

Through the thread of names: transnational relations in the process of material provision at Ginásio Paranaense (1892-1906)*

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Abstract

This text uses aspects from Master's and Doctoral studies situated in the debates about the provision of school material, history of education, and a transnational approach. Following the onomastic method of Carlo Ginzburg (1991), through the thread of names, we understand the subjects involved in the process of supplying and manufacturing the school furniture of Ginásio Paranaense in the late 19th century and early 20th century. Thus, the work aims to identify and map the transnational references in the consumption of artifacts targeting secondary education, checking the needs imposed and how they were fulfilled. The documental sources are newspaper articles consulted at the *Hemeroteca Digital da Biblioteca Nacional*; reports and documents of governmental representatives, consulted at the *Departamento de Arquivo Público Paranaense*. Furthermore, we used iconographic sources found in the archive of Colégio Estadual do Paraná and minutes from the *Museu Maçônico do Paraná*. Our theoretical base was the contributions of Serge Gruzinski (2001) regarding the international and intercontinental connections in the process of historic research; Eugenia Roldán Vera and Eckhardt Fuchs (2019) with the discussion on transnational history in the educational sphere; and Cynthia Greive Veiga (2018) to understand the existing margins between schools needs and how they were answered.

Keywords

Transnational history – School material culture – History of education – School furniture – Secondary education.

*English version by Viviane Ramos. The authors take full responsibility for the translation of the text, including titles of books/articles and the quotations originally published in Portuguese.

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Introduction

Faced with realities to be studied from multiple scales, the historian has to turn himself into a type of electrician in charge of re-establishing the international and intercontinental connections that national historiographies have disconnected or hidden, blocking their respective frontiers.
Serge Gruzinski

An issue proposed by Serge Gruzinski (2001), when exploring the connected histories² is to bypass Eurocentric narratives in the investigations of Western historians and exhume the historic connections. Thus, Gruzinski understands that the historian's role is to "make appear the continuities, the connections, or simple passages, often minimized (if not excluded from the analysis)" (p. 177). Hence, the author understands that the objects taken for a historical analysis articulate multiple contact points and junctions that end up producing new syntheses, which should emerge in the process of writing history³.

Regarding the history of education, Martin Lawn (2014), translated by Rafaela Silva Rabelo, states the difficulty in contemporary Europe in establishing themes that are not reduced to national configuration. The author explains that, when checking the circulation of certain objects, they end up losing authorship and are taken with a national characteristic, while other contact points are lost or become invisible. In other words, "history of education has been dealing with its study object as naturally national, as if it had impermeable frontiers, common institutions, different places, and native objects" (LAWN; RABELO, 2014, p. 132). Therefore, when we look at our study object, the process of supplying school desks, we tried to establish a more complex analysis, observing other facets in the material composition of Paraná secondary education.

Cynthia Greive Veiga (2018) explains the relations between school needs and how they are fulfilled should not be read a-historically – on the contrary: consumption relationships, in the case of school material provision, go beyond economic relations, also establishing socio-historic constructions. Supported by these assumptions, this study aims to understand, in the scope of *Ginásio Paranaense*, between 1892 and 1906, how was the process of supplying school furniture of this institution, in the sense of checking the circulation of subjects involved, the veiled systems of references, as well as the existing margins between school needs and its fulfillment.

These aspects allow us to problematize an operation established from material culture. According to Ulpiano Toledo Bezerra de Meneses (1998), we should be careful with the fetish of the object- that is, we should not reduce the analysis of the documental piece only to its physical properties. It is important to evaluate the physical/sensorial and the biography of the object (involving the production relation and social interaction) to identify the uses and senses articulated by the society which produced it. Regarding school material culture, Escolano Benito (2017, p. 9) explains that using this approach allows us to retake the "operatorial rules that weave the relationships between people and things", allowing thus to know a school culture and a school material culture.

2- The concept of "connected histories" was created by the Indian historian Sanjay Subrahmanyam (1994). According to this author, different spheres of circulation transcend regional, national, or even continental frontiers, allowing us to understand the connections existing in different cultures.

3- Data availability: all set of data that support the results of this study was referenced in the article and are publicly available.

Hence, when entering the empirical research, the historic weave developed here was designed based on the names intertwined, having Carlo Ginzburg's (1991) considerations about the onomastic method as theoretical support. According to the author, this allows us to investigate the contextual weaves connecting the subjects. Three names are key to this research: Pedro Rispoli, Affonso Lubrano, and Victor Ferreira do Amaral e Silva. The first two are Italian immigrants who built many businesses in Brazil- among them, woodworking factors associated with the creation of the school furniture for *Ginásio Paranaense*. The third one, Victor Ferreira do Amaral e Silva, as the General Director of Public Instruction of Paraná, can be seen as a cultural mediator (GRUZINSKI, 2014) who helped the circulation of artifacts and knowledge, and their respective provision.

The initial research focus encompasses the first regulation of *Ginásio Paranaense*, published in 1892, when discussions about intuitive teaching and the equalization of Paraná secondary education with that of *Ginásio Nacional do Rio de Janeiro* were in vogue. We established 1906 as the starting point when Pedro Rispoli signs the contract to produce the furniture of *Ginásio Paranaense*, mainly the Cabinets of Chemistry, Physics, and Natural History.

In this scenario, also grounded on Eugenia Roldán Vera and Eckhardt Fuchs (2019), we believe that the material supply of *Ginásio Paranaense* took place through a process that "crossed borders", because its consumption system was supported by the international circulation of catalogs, artifacts, and subjects, allowing connection points that contributed to the fabrication of school furniture in Paraná.

The thread and the name: connected by a school desk

The weekend was close and those who flipped the pages of the *A República* newspaper on that summer Thursday of 1904 would find an unusual invitation for an event on the following Saturday: to visit the *Exposição Paranaense* [Paraná Exhibition]. The newspaper article called attention to the school desks to be displayed in the main pavilion of the new *Ginásio Paranaense*, which would soon be open. They had a "special style never before seen among us" (A EXPOSIÇÃO, 1904, p. 2), the writer refers to the furniture origin and their supplier. According to the article, due to the indication of the General Director of Public Instruction, Victor Ferreira do Amaral e Silva, Lubrano Woodwork was responsible to make the desks, which were a large part of the furniture of *Ginásio Paranaense*. It is interesting to notice that the manufacturing references are not limited to the borders of Paraná, as the desk made by Lubrano was based on a sample brought by the director from a model school in the state of São Paulo (A EXPOSIÇÃO, 1904).

Three months later, in the same year and newspaper, other evidence about the material provision of *Ginásio Paranaense* was published. On May 12, under the title "expedients", by the order of Victor Ferreira do Amaral e Silva, two experts were designated to evaluate the school furniture intended for *Ginásio Paranaense*, manufactured by the woodworker Pedro Rispoli (PARANÁ, 1904, p. 1). As stated by Carlo Ginzburg (1991, p. 174): the "Ariadne's thread that guides the researcher in the document maze is what distinguishes an individual from another in all known societies: the name". Hence, by the

onomastic method, we have identified three names connected to the provision of school desks for *Ginásio Paranaense*: Pedro Rispoli and Affonso Lubrano, responsible for the factory; General Director of Public Instruction, interested not only in buying the best furniture, but also to offer quality references to the process of manufacturing.

This way, dear reader, we invite you to follow through *the thread of names*, and the trails left by these subjects to understand their relationship with the material installation of *Ginásio Paranaense*.

On the trails of Pedro Rispoli and Afonso Lubrano

The movement of so many people among the continents establishes bonds and offers a continuous source of information and knowledge.
Serge Gruzinski

It was 1895 when the Italian Pedro Rispoli boarded the “Vapor Satellite” to cross the Atlantic Ocean to reach Brazil. He got off in Rio de Janeiro; however, he would set his home in Paraná, living in a small hotel in Curitiba (CÓDICE..., 1891, 1894, 1895). Three years later, Rispoli’s data are mentioned in the newspaper *A República*: 24 years old, son of Ângelo Rispoli, married, artist, living in Riachuelo (ALISTAMENTO, 1898). Regarding Affonso Lubrano, we have no records of his arrival in Brazil, whatever was possible to discover was connected to the traces left by Rispoli. Lubrano appears as a strong competitor in the woodworking field and, in the newspaper advertisements, both have similar proposals and endeavors.

As stated by Michel de Certeau (2015), the historian’s gestures connect the ideas to the places. For this reason, we have opted to alternate the scale of observation of those subjects to understand the factual panel that precedes their arrival in Brazil. At the turn of the 19th to the 20th century, more than 70 million Europeans crossed the Atlantic Ocean seeking better work conditions. According to Sérgio Odilon Nadalin (2017, p. 62), in this period in Europe, there was a scenario of overpopulation and the precariousness of services aggravated by the Industrial Revolution. Thus, several people “emigrated to work, plow, plant, and raise; to build something of their own”.

Elaine Maschio (2012) explains that the circulation of propaganda pamphlets between Brazil and Europe was one of the strategies of commercial agencies to convince foreigners to emigrate to Brazil. Contracts and agreements were also established through provincial states. This way:

[...] agents advertised, recruited settlers, prepared the land lots, and were responsible for the transportation, installation of settlers, and settlement administration. The government was responsible for defining the settlers’ profile and paying for the total costs of this process, in general, stipulated by the agents themselves. Immigration was a business that generated meaningful profits for the businessmen in the field. (MASCHIO, 2012, p. 49).

In a report for the Legislative Assembly in 1876, the president of the province, Adolpho Laménha Lins, makes some declarations about the settlement process in Paraná; For him, the Paraná Province was the most appropriate in the Empire “to receive immigrants from all countries, hard-working settlers that seek a new home and country to find their well-being and elements to establish a future for their children” (LINS, 1876, p. 77). The word hard-working associated with the displacement and foreign occupation in Paraná lands was not simply rhetorical: there are pieces of evidence about the expectations on the arrival of immigrants and also the economic scenario of the Empire. To Lins (1876, p. 78), “the lack of manpower is an economic fact originated at the end of commercial treats with England”. With the abolitionist laws- first, the *Lei Euzébio de Queiróz* and later the *Lei do Ventre Livre* –, the political representatives had to find alternatives to substitute the enslaved workforce, thus creating strategies

[...] to invite the foreign migration wave and since September 18, 1850, the so-called *Lei das Terras*, the Imperial government became the immediate tutor of the immigrant, providing for their well-being, from the transportation from their original countries until their definitive establishment in their destined place. (LINS, 1876, p. 78).

According to Rafaela Mascarenhas Rocha (2015), we can see differences in the migration motivations between São Paulo and Paraná. In the former, the immigrant workforce was used to “substitute the enslaved workforce in coffee plantations, in a system originally called “partnership”. While in Paraná, the initiative was focused on the development of family agriculture” (ROCHA, 2015, p. 56). This situation took place exactly because the food production in Curitiba did not have the same power as the economy of Mate herb. For this reason, the installation of agricultural settlements around the capital became known as the “green belt” of the city. These immigrants would daily go to the capital “with their wagons full of wood, cereals such as beans and corn, legumes and fresh vegetables; following the pathway of the neighborhoods Campina do Siqueira, Mercês, and Alto do São Francisco, until the city center” (MARANHÃO, 2014, p. 53).

Maschio (2004, p. 3) points out that the largest wave of Italian immigrants reached Paraná between 1875 and 1878, a total of 4,350 immigrants, through a “contract established between the President of the Province, Venâncio José Lisboa and the businessman Sabino Tripodi”. Together with this, in the period between 1870 and 1890, there was a greater move of immigrants to the province, establishing more than 20 settlements of Italian families and other ethnicities. The author highlights that “between 1829 and 1934 Paraná received 47,731 Polish people, 19,272 Ukrainians, 13,319 Germans, and 8,798 Italians” (MASCHIO, 2012, p. 48). The Italian flow was the 4th largest contingent in the immigrant proportion that arrived in the state.

Even though Paraná had a substantial production of agricultural goods, such as the Mate herb and subsistence farming, some Italian immigrants had other purposes, as stated by Maschio (2012, p. 19), there were “families and individuals that established themselves in the center of Curitiba and developed commerce, worked as liberal professionals, or as factory workers. For example, the urban immigrants that we focus on in this study:

Pedro Rispoli and Affonso Lubrano – subjects that were part of the foreigners dedicated to commerce and industry, as owners of different establishments.

Paul Ricouer (2018, p. 222) explains that the change of scale does not make “the same things bigger or smaller, in greater or smaller characters, [...] we see different things”. Because of that, the scale here resumes the empirical consult on some actions of Pedro Rispoli and Affonso Lubrano in Curitiba. The financial authority and the commercial circuit of these subjects can be seen by the array of investments they owned, as well as by the “complicity network” they mobilized (GRUZINSKI, 2014, p. 77).

Named “*O Mobiliário Artístico*” [The Artistic Furniture] the commerce of Pedro Rispoli was located at Aquidabam Street (currently Emiliano Pernetta Street), in Curitiba. The newspaper poster to publicize the factory states that the owner introduced “great renovations and improvements in his industrial field [and] can execute all and any style of furniture at, unquestionably, the most affordable prices possible” (AO MOBILIARIO, 1906, p. 3). The factory also kept in storage, pine, and *imbuia* furniture, and accepted demands of lathing, entailing, stuffing, upholstering, padding, and repairing musical instruments. In the slogan, the owner announced they sold “cheap to sell a lot”, as can be seen in Figure 1.

Figure 1 – Poster of the steam factory of Pedro Rispoli in 1906

Ao Mobiliario ARTISTICO

—FABRICA A VAPOR—

6 - Rua Aquidaban - 6 Telephone 165

O proprietario deste estabelecimento tendo introduzido grandes reformas e melhoramentos em seu ramo de industria, chama a attenção do respeitavel publico e sua numerosa freguezia que acha-se em condições de executar todo e qualquer estylo de moveis e por preços incontestavelmente os mais modicos possiveis. Pois, para norma da casa adoptou como divisa

Barato para vender muito

Indubitavelmente sem competidor...Ha sempre em deposito grande stock de moveis em pinho e imbuia. Aceita-se encomendas de torneagem, entalho, empalhão, esto-fação e colchoaria. Concerta-se com perfeição instrumentos musicaes de cordas.

Nota importantissima—As compras que excederem de 100\$0000 serão presenteadas com um objecto a gosto do comprador ! VER PARA CRER !!

TODOS POIS, O MOBILIARIO ARTISTICO

PROPRIETARIO *Pedro Rispoli*

Source: “Ao mobiliário artístico” (1906, p. 3).

Marcenaria Lubrano, owned by Affonso Lubrano, was also announced in the newspaper *A Notícia* on May 10, 1906. The steam factory was “neatly” established in the new address at Liberdade street, nº 27 (current Barão do Rio Branco Street) having a “permanent exhibition of furniture, where people can [...] find furniture of their taste” (MARCENARIA, 1906, p. 4). Furniture for the dining room, bedroom, *boudoirs*, offices, and desks were some of the products produced by the factory, besides using “the best woods of Parará, which are: *imbuia*, oak, cedar, pine, etc, etc.” (MARCENARIA, 1906, p. 4).

Other traces left by these subjects in the commercial circuit can be seen in the newspaper pages: besides his steam factory Pedro Rispoli, had a furniture *club* (CLUB..., 1904), a cooperative of buildings (COPERATIVA..., 1908), had activities in a car factory, and in the creation of luxury furniture (DIÁRIO DA TARDE, 1907). Affonso Lubrano’s activities are similar to Rispoli’s: besides also manufacturing luxury furniture, he had a furniture cooperative (GRANDE..., 1908), and a car cooperative, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2 – Poster of the car cooperative Affonso Lubrano in 1907



Source: “Cooperativa de carros” (1907, p. 3).

By the number of endeavors cited, we can see that these men had a prestigious place in the social fabric. Holders of considerable capital, these entrepreneurs could participate in various public notices and, thus, keep another front in the commercial dispute of Paraná. Among their action niches, the schools were a favorable field for the furniture

area. Relying on a specialized workforce and factory technology, Rispoli and Lubrano, earned several biddings to supply furniture for Paraná public schools (GARCIA, 2020). What the public notices and newspaper articles do not show is the extra commercial connection of these subjects with the Director of the Public Instruction of Paraná. Before answering this question, it is important to understand the work of Victor Ferreira do Amaral e Silva in Paraná's social context.

As a medical doctor, he could not only talk about the object of medicine but also had the authority of commenting on pedagogical and material aspects of school. The debate between physicians and bachelors (in Law and Medicine) about the school scenery was recurrent at the turn of the 19th to the 20th century. These professionals commonly held positions of inspection and direction of Public Schooling: it was no different with Victor Ferreira do Amaral e Silva, appointed by the governor Francisco Xavier da Silva, on October 22, 1900, for the position of General Director of Public Instruction in Paraná (SOUZA, G., 2004). During the period he held the office (1900-1904), the Director wrote reports expressing his concern with school materiality and, on trips to São Paulo, under a governmental commission, he visited some educational establishments that, in his opinion, presented "a model organization, even luxurious, which are not far from those of more civilized countries" (SILVA, 1904, p. 6).

It is important to consider that the issues of hygiene and the value of modern architecture and pedagogy were already part of a debate that pervaded the 19th century. However, the schools created in the state of São Paulo (mainly the so-called *grupos escolares*) would enter the imaginary of society as signs of modernity announced by the Republican regime (SOUZA, R. F., 1998). To Marta Carvalho (2003), São Paulo school

[...] is strategically built as a sign of progress established by the Republic; a sign of modernity that worked as dispositive of fight and legitimation in the consolidation of the hegemony of this state in the Federation. The investment was prosperous and the São Paulo educational system is successful in organizing itself in a model system, in a double sense: in the logic that presided over its institutionalization and the exemplary force it has in the initiatives of school remodeling in other states. (CARVALHO, 2003, p. 225).

Jacques Le Goff's (2003, p. 175) statement that « modernity awareness emerges from the feeling of rupture with the past », helps us to interpret this historic event. Faced with this, we perceive a constant movement in the journalistic rhetoric and the reports of government representatives, establishing in the Republican regime a new redemptive order, while the monarchical regime would represent a precarious context that only the Republic could change. However, we know that the force of this event was related to a rhetorical strategy: though the Republic announced its concern with the educational scenario, there was no significant change in the first decades of the regime (SOUZA, G., 2004; BENCOSTTA, 2001).

In a Mason newspaper, Victor Ferreira do Amaral e Silva was praised in 1901 as an educational authority that fought for the civic cause:

Also masonry, an invaluable factor of Freedom and Civism, for more than a year, under the auspices of the Respectful Lodge *Fraternidade Paranaense*, started in the School José Carvalho an eloquent series of civic lectures. [...] *The illustrious Director of Public Instruction came to brightly sanction them, granting an official stamp. Worthy of praise!* (MOZAICO, 1901, p. 62, our highlight).

The School José Carvalho, mentioned by the newspaper, was created by the masonic lodge *Fraternidade Paranaense*⁴. According to the documents at *Museu Maçônico Paranaense* [Paraná Mason Museum], Victor Ferreira do Amaral e Silva was a member of this lodge. Coincidentally, Affonso Lubrano and Pedro Rispoli were also members. However, these subjects were also affiliated with another mason lodge: *Unione e Fratellanza*⁵ – we highlight that, in this lodge, the meetings and document records were held in Italian. However, we stress that the trails left by these subjects show the affinity of the conceptions shared by a political context.

In Brazil, according to Giana Lange do Amaral (2017, p. 58),

[...] the whole process of the Republic Proclamation also resulted from the work of politicians connected to Masonry. This became evident when we see that: the Republican Manifest of 1870 was written by the Gran-Master Saldanha Marinho, receiving signatures of a great number of masons: the “Republican Club” was presided by mason Quintino Bocaiúva; masons composed the first Provisory Government.

In fact, as a representative of the Republican government, many times, Victor Ferreira do Amaral e Silva wrote in his reports about his concern to establish in public instruction the principles of laity and civic education. One of the constant agitations in his position was to “establish civic education in schools. Considering that, ex vi of political constitution, education became laic, by the exclusion of religious education, it seems to me that civic instruction has inescapable importance” (SILVA, 1904, p. 14). Besides the civic education in the national parties calendar, Victor Ferreira do Amaral e Silva insisted on the conferences of civic education held in public spaces and announced through the lenses of *Ginásio Paranaense*.

Following this perspective, we perceive that the values surrounding the Republican precepts also reached the Mason philosophy. Therefore, it does not seem to be a coincidence that Affonso Lubrano and Pedro Rispoli rendered services, under the recommendation of Victor Ferreira do Amaral e Silva, to the main institutions of the Republican regime, such as schools, kindergartens, Normal schools, and the *Ginásio Paranaense* (GARCIA, 2020). Because Masonry is here considered as

4- According to its foundation minute, the Lodge *Fraternidade Paranaense* was found on April 1897. Among its founders were Affonso Lubrano, Pedro Rispoli, and Victor Ferreira do Amaral (MUSEU MAÇÔNICO PARANAENSE, [2022a]).

5- According to *Museu Maçônico Paranaense*, the Lodge *Unione e Fratellanza* was “founded in April 5, 1902 and its demand of filiation and regularization in the *Grande Oriente do Brasil* – G.O.B. (a Masonic body) was approved on June 2, 1902 (Bol. G.O.B. – 1902, page. 208). Constitutional letter sent June 2, 1902 (filed in the Lodge Dario Vellozo nº 1.213) and regulated on July 26, 1902 (Livro Atas da Loja Luz Invisível nº 0.749 page. 3 vs)”. Affonso Lubrano was among the founders of this lodge (MUSEU MAÇÔNICO PARANAENSE, [2022b]).

[...]a potential and aggregating locus, as a sociability space of intellectuals that ground ideas that are consolidated in the process of implementation of the Republic. Masons, who in their collective spaces, mason lodges, shared aspects of the liberal and positivist ideals, sought a new society based on order and progress. (AMARAL, 2017, p. 58).

Therefore, we believe that the places of action of these subjects reveal a “network of complicity” (GRUZINSKI, 2014, p. 77) that gave Pedro Rispoli and Affonso Lubrano the opportunity of satisfying the material demands of the Republican school, as well as benefiting them in the commercial circuit. Hence, after building the weave that connects these subjects, we still have to know other systems of reference that were present in the manufacturing of the furniture of *Ginásio Paranaense*.

The transnationalization of school artifacts: the installation of the Ginásio Paranaense and its specialized spaces

Even before Paraná left the protection of São Paulo, the old *Comarca* of Curitiba had inaugurated in 1846 the establishment of an institution to shelter secondary public instruction: “*Licêo de Curitiba*” (ZACHARIAS, 2013a, p. 21). Mariana Zacharias (2013a) points out that the history of secondary education in Paraná is marked by an unstable condition when offering its courses, as they were extinguished and recreated several times. According to the author, the definite extinction of the *Licêo* happened in 1874. However, in 1876, a preparatory institute was created, which became known as *Instituto Paranaense*. To this building, the Normal School was attached to be responsible for the formation of elementary education teachers. In 1892, the institute was called *Ginásio Paranaense*. The Library of the Capital and the General Direction of Public Instruction were in the same space.

Before diving into the processes of material installation of secondary education in *Ginásio Paranaense*, we once again need to change the observation scale to understand the historic scenery that precedes secondary education in Paraná. According to Clarice Nunes (2000, p. 36), the “emergency of this school form, is marked by university prestige”. However, the author shows that Brazilian schools were not directly born from this relationship but from “the policy of separation established by the Jesuit order between the teaching of humanities targeting the children of wealthy settlers and the education for the Indigenous” focused on catechism principles (p. 38).

Still, according to Nunes (2000), primary education would be grounded on the use of civilizing principles, in the sense of building governability pillars over the nation. Secondary education would be responsible for the formation of “an illustrious and intellectual elite, more fully inserted in the attributes of freedom and property, holder of privileges in the small circle that participated in the State power, in the local level, as well as in the broader Empire level” (NUNES, 2000, p. 39). This way, targeting the formation of illustrious young people, secondary education would provide a

[...] solid general culture, supported by ancient and modern humanities, aiming to prepare the leading individuals, that is, the men who would assume the greater responsibilities within the society and the nation, holders of the conceptions that would be infused in the people. (NUNES, 2000, p. 40).

Published in the newspaper *A República*, the Regulation of *Ginásio Paranaense* anticipated, in its first article, who was the public of secondary education and its aim: to the young people of Paraná to prepare them to enroll in the higher education establishments of the Republic and for the knowledge of “fundamental elements of general science”. Furthermore, “the course will be called *Gymnázio Paranaense*, attached to it, there will be a Normal School aiming to prepare teachers for the primary schools in the State” (PARANÁ, 1892, p. 2).

It is important to point out that during the Reform *Benjamim Constant*, in 1890, there was the equalization of secondary education in the main federal institution: the *Ginásio Nacional*, located in Rio de Janeiro (at the time, Brazil’s capital). With this, “the equalization aimed to give a unity to secondary education nation-wise, bringing with it supervisory measures, but not eliminating the preparatory examinations” (ZACHARIAS, 2013a, p. 37). Though the issue of equalization tried to promote national unity on the content to be taught, the initiative ended up becoming a great challenge to Brazilian cities and states. The same took place in Paraná, as the subjects of Physics, Chemistry, and Natural History demanded the installation of spaces with experimental characteristics, requiring appropriate furniture and technology for teaching.

When writing about secondary education, in the 1903 report, Victor Ferreira do Amaral e Silva informs that, to follow the model of *Ginásio Nacional*, there needed to be “some improvements, whose main goal is to create a cabinet of Natural History and a Physics and Chemistry Laboratory” (SILVA, 1904, p. 15). To him, the installation of specialized equipment would substantially improve teaching, as “the purely theoretical study is almost completely unsuccessful” (p. 15).

About these questions, the director enthusiastically announces that “the founding stone has been settled”: the new building under construction to welcome the *Ginásio Paranaense*. About the hygiene conditions and aspiring an architecture considered modern, the new *Ginásio* was inaugurated in February 1904. However, 10 months later, the new General Director of Public Instruction, Reinaldo Machado, affirms in a Report that secondary education had not yet reached equalization with *Ginásio Nacional*. Furthermore, he stated that one measure the government should take, as soon as possible, would be the “acquisition of a Laboratory of Physics and Chemistry and a Cabinet of Natural History, which has been keenly missed for the practical teaching of these sciences, not only for the *Ginásio* students but also those of Normal School” (MACHADO, 1904, p. 23).

We have seen, through official letters and contracts found in the Public Archive of Paraná that, though the building was inaugurated in 1904, only in 1906 the government could gather efforts to provide the building with the necessary furniture for the Cabinets of Chemistry, Physics, and Natural History (CERQUEIRA, 1906).

On May 16, 1906, the Bachelor Arthur Pedreira Cerqueira, General Director of Public Instruction, was authorized by the government to sign a contract with Pedro Rispoli to manufacture the furniture needed for the buildings of *Ginásio Paranaense* and the Normal School. In the contract, they define the deadline of 60 days for the supplier's production, which could be prorogated. We also found the list of pieces of furniture to be made:

250 pine desks, imitating *imbuia* varnished with 1.15 of length, 0.80 of height, following the model of fig.11 of the Catalog of "*Maison Les Fils d'Emile Deyrolles*", 13 armchairs of *imbuia* carved and stuffed, the largest and tallest for the table of the Congregation [...] 24 simple chairs of *imbuia* carved and stuffed following the chosen model. 1 pine lavatory imitating *imbuia* with a marble stone and a mirror [...] 14 benches with iron frame for students' recess with wooden seats. 2 small tables lathed and varnished. 1 platform for the Congregation painted table of 5 m in length, 3.30 in width. 4 blackboards with an easel of 2.40 meters high and 1.60 in length, and 1.10 wide. 24 clipboards for drawing painted black with 0.50 x 0.60 all with two frames with glass for schedules (free). (CERQUEIRA, 1906, p. 56-57, our highlight).

The contractor announces that the desks should follow "the model of fig.11 of the Catalog of '*Maison Les Fils d'Emile Deyrolles*'". Until now, we could not find the referred catalog but we suspect that Victor Ferreira do Amaral e Silva was the mediator in the circulation of the artifact, considering that he wrote in his 1903 report that "through printed catalogs of important commercial houses of Europe, the government could order the material for the laboratory in good conditions" (SILVA, 1904, p. 16).

The reproduction of artifacts by local woodworkers through catalogs or even detailed descriptions of the contractors is discussed by Wiara Alcântara (2016) in a study about the transnationalization of school objects in the late 19th century. According to the author, in this period many companies signed patents to protect the intellectual production in the production of objects, as was described in the catalogs, with possible punishment for those who reproduced the exhibited artifact (ALCÂNTARA, 2016).

It seems that, though knowing the risks, the educational representatives of Paraná did not hesitate to take the catalogs of *Maison Émile Deyrolle* as references to their orders for carpenters and local factories. Furthermore, Victor Ferreira do Amaral e Silva circulated in São Paulo, to know the main educational centers that also kept commercial relations with *Maison Deyrolle*. According to Diana Vidal (2017) and Wiara Alcântara (2018), the purchase of products from *Maison Deyrolle* all over the Brazilian empire was recurrent in the late 19th century, with the increase of experimentalist practices. Created in 1831 by Jean-Baptiste Deyrolle, the *Maison Émile Deyrolle* provided services related to the collections of Natural History, "as well as scientific equipment, taxidermy pieces, osteology, school furniture, and wall panels"⁶ (NAISSANCE, 2008, our translation).

In Brazil, the consumption of these objects for the teaching environment corresponds to a new pedagogical model: the intuitive method of teaching or the lesson of things. According to Alcântara (2018, p. 345),

6- In the original : "La vocation de l'enseigne y reste avant tout pédagogique. Outre le matériel scientifique, les pièces de taxidermie et d'ostéologie, le mobilier scolaire et les planches murales fournis à toutes les écoles et universités de France, beaucoup d'ouvrages spécialisés sont publiés par Deyrolle".

The intuitive method was generalized, in the second half of the 19th century, in Europe and the Americas, contraposing book education, as an indispensable method for the renovation of education. In the transition of the 19th to the 20th century, with the intuitive method, the world of artifacts invaded schools. In this period, emerged new types of scientific artifacts [...] the Cabinet of Physics, the Laboratory of Chemistry, the Astronomic Observatory, the Cabinet of Pharmaceutical, the Anatomic Theater, the Cabinet of Natural History, and the Botanic Garden. These new learning spaces emerged in school in a cultural context of valuing knowledge production and learning based on observation, experience, physical demonstration of things, and palpable phenomena.

As we can see in the reports of government representatives, it was not different in the state of Paraná: all the investment in a modern teaching environment, mainly with *Ginásio Paranaense* (matching *Ginásio Nacional*), had, in its prerogative, the distance from a “purely theoretical” education, towards a more experimental one.

Figure 3 shows a classroom of *Ginásio Paraense* in 1904. In the center, we can see a model of human body anatomy imported from *Maison Émile Deyrolle*.

Figure 3 – Inside a classroom of *Ginásio Paranaense* – 1904



Source: Photo digitalized from the archive of *Colégio Estadual do Paraná* (1904).

Another point to be highlighted in this image alludes to the discussion that opened this article: the manufacturing of furniture by the Lubrano Woodwork, for *Ginásio Paranaense*, in 1904. The coinciding dates suggest that the furniture appearing in the photo has been made by Afonso Lubrano, under the supervision of Victor Ferreira do Amaral e Silva.

Regarding Pedro Rispoli, we know that, besides the contract signed in 1906, received the amount of \$240,000 in 1909, “for the manufacturing of furniture for the cabinets of Physics and Chemistry of *Gymnasio Paranaense*” (PARANÁ, 1909, p. 1). Figure 4 refers to these teaching environments. However, our document source was kept in a photo album called “*Antigo Ginásio*” [Former *Ginásio*], with the date of 1941. We can imagine that part of the furniture in the space still refers to those manufactured by Pedro Rispoli.

Figure 4 – Inside a classroom of former *Ginásio Paranaense*



Source: Photo album of the “old ginásio”, dated from 1941.

Considering the characteristics of carving and the robustness of the wood, with apparently *imbuia* shelves, we might imagine that these cabinets were manufactured by Pedro Rispoli in 1909. Besides this, other objects, such as animals and skeletons in the showcases, typical of *Maison Émile Deyrolle*, suggest to us that this room was used for Natural Sciences studies, a space reserved for experiences and intuitive teaching.

Thus, in the toolbox used by the historian to understand the productions of the past (GRUZINSKI, 2014), it is clear that the installation of *Ginásio Paranaense* establishes

a complex and international arrangement, highlighted in its materiality. The school furniture and objects shown here reveal fragments of cultures in contact. From Italian manufacturers to French objects, we can observe a “cross-border history”, in the terms of Lawn and Rabelo (2014). The actors in this web translated ideas that had contacts in different scales, such as the circulations and translations made by Victor Ferreira do Amaral e Silva when visiting São Paulo (with the school desks), the contact with Rio de Janeiro (by the equiparation with *Ginásio Nacional*), the appropriations of French reference (as the catalogs of *Maison Deyrolle*), and the reaction with Italy itself (from the manufactures Pedro Rispoli and Affonso Lubrano).

Final remarks

The lines that converge to the name and leave from it, composing a type of fine mesh web, provide the observer with a graphic image of the social fabric in which the individual is inserted.

Carlo Ginzburg

Who would have guessed that subjects from Italy would make furniture in Brazil, under local and global aspirations? Tracking the circuits described in this article made us understand the implicit systems of references in the process of manufacturing furniture in Paraná. Following Carlo Ginzburg (1991, p. 175), we could say that more than the visualization of a panel of individuals, the tracing of this “web of fine thread” allowed us to observe hybrid actions, materialized in school artifacts.

According to Cynthia Greive Veiga (2018), from the consumption that the school establishes to satisfy their needs, it is possible to identify a school economy. Supported by Polanyi (2012) and refuting the formal conception of the economy as an entrance of the market to satisfy a scarcity, the author starts from a broader concept, interpreting economy as “the processes of human interaction with their natural and social environment, to produce what is needed to live” (VEIGA, 2018, p. 32). This way, looking at our object – *Ginásio Paranaense* –, we can see how the processes of interaction between government representatives and manufacturers took place to supply secondary schools with specialized spaces.

For this reason, we point out that, from the objects consumed by *Ginásio Paranaense*, it was possible to identify which needs would be fulfilled. As we have seen in the report of Victor Ferreira do Amaral e Silva, the criterion used to match *Ginásio Paranaense* with *Ginásio Nacional* was the installation of Laboratories of Chemistry and Physics, as well as a room for Natural History. These demands reveal a period in which book knowledge was no longer in vogue: students needed to enter the field of observation, and empirical sciences, translated by intuitive teaching.

Thus, the circuit of these arrangements has revealed a transnational economy, filled not only by national references but also by subjects and knowledge that circulate internationally. Roldán Vera and Fuchs (2019) affirm that the transnational history approach can be understood as a history that crosses borders; under this perspective, it was possible to see that the material composition of *Ginásio Paranaense* revealed aspects

that transcend its national configuration, establishing a more complex process of supply, with scales that varied between regional and intercontinental consumption.

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