



ARCHAEOLOGY OF SCHOOL PRACTICE IN EDUCATION OF CHILDREN

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RESUMO

As reflexões apresentadas neste artigo decorrem das experiências de pesquisa e extensão universitária desenvolvidas em instituições de Ensino Fundamental e Educação Infantil. A ideia de trabalhar com a Arqueologia das Práticas Escolares surgiu a partir de nossa imersão nos campos de investigação científica nas escolas, da observação e do registro de inúmeras práticas escolares, as quais, ao final do ano letivo, perdem-se, não havendo sistematização e produção de acervo do rico material produzido. Buscam-se, na arqueologia, os conceitos, e métodos de coleta de dados para se pensar as possibilidades de constituição de acervos digitais que possibilitem a análise da produção material do ensino na educação básica, delimitando o campo de indagação à “Escola de Infância” compreendida como a Educação Infantil (EI) e os anos iniciais do Ensino Fundamental (EF). E parte-se do entendimento que a articulação e as políticas de transição entre essas escolas necessitam ser repensadas continuamente.

Palavras-chave: Arqueologia. Prática escolar. Educação. Formação de professores. Cultura material.

ABSTRACT

The reflections presented in this article flow from the research experience and extension developed in institutions of Basic School and Childhood Education Schools. The idea of working with the Archaeology of School Practice emerged from our immersion in scientific research fields in schools and the observation and recording of numerous school practices, which, at the end of the school year, ended up getting lost, there being no systematization and production of a collection of rich material studies and teacher training. We seek, in archeology, concepts, procedures and data collection methods for considering the numerous digital collections of constitution of possibilities that enable the analysis of teaching material production in basic education, limiting our field of inquiry to the “Childhood School understood as the Childhood Education Schools (EI) and the early years of Elementary School (EF), starting from the understanding that the students of these levels of education they are still children and that coordination and policy transition between these schools need to be rethought continuously.

Keywords: Archaeology. School practice. Education. Teacher education. Material culture.

RESUMEN

Las reflexiones presentadas en este artículo se originan de las experiencias de investigación y extensión universitaria desarrolladas en Instituciones de Enseñanza Primaria y Educación Infantil. La idea de trabajar con la Arqueología de las Prácticas Escolares ha surgido a partir de nuestra inmersión en los campos de investigación científica en las escuelas; de la observación y del registro de innumerables prácticas escolares, las cuales, al final del año lectivo, se pierden, sin haber sistematización y producción de acervo del rico material producido. Buscamos, en la arqueología, los conceptos y métodos de recolección de datos para que pensemos las posibilidades de constitución de acervos digitales que nos permiten un análisis de la producción material de enseñanza en la educación infantil, delimitando nuestro campo de cuestionamientos a la “Escuela de la Infancia” comprendida como la Educación Infantil (EI) y los años iniciales de la Enseñanza Primaria (EP), partiendo del entendimiento que la articulación y las políticas de transición entre esas escuelas necesitan ser repensadas continuamente.

Palabras clave: Arqueología. La práctica escolar. Educación. La formación del profesorado. Cultura material.

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1 IN FAVOR OF AN ARCHAEOLOGY OF SCHOOL PRACTICE

This article was conceived from the convergence of theoretical-methodological ideas and concepts of a group of scholars dedicated to the questions posed by everyday school practices in childhood schools. The reflections presented stem from the experiences of university research and extension, developed in elementary and early childhood education institutions, observations, records and analyses of those scientific investigations, as well as the training of working professionals, continuing training groups and teaching in higher education.

Due to those studies, childhood schools have difficulty in preserving their material production, as well as the expectations of education professionals regarding the registration and treatment to be given to those data sources, and the possibilities of analysis that are lost with the disposal of that production without prior selection or any preservation treatment. Children's education schools (EI) and the early years of Elementary School (EF) are understood by childhood schools, starting from the understanding that students of those levels of education are no longer children and that the articulation and policies of transition between EI and EF schools need to be continuously reconsidered.

The idea of working with the Archaeology of School Practices arose from the immersion in the fields of scientific research in schools and the observation and record of countless school practices, which, at the end of the school year, ended up being ruined. And there was no systematization and production of a collection of the rich material of studies and training of teachers.

From archaeology, the concepts, procedures and methods of data collection were brought to think of the countless possibilities of creating digital collections that would enable the material production analysis of education in basic school. The field of inquiry was limited to childhood schools and a profound dialogue was established among the sociology of education, history, anthropology and pedagogical thinking.

As a starting point, a previous bibliographical survey was carried out and it was found that, in the education field, there are no similar surveys that establish a dialogue among archaeology, the sociology of education, history and pedagogical thinking, to analyze the production of school materiality.

The association among the fields of knowledge – history, sociology, anthropology and archaeology –, in constant dialogue with pedagogy, may result in the development of repositories of educational objects, focused on material production and development of strategies, practices and pedagogical actions aimed at the dissemination of the archaeological heritage of childhood schools. In Brazil, there are examples of successful repositories and, among them, can be cited the National Institute of Pedagogical Studies (INEP) and the International Bank of Educational Objects, maintained by the Ministry of Education (MEC).

The survey, capture, cataloguing and availability of educational objects are of paramount importance to show the material culture of the school, understood as the historical-sociological memory of the different groups that make up the distinct educational experiences. And the creation of digital collections of that nature will enable school communities to have the right to information, as well as the possibility of knowing and disseminating more dynamically and more democratically the materiality of the school in order to promote the permanent and desirable improvement of the objective teaching conditions, the advancement of scientific knowledge about the material production of the school, as well as the permanent training of teachers.

As a field of privileged knowledge in this study, archaeology, in permanent dialogue with sociology of education, with history, with anthropology and with pedagogical thinking, is science capable of contributing to the preservation of archaeological traces. Those are understood as the brands, the know-how and the practices that are continuously printed in childhood school and which constitute a way of conceiving children's education in a given society, and the objective social conditions in which teaching is developed in social, cultural, economic, ethnic and religious aspects.

The production of material culture at school is an active process by which different social subjects, who make up a given school community and who are inserted into a society, interact about their cultural heritage, create and recreate the materiality of teaching, remeaning the prescriptive norms imposed by governing bodies of education. In this sense, through the permanent dialogue with school's daily life, it was possible to note that the subjects of education – teachers, managers, students and families of children – have the clear understanding of the cultural heritage that is

produced continuously in school. However, they find it difficult to preserve them, problematize them and produce new knowledge from them. In this way, the university has the central role of highlighting the need for conservation of what we call the material culture in childhood education and, more specifically, the archaeological remains that spread across the different regions, in general, and in Minas Gerais, in particular.

It is understood that, in the interlocution between university and school, a continuous process of perception, creation and re-creation of the school materiality can be established, thus constituting a cultural process in dialogue. The intention of expanding the dialogue between university and school, in the perspective adopted in this study, is based on what Marshall (2002) called "Community archaeology", forming, among the members of the communities, the managers of that archaeological patrimony to constitute a relationship of cooperation. At the same time, it allows the identification of that heritage as an inheritance, not as something so distant from the social and cultural reality of those communities.

2 ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE CULTURE MATERIAL PRODUCTION IN CHILDHOOD SCHOOL

Material culture encompasses the study of material objects in their interaction with the most concrete aspects of human life and was born from three different and complementary disciplines: archaeology, which can rebuild the history of societies from material traces and objects that have been produced; ethnography, which aims to analyze the material productions inserted in societies, at different historical moments; and the history inspired by Marxism¹.

The study of material culture has been, since the beginning of the twentieth century, committed to the human productions of textiles, ceramics, furnishings, houses, focusing on careful collection of objects and a descriptive work, seeking to build a social history of technology and a social economic history, especially the objects that have been studied to capture the practices that are not written.

¹ In 1919, Vladimir Lenin creates, through a decree, the Academy of Material Culture History of the extinct Soviet Union.

The material culture history also benefited from the birth of sociology, particularly from the paths opened by Marcel Mauss and Henri Hubert and by the progressive development of archaeology. Likewise, Fernand Braudel wrote, in 1967, the book *Material civilization and Capitalism*, which became a benchmark for the studies of material culture. The studies that followed began to consider demographic data, food, housing, furniture, clothing, technical productions, so that they could emphasize that life was made up of masses of objects, gestures, techniques that absorb thoughts and actions of a given society.

Among those studies, we can highlight the best known in Brazil, which seek to revisit certain objects or systems of objects: Roger Chartier (1998), book; Daniel Roche (1998), clothes; Jean-Louis Flandrin and Massimo Montanari (1998), food; Georges Vigarello (1996), house, furniture, body. Such contributions were fundamental to the formation of studies on material culture in school, which are especially centered in the history of education in Brazil. It is understood that the set of foundations is sufficient to increase the recent synthesis. In this sense, they are brought to reflection to expand the field of inquiry, both for the construction of the recent history and for the establishment of a fruitful dialogue between the sociology of education and the contemporary pedagogical thought. The objective is to broaden the perspectives of analysis on the production of education materiality.

The cultural objects produced in school offer a set of contributions organized around the concept of "material culture" (SCHIFFER, 2000). And if you are aware, however, of the difficulties and debates that the concept can raise. A first problem that can be analyzed comes from the ambiguous and inaccurate formulation of the concept by suggesting that materiality constitutes culture in its essence, when in fact it covers only one dimension of culture. The ambiguity is even more problematic if applied to the material culture produced in childhood school, more precisely by the diffuse character of its destination, or even by the difficulties arising from its preservation. To settle such ambiguity, a possible formulation would be that of the idea of registering the "materiality of the school culture" (OLSEN, 2003).

This formulation has the advantage of highlighting that the objects, the knowledge, the speeches and the performances conceived in the school framework for children, or still adopted by them, would continue through media and objects within cultural and social circuits, technical and editorials that carry them in a condition of

reach and efficacy, of nuances and modulations, being revealed in the materiality of the school's culture. They stand out as objects of the school: the didactic materials, the iconographic records – whether through the drawings, either through photographs; the toys, the games, the moving pictures – the videos, the filming of the pedagogical projects; the furnishings, the arrangements carried out in the physical space. All those school objects are intelligible and consecrated in the historical-sociological sphere, leading the discourse on education, childhood, learning and teaching practices and students to materialize.

In this sense, the movement proposed in this article consists in reflecting on a neglected dimension of those objects: the cultural – not just technique. And on the materials that those objects are made of, that affect "sensibility", so strongly "perceptual", of the new generations (MERLEAU-PONTY, 1990, 1999). Thus, the term "material culture" seems relevant to many historians and sociologists, which raises its power to mobilize and gather, around the objects of education, specialists of different disciplines. Therefore, the term is appropriate to clarify the genesis, to explore some territories and to show the analytical tools to understand the new ways of the school to produce its materiality.

2.1 The treatment of archaeological remains

Archaeology, unlike other sciences that deal with the understanding of societies, cannot observe the behavior of the population that it studies, but can infer the behavior, ideas and values of people from remaining materials than they have made and used and the physical impact of their presence on the environment and social. Thus, it contributes to the systematization of material culture and to its understanding of the uses and social and cultural appropriations.

The study of school material culture requires the production of imagery media that allow the registration and preservation of the collected research data. From the records of that data, the images iconographic analysis of the school culture materiality will be carried out. This analysis can show a deepening of the consciousness of the ancestors and contemporaries on the material culture of the schools from Minas Gerais.

However, entering the universe of material culture and trailing the paths traveled requires certain behaviors. To allow boldness, those conducts must surround themselves with procedures and certain methodological rigors that ensure the maximum coherence and accurate observation of the investigated universe. In the case of this article, this universe is the material culture of the school, specifically of its look at childhood education. Therefore, it would not be up to analyse education and childhood here only through the material culture of the school, but, yes, the education and childhood that emerge.

Walter Benjamin (1993) evokes the confectioner of Barcelona, who, when making dolls, placed, in their hearts, a ball of sugar, presenting the toy as an expression of the power of the senses. This image is important because it makes us reflect on the importance of considering the production forms of the school culture materiality through the images produced during the collection of data for this research.

The images study, however, also requires proper procedures, not necessarily listed in works that guide the methodology of the research traditionally organized from written documents. In this sense, the procedure to be used in the realization of the studies on the images of the school material culture needs to be based on the iconographic description, in its analysis and in its interpretation. It is therefore necessary to "see" the images and what they show (REIS, 2007).

Unlike the written text – in the western form –, which leads the look in its path from left to right, from top to bottom, which reveals itself little by little, the image shows up at once, allowing the look to begin to see it from any point and in different directions. This "look at the image" begins a different way of understanding the image, its shapes, lines, perspectives and stains, and it is also one of the ways of thinking what the image shows, reveals, exposes and reports on a certain imaginary, about a certain representation of material culture. Thus, in such a way that something meaningful is revealed, it is necessary that images and texts, representation and ideas are confronted and put into tension to seek senses in the problematic approach of different languages on the materiality of the school's culture.

Thus, it is necessary that the images of this study do not constitute in mere illustrations of the text, even if the text is the only instrument to explain the images, but that the researcher (and the reader) walk through them, imagining other meanings and adding questions to those underlying.

The images of the school's culture materiality constitute a valuable source of knowledge about education, childhood, learning and teaching practices and students. Thus, those images are considered as possibilities for a study of the iconographic language, as a significant source of knowledge production, in which the presence of material culture is recorded not in isolation, but along with the environment in which it is inserted. Little is yet known about the social imagery about the materiality of the school's culture and its sociocultural diversity. The field of images has been little used by scholars interested in understanding the representations of school material culture, hence the importance of school practice archaeology.

2.2 Material culture and educational objects banks as supports for the archaeology of school practice in childhood school

The survey and cataloguing of the school material culture reveals the problem of how to manage such archaeological heritage, which requires systematic analyses, planned actions of medium and long term and, eventually, a change of course, in addition to the development of new strategies for the preservation of the goods produced by the school material culture. But always safeguarding the preservation of the essence of the material collected, the material culture itself and the political and ideological perspectives that are underlying them. It is known that in archaeology, an intervention can occur in the research field with the collection of archaeological remains and sometimes the risk of that will no longer return to its original structure. In this sense, it is essential to keep in mind the importance of preservation in two respects: to safeguard the information about the artifacts removed from the archaeological site and to preserve the physical state of the objects that can be preserved by means of the procedures of record more appropriate to the material.

It was proved the need to use techniques to keep those materials as close as possible to their original physical state and to preserve information about the educational objects collected, such as the production of specific didactic material. As an example, the use of Cordel literature in Portuguese language teaching, which is inserted in the cultural scheme itself. Thus, preservation and conservation unite with archaeology to gather knowledge about educational practices.

The meticulous treatment given to archaeological remains, from the collection act to its insertion into the research protocol, assists in the preservation of the artifacts, as well as all possible information concerning the political-pedagogical context in which they were produced. This new methodology of data collection in education is little known in Brazil, but it has more and more significant possibilities in archaeological sites analyses of educational materials found. Thus, it is necessary to preserve as much information as possible about the studied reality.

The information registration is essential to the understanding of the site and the archaeological materials found therein. They may be used for the purposes of registration of the coordinator's and team's field notebooks; the field journals of the "diggers", that is, the scholars who will collect the archaeological traces of education; the photograph; the video documentary; the scanning of printed documents; and the design of all the pieces "excavated", if it is not possible to carry out the photographic record and/or video graphics, the scanning, among other procedures.

The photographic record is a procedure performed on virtually all materials collected in the research field. The archaeological remains are photographed for their recognition in the digital system of documentation and identification, when they are searched in the collection. After all previous steps completed, the generated information is inserted into the registration protocol and made available in the database, which are created to record the data pertaining to archaeological sites, including descriptive data and imagery. To do so, it is necessary to create an electronic form with information on the spatial data and descriptive materials of the artifacts catalogued in the same archaeological context of the site; a database related to the input of these artifacts in the collection; and finally, a record entered each protocol with the physical information of each object individually. The articulated set of procedures will produce data to be generated in cores or study groups in school practice archaeology and made available in educational information repositories.

The research organization and the teacher training material arising from the archaeological collection of data needs to be made available in open and free educational information repositories. And the idea is to facilitate the sharing of knowledge and experiences successful in education, as well as to offer the participants in the teaching career the visibility of the school material production. In the same direction, academic investigations can be enriched with a material sickness that gives

more force of expression to what happens in schools, allowing more complex analyses of their daily life.

The educational objects banks are Digital Repositories (DRs) consisting of online databases, which bring together, in an organized manner, the scientific production of an institution or thematic area and store files of various formats, which facilitates the inserting files, videos, documentaries, photographs, animations, music, among others. Those storage modes result in several benefits, both for researchers and for scientific institutions or societies, since they provide greater results visibility of studies and enable the preservation of the University memory and school institutional science. DRs can be institutional or thematic, or even both combinations, allowing a multitude of experiences. Institutional repositories deal with scientific production of a given institution. The thematic repositories deal with scientific production of a certain area without institutional boundaries.

3 ETHNOARCHEOLOGY AND CULTURE MATERIAL PRODUCTION IN CHILDHOOD SCHOOL

Funari et al. (1999) emphasize that archaeology is a field of scientific knowledge identified with different disciplines, such as anthropology, history, sociology and pedagogy. In this way, archaeology is the science that seeks to recover and highlight the archaeological heritage moved by cultural identity of today's populations. It is thus understood that its core is in the dialogue, deep and continuous, with the different disciplinary fields, as well as in the empirical knowledge of the material culture of different social groups. Oral sources, informal testimonials and archaeological remains are the starting point for the development of archaeology studies.

The material culture is therefore the object of archaeology and the testimony of society. In the case of material culture of the childhood school, the archaeological remains have a diffuse destiny and, in many cases, are discarded, indicating, in this sense, that significant part of the materiality of the school culture is knowledge that is lost. The recent trajectory of archaeology is expressed in different contexts of material production. There is the quest, among archaeologists, about what is the relation of archaeological work in contemporary society and what this expects, demands and

yearns for archaeology and what knowledge can produce on the recent past and on the present of the field researched.

According to Funari et al. (1999, p. 4), archaeology either builds or deconstructs a capitalist individualism: "[...] in the everyday material culture of capitalists or workers, the porcelain of apparatus opposes the pottery of workers, the great erudite architecture to the vernacular construction".

Kramer (1979) claims that archaeology combined with ethnographic procedures has been thought of a specialty that studies contemporary societies to develop hypotheses, conceive interpretative models and develop new theories About the relationship between people and the production of materiality, to what the author calls "Ethnoarcheology". This combination arose from the practical necessity of archaeology to use ethnographic data to substantiate its interpretations of the archaeological contexts, which have been developed in the context of the debates on how such interpretations on the material culture can be conducted. Similarly, ethnoarcheology assists in the refinement of the procedures for obtaining ethnographic data by the archaeologists themselves, expanding the research themes and establishing interdisciplinary dialogue with other fields of knowledge.

BY WAY OF CONCLUSION

The establishment of an archaeology of school practice through the production of the school's culture materiality is intended to present new arguments, looks and hypotheses that can broaden the way the material production of the school is interpreted, collaborating for a better understanding of the whole range of social, cultural, formative, economical and symbolic relationships and practices that characterize the school universe.

As a source of inspiration for the formulation of new hypotheses concerning the organization and material culture produced by schools, many of the reflections arose from an intense dialogue with social sciences – in particular history, sociology, anthropology –, which are in constant dialogue with pedagogy. From ethnographic references, in practice, the anthropological look brings with it the possibility of reinterpretations of the material culture of the schools. Through the insertion of procedures and archaeological techniques, it is possible to obtain an important

contribution to the realization of analyses not yet explored in the field of education and culture. Thus, the combination of methodologies can make possible the conservation of the archaeological heritage belonging to the schools, which requires financial resources and appropriate conditions of production of the *acquis* and its availability to the school and academic community. It is also emphasized the need to maintain the integrity of educational objects and the preservation of information on those, since, once inserted in digital collections, they need to go through curation procedures periodically.

Thus, there is a multiplicity of possibilities for the development of studies and research capable of producing new and complex knowledge about the school reality, about its daily life and, above all, about the ways in which the school produces its materiality. Parallel to all the differentials invested in an archaeology of school practice, it is essential to direct an awareness-raising action to researchers, as a "patrimonial literacy", to highlight the relevance of practices that promote the conservation and preservation of artifacts to be studied by themselves.

Archaeology makes it possible to study a wide variety of objects and traces and to propose conclusions about the non-material aspects of the culture. The intricacies of those discoveries have increased in recent decades, but always limited attention has been given to what the archaeological record can say about transferring cultural knowledge through pedagogical practices and about the consequent learning that this can provide.

The reflections presented in this article invite you to think that archaeology can greatly benefit the preservation of the school's material culture with the understanding of the social dimensions of knowledge transfer. Similarly, when you keep in mind the aspects of the school's materiality, it is possible to enrich the understanding of the relationship between the traces of materials and the perspectives forming the new generations.

In view of the analyses presented, many questions are raised. Does the material culture alter, influence, condition the learning? What are the impacts on the ways in which you learn, or how you teach, being mediated by the production of school materiality? How and by what means do people learn in different social scenarios? Who's teaching? Why are students learning, or not? What are the results of this learning? How do you recognize the transfer of knowledge in the archaeological

record? Those questions are fundamental to understanding the material culture of the school, particularly those related to the transmission and the traditions of learning and education of the entire cultural universe of each society.

In this way, this article is concluded with the proposition of academic and policy actions that in fact propitiate the visibility of the archaeological heritage of schools with the participation of the scientific and school communities – students, teaching professionals, children's families, school managers.

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