

The school library in the reading process: focus on the context of the New School movement in Minas Gerais, Brazil (1920-1940)

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Abstract: The place of the school library in Minas Gerais between 1920 and 1940 is discussed. The statements of the New School Movement are evaluated, namely, setting up and structuring of school libraries, reading modes and textbook setup. Current article analyzes laws, government decrees, letters, board reports and inspection books and codices. It also discusses articles on school library, reading and books, published by the *Revista do Ensino*. Results show that the school library complied to Republican and Modernist ideas, or rather, the hygienist and New School ideal in its practice, space and book collections.

Keywords: school library, New School Movement, school, Minas Gerais.

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A biblioteca escolar no processo de escolarização da leitura: uma análise com foco no contexto do movimento Escola Nova em Minas Gerais: 1920-1940

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Resumo: No artigo, identifica-se o lugar da biblioteca escolar no período de 1920 a 1940 em Minas Gerais e avaliam-se as assertivas escolanovistas quanto aos seguintes aspectos: a configuração e a estruturação das bibliotecas escolares, os modos de ler, bem como a configuração do livro escolar. Metodologicamente, procedeu-se à análise de documentos, como leis, decretos, cartas, relatórios de diretoria e inspeção agrupados em livros e códices, e também de artigos da Revista do Ensino cujos temas fossem biblioteca escolar, leitura e livros. Conclui-se que a biblioteca escolar conformou em suas práticas e em seus espaços e acervos o imaginário republicano e modernista, o higienismo e o ideal da ‘escola nova’.

Palavra-chave: biblioteca escolar, Escola Nova, escola, Minas Gerais.

La biblioteca escolar en el proceso de escolarización de la lectura: un análisis centrado en el contexto del movimiento Escuela Nueva en Minas Gerais: 1920-1940

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Resumen: En el artículo, se identifica el lugar de la biblioteca escolar en el período 1920 a 1940 en Minas Gerais-Brasil y se evalúan las asertivas escolanovistas en cuanto a los siguientes aspectos: la configuración y estructuración de las bibliotecas escolares, las formas de leer, así como la configuración del libro escolar. Metodológicamente, se procedió al análisis de documentos, tales como leyes, decretos, cartas, informes de dirección e inspección agrupados en libros y códigos, y también de artículos de la Revista de la Enseñanza cuyos temas fuesen biblioteca escolar, lectura y libros. Se concluye que la biblioteca escolar conformó en sus prácticas y en sus espacios y acervos el imaginario republicano y modernista, el higienismo y el ideal de la ‘escuela nueva’.

Palabras clave: biblioteca escolar; Escuela Nueva, escuela, Minas Gerais.

Introduction

The school library must be inserted within the school context So that the place it occupies within the school reading process could be characterized¹. In fact, the library and the school are interdependent and indissoluble institutions. Investigation on the social and historical process in which the school develops includes a discussion on the evolution of the school library.

Since current research was motivated by issues on the constitution of the school library, the paper has been structured on the following questions: What is the relationship between the library and the school? How was the library issue presented within the context of New School discourse? Who frequented the library? What was the librarian's role in the school? Based on these issues, the school library between the 1920s and the 1940s is analyzed so that results may foreground the theoretical and discursive field on the library as it is at present, coupled to reflections on the school, books and reading.

Several topics previously discussed by Brazilian educators and researchers will be reviewed so that the historical and social trajectory of the school library would be delineated and constructed. The historical construction of the library institution and its place within the educational context is highly relevant for Library Science. The task of reconstructing the development of the object under analysis aims at the consolidation of science and, consequently, the legitimation of the scientific field and new discussions for further development. Relevance on research work with regard to the library and education should be underscored. According to Lopes & Galvão (2005), one may even talk on 'the Histories of Education'. Studies that investigate not merely teaching and the school (the discipline's traditional objects) but also children and young people, books, reading and libraries, among so many agents and objects, contribute towards the understanding of past educational processes (Lopes & Galvão, 2005). Moreover, so that the library institution between the 1920s and 1940s could be researched, the History of Education has been focused "[...] within the perspective of understanding the manner teaching took place within a certain time and space" (Castro, 2003, p. 64).

It should be underscored that the historical process or the social tissue of the library institution contributes towards the understanding that

¹ Current paper gives the result of a research work for a Master's degree.

the library bears the flow of social existence. Silveira (2007, p. 20) remarks that “[...] the cultural heritage finds a fertile soil to build the basis on which identity is constituted, nourished and valorized”.

As a social institution, the library reflects the culture that produced it and, in its turn, it affects culture, since it contributes towards the preservation and diffusion of cultural heritage by transmitting values, beliefs and behavior (Gomes, 1982). At the same time, the library, in its influence on the social medium, or rather, its functions, aims and characteristics, is determined by the social, historical and cultural context.

The library does not rise as an isolated wind palace within a true landscape, as a framework. It curves space and time around it; it is a provisional receiver, a despatcher, a transformer and a compass needle to concrete fluxes that it continually moves (Latour, 2000, p. 21)

Therefore, the study of the history of the library is not limited to its constitution throughout time. So that one may understand the condition of a library within different historical periods, the social plots that involve space and ideological contradictions present in its development should be analyzed, “[...] since the library is the arena of terrible struggles behind the apparent stillness of its halls and shelves” (Silveira & Reis, 2007, p. 46). Therefore, the library has occupied a great number of spaces. Its historical route, the constitution of its social tissue and the place it occupies within the educational milieu should be revealed, analyzed and understood.

Current research broadens the idea of a library and of its interrelationships with education. The time cross-section is the 1920 – 1940 period within the context of the New School Movement in the state of Minas Gerais, Brazil. The essay is organized in four parts: methodological procedures, foregrounding theoretical references, analysis of data and conclusions.

Methodological procedures

Legal educational sources from the state of Minas Gerais, Brazil, comprising decrees, laws, headmasters’ and inspectors’ reports, were employed to analyze the pedagogical discourses from the New School Movement, coupled to articles published in the *Revista do Ensino*. Legal

documents included: Regulation for Primary Education of 1924 (Decreto-Lei n. 6655/1924); Program for Primary Education of the State of Minas Gerais, (Decreto n. 6.758/1925); Regulation for Primary Education of 1927 (Decreto-Lei n. 7970 /1927); Program for Primary Education (Decreto n. 8094/ 1927); Regulation for Teachers' Training College (Decreto n. 9450 / 1930); Decreto n. 10362/1932 and Decreto n. 11501/1934.

Data on school libraries could be retrieved from the legal documents, such as the manner they should be run and equipped in primary schools, books prescribed and donated by the State, office regulations and the spaces they should occupy. Headmasters' and inspectors' reports show how they appropriated discourses and practices. According to Klinke (2003, p. 26), the documents help the researcher to "[...] understand the implications of what was prescribed and what was put into practice within a tense relationship between orders and pedagogical practice".

The *Revista do Ensino*² (1925-1971) was another source of information. It was the journal published by the administration of the state of Minas Gerais and was the government's main communication channel with teachers. It included papers by teachers, school inspectors, headmasters and other educational people who, foregrounded on the ideas of the New School Movement, analyzed, suggested and frequently criticized aspects of day-to-day life in school.

The *Revista do Ensino* was actually the most important official pedagogical journal in the History of Education in Minas Gerais due to its longevity and its role in the process of teacher formation according to the

² The *Revista do Ensino* was first published immediately after the Proclamation of the Republic of Brazil, under the Afonso Pena administration (1892-1894). It was one of the changes proposed by the reform of the Training College following Law 41 of August 1892. "[...] The *Revista do Ensino* would be published fortnightly or monthly according to dispositions in Art. 190 and in Decree 655 of 17/10/1893, which promulgated rules on Primary Education and Primary Schools. Only three issues, annexed to the official gazette, were published at that time. It was discontinued immediately afterwards. The initial aim of the *Revista do Ensino* had a more technical and juridical stance rather than a pedagogical and/or methodological one. The *Revista do Ensino* resumed publication in August 1924 through the efforts of Raul Soares e Melo Viana by Decree 6655. The first issue of the new *Revista* was published on 8/3/1925, annexed to the Minas Gerais government gazette. The administration of Minas Gerais started a series of changes in educational policies during this period" (Carvalho & Bicas, 2000, p. 84).

educational stance of the state. It is really important to understand the role of the library and reading activities developed by agents inserted within the educational context.

The database of the Interdisciplinary Nucleus of Studies and Research in the History of Education (NIEPHE), by Dr. Maurilane Biccás, containing references of articles in the journal, was employed to select the articles. Current research used the terms 'library' and 'reading', and resulted in 26 articles with the title/theme 'library', and 38 article with the term reading. All articles, published between 1920 and 1940, were analyzed and 20 were selected due to the themes library and/or reading.

In the case of documental analysis, categories were divided according to three topics. The first topic was related to the literature used in current research, with special reference to Klinke (2003) and Goulemont (2001), who systematized reading practices with such questions as: 'reading where?', 'reading what?' and 'reading how?'. These questions are relevant for the analysis of the documents. The second topic comprised the experience of the librarian through whom one could identify acquisitions, organization and conservation of books. Further, research data provided the theoretical and methodological construction of the last category: reading rituals and modes, time, space, collections and school projects.

The paper starts with discussions on the school library by the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century with regard to educational, social and cultural terms. In fact, the educational formulation derived from the innovation ideas by the theoreticians of the New School Movement started during this period

School during the republican period and the New School movement

When one analyzes the school library during the 1920s, the Republican period must be placed into context since it was foregrounded on the project of constructing citizens that would lead the country towards social and economic progress. The school was perceived as the privileged space to instruct and educate future citizens and members of society by emphasizing these aims as governmental activities to construct new human beings. So that the school would comply with the social wishes and aspirations of the elite, it had to renew its methods, practices, spaces and time.

School renovation did not occur outside the social and cultural context of the 19th and 20th century. It was not a mere consequence of changes in society. “School reform was inscribed within different reforms and innovations within a period of innovations in the scientific and technological field and in society’s material cultural” (Veiga, 2004, p. 68). Further, Veiga (2007) insists that, since the late 19th century, movements in pedagogical renovation and schooling practice were in harmony with society’s new dynamics, or rather, the development of the sciences and new technologies, the extensive urban way of life, industrial labor, the new professions, the consolidation of capitalism and social heterogeneity were factors that contributed towards a novel perspective with regard to the school institution: its agents, time and space.

Urban reforms and reforms in recreation affected school architecture and its projection on the city. Educational reforms based on new pedagogical theories, derived from the educational ideal of the New School Movement, were implemented. They aimed at modifying school practice, spaces and time, complying with human renewal.

Prior to encountering its comprehensive methods and systems at the start of the 29th century, the New School Movement was built on small and isolated experiences in the last decades of the 19th century. It started with discursive strategies, with a trend towards distinguishing the old from the new, the unfashionable from the modern. “The new is announced and should be constructed; the old and the traditional should be destroyed” (Cury, 2004, p. 119). When Pedro Deodato de Moraes delivered his lecture ‘The New School’ at the First National Conference of Education, he explained the aims of the movement:

Currently, Science provides us with experimental Psychology, the newest and most promising branch of the old corrupted trunk, which roots itself within the original market and has flourished with blood and tears.

The school is a living being [...]

We need a new school. A new Brazilian school, for Brazilians, with Brazilian ideas and Brazilian resources. We need a new school that prepares, guides and strengthens our people for Brazilian life.

It is not enough to read; Brazilian people should be taught to work. As a rule, we are inclined for the least effort. The job of civil servants is preferred to work in trade and industry. Whereas the foreigner who arrives in our ports

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strives to make progress and enrich himself, the Brazilian citizen feels better at a bureaucratic job with its charming ideal.

Only the New School may provide strong, healthy, intelligent and good people to Brazil, not with a brain filled with theories, formulae and prescriptions, but with practical knowledge and a deep desire to work; making them self-sufficient; overcoming difficulties and have a proper conscience of their value and empowerment (1927, p. 611 apud Monarcha, 2009, p. 150).

The New School was the salvation of ‘poor and ignorant Brazilians’; the country will save itself and project itself only through education for economic and social progress. According to Anísio Teixeira, the traditional school was not prepared for such aims.

The school is the model of society which it serves. The traditional school was a replica of the old society which is vanishing. This is easily demonstrated. One may show that, as all presuppositions on which it was based, it has been changed by the new order of things and the new civilizing spirit.

On the other hand, the New School does not intend to foreground itself on these facts and on the new mentality. Similar to the traditional school, it is a replica of the renewed society in which we live (Teixeira, 1930, p. 8).

Educator Anísio Teixeira’s discourse reveals the need of reforms in teaching methods and practices so that they would fit within modern society and replace the traditional methods. Inadequate schooling practices would be replaced by modern pedagogy which united the basic ideas of Psychology, Biology and Sociology. The new theoretical ideas provided by the New School Movement underscoring “[...] the centrality of the child in learning relationships, respect to the hygiene laws of the disciplinarization of the student’s body and gestures, the scientificity of the schooling of social knowledge and tasks and the importance of observation and intuition” (Vidal, 2007, p. 497), had great echoes in the 1920s and in the following years, with great repercussions on the school. They were prescriptions in inspectors’ reports and in legal norms.

It should be emphasized that New School discourses triggered a new dynamic in school relationships. The pupil became the center of the

processes in the acquisition of school knowledge: learning replaced teaching (Vidal, 2007). Experimental Psychology, highly important for the New School Movement, foregrounded pedagogical scientificity and produced the individualization of the child within the schooling discourse of the masses: tests and homogeneous classrooms assured the child's centrality within the educational process and guaranteed respect to its individuality within a school structured for a growing number of students (Vidal, 2007).

In a renewed school, the regulation of school practices occurred by rhythms and the production of efficient gestures. "School material had a singular importance since it was indispensable for the experimental construction of students' knowledge. The method was validated by activities" (Vidal, 2007, p. 498). Consequently, the New School discourses produced significant changes within the dispositions of the Brazilian primary school in the 1920s and 1930s when rationalization and the adequacy of educational processes to new social contexts, reading practices and school libraries, spaces dedicated to the disciplinarization of reading within the institution, were greatly desired. This is the reason why educators' discourses imbued with the ideas of the New School Movement underscored reading and school libraries.

Discourses on reading and school libraries:

Discourses on reading

New formats were given to practices, methods, school time and spaces in the enunciations of the new pedagogical movement. Discursive strategies reconfigured old and traditional practices to the dictates of the new. The modern pedagogical theories that were teeming the school imaginary and legitimated the new educational policies derived from school reforms in other states of Brazil in the 1920-1930 period should be put in the limelight. In fact, they reconstructed the teaching programs of Primary Schools and Teachers' Training Colleges according to learning methods.

Within the struggle between verbalism and passivity, typical of traditional teaching, the New School enunciations dealt with activities linked to the movement and strengthened education's kinetic image. Walks, excursions, games and physical exercises provided a new dynamics to activities which were deemed indispensable to education. In

fact, the students were observed and perceived within their constant activities (Vidal, 1998).

Centralized on the Movement's activities, the practice seemed to impair reading due to the active process of learning: how may the students, sitting statically in their chairs and reading silently, be involved in active ideas? Vidal (1998) argues that the idea of a kinetic education is not restricted to physical activities; it determined a new attitude in the wake of knowledge acquisition: although sitting in silence, the students may be 'actively' involved in learning. Studying practice as a form of research was an example of an activity in 'silence'. However, plural readings and variegated sources had to be provided to students so that a learning process occurred. The text book was shunned by the New School Movement since it failed to provide a diversity of reading and thus teaching.

Azevedo insisted on the modification of the text book not merely as an object but with all the practice and methods involved. Therefore, the New School would provide a new type of protagonist.

When discussing books and the need for creating the reading habit, I heard the remark, badly formulated, that, under the pretext of condemning a 'bookish' culture, in the worse sense of the word, the principle is exalted by which, through indolence, good sense and practice are enough (Azevedo, 1945, p. 344, author's emphasis).

Maria dos Reis Campos insisted that no contradiction exists between the New School and a bookish education:

In modern schools, the library is an integral part and highly relevant in school organization. In the more modern school, books abound and the students have them at their disposal, as occurs in the United States. On the contrary: the book is a great help in the modern school; the book has the same important role as it always had. The difference is not in its abolition, which is an absurd idea, but in how to use it (Campos, 1936, p. 272).

New School authors inclined towards a more rational use of the book since it might produce knowledge when "[...] the subject-matter

triggered research and reflection and not as a ready-made intellectual food to be just absorbed and assimilated as if it were a jam bought from the grocery” (Campos, 1936, p. 275).

Consequently, New School educators, writers and intellectuals were adamant in constructing “[...] new discursive practices on the book and on reading, modeling school use and normalizing the appropriation forms of what was read” (Vidal, 1998, p. 91). The book becomes an instrument for accessing new information, favoring the production of new knowledge and transforming reading into recreational and formation modalities.

Several articles specifically on reading were published where the advantages and disadvantages of the analytic method in the teaching of reading in opposition to the synthetic method were highlighted. At the same time, techniques proper to the reading act were established, including a whole disciplinary list devoted to the reader, ranging from body positions to discernment with regard to the good and bad use of reading (Vidal, 1998).

Discourses on school library

Within the educational and social context, the library has a different status in the schooling process: if the school institution is re-signified, the library is also re-structured according to New School discourses. A displacement of the activity of the school library occurs with regard to reading in the school whose aim, following official and educational discourses, is the support of teaching and development of reading in the classroom. The association between libraries and primary schools is not a new factor in the Brazilian educational scene. School libraries have been included in school plants since the 19th century for teachers’ use and instruction, with similar trends for students too. However, only after the 1920s do libraries feature as an integrating part in primary schools.

The building of libraries for students involved the construction of reading habits. Lourenço Filho (1944, p. 6) remarks that “[...] teaching and the library do not exclude, but rather supplement one another. The school without a library is an imperfect tool. The library without teaching, or rather, without stimulating, coordinating and organizing reading, becomes an uncertain and undefined tool”. In this case, the library is a space for interventions, especially by the New School Movement which considered it as the school’s heart. Maria dos Reis Campos (1936, p. 272) insisted that “[...] in modern schools [...] the library is an integral and

highly relevant part within school organization”. The educator Armanda Alvaro Alberto, a member that signed the New School Manifesto, highlighted that the establishment of new spaces targeted “[...] the instruction of children in the employment of books and libraries as working tools, the training of children in social activities (reading clubs and drama, pupils’ self-control and others) and, above all, the teaching of reading as a pleasure and a life-long habit” (Alberto, 1932). The same author also insisted that “[...] there was a great need for libraries in teaching institutions” (Alberto, 1928). With its differentiated collections, the school library would cooperate in the modification and fomenting of students’ reading. Educational discourses based on the pedagogical renewal ideal produced a new type of school libraries, or rather, they became stimulating milieus for the pleasure of reading rather than a space for the collection and organization of ‘good books’ (Veiga, 2004).

Therefore, the library would be the right place to develop the critical stance and new sensitiveness which may also be stimulated through spaces that valorize children. In other words, children’s bio-psychological characteristics are duly respected according to the ideals of the new pedagogy. Fernando de Azevedo (1968, p. 201) argues that

Through the renewal of school methods, libraries gain a vigorous impulse not only in extension, by multiplying themselves in schools at all levels and in all categories, but also vertically, through renewal, to become more accessible, attractive and usable under the influx of the new educational ideas. If the issue is more closely examined, the iso-synchronism of the two movements, education renewal and school libraries, developing at the same rhythm and in the same direction, should not surprise us.

Foregrounded the enunciations of the new education, the library’s practice and space were re-structured so that already constructed habits would be modified and new attitudes established with regard to books and libraries. Innovations such as the placing of books on shelves within children’s reach favored the direct access to young readers. Books could easily be read on the premise or taken home for reading. These practices were considered new, albeit not absolutely novel.

Low shelves were a help in the choice of books by children and a relationship of satisfaction and pleasure with the title, book cover and the

edition's plasticity could be constructed. According to Cecilia Meireles, libraries corresponded to the needs of the period and spaces so that adults could perceive children's preferences. She argues that "[...] the child's choice among so many books available revealed its tastes, trends and interests" (Meireles, 1979, p. 111).

The books available on the shelves were first full of pictures "[...] with few words for the students to read; they were slowly replaced by more complicated stories and fewer pictures in the more advanced years" (Vidal, 2004, p. 193).

Educator Armanda Alvaro Alberto showed activities occurring within the library space and underscored the exposition of books and figures organized by users and speakers whose "[...] speeches were capable of enchanting such sophisticated listeners" (Alberto, 1932). Another important activity was the short story led by a librarian. According to the author, the activities in the library with the participation of children, young people, adults and librarians referred to social tasks involving collaboration, co-participation and solidarity.

Through discursive strategies, the New School Movement re-signified the school library and provided a new model according to which, the organizing and collection space restricted to 'good books' was replaced by pleasant and stimulating environments based on the pleasure in reading. Taking into consideration the discourses foregrounded on the ideas of the New School Movement, the enunciations that re-signify the school library are identified by analyzing the space occupied by legislation and speeches of the school agents of the New School Movement. The restructuring of practices, methods, collections, spaces, time and processes involving the library was dealt with.

The library in the school reading process in the state of Minas Gerais

So that the place of the school library could be identified within the schooling process, the following sources were analyzed: laws, decrees, headmasters' and inspectors' reports and articles of the *Revista do Ensino*. Several common factors identified the library as a place for conformation and uniform of reading. It must have delimited collection and space, promote organization practices, establish policies and discipline norms and have a professional who guides readings in the library.

Several sources indicate that the library's organization practice should not only include the ordering that the school provides to space but that children might also organize the environment according to their needs. The principles of autonomy and spontaneity proper to childhood must be respected. "The organization of libraries in the primary school has strived to provide spontaneity to teaching, which is actually one of the characteristics in functional education" (*Revista do Ensino*, 1934, p. 41). Children's library in primary schools is frequently organized by the pupils through the encouragement of the teachers who helped in the arrangement of spaces.

The activity would thus provide the collective development of projects among the students since, according to New School ideas, "[...] they should share work, learn to live in society and cooperate" (Azevedo, 1968, p. 201). Even after the installation of the library, children's activities must follow the proposals of pedagogical renewal. "The library should continue providing opportunities so that spontaneous and live features, the ideal of an active schooling, are awarded to teaching" (*Revista do Ensino*, 1934, p. 42).

According to Article 95, Decree 10.362 of 1932 states that "Teachers' Training Colleges should have properly equipped libraries transformed into a classroom" (Minas Gerais, 1932, art. 95) so that their organization "[...] complies with the plans proper to the several courses of the training college; a determined section should be attributed to each course, with the number of copies according to student enrolment" (Minas Gerais, 1932, art. 96). The teachers have to sit for tests to evaluate the organization projects of school libraries to verify whether the organization complies with legislation:

[...] the students had to acquire the libraries' organizational technique which will be an item in the exam; they should participate in activities related to classification and disposition of school books by strict scientific principles (Minas Gerais, 1930, art. 61).

With regard to the library's space organization, the *Revista do Ensino* showed the importance of the student-friendly aesthetic feature of the environment. "The library should be organized in such a way that students and teachers would frequent it at leisure, within a large space" (*Revista do Ensino*, 1929a, p. 100). The aesthetic aspect aimed at

enchancing, due to the importance of space and enhancement of sensitivity. The arrangement of books should be done aesthetically since fine taste should be exercised and a reading-favorable environment should be established: “First, aesthetics should be taken into consideration. All the volumes, arranged according to height, have another scope, or rather, space-saving” (Revista do Ensino, 1929a, p. 4).

Book collection in the library should be organized according to the disciplines of the students in the Teachers’ Formation College. Organization must be done according to catalogue techniques since “[...] book cataloging is a basic point in a library” (Revista do Ensino, 1933, p. 3). In fact, book cataloging techniques were based on library routines in the US and in Europe. The prescriptions and discourses of educators, politicians, teachers and the community on book collections revealed great concern since books may be of great benefit within the learning process, following moral and values, or they may be hazardous to children’s performance. In fact, a broad discursive field indicated book titles for library collections.

According to the 1927 Rules for Primary Education, “[...] no donated book may be placed on the library shelf without first examined by the school’s head master who will refuse it if he thinks it improper for the people under his charge” (Regulamento do Ensino, 1927, art. 186). In other words, the library collection must have educational aims and its main aim is not to increase access to all type of literature but to offer books which are most convenient for educational purposes.

Educational discourses revealed great concern with regard to the control of available books for students. Aláide Lisboa states: “The power of reading is great – for good or for bad. Those who arrogantly say ‘I may read everything’ are either non-humans or they are too much humans [...]” (1935, p. 21, author’s emphasis). Consequently, library collections must not have books considered pernicious for children. The selection of books that should make up the school collection should be the responsibility of the headmaster, teachers and librarians. It must be highlighted that “[...] the duty of Christian headmasters and librarians is to take away from the library any book that conveys ideas that do not comply with our social and religious principles” (Revista do Ensino, 1938, p. 18). Further, the prescription of books should comply with the ideals of the New School Movement, particularly, with social and moral values.

The arousal of children's interest was the main purpose in the case of literary works. "Children's literature should be chosen from two aspects: the basic quality of the literature and children's need and interests" (Revista do Ensino, 1938, p. 20). Literature books in school libraries are indispensable, especially those on a moral and educational theme. Manoel Bonfim states that "[...] literature books, the most important in the school library, should also be educational since they are the first books offered to children to move and inspire them. In fact, books should develop a practical moral lesson" (Revista do Ensino, 1926, p. 310). In spite of all the educational status of books, the pleasure of reading should be aroused in children through marvelous, supernatural and adventure aspects. Educational issues should dictate the choice of books and mainly children's and young people's preference to stimulate their interest for reading. In the midst of such concerns, several questions may be placed on students' preferences. Educator Alaíde Lisboa concluded that students preferred religious and adventure books:

Due to the above results, I would like to make an appeal to writers, especially writers of children's books, to employ all their capacities in the writing of adventure books, modeling their protagonists on real world heroes, and in books that truly educate. With regard to religion, it is highly deplorable that books on the lives of Christ and the saints are lacking, written specifically for children, within the principles of pedagogy and art (Revista do Ensino, 1935, p. 20).

According to the above-mentioned educator, adventure books should be educational and reveal the history of Brazil through 'real world heroes'. Religious books, on the other hand, should associate pedagogical principle to religious ones, or rather, uniting the premises of the active school.

According to Klinké (2003), the effort to discover readers' preference and the intensification in the production of reading books contributed towards the fact that reading conquered a significant place in educators' discourse in the 1910s and 1920s. "They invested in children's frequency in libraries, students in the main, since children under 14 were prohibited in other public libraries" (Klinké, 2003, p. 86). However, all publications in reading restrict children's reading to books which are *proper* to their age and condition.

Librarian/The teacher-librarian

Another factor analyzed in current research was the participation of agents that guided and indicated readings within the school library. School librarians may be pinpointed, with several tasks. The first legal notes on the educational task appeared in the early 1930s but the term librarian or teacher-librarian occurred in the *Revista do Ensino* in the mid-1920s.

In the 1930 rules for the Teachers' Training College, the task of the librarian was included within the administrative articles, according to which there should be such a professional in Training Colleges. However, the librarians' competences were not mentioned. In the 1932 decree 10.362, the teachers-librarians were listed under the administration roll and their tasks were given:

Art. 146. The Librarian's tasks are:

- a) Taking care of books and catalogue them according to the most modern methods;
- b) The presence of students should be daily reported;
- c) Providing books to students and guiding their permanence in the library, maintaining order and silence as required;
- d) Updating borrowed books and receiving them in their due time;
- e) Providing statistics on the monthly movement of the library;
- f) Informing the deputy headmaster on what is required to improve the organization and functioning of the library (Minas Gerais, 1932, art. 146).

The female librarian and the tasks commissioned by the decree reveal that the professional comes from Teachers' Training Colleges. According to Klinke (2003), due to their natural familiarity with the school library, the teacher trainee is pointed out as the ideal professional for the task of librarian, by the *Revista do Ensino*, due to the fact that it attributed to the school library the transition role (from didactic to self-didactic) that social life imposed.

The librarian-teacher was thought to be able of converting students into teachers by providing them intellectual independence. "When teachers accept the tasks of the librarian, the school library is more characterized as

a space for reading in the school” (Klinke, 2003, p. 89). The above may be observed in the article ‘Teacher-librarian’ by Felinto Elysio: “The teacher-librarian is similar to the teacher of Portuguese or of Geometry. The term ‘librarian’ does not express my idea with precision: ‘new things should have new names’” (Revista do Ensino, 1929, p. 111, author’s emphasis).

In the article titled ‘The functions of the school library’, the relationship between the teacher-librarian and the educator was established: the professional should be “[...] aware of psychological development, a capable explorer of the child’s emotion and capable of prescribing books with the sureness of a physician [...]” (Revista do Ensino, 1935, p. 227).

The term ‘librarian’, however, was employed by several educators, such as Alaide Lisboa and J. Guimarães Menegale, who, in their articles titled ‘Libraries’ and ‘Children’s Library’ respectively, insisted on the presence of this professional in school libraries. Menegale (1935, p. 82) states that “[...] the profession of librarian became so important and turned out to be such a complex task that its protagonist lay at the center of forces surrounding the children in their education”. Further, Lisboa (1935, p. 30) attributed to the librarian “[...] an important role in the organization and in the functioning of the library so that it will achieve its purpose. Through a thousand ways, the librarian must attract students to the library”.

Discourses by Menegale (1935) and Lisboa (1935) added more attributions on operational tasks to the librarian which were not included in the legislation above. The task of the librarian could be extended to the primary school since there were no legal competences for the librarian of the Primary school. According to Lisboa (1935), the librarian must “[...] combine the qualities of a teacher with those of a good librarian” (Lisboa, 1935, p. 26) and, as an agent inserted within the school environment, he should be knowledgeable of “[...] children’s and young people’s psychology” (Lisboa, 1935, p. 27). The librarian “[...] should select books with great discernment” (Lisboa, 1935, p. 27) and follow the students’ readings. In both discourses, reading guideline should be their main responsibility.

Menegale (1935, p. 82) commented that “[...] helping each child to select a book is the first task of the librarian”. Book selection should be according to the needs of the child and its tastes. It is the librarian’s task to know “[...] each and every reader [...] preparing intuition to study, the

librarian may pinpoint the precise book that each child will appreciate” (Menegale, 1935, p. 83).

The activities listed by Lisboa (1935) revealed a collaborating librarian within the students’ schooling. Since the author provided the librarian with the task of ‘cooperating with the vocational institution’, she suggested that the librarian would participate in other school functions and, in this manner, she will not be restricted to the space of the school library. The attributes given by legislation and by the educators’ speeches showed the humanist traits of the librarian.

According to Silveira (2008), the qualities of would-be librarians should be “[...] dedication to reading and great appreciation for books, a great sense of organization, deep insight to establish and administer classification systems [...] besides the comprehension of the processes and circulation of what is written” (Silveira, 2008, p. 87). One should underscore that these attributes were, during a long period, required and spread by librarian-training schools especially the École de Chartres. The librarians’ activities “[...] concentrated on culture, education, knowledge, information, with traits that would include them as segments attending to the requirements of the human spirit” (Almeida Júnior, 2000, p. 45).

The librarian, foregrounded on a humanist formation, would be a capable professional to deal with new pedagogical precepts, with the functions of selecting readings for the students, indicating specific texts if they failed to find what they required and exercise the students to take notes from their reading and in the distribution of themes. The professional must deal in pedagogy and school librarians must school themselves in these new aims. Therefore, the neologism teacher-librarian is not so far-fetched from the term librarian.

Conclusion

According to the educational and political discourses, the school library and the classroom share the teaching of reading. The articles and legislation reveal the need of a space proper to children’s interests, book collections that provide pleasure and taste, coupled to policies and norms for the disciple of body and gestures. The enunciations evidence the place occupied by the library, or rather, not merely conforming itself to civilizing and industrialization dictates, or rather, the creation of the *homo faber*, but to stimulate and encourage children to be future readers and, mainly, citizens of the Republic. According to the texts and discourses of

several agents, the library would accompany the person through life and contribute towards the continuity of the building of the well-instructed and civilized Republican citizen.

The educational discourses of the New School agents remodeled the practice of the library, its spaces and collections; they controlled books and disciplined the use of its space. Discourses on books, reading and school libraries identified the acknowledgement by educators, politicians, headmasters and teachers, of the structure of the library and its place in schooling, which were the result of reforms that were being undertaken. The library was not far away from the impositions of a school culture that regulated spaces and established agreeable spaces in which children were stimulated to read and acquire the habit of reading till adulthood.

The discourses and the legislation forwarded above showed that the school library occupied a place in the process of the schooling of reading. The need for such space within the school premises, as surmised in the headmasters' reports and in the article published in the *Revista do Ensino*, evidences the expectations of school agents for an environment linked to the teaching of reading in the classroom and in reading clubs. The discourses placed the library as a help in the educational process giving it the same as that of the school.

When the library became part and parcel of the school and its space became relevant in public education, it was influenced by the school context and it redefined its practices, its space and times according to school requirements. In the case of school libraries, even if it did not have in its conception the transmission of knowledge through the teacher-student relationship, the space transferred knowledge by library collection, reading prescriptions, norms and internal policies, spaces and organization – cataloging, school projects. In other words, it was mandatory for students to be and to act accordingly. The library cannot be seen separated from pedagogical precepts since it assumed the place that educational discourses by the New School Movement provided it shared Republican principles.

The re-location of the library as 'the dynamic center of reading', one of the New School Movement's theories, revealed the importance of reading, the book and, mainly, the school library. The latter became the 'heart of the school' even though the lack of libraries, structure and good collections was always underscored in several reports.

Great importance should be given to the discourses that remodeled the educational structure of school libraries and characterized them as supporting factors to pedagogical processes. The social-cultural history of the school library showed that it had been seen only as ‘a store for books’, a sacred place where only teachers would venture. However, the end of the 19th century and during the 20th century, the century of modernity, became the golden age for school libraries. Progress, such as furniture, shelves at the reach of children and pedagogical projects to connect the classroom with the library, have been demonstrated in the text

At a time in which there is a distance between the school library and pedagogical ideas that foreground teachers’ knowledge to train and educate the student, the pedagogical theories that penetrated the spaces, modified its structure and linked the two institutions, should be reviewed. The school library must dialogue with educational theories and the school community, namely, teachers, students and headmasters so that the library space may not be reduced to isolated ideas but maintain a frank and horizontal dialogue with pedagogical principles. The library should be an intrinsic space within the school and not an environment displaced from the institution. The interlocution between library science and education from the 1920s to the 1940s revealed to future researchers and educators that a dialogue was possible between the two institutions, library and school. It is the task of educators, librarians, teachers and researchers of both areas to improve their attitudes and practices with regard to the school library.

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