

IMAGE AS BURDEN: VISUAL SUBALTERNITY AND THE ROLE OF EDUCATION IN VISUAL CULTURE

Paula Santos Menezes
Professor and researcher at Colégio Pedro II, Brésil
Researcher at LAET-ENTPE, France

PhD in Sociology and Anthropology

email: menezes.paula@gmail.com

Abstract: This article seeks to analyze what I call *school's visual culture*, especially the visual universe of textbooks. Using classic references, such as Pierre Bourdieu and Michael Apple, and readings from cultural and decolonial studies, we seek to outline a framework to analyze the role of images in school's scientific/visual culture. This issue becomes particularly important in the so-called *multicultural context*, where the claim of visibility of subaltern groups becomes a central dispute. In this sense, we present an analysis of eight textbooks adopted in a second public school in Rio de Janeiro, Brasil. The central purpose is to interpret the extent to which these representations make up the imaginary of what we know as scientific knowledge, building a network of meanings that support the idea of a *restricted humanity*. Finally, we make some reflections on the role of social sciences' education in the critical analysis of the image and in the confrontation of the hegemonic visual culture.

Key words: school; visual culture; curricula; textbook; subaltern studies; cultural studies; decoloniality

1.Theorizing visual culture and its role in school's culture

Image 1 - *The Image as Burden*, Marlene Dumas, 1993¹



Source: <http://www.painters-table.com/link/artslant/marlene-dumas-image-burden>

Although it seems difficult to isolate something that we temporarily call “school’s visual culture” from the whole complex of image production in our society, from cinema to social networks, it is possible to highlight textbooks as important pieces in the “struggle for the monopoly of the legitimate representation part of the social world” (BOURDIEU, 2001). Imbued with scientific and commercial authority, governmental seal and pedagogical authority, textbooks compose one of the pillars of public education policies in Brazil, carefully evaluated, and critically received by basic and superior education teachers and by the scientific community in general. Undoubtedly, this degree of criticality is necessary in view of what will form the pillar of scientific thinking among young people and children across the national territory. Those books will also be responsible for all legitimate scientific knowledge that circulates in all possible means of communication and that integrates, together to local, religious and popular knowledge, the worldview of a significant part of the schooled population.

The school institution, in its relative autonomy, has its specific authority’s base (pedagogical authority) in dissimulating power’s relations that it intends to naturalize, acting as legitimate. School culture, in its visual dimension, does not escape the symbolic violence that constitutes pedagogical action (BOURDIEU; PASSERON, 2016). If there is an “image” of science and knowledge as a patrimony of humanity, we can say that it is the textbooks and the school’s visual culture that sustain its legitimacy. Maps that will tell us which countries are developed and which are poor, which will support the legitimate (di)vision of the planet; paintings and photographs that will build the image of those who are the producers of knowledge, scientists and politicians; films that will tell us about the most relevant historical facts of humanity, such as the French Revolution; and documentaries that will bring the “truth” about who invented writing or medicine. As in the analogy of Dominique Julia, school culture resembles a “new religion” in its rites and myths, and here we add its iconography (JULIA apud FARIA FILHO et al, 2004, p. 143).

With regard to the curriculum, it is supported by the reference to the scientific world, which is supposedly neutral, and it constitutes a central element in the imposition of a “network of assumptions” (APPLE, 2004, p. 263) and provisions that reproduce / reinforce the status quo, that is, all manifestations of social inequalities. This conception of the curriculum goes along with what Roland Barthes says in *The Death of the Author*: the text (and the image, we add) is part of a

¹ Details: Oil on canvas, 40 x 50 cm. Private collection, Belgium / Copyright Marlene Dumas; Photo: Peter Cox.

complex of meanings and ideas that are continually borrowed and rarely “original”. The role of images, in the visual age, cannot be seen as secondary in this process, as they evoke / impose all these devices and networks of meanings, establishing a real burden for those who are portrayed as the inferior and defeated in history.

However, in the multicultural era, images become an arena of dispute: in that context, how could we rethink some of the most fundamental concepts in Sociology to understand the role of education and its power’s relations in the construction of ways of feeling / seeing / believing in the world? Political conflicts involving the role of institutional education are not few: they arise mainly from the “disclosure” of innumerable aspects of this hidden curriculum (Apple, 2004), from the deconstruction of the dominant ideology, from the questioning of heterosexual white men as human beings *par excellence*. The subversion of pedagogical action, as defined above, happens within the school, due to the penetration of black, feminist and ecologist movements, claiming their place and right to speech and demanding the transformation of the hegemonic representation of the social world. Above all, another image of these groups is claimed, in films, photographs, textbooks, that is, another *world view*. These demands, that are still marginal in some fields, create, however, a strong demand around the visual representation of subaltern groups that do not wish to carry the burden that these images impose (whether in the media, advertisements, films or textbooks).

Demands for visibility and representativeness must be seen from their various contexts: the continuous transformation of the image into merchandise and the culture-market turn. As Frederic Jameson (1998) tells us about, this cultural market creates a world saturated with images, where aesthetics’ experience becomes trivial (this being the dominant context). In this sense, the claim for “visibility” or representation of non-hegemonic forms and bodies is also an appeal to be “consumable”. On the other hand, experimentation and visual production of marginal emancipatory or artistic movements are essential to make sense of other relationships and worlds that are constructed as alternatives.

In the universe of school’s culture, in Brazil, new demands for representativeness will have a particular impact. This is because the school’s culture as a derivative (FORQUIN, 1992) of the general culture is often caught in its caricatured aspect. The images selected in the didactic supports will generally opt for the *cliché* (Delacroix’s painting about the French revolution; the image of a Japanese who represents robotics studies; or the photograph of a broken city, between favelas and luxury buildings), based on the idea that the knowledge of these images represents access to a higher culture. Thus, students from the so-called “minorities”, in contact with a more diverse visual culture, will confront this visual universe of references and will express, in different ways, their discomfort and discontent with this particular violence.

In terms of theoretical bridges, it is with the Indian thinker Gayatri Spivak that we set out on our journey, more specifically from her critique of the representation of an essentialized subject that Western thought makes use of. This criticism turns to “speaking for” the subordinates, considering the category of the “other” as still essentialized, even in the most libertarian perspectives created in Europe, such as those of Foucault and Deleuze and Gattari. In this sense, she also criticizes the notions of “conscience” and agency as conceived in European theories, which tend to universalize and treat human action as rational. Although the author seeks to identify all the speech limits of the subordinate groups, we believe that her perspective opens the possibility to investigate not only the “absences” but also the silencing and invisibility processes of these groups. Thus, Spivak calls our attention to the construction of this essentialized subject who, at the same time, puts the other in a subordinate situation. Visual culture, therefore, not only represents this condition, but constructs it.

The concept of “subaltern groups”, used by Spivak is a central reference here, but it deserves to be further refined for our purpose. The idea of subalternity used by the author starts from the theory of power’s relations in Gramsci, but with a distinctive deepening: the marginal and colonial character of the subaltern position that is equally projected in the field of existence, particularly from speech, from enunciation, as well as in the field of representations. This

perspective helps us to focus on the *processes* of subordination, which works through mechanisms such as silencing, displacement and appropriation. To speak of subalternity, therefore, is to evoke the power relations and the concrete mechanisms that persistently reinforce these same relations. To allow a better translation of this perspective, we have chosen here to use the expression "groups subject to subordination" instead of "subaltern groups" because we understand that subordination is a process and that it is necessary to "de-essentialize", at the language level, the notions and concepts that used to qualify social groups.

Bringing this discussion to the 21st century, the critique of the hegemonic image becomes even more complex. The appropriation of the idea of diversity and multiculturalism by the systems of capitalist cultural production leads us to distinguish important boundaries between this logic and that of effective planetary solidarity. Thus, the reference to critical interculturality (WALSH, 2009; CANDAU; KELLY, 2010) will be indispensable to overcome the pitfalls of multicultural proposals, and to forge an education process authentically sensitive to cultural differences not only in terms of coexistence and respect, but above all in the perception that these *differences* are usually transmuted into *inequalities*.

In the next pages of this chapter, we will present, therefore, reflections on a research led between 2016 and 2018 on images in textbooks of different disciplines adopted in a public high school in Rio de Janeiro. At first, we will focus on proposing a prior reflection on the *function* and *meaning* of images in textbooks, seeking to relate to some theoretical reflections. Then, we will present the methodology used in our study and, finally, the visual analysis of the images of the selected textbooks. Our final proposition will seek to evoke the role of social science's education and its necessary contribution to aesthetic and cultural criticism, in order to promote not only the construction of a critical visual culture, but also to form citizens capable of distinguishing and producing messages and visual meanings outside the market aesthetic.

2. Function and meaning of images in textbooks

In textbooks, the image has two fundamental functions: the illustrative (passive) function, which serves to give a status of veracity to what is being narrated - they are, therefore, generic images that seek to universalize what is being said or illustrate the *object* of the scientific area in question; and the subjective (active) function, which aims to name and identify those who "discovered" worlds or created theories - these are the figures of scientists, the *subject* of knowledge - or political, sporting and artistic personalities. There is also a third function, which remains underestimated. It consists of the representation of historical subjects, collectivities that participate in the process of change / social permanence: these can appear within the passive function, as *objects* of study or as illustrating a *subject*, but they can also integrate an active function, which is extremely rare (collective manifestations).

It is evident that the illustrative function will be predominant in Natural Sciences books. The human body, as support for these illustrations, will then be the object of fundamental analysis to observe how an idea of a neutral or universal body is being constructed. On the other hand, the figures of scientists and intellectuals will also gain prominence in these books, in order to legitimize and personalize what is selected as superior, legitimate and fundamental knowledge for humanity.

Both in the illustrative and in the subjective function, what we here call *groups subject to subordination* appear in a large minority. Although the illustrative images may contain a greater diversity - such as in the illustration of professional activities, in the demonstration of the daily use of a physical-chemical process or in the portrayal of human groups and their cultures - populations that make up the majority of Brazilian society will be underrepresented. Despite being a simple finding, without the need for in-depth studies, it is important to bring to the reflection the quantitative question of the represented bodies in those books, since this set of images is inserted in a web of non-visible meanings, from which comes precisely its strength of naturalization of the world.

Considering the image analysis in the multicultural era, a *sociology of absences* is not enough. It is not just a matter of verifying what is not represented or under-represented. The analysis of the visual culture of textbooks involves mainly showing how groups subject to subordination are represented (in the framework of passive or active functions) and, mainly, which is the representative imaginary of the whole of humanity, including science, politics, art and all human production.

In terms of cultural diversity, the visual representation of the world has been increasingly filled with racial, sexual and gender diversity, without, however, altering the logic of power and understanding of the world of "below". This means that, as much as we encounter more black people, women, gay kisses and colorful flags in countless media spaces, the production of images continues to follow the fundamental mental operation of classifying and hierarchizing, in even more sophisticated ways. Although the market has understood that these "declassified" groups have consumption power, the fundamental stage of our analysis can take place from the question: *What is being visually represented as the universal and neutral human being behind any hegemonic visual culture - that is, their body, their attitudes, their values?*

In this sense, in our analysis, we seek to pay special attention to the understanding of the representations of human bodies in textbooks, as well as the privileged place of images of intellectuals, scientists and writers. As the Nigerian sociologist Oyérónké Oyēwùmí (2001) notes, Western culture has the body as the unit of analysis of the world, which is primarily perceived by the fact that it is a visual culture. The sociologist also points out the importance of analyzing the legal, cognitive and philosophical devices of colonialism and coloniality that give the colonizing white man the status of humanity; and to the others, the condition of subhumans (OYĒWŪMÍ, 2001).

3. Methodology

The selection of textbooks in our research sought to contemplate the various areas of knowledge, commonly divided between Humanities, Natural Sciences and Languages. Thus, books used in the 2nd year of a public high school in Rio de Janeiro were selected, where the research was developed, being the books of the following subjects: Biology, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Sociology, History, Geography and Brazilian Portuguese and Languages. We firstly opted for analyzing the images of the books by a quantitative approach, to systematize the results. We then analyzed them contextually, through a more qualitative work. The methodology consisted of graphic analysis (photos, paintings and prints, but we excluded cartoons, caricatures and drawings), externally assigned color / race and gender, that is, from the perception and classification of the students involved in the research, with the help of the researcher. Considering all the limitations of externally assigned classification, particularly with regard to the color / race criterion, we chose to leave the selection and classification of images by the students². Having had three scholarship students, we were able to organize the selection of images according to these students, but under guidance and debate with the researcher. Thus, we intended to go beyond the limits of externally assigned classification by using the students' gaze as a criterion.

Quantitative and qualitative analyzes were then undertaken, contextualizing the images from the situations / themes in which they appeared, giving special emphasis to the images of intellectuals, interracial images and, in some cases, in the observation of the people who are named, individualized and those who are cited as members of a group. In this chapter, although we refer to some quantifications of images, we will give priority to a qualitative analysis, seeking to relate them to the functions and contexts in which they are found.

² Two female students from secondary and one from superior education were involved in this selection.

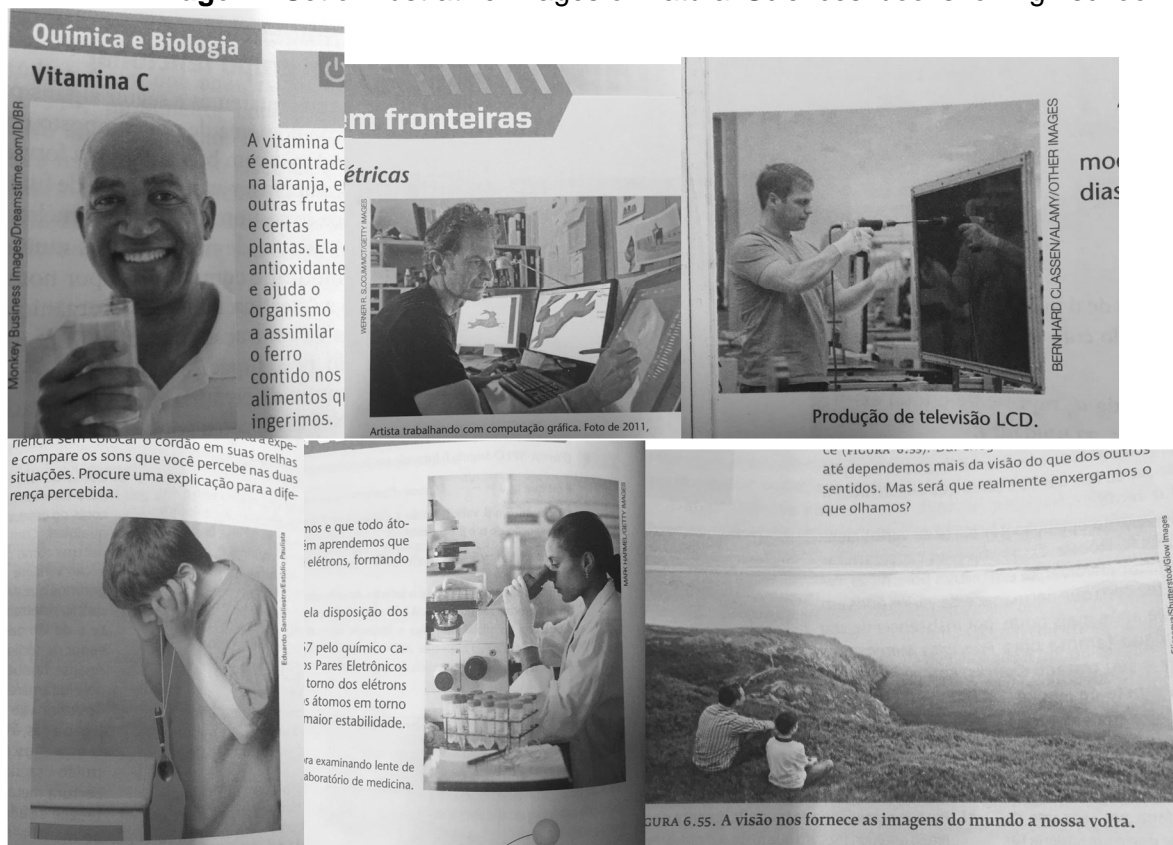
4. Visual analysis of textbooks

Textbooks have been analyzed in the most diverse areas, particularly in History and Languages. The data shows always similar results, showing the most diverse mechanisms by which the subordinate condition is built from images: a) invisibility / absence; b) the representation of women and blacks as collective categories (without agency); c) non-nomination of characters / individuals from these groups; d) incorporation of those groups in the dominant perception schemes (for instance, black people usually portrayed as slaves or poor).

Regarding invisibility, we can point out that books in the areas of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, more often reproduce images of white scientists and men, as well as white men in illustrative images. In the analyzed Mathematics book (PAIVA, 2015), there are no figures of black men, nor indigenous people or of any other groups throughout the book, in contrast to images of 14 white men and 3 white women. In the Physics book (MAXIMO E ALVARENGA, 2014), all the intellectuals presented are white men. In the Chemistry book (DE BRUNI et al, 2015), the presence of women is very problematic and tells us a lot: of the 7 women presented in the 280 pages, none of them are black and almost 50% of the female figures serve to exemplify aesthetic processes that involve chemistry, such as the use of formaldehyde to straighten hair, the use of acetone to remove nail polish and even the representation of an aging process.

Natural Sciences books have greater visual flexibility to integrate other groups into their images. This is because the representation of physical, chemical or biological phenomena uses the human body as a reference, as we see in the images in figure 2. Therefore, statistically, it is possible to observe an apparently better representation of minority groups in these works. Although more diverse than in the old books, these images still show predominantly white men. Thus, the human body that is shown as more illustrative and “neutral”, that is, relatable, is the one with masculine characteristics. This feature will become even more evident when we look at the Biology books.

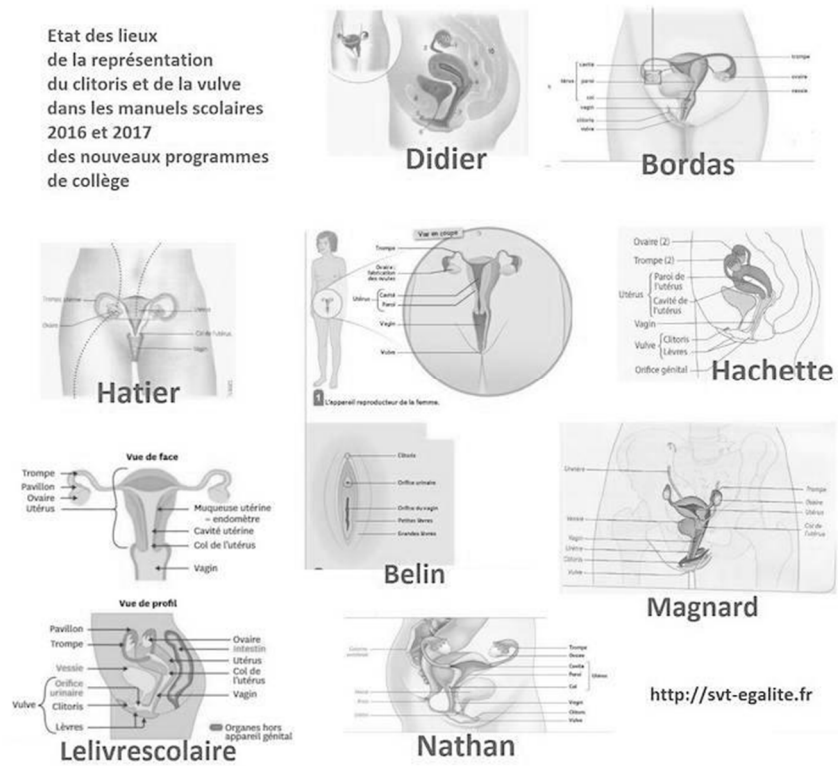
Image 2 - Set of illustrative images of Natural Sciences' books for high school



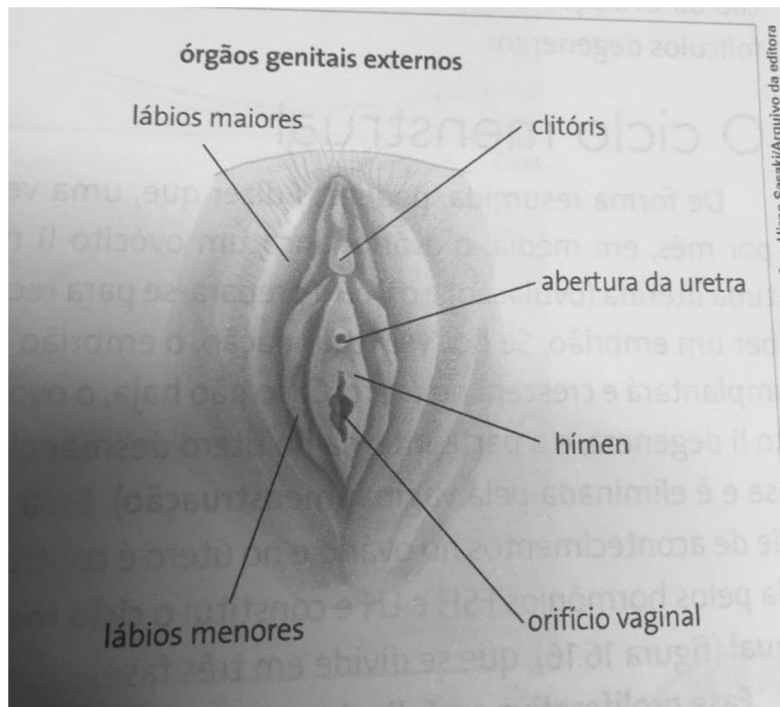
We see here some typical images for illustrative purposes in the natural sciences' books. The representation, although more diverse in recent years, still uses bodies with masculine characteristics as dominant.
Sources: Ainfas et al, 2014; De bruni et al, 2015; Màximo and Alvarenga, 2014; Linhares and Gewandsznajder, 2014.

Biology books are a privileged object of analysis when we want to decode what school's visual culture transmits to us as a *didactic body* (VALIENTE; SELLES, 2017): that universal image, with masculine characteristics and without genitals, that any schooled individual has in mind. In recent years, as Valiente and Selles (2017) analyze, the image of the human body has changed considerably in the discipline's books, which now seek to illustrate bodies with feminine characteristics. However, with regard to representative sexuality schemes, the illustration, for example, of the clitoris is very recent. For comparison, we can mention that, in French textbooks, according to the evaluation of the SVT Project, the clitoris will only be clearly illustrated in a 2016/2017 edition of Belin. In Brazil, although this data was not found, the Biology book analyzed by our research already had a frontal representation of the vagina, including the clitoris, as we see in the image 4.

Image 3 - the representation of the clitoris in French biology textbooks for high school



Source : <http://svt-egalite.fr>

Image 4 - representation of the clitoris in a biology textbook for high school in Brazil

Source: Linhares e Gewandsznajder, 2014. In the first image, we see the analysis of the French project SVT on the current representations of the clitoris in biology books; below, the image of the analyzed Brazilian book.

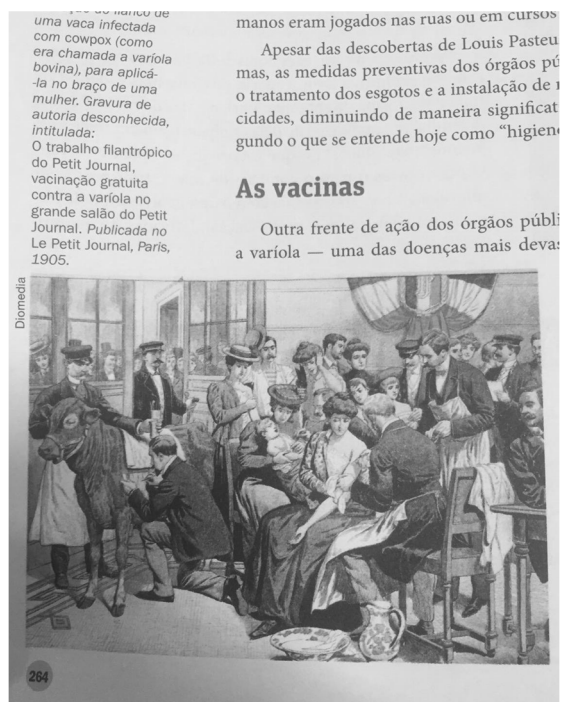
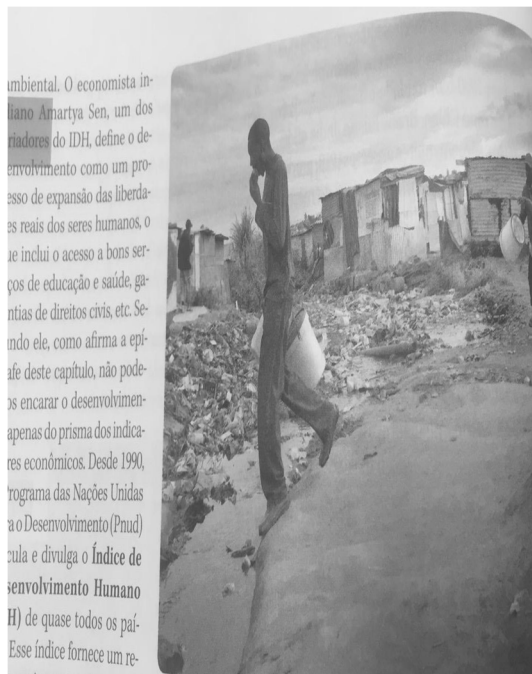
In the field of Languages, the Portuguese book (CEREJA and MAGALHÃES, 2014) is rich in diversity of images, the majority of which are made up of reproduction of paintings, in addition to the images that are not included in this study (cartoons, drawings and caricatures), with great presence of human figures. However, we found the biggest difference between the representativeness of white groups (462) and non-white groups (43). Among the intellectuals / writers, we count a total of 26, where 23 are white men. Black or Mestizo men who appear are Machado de Assis in a photo by Marc Ferrez (p. 288), and the other two appear as in caricatures. It is important to remember that the image of the writer Machado de Assis is one of the most emblematic recent disputes around black representation. His image has been whitened and spread over the past century as that of a typically white man, even though he is of mixed race.

The history book (AINFAS, 2014) does not fail to show the struggles of slaves and indigenous people, but still speaks much more about slavery than about these struggles. This is evidenced in the images when we note that of the 53 black men who appear, 19 are slaves, that is, only 24 black men are depicted in the book outside the context of slavery. Of these 24, 20 appear in the same image that depicts a Haitian army, leaving us with a minimum number of other 4 figures of black men portrayed as free individuals. In the case of black women the situation is even more drastic: of the 24 black women portrayed in the book, only 6 are not in a situation of slavery. Another important point perceived in the analysis concerns the number of images that represent historical or intellectual personalities, that is, the images in which the characters are named. In all, 43 figures portrayed in the book were named, of which 37 are men (30 white, 4 indigenous and 3 black) and 6 are women (5 white and 1 black). **The naming of individuals is relevant because it grants subjectivity to the actors and creates space for these characters to become the object of representativeness. These are the names that we will remember as relevant. Given the rather uneven picture presented here, it is clear that white men are the key personalities in history as it is still presented in school.**

In the books of Geography (DE SENE and MOREIRA, 2014) and Sociology (SILVA et al, 2014) we find a greater concern with the plurality of images and the representation of a more multicultural society. However, when we turn to the analysis of the named individuals in the book of Sociology, the inequalities of race and gender are much more striking than in the general analysis. Of the 86 nominees, 64 (which is about 90%) are white men. Among the 22 named individuals that remain, 13 are men (4 blacks, 4 Asians and 5 of other races) and only 9 are women, 7 white, 1 black and 1 Asian. In the Geography book, however, black people in general are best illustrated when discussing issues related to inequality and poverty. An interesting highlight appears on page 240, where a photograph shows white men protesting racial quotas at public universities in front of the Rectory of the University of São Paulo (USP). No black individuals were identified in the photograph.

In the Language and Human Sciences books, the representation of *groups subject to subordination* as collective categories without agency prevails. Thus, for example, to illustrate a culture or a group in a generic way, images of women and blacks are abundant, but often in the role of illustration. The contexts also correspond to the classic stereotypes of poverty (Africa), care (it is the woman who will always be seen with children, in the role of motherhood), professional activity and political activity (usually male). In contrast, it will be more difficult to find interracial collective images, which predominate only in history books, or where women act collectively. One of the key chapters for evaluating collective agency is, for example, that of social movements, in the book of Sociology. In the analyzed edition, the movement images are mostly of men, and there is no visual reference to women in collective action. These images will be relegated to the chapter on Gender, where feminist movements will gain prominence.

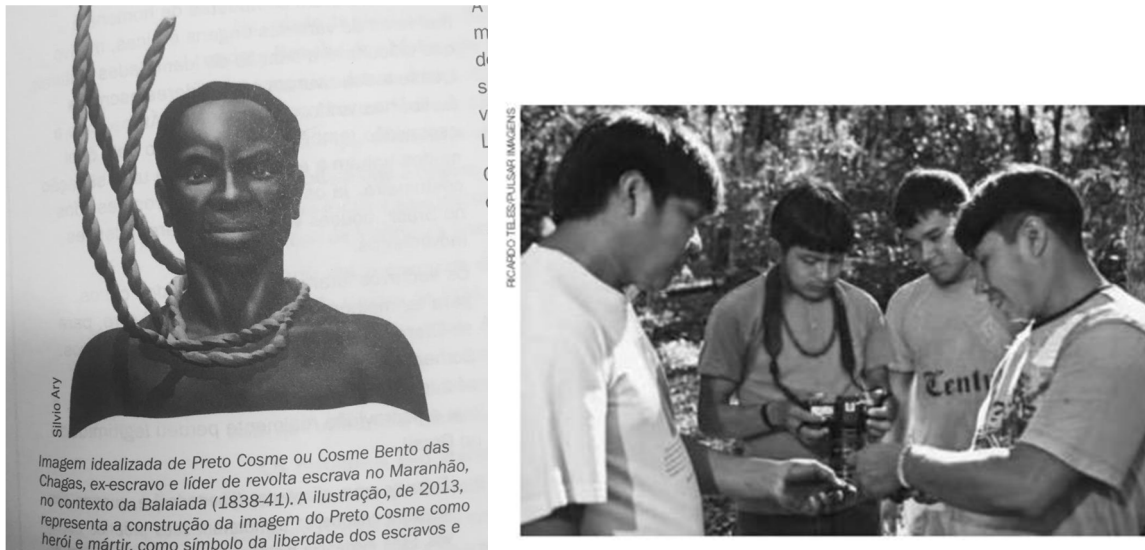
Image 4 – Set of images representing groups subject to subordination in Humanities' books



Sources: DE SENE e MOREIRA, 2014; AINFAS et al, 2014

Some typical contexts where the so-called “minorities” are represented. The burden of these images is crucial to school sociability, since the association of blacks, indigenous people and women to the contexts of subordination does not go unnoticed by students.

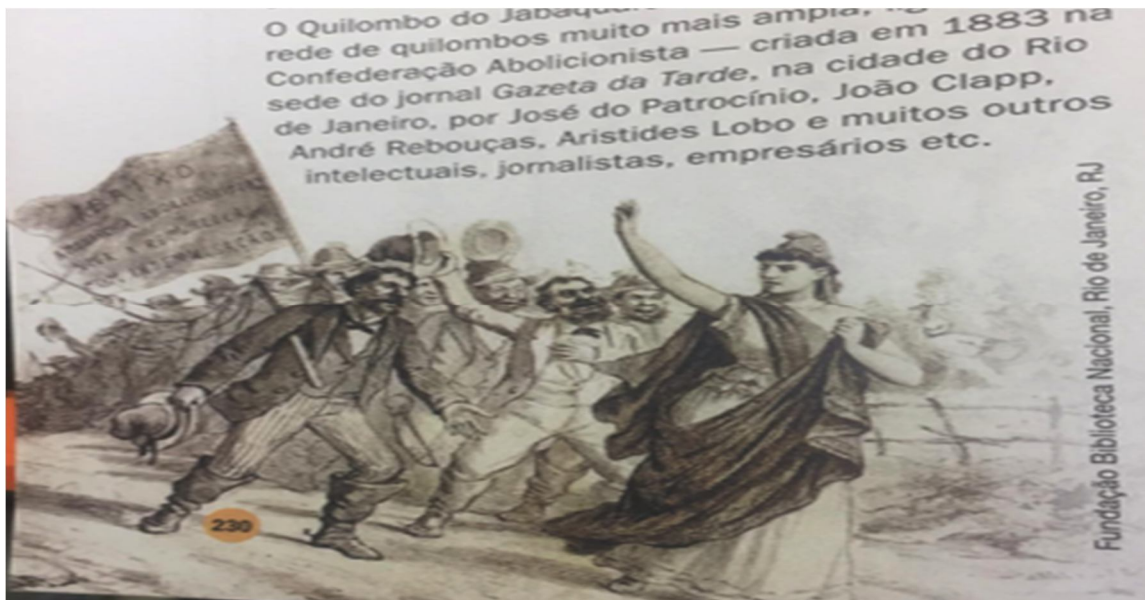
Image 5 - Set of images representing groups subject to subordination in Humanities' books



Sources: AINFAS et al, 2014; SILVA et al, 2014.

On the left, although wishing to portray the black man as the Subject of History, the History book brings Preto Cosme in his condition as a slave, weakening his historical role, once the image enters the illustrative function. He was one of the leaders of a very important rebellion called “Balaiada”. On the right, a rare image of an indigenous group working with technologies to combat illegal extraction, in the Sociology book.

Image 6 - Set of images of representations of women - allegories in the history book



Source: AINFAS et al, 2014

It will not be uncommon to find mythical images of women throughout the Language and History books. As we can see in the images highlighted in the figures above, women will be represented in allegories such as Marianne, to represent the republican ideal. Although in her original context the figure of Marianne evoked the pure ideals of the French Revolution, the

oppression of women during this period is quite emblematic, as well as the attempts to emancipate the colonies. Thus, it would be interesting that the representations of the ideals of nation and freedom were also presented based on the narrative of the “losers”, such as Olympe de Gouges and the Haitian revolution. In this example, we can clearly see that the hegemonic imaginary about historical facts is in agreement with the version of the dominants, and little explores the place of subordinates and their narratives.

The representation of the human agency of textbooks is extremely individualized, highlighting those that have had or have a relevant impact in all areas of knowledge or history / politics / economics. Thus, the prevailing image of the production of art, science or historical transformation is centrally the result of unique individuals who have a name. This operation of naming and highlighting individuals will therefore be one of the central devices of school culture. *Who is worthy of being nominated?*

In the Chemistry book, for example, the only intellectual woman presented, Gerty Cori, carries with her a description and a photo showing not only her high education in Medicine and her discoveries in the field of biochemistry but also her husband, Carl Cori. The female author is never represented as a protagonist, since her entire career in the scientific field is summarized and shared with her husband. Still with regard to scientists / intellectuals, we find on page 157 the Asian Ryoji Noyori. In the total of 12 intellectuals, we have 1 Asian man, 1 white woman and 10 white men. On the racial issue, no black theorists were found. The only representations of black people were in the exemplification of chemical processes or in the role of workers. This inequality in the representation of the subject of knowledge can end up conveying to students the perception that the capacity for action on the world and on knowledge is a monopoly of the white man. Moreover, it also illustrates how much knowledge and historical development that is studied at school is based in a male and Eurocentric image.

A series of secondary and even subtler elements can be the object of analysis of the image: the colors and size of the figures, position on the page and association with the content, among others. These aspects reveal how much visual culture is a central element in the creation of behaviors and norms inculcated by the school system. Even more important is to recognize how school visual culture is revealed by the films and images used by teachers in the classroom that are often repeated (such as the movie *Modern Times*, by Charlie Chaplin), by the media's selections of images about different facts and historical references, and that it must be constantly rethought and confronted with other sources and narratives.

5. The burden of hegemonic visual culture

Just think about what would happen if, as in fables, dogs, foxes and wolves had a voice in the chapter on the classification of canines and the acceptable limits of variation between recognized members of the species (...). In short, to the great dismay of the philosopher-king, who, by attributing an essence to them, intends to compel them to be and do what is their duty by definition, the classified and the disqualified may refuse the principle of classification that reserves to them the worst place (BOURDIEU, 2001, p. 11-12).

The modernity-coloniality that pulverizes our world of images and super-images is clearly violent. It is not just a cultural attitude towards difference, to be overcome by understanding and tolerance: it is about recognizing the active construction of those who represent the status of humanity, on the one hand, and of subordination as a condition of those who are outside the circle, on the other hand. More broadly, in the multicultural context, as pointed out by Spivak (2010), the main issue is the supposed contemplation of diversity by the hegemonic means of production and

visual reproduction, which no longer act for the complete concealment of these groups, but for the translation of subaltern experiences in hegemonic language and perception schemes.

The black student, who is constantly faced with the image of bodies like his own, mutilated, tortured and exploited, will feel the weight of the history he carries within him; mestizos and indigenous people will quickly associate their image with that of those considered to be backward figures and will also deny their characteristics; girls will never feel at ease to occupy public spaces or deny the importance of the role of motherhood, mainly due to the difficulty of imagining themselves in these roles. The educator needs to be sensitive to this context of reception.

We are not proposing here to deny the history of patriarchal, colonial or racial domination, much less to improvise speeches about a supposed "overcoming" of these elements - slavery has passed and is over, Nazism was only the result of a particular historical moment and it is over, women have their rights guaranteed and patriarchy has been overcome. In many ways, school culture will reproduce the symbolic domination that takes place outside of it: science, politics and the instances of power dominated by men are facts of our reality, and the school and its pedagogical supports could not escape this. However, it is up to the educator to think about the meaning of what he/she teaches, the images he/she promotes, the emotions he/she triggers. From the humanitarian point of view, the educator cannot ignore the violence inherent to pedagogical action, if he wishes to build a democratic environment. Or as bell hooks (2013) tells us, the educator should recognize the different cultural codes and the probability that the classroom environment can generate conflicts. Without this, the educator will continue as the preacher of the desert, or awaken negative associations towards his students from these groups, particularly when it comes to mixed schools.

Social sciences' education has a fundamental theoretical repertoire for the critical analysis of the image: the studies of the Frankfurt School are very widespread in the school culture of the discipline, and are useful for the understanding of mass culture in the 20th century. References to Roland Barthes and semiotics are less frequent, but they can be equally useful to develop a perception and competence to "read" the objects, images and texts that surround us, with their intentional or unintentional senses.

However, the most important contribution of Social Sciences may be in the search for a counter-hegemonic and decolonial visuality, capable of perceiving the schemes of perception and the networks of meaning. On the practical level, this means moving towards the construction of an educational practice that considers students as image producers, who can appropriate the critical analysis that the discipline offers and engage in emancipation from the burden they impose on them. The school spaces can be used in this promotion, as well as in the search for alternative sources of documentaries and films, popular artists and marginal visual productions.

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