, is an important example for us to consider the new demands of reading and writing directed at the agents who acted for the so-called Public Tranquility.

Having as a function not of producing a person's accusation, but of gathering evidence of the facts, the police inquiry required the adoption of conducts ruled in every course of the police action: "The police investigation consists of all the necessary steps for the discovery of criminal facts, their circumstances and their perpetrators and accomplices and should be **reduced to writing**" (emphasis added)<sup>8</sup>.

According to Rosemberg (2005 p. 3), in the investigation the investigative functions of the police, were intended to gather evidence that would help convince the judges about the "truth of the facts" and were based on "inquisitorial principles, that is, in the investigation phase there were no defendants, a suspicion was being leveled against an individual who, in police headquarters, could not defend himself, since there was no formal charge. "

How do these practices of administration of justice - which involve the knowledge of the norm through a competent reading and the ability to write - constitute in the province of São Paulo? On the one hand, we find in the reports evidence of resistance to the very institution of the police investigation as an efficient practice for crime prevention, as the process would entail formalities that give police action a disadvantage, according to the police chief in 1871, as well as problems with the ability of patrol commanders to apply the law.

[...] Preventing crimes, discovering and capturing offenders - it's the police's primary mission; but to be fulfilled, strength and freedom of action are indispensable. The police are stripped of both. To want active, energetic and forward-thinking police, and to hold authority with the fame of formalities, is to demand miracles; and the power to operate them only to God belongs. The formalities repel the secret, and this is the soul of the police. Ella must see without being seen. (Sic)

[...] While the police are responsible for describing the place where the crime was committed, while conducting inquiries and sending them to the trial court, and as long as the Municipal Judge decides on

<sup>7</sup> These printed papers organized as a large table were located at the Torre do Tombo in Lisbon in 2007.

<sup>8</sup> Art. 42 of Decree No. 4,824, of 22 of 1871, which regulates Law No. 2,033, of September 20, 1871. Available at: <[http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil\\_03/decreto/historicos/dim/DIM4824.htm](http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/decreto/historicos/dim/DIM4824.htm)> Accessed on April 20, 2019.



the issuance of the arrest warrant, the criminal will have time to seek shelter, where there can be no notice of such an expedition. (Sic)<sup>9</sup>

In the same report of 1871 is the exposition of the problem imposed by the new Law, being directed the police action at night to "catch red-handed all the delinquents, in order not to be caught in the network of formalities that the law created for the prisons ". The aim of the strategy was to avoid the formation of the investigation due to the difficulties involved in drawing up the act and knowing how to frame the crimes.

[...] Anyone who is not arrested in flagrante will mock the police, because it is difficult for her to harass you. To these stations can be collected the drunkards that are found to sleep in the streets, or the victims of any disease, or accidents in need of urgent aid. Those individuals who are arrested during the night may also be collected at such places, and in respect of which it is necessary to draw up the order ordered by art. 12 §3 of the Law of September 20 last. Commanders of patrols, who are rare to read, will certainly not be able to perform such an act, and the less they will be able to distinguish the crimes in which the fugitives are freed. (Sic)

We must consider the demand generated by the police investigation in terms of reading and writing for the public force of the time. In 1874, the need for these competencies was announced as a requirement to the command posts to make feasible the practices of justice: the practical and technical knowledge of the Laws and their application and will be enunciated as indispensable to soldiers and squares as of that year.

[...] I think it essential to introduce the teaching of illiterate soldiers, as is the case with the line cavalry company. I do not need to demonstrate the advantages of elementary education for the police squares, which must know the Law to execute it, without excessive assignments.<sup>10</sup> (Sic)

Reading in the universe of the administration of justice also conforms to the **written pair - order and reading-obedience**, extending here obedience as a series of procedures that serve to be applied, corresponding to a pattern that implies the risk of nullity of action.

The need for investments in the training of reading and writing skills of these agents of the State involved in the administration of justice is born, we could say, from the more general "educational system" of the set of situations that imply mobilizing learning in favor of the materialization of order.

Rogério Fernandes, a historian of Portuguese education, in dealing with the education system in Portugal, presents a demand from this more general educational system for the field of public education that will impact the Portuguese school system. The modernization of the Portuguese army between the late eighteenth and eighteenth centuries brings with it the need for literacy of subordinates, generating in several army units the creation of military schools

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<sup>9</sup> Report of the Police Department of the Province of São Paulo, 1871, p.4-22. Annex to the Report presented to the Provincial Legislative Assembly of São Paulo by the President of the Province, Mr. José Fernandes da Costa Pereira Junior, on February 2, 1872, American Typ., 1871 [sic]

<sup>10</sup> Report presented to His Excellency Mr. João Theodoro Xavier, President of the Province of São Paulo, by the Chief of Police, Joaquim José do Amaral, Judge of Law. Annex to the Report presented to the Provincial Legislative Assembly of S. Paulo, by the President of the Province, Mr. Dr. João Theodoro Xavier on February 5, 1874.

through the method of mutual teaching. This demand will lead the Portuguese army to found the first School of Teacher Qualification in 1816 "open to civilians, thus contributing to the emergence of qualified teachers in the application of the method."<sup>11</sup>

This news stimulates considering how much the demands of reading and writing from outside the school - in the case of the Province of São Paulo to enable the Public Force action in accordance with the Law - act in the formation of pedagogical practices of public education organization and literacy aimed at specific audiences.

### Practices of regeneration through reading

Reading occupied a place of importance in the actions of **moral regeneration** of the condemned during the nineteenth century. In the Correctional House of the province a school of first letters made possible initially the practice of edifying readings that in the decade of the 70 passed to the reading of manuals for the education and improvement of the crafts; in the orphanological colonies the literacy of the "lesser strays" leads to the learning of the arts of agriculture; in the barracks, from instruction in the first letters to the learning of the laws and arts of war.

Considered to be a model, the House of Prison with Work of the Province of São Paulo<sup>12</sup> records in its reports the "engines of all moral transformation" in the House of Correction, summarized in three words: religion, work and silence. The teaching of first letters enabled those sentenced to a permanent reflection on the religious principles, to which these readings were associated; the work guaranteed the regularity in the conduct and the silence guaranteed the security of the establishment, against the possibility of any conspiracies<sup>13</sup>. The model of correction of the condemned ones conjugated the isolation and the work in silence like agents of the prerecorded transformation.

To compete for a complete regeneration of the damned, religion and instruction will be introduced in the first letters. In 1855 the President of the Province arranged for a parish priest to go to the House of Correction, and there were initiatives involving the house school which, according to the records examined, originate from the prisoners themselves<sup>14</sup>. The school ruled by one of the prisoners was condemned by the Director and suppressed - fact that takes a Commission Provincial appointed by the president in 1862, to recommend its reinstatement.

There are records of the proposal to found a library for the use of those sentenced in 1876 by Director Joaquim Mariano Galvão Bueno. "The custodian of the penitentiary, Joaquim Mariano Galvão Bueno, who, among other responsibilities, was also responsible for teaching the first letters to illiterate prisoners, since 1874, he became director"[...] <sup>15</sup>

In 1878 primary instruction in correctional institutions is pointed out in the official discourses as a necessity:

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<sup>11</sup> Fernandes, Rogério Creative Commons License Genesis and consolidation of the national educational system (1820-1910). In: The system of Teaching in Portugal (19th-20th centuries). Maria Cândida Proença (Org.). Lisbon: Ediciones Colibri, 1998, p.23-46. A detailed description of the functioning of the General School can be found in Fernandes, Rogério. The challenge of military schools. The paths of ABC. Portuguese Society and Teaching of the First Letters. Lisbon: Porto Editora, 1994.

<sup>12</sup> The first Provincial Assembly of 1834, in São Paulo, decided to create a prison house with work, later called Correction House, or Penitentiary.

<sup>13</sup> Report of the House of Correction. Annex to the Report with which His Excellency Senator Barão de Itaúna passed the Administration of the Province of S. Paulo, Mr. Comendador Antonio Joaquim Rosa, 3rd Vice-President [on April 25, 1869].

<sup>14</sup> "The teaching of first letters goes there regularly progressing, nevertheless it is promoted by a master of the same class of sentenced. Address with which the Honorable Senator José Joaquim Fernandes Torres, President of the Province of S. Paulo, opened the Provincial Legislative Assembly on February 2, 1860.

<sup>15</sup> Report presented to the Provincial Legislative Assembly of São Paulo, by the President of the Province, Dr. Sebastião José Pereira, on February 2, 1876

[...] Ignorance and idleness are the two main causes of the crimes committed in the province, and in the penitentiary, we have tried hard to debase these causes. Sentenced persons are given primary and religious instruction, which enables them to know their duties. The teaching of mechanical offices, to which all sentenced are subject, also accustoms them to work, and prepares them means to live honestly, when they return to the society of which they are kidnapped. Very few are the condemned, who, when collected to the penitentiary, know how to read, or know some art: almost all are of illiterates and individuals without profession. (Sic)<sup>16</sup>

In several Brazilian provinces there are records of the establishment of primary schools in penitentiaries, a fact that suggests considering the development of reading skills specific to the regeneration of character as a demand of the State to ensure public tranquility.

### Final considerations

The educational practices engendered in the exercise of government - be it state government, institutions, population or family - necessarily involved new skills for the exercise of power. If we rescue the uses of instruction: reading and writing, we find that it offers **basic tools** for the continuity of actions of other agencies that can, from there, conform the subjects in their individual and collective conducts.

Within the scope more restricted to public education the period registers successive approximations to the organization and expansion of the controls on the educational institutions and on the schools; teachers' conduct and teaching qualifications, reading materials, teaching methods, parents' freedom to enroll and keep children in school, inspection of teaching and so many questions become the target of public instruction since 1850.

Specifically, on reading at school, in 1860 the reports record that for the reading in the Seminar of Educandas and in the Seminar of Educandos, the Fleury Historical Catechism is also used in schools, translated by the Counselor Amaral Gurgel, that in the original version presents besides texts, images, in order to lead the reader to understand the desired direction<sup>17</sup>.

<sup>16</sup> Report with which the Excellency. Dr. Sebastião José Pereira transferred the administration of the Province to the 5th Vice-President, Monsignor Joaquim Manoel Gonçalves de Andrade, on January 16, 1878.

<sup>17</sup> Report of the Inspectorate General of Public Instruction December 31, 1860. The French edition of the Historical Catechism was a bestseller until the mid-nineteenth century. Claude Fleury opts for the historical method by writing the catechism, which contains a summary of Christian history and doctrine, intending to offer access to the meaning of the sacred texts, breaking with the practice of memorization by reading, which should be carried out by children in schools. It inserts in it sacred figures of history beyond the narrative style that counts on the possibility of "that everyone can understand and keep a story .... Especially children are the most eager for her. " The images, "writing of the ignorant", associated with the narrative language, make possible, according to Fleury, an access to the understanding of the Christian truths. "(...) To know certain words in color without understanding their meaning does not mean to believe. It is not with the mouth that one believes, but with the heart [...]. One cannot say that I believe 'in the ministry of the Trinity' if I have no idea of it, if I have only memory loaded with a sound of words, which are as unknown to me as those of a foreign language. Now, scholastic language is precisely this for all those who have not studied it ... ". Julia, Dominique. Readings and Counter-Reformation. In: Horse, G. & Chartier, R. (Org). History of Reading in the Western World. Multiple Written Collection. São Paulo: Attica, 1997. p.79-116. The news of the inspector's report in 1860 records that the translation belongs to Counselor Amaral Gurgel, however, we find an edition translated in the Court, in 1846, by Joaquim Jose da Silveira, for use by the schools of First Letters of the municipality of the Court. Digital Library of the Chamber of Deputies, Brasília. Rare Books Collection. Available at: <<http://bd.camara.leg.br/bd/handle/bdcamara/22562>> Accessed on April 20, 2019. The Spanish version

Among the few reading materials distributed to the schools of the time, the catechisms appear to have even been the subject of dispute. In the same year of 1860, according to the Inspector of the Public Instruction Diogo de Mendonça, the children's librarian had received a new catechism, "written by the Diocesan Bishop under his direction for the use of the faithful." The news comes with comments on the editor who suggests to the President of the Province that he be adopted in all schools as the only one to be used:

The editor, the citizen Joaquim Roberto d 'Azevedo Marques, who, owner of the best press of the Province, has already provided so many services to him, competes in large part for this indispensable work, and immediately invoked the support d' this Office in order to obtain adoption of the Book in primary schools. Later, the Reverend Vicar General was also ordained by order of Your Reverend Excellency, and the Excellency President of the Province, the one requesting, and this one ordering that I expedite the convenient orders in order to be the Christian doctrine explained in the schools of both sexes solely by the referred catechism. I have both had the honor of replying that as soon as the Book was published and the Editor offered me a copy, I recommended it to the Professors both public and private, in order to give him preference when they had to buy works of this order, but that to prohibit the use of any other catechism was not possible because it was adopted the Historian of Fleury, of which there is a great number of copies, printed by order of the Province to be distributed gratuitously by the schools<sup>18</sup>.

Apparently, the reading material that mobilized governments and produced competition (political) to be present in the setting of the first letter schools was the Catholic catechism, which carried the expected civility and Christian morality, but other reading material used in the schools, without the control of the State, made up the list of concerns of the Public Instruction Office.

The narrative on the precariousness of the schools of the time is reported in an exemplary manner in the speech of the Inspector of Public Instruction in 1864, when dealing with part of the challenges of institutionalizing public education in the Province:

[...] The teachers do not usually live in the villages where they are called to serve. Arriving they rent a house, and they buy or they borrow some frets, it is in this house and with these frets that the chair will be installed. Outside the capital, the province does not supply them; the teacher wins miniature ordinances. Does not matter; It is

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Catechism, or Compendium of sacred history and doctrine caught, and of the Christian Doctrine contains the images quoted by Julia, as well as a long preamble dedicated to the monarch and warnings about the end and use of the catechism. Episcopal Library of Barcelona. s / d. Available at: <[https://books.google.com/books?id=9zZQAAAACAAJ&printsec=frontcover&hl=en&source=gbs\\_ge\\_summary\\_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.com/books?id=9zZQAAAACAAJ&printsec=frontcover&hl=en&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false)> Accessed on April 20, 2019.

<sup>18</sup> The Editor quoted was proprietor of the Imprinting Typography and also Editor-in-Chief of the *Correio Paulistano Journal* (1854-1963). A series of Provincial laws demonstrate disputes between editors of Catechisms. Here are some examples: Law No. 890 of April 6, 1866 - To adopt for religious teaching in the public schools of the Province the Catechism prepared and published in 1860 by the late Diocesan Bishop Dom Joaquin Joaquim de Mello; Law No. 966 of July 19, 1867 - Authorizes the Government to pay the sum of 400 \$ 000 with the purchase of two thousand copies of the Brazilian Cathecism, to be distributed by the schools of the Province; Law No. 036 of March 28, 1870 - Repeals Law No. 34 of July 1, 1867, on Brazilian Cathecism.

incumbent to give local and furniture and utensils. The house is necessarily small and the room intended for teaching improper by its appearance and dimensions. A small table, and one or two old benches, here is the furniture, happy still who gets them. An inkpot, a few pennies, **a half dozen transcriptions written by the teacher, God knows with what mistakes, private letters in all sorts of defects**, these are the utensils. Essential things are dispensed with. Who today ignores that the prosperity of schools essentially depends on materials and home? <sup>19</sup> (our griffins)

The reading materials to be used in schools of first letters gain increasing importance in the speeches of the President: in 1865, reading emerges as an important tool for the conformation of the character, reporting having ordered to print the work "Historical Pictures of the province of S. Paulo "Of Mr. Brigadeiro José Joaquim Machado de Oliveira and 1,500 copies to distribute to the schools of the province.

[...] The advantages of primary education do not consist in knowing how to read, write and count. The instruction should not be limited to this material study; on the contrary, it must principally **consider reading and writing as a means of acquiring useful knowledge and working in the moral improvement of those who learn**. Under this aspect the public education needs to produce good fructos to be favored of good books. The lack of convenient reading causes the spirit, whose activity has been aroused, to drink poisonous food into a mortiferous food.<sup>20</sup> (our griffins)

In 1880, the President announced that he had authorized the purchase of 800 copies of Dr. Amire Brasiliense's "New method of teaching to read and write" of 500 copies of the "Homeland History Lessons" by Dr. Américo Brasiliense and contracted the acquisition of 6,000 copies of the "Compendium of Geography" by Dr. Jeronymo Sodré, "a work he is due to publish soon and in which he was obliged to treat this province with more particularity than he did in his already published book<sup>21</sup>."

The teaching materials, thought as mediation between the activity of the teacher and the student's learning, are also linked to the practices of teaching, to the government of teaching; teaching methods appear as formulas to be adopted by the teacher to solve students' learning, forming one of the layers of the educational field, which draws a certain economy of procedures to shorten the times, establish regularities, discipline the practice of the teacher and the student. The absence of a teaching method in schools is one of the constant arguments that justify the unflattering state of schools.

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<sup>19</sup> Report on the Public Instruction of St. Paul in 1864 presented to Ilm. And Exm. Snr. Counselor João Chrispiniano Soares President of the Province by the Inspector General of the same Public Instruction Diogo de Mendonça Pinto. Annexes to the Report presented by the Provincial Legislative Assembly of São Paulo (1985) at the Second Session of the Twelfth Legislature by the President The Counselor João Chrispinianno Soares S.Paulo Typ. Impartial, by J.R. de <sup>a</sup> Marques, 49 - Rua da Imperatriz - 49

<sup>20</sup> 1865 Report presented to the Provincial Legislative Assembly of São Paulo at the Second Session of the Twelfth Legislature on February 2, 1865, by the President of the same Province. Counselor Joao Chrispinianno Soares S. Paula Typ. Impartial, by JR de Marques, 49 - Rua of the Rosary - 49 1865.

<sup>21</sup> Interesting collection of utensils for schools and the educational market for teaching is compiled by Hilsdorf, Maria Lúcia Spedo. School Times: sources for the female presence in Education, São Paulo, - XIX Century. Center of Memory of Education - Feusp. - São Paulo: Plêiade, 1999.

In this network of educational practices disseminated in society, primary schools - in the words of the Inspector of Public Instruction in 1854 - "are the sharing of the crowd; the averages fit the portion that, living with certain convenience, interests and has the right to go beyond the first letters."<sup>22</sup> " The offer of primary school as a great challenge imposed by the Constitution on the Province of São Paulo had as its aim the dismantling of childhood, while the secondary education was destined to the youth that returned to free professions or university studies, this yes directed to the members of the "higher classes" where they would find "erudition and science to retain the influence they are called to exercise in Society".

In the three events presented in this article: the formation of provincial statistics, the introduction of the police investigation by the Judicial Reform of 1871 and the use of reading and writing in the moral regeneration of sentenced persons, we highlight a singular universe of demands of reading and writing directed to the government of men and things, from which we can draw contributions to understand the ways that lead to school an unparalleled set of expectations that overflow reading, writing, counting and behaving, ceaselessly producing the necessary conditions for government practices.

Recalling Chartier (1994, p. 107) we can understand that the writing of the State as "work" produces a series of operations that tend to conform to a stable sense; the laws and regulations could be at the top of a classification of these works of the State, because they try to constrain the reading and to conform the practices, however, the proliferation of these "works" marks at the same time the field of resistances that permanently demanded the revision of the same works in response to the resistances and constraints that reading and social practice impose on State writing.

Considering the proliferation of normative and prescriptive texts in the period, we must also consider the impacts that the practices of reading and writing sediment when thinking about the relation "**writing and reading**" in the form of "**order and obedience**".

[...] Certainly, creators, or authorities, or "clerics" (whether or not they belong to the Church) always aspire to fix the meaning and to enunciate the correct interpretation that should constrain the reading (or the look). But always, too, the reception invents, shifts, distorts. (Chartier, 1994, p.107)

The proliferation of State writings - or rather, the proliferation of writings to govern - throughout the nineteenth century offers important clues to investigate the possible impacts of this writing model on the conformation of the reading and writing practices developed in schools, and this provocation remains a necessary exercise.

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<sup>22</sup> Report of the Public Instruction of the Province this year. Diogo de Mendonça Pinto, Inspector General of Public Instruction.1854. Documents with which the Honorable Dr. José Antonio Saraiva, President of the Province of São Paulo, instructed the Report of the opening of the Provincial Legislative Assembly on February 15, 1855. In the December 2 issue of Antonio Louzada Antunes. 1855

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