

Maria Auxiliadora Schmidt



# History Lesson: A proposal for the Didactic of History

The journey towards the reconstruction of the method of science in the History Lesson culminated in the production of a matrix of knowledge, which the author called the "matrix of the history lesson". The matrix has as key concept the category meaning, where the form, content and function of history teaching and learning are articulated. The idea of reconstruction is not in reconstructing the past in itself, but in the way of presenting meanings to history, from the interpretations and understandings that teachers and students attribute to past and present time, looking to the future, either in triumphant contents or in themes that are difficult and troubled by explanatory tensions. The relationship between the practical life of individuals, teachers and students and the science of history is the constant search of researchers in the teaching of history. Understanding how the lack of orientation and the interests of the subjects are established is essential for the understanding of innovation in the teaching method. Assuming the narrativistic status of the science of history marks the meaning of thinking about the form of history learning and it is this journey that the book *History Lesson: A proposal for the Didactic of History* intends to unveil in the paths between memory and historical thought.



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# **History Lesson: A proposal for the Didactic of History**

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## **History Lesson: A proposal for the Didactic of History**

**Maria Auxiliadora Schmidt**

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## Contents

6	introduction <b>Why History Lesson?</b>
11	chapter 1 <b>History Lesson: Contributions from Research</b>
18	chapter 2 <b>Learning as the Foundation of History Lesson</b>
49	chapter 3 <b>Formation of Historical thought as the Purpose of the History Lesson</b>
80	chapter 4 <b>The Methodology of a History Lesson</b>
101	<b>Final Considerations</b>
109	<b>References</b>

## introduction

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## Why the History Lesson?

**This is not a time of weeping or fatalism, although we have reason or will to do so, this is a dramatic, challenging time, a time of strife and hope.**

**(Paulo Freire)**

The undeniable importance and significance of knowledge and historical education is defended, both for the collective and for each individual. For this reason, the teaching of History at school has not been discredited by the powerful. This is also why the place of History as a science in school is invaluable. Even if every age may appear to contemporaries as catastrophic and terrible, the relevance of History is to be able to show that, through systematic and methodical knowledge of the present in the light of the past, hope cannot be undeserved.

To speak of systematic and methodical knowledge is to speak of the importance of schooling and the presence of scientific knowledge in the school. Not just any knowledge, but that which is a bearer of meanings, capable of preparing for the future and training young people and children who can face the original, unforeseen and unpredictable situations of their lives.

On the other hand, History Class it resulted from the dialogue with the debates and theoretical productions that have been carried out in the field of the Didactics of History, object of investigations and reflections, not only in the field of History, but




also in Education. In this sense, several authors have challenged positions that think of the Didactics of History only as a set of knowledges that tries to transform, in practice, professional historians into teachers of elementary and middle school. This perspective has accompanied many conceptions related to subjects designed to teach how history<sup>1</sup> is taught and has been confronted by new trends, such as curricular reformulations for the formation of historians and History teachers.

In general terms, there is a specific theoretical field of knowledge called Didactics of History, which is part of the research interfaces between the epistemology of History, taken as a reference for the construction of categories and methodologies of analysis, and its dialogue with other sciences, situated “at the crossroads of several human sciences among which are, on the one hand, those traditionally concerned with learning and, on the other, those that constitute the basis of the knowledge that is intended to be taught”. (PRATS,2001, p.81).


If the indicative of Didactics is not new, what qualifies the novelty is the denomination of History Lesson. It is the adherence to the fundamental principle of historical learning or historical cognition situated in History itself for the formulation of the teaching method and that, in History lessons, teachers and students travel the path of the relationship between present, past and future, reconstituting it and reconstructing it, challenged by the possibility of producing new understandings and new historical narratives. In this way, a counterpoint is suggested to the principle that the pedagogical relationship is produced by the principle of the transposition of scientific knowledge into school knowledge, and the possibility of the reconstruction of the past is announced, enlightened by the individual and collective needs and interests of the present. To take up this challenge is to accept the limits and possibilities of the formation of historical thought in a scientific way and to make the principles of the methodization of historical knowledge happen in History classes, remembering that, “it is not in the why of the definition of historical thought by interests, ideas, methods and forms that will be the starting point of its specifically scientific interpretation, but in *how* it happens. Methodization means systematization and expansion of the foundations that guarantee the truth”. (RÜSEN,2007b, p.91).

In an attempt to respond to the problems, one can refer to the dialogue with different authors such as Peter Lee and Jörn Rüsen, seeking to ground a theory of

 <sup>1</sup> A survey conducted by Adriane Sobanski as part of her PhD thesis under development at PPGE-UFPR-2015, found the existence in the curricula of different undergraduate courses in Brazilian History of a set of disciplines related to the theme of how to teach History, such as: Methodology of History Teaching, History Didactics, History Teaching Practice, Supervised Internship in History and History Teaching Workshop.

Didactics based on the science of History. To adhere to certain references does not mean to assume orthodox positions, but to interact in a dialogical perspective, because it is dialogically that consensus and counterpoints are built. The Didactics of History is the science of learning, because it creates the plausible conditions to produce in a scientific and competent way, proper of the reference science, the learning processes, when the object is the teaching of History. This requires the possession of the knowledge necessary for the development of the capacity to think historically, through the formation of historical thought, to be carried out in the teacher and student relationship.

By adopting the assumption of didactics as the science of historical learning, it is being signaled that the central question is to understand how historical thinking contributes to orienting, temporally, human life inwards (identity) and outwards (praxis), in the formation of historical consciousness. Thus, from the epistemological point of view, the History Lesson is accountable to the process of learning to think historically, that is, to carry out the “historical formation” and this involves two organically interconnected aspects - practical life and science - which are carried out through the methodology present in each History lesson



Formation is the capacity to oppose the otherness of the past, to lift the veil of familiarity with the past camouflaged in present practical life and to recognise the stranger, thus discovered, as one's own. Formation is an intensification of the assumptions of objectivity in the cognitive management of the past. (...) Formation, in the movement of learning from objectivity to subjectivity, also means a fundamental flexibilization of the subject's own points of view, a certain form of position proper to the subject when interpreting the experience of the past. (RÜSEN, 2007a, pp.108-109).

Clarified the presence of the purpose of formation on the agenda of the History Lesson, there are a few questions - to form what and how? Formation for what? There are no simple or ready-made answers to these questions, but it is important to emphasize that the work with historical knowledge in school is fundamental in the formation of historical consciousness, that is, in the process of internalizing ways of organizing and giving meaning to the individual and collective experiences of young people and children, in the relationships they establish between present, past and future. And these experiences are important for the definition and insertion of the subject in his own destiny. The function of historical knowledge, from the perspective of the History Lesson, is to form historical consciousness, starting from elements that trigger the ability to interpret historical thought itself.

In Jörn Rüsen's thought trails, points to the importance of thinking about the formation of historical consciousness from the perspective of a humanist didactics of history, since "the work of the didactics of history cannot be understood or developed without a consciousness of its role in the historical culture of its time. It has to perceive and respond to the challenges of historical orientation, especially with regard to historical learning and its realization in different institutions, especially at school". (RÜSEN, 2015a,p.19).

From discussions with its predecessors, with theory and with everyday practices, the proposition of the History Lesson has traveled its path, opened from multiple reflections. In the first place, it becomes important to understand the relationship between the perspective of situated historical cognition and the perspective of didactic transposition. This is not an easy task, still with many edges to be solved, considering, mainly, the great influence of the concept of didactic transposition on the constitution of school subjects in Brazil. In dialogue with this concept, the proposal of the situated historical cognition weaves a path towards the science of reference, putting in perspective the process of methodization to be carried out in the History Lesson. A process in which the role and the meaning given to the work of the teacher and to the relationship with the learning of young people and children take on a qualitatively different dimension from those that, historically, have based the didactics of History in Brazil, much more articulated to the psychological conceptions of learning, than to the categories of historical thought itself.

At the heart of the proposition of the History Lesson is the proposition and construction of a differentiated relationship with the concept of learning, which dialogues, in an organic way, with the categories of historical thought itself. Thus, it becomes important to make explicit what is understood by historical thought and to seek the categories that, in the process of constituting History as scientific knowledge, have been objectified. Still in the phase of research and introduction into experiences of teaching practices, the adherence to the formation of historical thought allows one to speak of the fundamental importance of categories as historical explanation, argumentation, temporal orientation, empathy and historical narrative. The actual historical categories form the background for the formation of thought, always in accordance with the contents that constitute the substance of historical knowledge. Learning to think historically never foregoes the choice of content or the past that one wants to learn, so that the process of subjectivation in the relationship with knowledge is significant and has meaning for those involved in the teaching and learning relationship.

However, the difficult relationship between the conception of learning and the teaching method persists, which is fundamental for the effectiveness of the course relating to the way in which teachers and students perform in class, the appropriation of the method and the production of historical knowledge. This has been the concern of authors like Peter Seixas and Jörn Rüsen, in the contribution to the elaboration of a matrix of the Didactics of History, referenced in the disciplinary matrix of History. Here, the necessary contribution of the experiences and productions of teachers of History must be highlighted, in the incessant work they do and in the constant dialogue between theory and practice, even facing precarious conditions in their teaching work.

In this respect, one of the questions is to understand whether a didactic process is possible, with reference to the renewal of the idea of learning, from a reconstructivist perspective, that is, is it possible to carry out in History classes the path of the methodic of the science of History itself? It is important to remember that the didacticisation of historical knowledge has been seen as a process involving the empirical task, related to the production and investigation of teaching and learning processes; the reflexive task, proper to the systematic analysis of the formation and self-training processes of individuals and societies and the normative task, which investigates the forms of intentional mediation and representation of History, in teaching or not, in different moments and historical contexts (BERGMANN,1990, pp. 30-31).

These are challenges that need to be accepted and addressed, namely through systematic, individual and collective research and reflection.



## **History Lesson: Contributions from Research**

The theoretical framework of situated historical cognition can also be considered as the main support for the paradigm shift in research on History teaching. The systematic implementation of the consultation of the science of reference, in the frameworks of relative production, particularly the philosophy of History, is a work carried out by the historian and that allows, among other things, to elucidate questions relevant to the relationships between historical thought and the formation of historical consciousness, with reference to the theory of historical consciousness and its articulation with the learning and teaching of History.

By reaffirming historical consciousness as the place of learning, Rösen (2012) poses new questions from the conceptual and theoretical point of view. For him, this requires empirical research, while demanding an operationalization of research from the Heuristic, Analytical and Interpretative perspectives. From the point of view of Heuristics, it means that a theory of historical learning requires investigations that take into account the statements of historical consciousness, identifiers and enablers (from the theoretical point of view) of the performances of historical learning (how does it manifest itself?). One can locate here the processes or strategies of historical thought, such as historical explanation, evidence, empathy, and narrative, that constitute the epistemological concepts of History. The analytical perspective indicates that a theory of historical learning provides the necessary criteria and categories for the investigations of the material content of the said

statements, for example, the category of multiperspectivity, which can be analyzed and also worked with, from the substantive concepts or contents of History. Finally, the interpretative perspective starts from a theory of historical learning that allows the formation of hypotheses of investigations about the empirical correlations between the different factors and development of historical consciousness, and the conditions in which such correlations occur. In this case, examples of investigations that have carried out pathways in an attempt to unveil the complex conditions in which the relationships between subjects and historical learning occur and how they can be explicit in ways that they construct meanings and attribute meaning to the relationships between past, present and future can be cited.

This paradigm of historical learning considers that historical consciousness is revealed mainly in and through language. Thus, the linguistic statements of the historical narrative can be privileged as research interest, but not only them, because other elements, such as the imagery symbols, are also indicative of the expressiveness of the senses of the interpretation of time and, therefore, reveal historical consciousness. Interesting research problems have been postulated, for example: how to relate the different phases of life (childhood, youth) to the form of their models of historical interpretation? Would the models of historical interpretation be influenced by the contents, to the point of causing changes in their interpretation? Do models of interpretation depend, and if so to what extent, on the worldviews and ethics of learners? Does the ability to use more complex and elaborate models of interpretation in the apprehension of historical experience diminish or increase as the contents of the experience tangent to immediate personal issues of the subjects, or challenge deeply rooted self-assertions and/or views? (RÜSEN, 2012, p.94-102).

Based on the basic assumption that historical consciousness is the place of learning, some research has been concerned with issues such as the definition, conceptualization, elaboration, investigation of functions, addressing conditions, driving forces and consequences of historical ideas present in school culture, whether in the ideas of teachers and students or elsewhere in school culture, such as textbooks and curricula. In the choice of themes and/or objects of research, the relevance of research “in schools” has been sought, which has as their object the “teaching of” and, therefore, are based on the repertoire of reference science and its specific teaching. However, they also engage in a closer dialogue with empirical theoretical-methodological perspectives of educational research, such as those of anthropological and sociological nature.

The results of the research indicate the option for situated historical cognition, but with a precise focus on learning situations and schooling processes, for example, in classroom studies, making it the reference centre for studies such as curriculum and efficiency of teaching and learning and also looking for the processes that take place in the classroom. Some references from research already carried out or in progress are based on the foundations of English critical sociology, whose manifestations can be observed, for example, in the work of Raymond Williams and Stuart Hall on cultural studies<sup>1</sup>. Other references for the study of the processes of schooling and the relationships of subjects with knowledge in schooling situations are based on the proposals of Paulo Freire's pedagogy and on the field of sociology of experience, particularly the works of François Dubet and Bernard Charlot. These works deal with research that encompasses themes such as gender relations and teaching, issues of identity and teaching, exclusion/inclusion and teaching, as well as the specificity of the subjects' relations with school knowledge, in the dimension of culture and its relation with the processes of schooling.

In general, the works being developed propose a dialogue with qualitative research methodologies in the educational field. In this direction, they are mainly guided by two assumptions. The first of these starts from the reference to research of a qualitative nature, fitting in with Eisner's (1998) perspective of "qualitative enquiry". For the author, the "qualitative enquiry" seeks to understand what teachers and students do and the groups in which they work. Thus, according to Eisner, in order to achieve these objectives, "it is necessary to pay attention to schools and classes, observe them and use what we see as a source of interpretation and valuation" (EISNER, 1998, p.28). The second assumption is based on the perspective of "social construction of the school" (Rockwell, 2011) and, for this reason, the school becomes the place from where the initial questions of activities and research start, such as: what happens in History classes? How do the changes occur? How does teaching take place there? What kind of relationships do subjects establish with historical knowledge? What are they or how do teachers and students develop their understanding of historical ideas? What meanings does historical knowledge have for the subjects involved in the teaching/learning process? How do young people and children react to the processes of historical knowledge production? What is the result of historical knowledge in the formation of historical consciousness of young

<sup>1</sup> A discussion of this theme can be found in CEVASCO, Maria Elisa. Culture: A British Topic of Western Marxism. In. LOUREIRO, I.M./ MUSSE, R. (org.) *Capítulos do Marxismo Ocidental*. São Paulo: UNESP, 1998, pp.145-171.

people and children? On the basis of the questions raised, the surveys may be conducted in groups, and a provisional summary may be made:

### **1. Themes related to learning and their relationship with teaching methodology**

One of the themes emphasized by groups of researchers is anchored in the specific concern with the relationship between learning and the teaching of history and concerns the teaching methodologies in the classroom and their relationship with historical consciousness, with the aim of finding appropriate responses to the necessary relationships between the teaching contents and processes and the historical consciousness of the subjects who teach and learn.

Referring to Rösen's propositions, Fronza (2012, p.77) states that, from the propositions of this author, it became "possible to investigate historical learning as one of the dimensions of historical consciousness, where the didactics of history should conceptualize and explain this consciousness, giving a sense of orientation linked to the learning process". One of the difficulties encountered in the development of studies was to overcome the investigations of the students' historical knowledge as a mere acquisition of specific information on what the students already knew about the contents. In this respect, Rösen's (2001) protonarrative conception has been the starting point for getting to know students' historical thinking and how it has been used as a guide to practical life situations. According to this author, protonarratives are included in a pre-history, not in the chronological sense, but in the sense of an assumption, that is, "In this pre-history, the past as such is not yet conscious, nor inserted, with the present and the future, in the complex set of a "history". (RÖSEN, 2001, p.74).

In contrast to the perspective of the theory of didactic transposition, the proposal of "situated historical cognition" starts from the conception that the teacher is a researcher who seeks to understand and transform the historical ideas of his students, carrying out a process that passes through a contextualized understanding of the past, based on available evidence, and the development of a temporal orientation that translates into the interiorization of relations between the past understood, the present problematized and the future in perspective (BARCA, 2005, p.13). In this process, the student is understood as the agent of his formation with previous ideas and diverse experiences and the teacher as a social researcher and organizer of problematizing activities. Historical knowledge is seen from its multifaceted nature and at its various levels: common sense, science and



epistemology; strategies and resources are multiple and intervening; evaluation is made from all the material produced by the student; and social effects are focused on social agents.

One of the main contributions of the use of this process can be developed with teachers and students from the primary school. In this case, the importance is now given to the “how” students bring, from their experiences and backgrounds, ways of relating to knowledge, as one of the elements of reference and support for the thematisation of the curricular contents, as well as the cut-off to be given to them. Moreover, the research and analysis of protonarratives also serve as a starting point for the selection of sources, materials and problematizations that will be worked on in History classes, at school and outside of it.

Another result of the investigations has been the elaboration of models of analysis of students' narratives, based on the systematization of some categories, such as: 1. Development of ideas of causality and/or interpretation; of continuity and change. 2. Analysis of the progression of students' previous knowledge from the incorporation of new information to existing ones and the use, in their arguments and explanations, of the references of their cultural group. 3. Use of temporal concepts, such as relations between present and past, chronology, periodization and words or concepts that indicate temporalities. 4. Forms of structuring of narratives that can be observed from the analysis of elements such as the linear and chronological dimension of events; the identification and explanation of the causes and intentions that generate changes; the exposure of relationships between objects and events; the explanation of a problem or conflict that triggers the relationship with the past; the personification of the actions of the characters; a conclusion or closure that synthesizes the explanation.

## **2. Topics related to the analysis, function and nature of historical consciousness**

The work of Furman (2006), can be understood as an important discussion on the function of historical learning, from the analysis of the relationship between historical consciousness and citizenship. Conducting a review of the concept of citizenship and a dialogue between Paulo Freire and Jörn Rüsen, he investigated the idea that 966 young students in the fourth cycle of primary school (8th and 9th grades) had about citizenship, applying a questionnaire with semi-structured questions. The results pointed out that, despite the different meanings that young people attribute to this concept, a strong relationship prevailed between citizenship

and links of sociability. On the contrary, among their teachers, the idea of citizenship as political participation and the conquest of human rights predominated.

The nature, function and importance of historical consciousness, related to the values attributed by young students to their religiosity, was the subject of Nechi's research (2011). In addition to investigating the meanings that 172 young students and 4 history teachers in a Catholic confessional school attribute to ideas of religion and religiosity when studying history, he analyzed the way in which they relate to the content of religion that is present in their textbook. One of the results was that young people are unable to attribute meaning between what they learn about the religion of the people in history classes and their own religiosity in practical life.

Also worthy of note is the research carried out by Fronza (2012) which includes the category of intersubjectivity as one of the important second order concepts related to the historical learning of young students, as well as its relationship with historical objectivity and truth. Likewise, Germinari (2010), taking as its premise the relationship between the nature of historical consciousness and the functions and uses of history in public life, investigated manifestations of the historical consciousness of 126 young people aged 14 to 19. One of the results of the research was the existence of contradictions between the historical consciousness of young people related to their practical life, tinged by the presence of uprooting and living with violence, and the way in which they relate to their city's past.

### **3. Themes related to the functions and uses of history in public life**

This theme may include a set of researches that take as an object of analysis the presence of historical ideas in textbooks intended for pupils and those intended for teachers.

These investigations have pointed out a close link between historical culture and the schooling process and in them can be framed the work related to the study of learning concepts in student textbooks and/or History Didactics textbooks intended for teachers and also to the presence of historical ideas in student textbooks and notebooks. This includes the work of Medeiros (2005) on the relationship between young high school students in a public school and the textbook produced by the school's publisher. Based on the premise, espoused by Rüsen (2010d), that an ideal textbook should develop a narrative competence, the author has noted the difficulties for this to occur, due to the impediments generated by the political economy of teaching materials, in which a certain form of production, distribution and consumption of historical knowledge is determined. Medeiros, based on

qualitative research, analysed the manual produced, the ideas of the author who produced it, as well as of 152 high school students. Among the results presented, the fact that young people do not find in the material offered any meaningful relationship between historical knowledge and their practical lives that can provide a sense of orientation in time stands out.

One of the surveys that indicates of how textbooks for students have produced references for certain conceptions of “the other’s” past was carried out by Bertolini (2011). The author pointed out that the idea of Islam present in textbooks produced from 1911 to 2011 in Brazil does not present any change that could be a reference for overcoming stereotypes and prejudices towards the Arab and Islamic people.

In another direction is inserted the research that was conducted by Grendel (2009). During a school year, the researcher followed the use that young people in the 6th grade made of their History notebook, in a public school. During this period, she tried to understand the ways of recording, the meanings and the importance that young people attributed to the history content they recorded in their notebooks. One of the questions pointed out was that the students’ records showed certain mental operations of thought much more inserted in the cognitive abilities of general didactics, such as: characterizing, identifying, comparing, than in the competencies of historical thought itself, such as forms of retrospective, prospective, selective or argumentative interpretation. Furthermore, Grendel found that the teacher’s and textbook’s narratives were practically the only ones appearing in the notebooks and the students’ narratives were practically non-existent.

The counterpoint between the theory of situated historical cognition and didactic transposition signals the existence of a movement within the discussions on the Didactics of History and points to two main results. On the one hand, the importance of valuing the teacher as the subject of the production of knowledge within the schooling framework, revealing the possibility of overcoming the classic division of labour between academia and basic school. On the other hand, the emphasis on the possibilities of historical learning constituted from the formation of historical thought itself and the assignment of meanings to those who teach and those who learn. These results can contribute expressively to an emancipatory and libertarian education so that the history class is a relationship of interlocutors who build up senses.



## Learning as the Foundation of History Lesson

Historically, many reasons have been given to justify the necessity to learn History. So many are the demands of different societies and human groups at various historical moments. In general, the novel announcement of current discussions in the field of History teaching has highlighted two aspects. The first is the importance of knowing the concept of learning, as well as the ways to learn, in order to define the teaching methods. The second, more specific of a certain field of History teaching, concerns the necessity that the history learning is based on perspectives and concepts of the reference science itself and not only on elements of the psychology of learning. It is never too much to try to answer the classic question - why learn History? The answers are multiple, depending on the authors consulted.

Some justifications for this need are given by Peter Lee, when he states that “one does not escape the past, for it is the reference for our knowledge of rules and our ability to select events” (LEE, 2011, p.20). In dialogue with philosophers of History, the author argues that without history, the past would merely serve practical interests and humanity would be deprived of its own experience. Thus, says Lee, “If our knowledge of the present world is never ‘instant knowledge’, and brings us, whether we like it or not, some substantive conception of the past, then to be historically ignorant is precisely to be ignorant”. (LEE, 2011, p.26). Contrary to relating historical learning to expectations outside the scientific discourse itself, according to Lee, some explanations of the quality given to the acquisition of

experience by historical knowledge can be found in the justifications presented. On the one hand, it is a “vicarious experience” because it is acquired second-hand, i.e.

People who read about (or even research) different ways of life do not live them because of this and following the path of diplomatic negotiations does not mean being engaged in diplomacy. But by seeking to understand why people have done as they have done and why diplomacy has done so, a person can expand the range of situations with which he or she is equipped to recognise the range of possibilities that he or she is prepared to encounter. (LEE, 2011, p.38).

On the other hand, it is about acquiring the experience of articulating the reasons and skills of seeing things from different points of view, learning history to develop tolerance. But, as Lee states, the tolerance offered by history “is not a vague sense of sympathy or forgiveness, which accepts everything on the basis of widespread human common sense and relativism. (...) Genuine historical tolerance must be well informed and critical”. (LEE, 2011, p.39). The nuclear significance of learning history within the foundations of science itself points to the importance and specific nature of historical cognition situated for the Didactics of History.

### **Relations between learning and the Didactics of History**

Since 2001, the works of historian and philosopher Jörn Rüsen<sup>1</sup> have been published in Brazil. In contrast to discussions that had been initiated by specialists in history teaching, Jörn Rüsen’s (2007a) reflections on the didactics and functions of historical knowledge bring the assumption of didactics as the science of historical learning. The perspective meets a problem that has challenged many educators, emphasizing that the core element of teaching practice is learning, which results from the intellectual and practical activity of those who learn in relation to content or object, carried out together with teachers and colleagues. Therefore, the reference for the teaching activities is the student’s learning; how one teaches depends on knowing how individuals learn. (LIBANEO, 2008, p.65). The importance of the concept of learning as a starting point and guiding premise for the teaching method of History, as well as its complexity and diversity of approaches, in view of its relationship with the science of reference, is thus highlighted.

<sup>1</sup> Jörn Rüsen (1938-). Professor Dr. Honoris Causa of the Federal University of Paraná. Professor Emeritus of the University of Witten/Herdecke (Germany), he was a professor at the universities of Braunschweig, Berlin, Bochum and Bielefeld. A historian, he is the author of fundamental works in the fields of theory, methodology and didactics of History.

In the work - Theory of History. A theory of History as Science - published in Brazil in 2015, the relationship that Jörn Rüsen establishes between history theory and learning is well explained when he asks: what is the role of History theory in the Didactics of History? And he answers

All knowledge of what historical learning is requires knowledge of what history is, of what the specificity of historical thought is and of the modern scientific form in which it is expressed. At the heart of the issue is the capacity to think historically, which is being developed in education and training processes (RÜSEN, 2015, p.243).

For the author, the Didactics of History is the science of historical learning, “learning continues to mean the object of didactics in history theory”, (RÜSEN, 2007a). When asking - “What is the Didactics of History? He says - It is the science of historical learning. It consists of two components: history and learning”. (RÜSEN, 2016,p.16). Based on the theory and philosophy of History, the Didactics of History as the science of historical learning, signals that the central question is to understand how historical thinking contributes to orient through time human life in (identity) and out (praxis). It is an account of the process of learning to think historically, i.e., to carry out “historical formation”, involving two aspects - practical life and science - organically interconnected. In a transversal perspective, it means understanding historical knowledge as a synthesis of human experience with its interpretation for orientation in practical life. Horizontally, it would mean considering formation as socialization and individuation from its relationship with science.

There is a criticism of the so-called “Didactics of Copying”, that is, of the way in which the transposition of scientific historical knowledge to school form was and is carried out, which resulted, among others, in the banning of scientific procedures related to the process of production of historical knowledge, such as: the way of generating historical problems from the lack of orientation of practical life; the relationship between historical formatting and the public and the function of orientation of practical life as something that influences the very production of historical knowledge. Such considerations could not be dismissed from the category of historical culture, with which it is important to dialogue, articulating with issues that involve the process of historical school learning.

In general terms, researchers have sought to look at the subjects “in the school universe”, taking as a fundamental reference the category of culture and sociological and historical approaches, opening up possibilities to meet, not the student, but the child, from his or her way of living as a child, and the young person, from his or her

way of living as a juvenile (MARGULIS/URRETI, 2000). It is understood that culture needs to be apprehended as an integral process of life, of a social character, which needs to be comprehended from a relational perspective, with emphasis on the interdependence between all aspects of social reality and on the proper dynamics of social change. Thus, culture is not situated as an absolutely superstructural element, nor can it be understood as a mere reflection of infrastructure, but needs to be apprehended in and from relational processes.

Such a conceptual perspective incorporates culture in a totality, as a result of the universal human condition, as an ensemble or product of human experience, as a process of selective tradition, and as human action in practical life. Thus, it allows us to understand it as something lived from a moment and a place, as the historical product of a given period and society, and as the intentional selection of the history of humanity. One can also speak of elements of culture, referring to artifacts, ideas, signs and symbols, languages and everything that allows and fulfills the mediations of and between subjects, in historically determined social relations, where these subjects are products and also producers of culture, and one can admit the existence of categorical approaches to culture, such as historical culture and school culture.

The categorical potential of this concept of culture even refers to the possibility of talking about specific cultures, related, for example, to the formative processes of historical awareness, integrated into the dynamics of historical culture and school culture. In the perspective adopted by Forquin (1993), school culture can be defined as the set of cognitive and symbolic contents which, selected, organized, standardized, routinized, under the effect of the imperatives of didatization, usually constitute the object of a deliberate transmission in the context of schools and school culture, the latter being the specific form of realization of school culture within the school itself.

According to Juliá (1995), school culture needs to be grasped, not only from the evidence found in documents and sources related to the bureaucratic organization of the school, but also from the heterogeneous and mutating evidence of educational practice. For this author, on the one hand, one finds the school culture evidenced in the norms and texts relating to the control of daily school life, and on the other, the multiplicity of daily practices. This is what Rockwell<sup>2</sup> and Ezpeleta<sup>3</sup> (2007, p.133) call “the documented history of the school” which coexists with the “undocumented

 <sup>2</sup> Elsie Rockwell (United States, 1945). Historian and anthropologist. She works in Mexico. Specialist in educational research.

<sup>3</sup> Justa Ezpeleta. Honorary Professor at the National University of Colombia.

history” of the school and both need to be looked at in their diversity, always from the perspective of change and taking the school as a social construction, that is, that each school, even immersed in a historical movement of broad scope, is always a local and particular version of this movement.

In this sense, for Rockwell, while the norms and texts of school culture are articulated and show a school that is practically immune to the contradictions and tensions of the outside world, the culture of the school, that is, the daily practices of the school that reinterprets them, in a multifaceted way, can be revealing of these tensions and contradictions. According to the author, “there are unwritten norms (sometimes the most effective). There are discursive practices and practical discourses, and there are practices that set the norm (written or unwritten and monitor its application). Some norms, the product of practices, reflect broad consensus; many practices, derived from norms, are imposed by coercion; many norms and practices have little relation with each other”. (Rockwell, 2011, p.160).

It is important to stress the assumption that historical culture is a category of analysis that allows one to understand the production and uses of history in public space in today’s society. This is a phenomenon of which the great boom of History, the success that academic debates have had outside the circle of experts, and the great sensitivity of the public to the use of historical arguments for political ends are part. This process includes the clashes, confrontations and rapprochements between academic research, school teaching, the conservation of monuments, museums and other institutions, around a common approach to the past. Thus, “historical culture contemplates the different strategies of scientific-academic research, artistic creation, the political struggle for power, school and extra-school education, leisure and other procedures of public historical memory, as concretes and expressions of a single mental power”. (RÜSEN, 2016, p.56).

In this direction, the category of historical culture theorized by Rösen shows historical consciousness as an elementary and general reality of the human explanation of the world and of oneself, with an unquestionable practical meaning for life, proposing that

of historical consciousness there is only one small step to historical culture. If one examines the role that historical consciousness plays in the life of a society, it appears as a fundamentally specific cultural contribution that affects and influences almost all areas of the praxis of human life. Thus, historical culture can be defined as the practical and operative articulation of historical consciousness in the life of a society. As a praxis of the consciousness, it has to do, fundamentally, with human subjectivity,



as an activity of the consciousness, through which human subjectivity is realized in practice, it is created, so to speak. (...) Historical culture contemplates the different strategies of scientific-academic research, artistic creation, the political struggle for power, school and extra-school education, leisure and other procedures of public historical memory. (RÜSEN, 2016, pp.57-58).

Based on the functions of historical culture in certain societies, Rüsen (2016) presents its three main dimensions: the aesthetic, political and cognitive dimension. In the aesthetic dimension of historical culture, historical recollections are presented mainly in the form of artistic creations, such as novels and historical dramas. It is not a question of finding the historical in the aesthetic, but the presence of the aesthetic in the historical, making it visible as something relevant to the rememorative work of historical consciousness.

The political dimension of historical culture is based on the principle that any form of domination requires the adherence and/or consent of the dominated and historical memory plays an important role in this process, particularly because of the need for legitimisation for consent. Thus, the genuinely political dimension of historical culture is based on the fact that any form of domination requires the consent of those affected; historical memory plays an important role in this consent. It is not a coincidence that political domination presents itself using symbols loaded with historical resonance. This is evident in national festivals, which generally have to recall the origins of the political community in such a way that they show a normative obligation, initially established as lasting. (RÜSEN, 2016, p.69).

Finally, the cognitive dimension of historical culture is realized mainly through historical science and its processes of methodological regulation of the activities of historical consciousness, that is, the principle of coherence of content, which refers to the reliability of historical experience and the scope of the norms used for its interpretation. (RÜSEN, 2016, p.71).

The elements of historical culture provide possibilities to identify and analyse certain elements of school culture, such as the strong presence of commemorative dates and national heroes in History teaching. Moreover, textbooks, in a particularly interesting way, are part of the production dynamics of the historical culture of each society at different historical moments and have been, as Rüsen (2010a., p. 112) states, “one of the most important channels for the transportation of historical research on the historical culture of a society”. In his considerations about “the ideal textbook”, the author emphasizes the importance of not only making efforts towards systematic evaluation projects and analysis of these textbooks, but above all,

developing research on how they are used by teachers and appropriated by students. This is one of the dynamics of learning history that can be identified as one of the processes that call into question the relationship between elements of the culture of school (in this specific case, history textbooks) and school culture, i.e., the practices and experiences proper to the school universe.

In systematizing the reflections on historical culture, Rösen affirms that, in today's society, the tendency to instrumentalize diminishes the possibilities of articulation between the three dimensions, often making one of the models more decisive in the construction of historical consciousness. This can cause a weakening of the argumentative force of the methodological use of the intellect in addressing historical experience, that is, the experience of the past in relation to the expectation of the future, always from the present, thus reducing the potential of historical learning for the formation of historical consciousness.

These concerns interfere, above all, in the analysis of the relations between historical culture and the teaching and learning of history, and agree with the hypothesis raised by the author of the existence of a process of detachment within the cognitive dimension of historical culture, due to the process of specialization of History as a science, causing separation between those who research - historians; and those who teach - others. According to RÖSEN (2010b), the consolidation of History as a science has excluded Didactics of History, and therefore historical learning, from the centre of the historian's reflection on his own profession, being replaced by the methodology of historical research, causing a separation between the teaching of History and its research.

During the process of 'scientification' of History, the learning of History and, therefore, its teaching, started to be seen as activities of lesser value, secondary, of mere reproduction of academic knowledge, with the objective of fulfilling the purposes assumed in the processes and forms of schooling of each society. The act of teaching History and the product of this act were not attributed the status of science because, while scientific knowledge was produced exclusively by History professionals, the "task of teaching History was to transmit this knowledge without participating in the creation of the discourse" (RÖSEN, 2010b, p.27).

This separation ended up leaving a void for academic historical knowledge, the void of its function, since from the "nineteenth century, when historians constituted their discipline, they began to lose sight of an important principle, namely, that that History must be connected to the social need for life's orientation within the temporal structure" (RÖSEN, 2010b., p. 31). The existence of erudite historical

knowledge was justified in order for it to serve as a basis for teaching, but the teaching of History was not justified because its function for practical life had been lost. This disconnection from the subject of History in a practical sense, if on the one hand it offered it the status of an erudite subject, on the other, generated the vacuum of the function of History teaching in the school. This point of view reached its peak in the middle of the 20th century.

Questions concerning the interrelationship between historical research and the lived world (of experience) (*Lebenswelt*) of this researcher, as well as all questions of interest to historical education, were banned as a separate, extra-historical discipline: consequently, formal History did not directly address the essence of school historical knowledge. Historians considered that their discipline could be legitimated by mere existence and compared historical studies and their production of knowledge to a tree that produces its leaves. 'The tree lives as long as it has leaves and it is its destiny to live and have leaves.' It refused to give History any practical use or real function in those cultural areas where History can serve as a means to explicitly provide a collective identity and life orientation" (RÜSEN, 2010b, p.34).

This case was not restricted to the German reality, which Jörn Rüsen examined. In Brazil there was also a movement in which the issues of teaching and learning History were not the object of "historians" and were pushed, tendentially, into the sphere of school culture. From this readjustment, the cognitive dimension of historical culture, with regard to the formal and informal processes of teaching, came to be articulated with the political dimension of school culture. The questions related to historical learning and, therefore, to its teaching, did not belong to the agenda of historians, but to the theoreticians of education and, therefore, of the forms and functions of schooling, making it understandable that the problems and crises which occurred in the cognitive dimension of historical culture came to belong more to the scope of the crises of schooling than to the science of History itself, the so-called "pedagogisation of the teaching of history"<sup>4</sup> taking place.

By way of example, a speech on the crisis in History teaching in Brazil, announced already at the end of the 19th century, can be cited. In the preface to the

<sup>4</sup> SCHMIDT, Maria Auxiliadora. História com pedagogia: a contribuição da obra de Jonathas Serrano na construção do código disciplinar da História no Brasil. (History with pedagogy: the contribution of the work of Jonathas Serrano in the construction of the disciplinary code of History in Brazil) In. Revista Brasileira de História. Dossiê: Produção e divulgação de saberes históricos e pedagógicos. (Brazilian Journal of History. Dossier: Production and dissemination of historical and pedagogical knowledge.) São Paulo: ANPUH, vol. 24, n. 48, jul-dez, 2004, pp. 189-211.

History of Brazil textbook, by João Ribeiro<sup>5</sup>, Araripe Junior<sup>6</sup>, a newcomer from Germany where he had accompanied the innovations in teaching, exposed the need for a methodological reform of history teaching in Brazil, arguing that “the method is the marvel of the school and the delight of the teacher”. From the perspective of pedagogical argumentation, the crisis of the teaching method began to be announced, also observed in the reflections of two significant specialists in History teaching: Jonathas Serrano and Murillo Mendes.

The first, a professor at teacher training courses, member of the Brazilian Historical and Geographic Institute, author of numerous textbooks for students and teachers of History, noted the existence of a crisis in the teaching method of History based on the memorization of oral presentations and written points. He suggested a broad methodological renewal of History teaching, mainly due to technological transformations (such as the invention of the school cinematograph), also proposing the urgent need to apply to History teaching all the real achievements of psycho-pedagogy and renewed didactics (SERRANO, 1935, p.13).

The second, who also dedicated himself to the training of History teachers, author of the classic study on history teaching in secondary school, noted the concern he saw among the young people of his time about the study of the past and proposed a renewal of History teaching, taking into account its usefulness for the life of youth. This utility should be “in function of the complex social problems which we are called upon to solve and which require the new generations to appreciate a more intelligible world, in which they can more effectively cooperate for the improvement of the collective life, in the universal and irrepressible tendency of the new education, which Brazil cannot escape” (MENDES, 1935, p. 15).

None of these authors criticised the conception of historical knowledge spread in schools during the period, noting only the existence of a crisis in the “teaching method” and in the perspective in which History teachers saw their pupils as passive subjects of historical knowledge learning.

Subsequently, Nadai (1993), in an already classic study on the trajectory of History teaching in Brazil, admitted the existence of a crisis in the teaching method along the lines previously mentioned, but indicating that

<sup>5</sup> João Batista Ribeiro de Andrade Fernandes (1860-Sergipe/1934-Rio de Janeiro), better known as João Ribeiro, was a Brazilian journalist, literary critic, philologist, historian, textbook author, painter and translator. He was also a member of the Brazilian Academy of Letters.

<sup>6</sup> Tristão de Alencar Araripe Júnior (Fortaleza, 1848 - Rio de Janeiro, 1911) was a Brazilian lawyer, literary critic and writer.

History teaching is currently experiencing a crisis, which is surely a crisis of “historicist history”, resulting from the imbalances between the multiple and differentiated social demands and the inability of the school institution to meet them or to respond to them in a coherent manner. This crisis mirrors the changes in scientific production itself, which, in a way, have broadened the range of possibilities for thinking, doing and writing history (NADAI, 1993, p.144).

In the wake of the discussions that took place at the time and of some propositions that had taken the form of curricular proposals in various state education systems, Nadai (1993) pointed to the crisis in the conception of history produced in the 19th century and indicated what the elements of the new paradigm for History teaching would be: the acknowledgement of the existence of school historical knowledge with its own specificity and legitimacies; the recognition of the end of the mastery of great historical narratives and the orientation towards other conceptions of narrative such as thematic history and microhistory; the need for history teaching to take as a reference the method of science itself; overcoming the teaching-research dichotomy and searching for pedagogical proposals that contemplate the social reality of students and teachers; the understanding that students and teachers are subjects of History as a social movement and as memory; the school use of historical documents as well as the renewal of their use in textbooks. It is important to point out that at that time he made no specific reference to a renewed conception of learning, the theoretical spectrum of which was allocated to the science of history.

The problem of the dichotomy between the science of History and learning and teaching has also contaminated the direction of research on history teaching, such as the work of Medeiros<sup>7</sup> (2002). Investigating young high school students, the researcher found the “pedagogical gaps” indicated by Rösen (2010b). According to Medeiros, these voids relate both to the conception of the one who learns and of the history that is taught

Such “pedagogical vacuums” are constituted first of all by the aprioristic conception of the student as ‘someone who has come to learn’. (...) The application of the questionnaire on History teaching revealed a willing and interested young person. More than this: A young person waiting. Hence the second interface of the “pedagogical void”: the difficulty of translation. Aware that we have a ‘scientific

<sup>7</sup> Daniel Hortêncio de Medeiros. History teacher in High School. He was my Master’s and Doctorate student in the field of Education.

content' to teach, we forget that there is a history being constructed in the present and that also in the past, histories are suffocated by chronological and deterministic schemes of explanation. (MEDEIROS, 2002, p.122).

Continuing his research on the use of textbooks, in his PhD thesis, Medeiros (2005) concluded that

The textbook is the field of a double dispute: on the one hand, the clash in the field of the science of History, between those, like Jörn Rüsen, who advocate a continuation of critical rationality and those who, on the other hand, condemn the uncompleted rationality of modernity as those who throw away the dirty water with the child together. On the other hand, the clash between the history teaching material made for the market and the pupils who do not incorporate its contents into their everyday worlds. In the midst of these clashes, I researched the relationship of the pupils with the didactic material and verified how much a traditional material, more concerned with the teacher than with the senses of the pupils, alienates these pupils from the possibility of producing historical consciousness. In spite of this, they are pupils and students waiting. The sterile nature in terms of the connection with the present of the contents of the researched textbook does not prevent them from still wanting history lessons (...) (MEDEIROS, 2005, p.161).

Research results have shown that the relationship between historical culture and school culture, as far as historical learning is concerned, brings consequences beyond the cognitive dimension, as it points out tensions and decisive issues in relation to the political dimensions, which are crucial in the process of selection and choices, of contents, learning conceptions and teaching methodologies that involve the training of historians and the didactic function of History.

### **Form and function of Learning for the History Lesson**

Reconstructing the past in History class, this is the starting point of the Reconstructivist Didactics of History. The dialogue between History as a science and the Didactics of History, from the perspective that the past is not a construction, but a reconstruction, means, among others, assuming the principle of the existence of the events of the past and the possibility of being methodically reconstructed. It also means to adhere to the assumption of narrative as a form and function of historical learning, considering that the attribution of meanings and sense by historical knowledge are related to the understanding that historical consciousness is the starting and ending point of learning. In this sense, historical consciousness is understood as a form of human consciousness, and learning to attribute meaning is

related to the experiences of practical human life, and one of the elements of this consciousness is time, because the human being - by establishing an interpretative framework of what he experiences as a change of himself and of his world - needs to take control of time so that he can realize the intentions of his actions. This process, the result of historical consciousness, can be described as a unitary operation of the consciousness and as a coherent process of thought; the synthesis is realized in the acts of speech, through the historical narrative. The narrative is the form and learning to narrate oneself and humanity is the function of historical learning.

The reconstruction of the past is carried out through the teaching and learning of history, taking place from the interaction between the subjects. In this process, the fact that the narrative is constitutive of historical consciousness allows the subjects to use memories as one of the elements to reconstruct and interpret the experiences of time, because, as Rüsen states, “the past would be like a forest into which men, through the historical narrative, launch their cry in order to understand, through what echoes from it, what is present to them in the form of the experience of time (more precisely: what moves them) and to be able to hope and project a future with meaning. (RÜSEN, 2001, p. 63)

But it is not only through memory that the past is reconstructed. Regardless of the way in which *historical consciousness* penetrates the past, as in the itinerary of the archives of memory, the impulse for this return is always given by the experiences of the present time. That is, historical consciousness is the place where the past is led to speak, but it only comes to speak when questioned. And the question that makes him speak originates from the lack of orientation in current practical life, in the face of his experiences in time.

Interpretation and continuity are part of the reconstruction process. It is an interpretative reminder that makes the past present, in the here and now, because “historical narrative makes the past present, so that the present appears as a continuation in the future” (RÜSEN, 2001, p. 64). It is also about the “representation of continuity” as one of the intellectual operations of the narrative, a unifying element in the process of the relationship between present, past and future, which makes it possible to build resistance against the loss of ourselves through self-affirmation and the constitution of identity, since “through the historical narrative, representations of continuity of the temporal evolution of men and their world, instigators of identity, are formulated through memory and inserted, as a determination of meaning, into the framework of the orientation of practical human life. (RÜSEN, 2001, p. 67).

Giving centrality to historical narrativity as a reference for the teaching and learning of History indicates at least two problems to be confronted. The first concerns the mastery of narrative by teachers in history classes and attempts to replace it with other forms of communication. The second is the very theory of the narrativity of history which underlies the relationship of dependence between the teaching of history and the science of history. Given the theoretical framework proposed about the relevance of narrative in and for historical consciousness, it is valid to question its practicality in the process of school learning. An incursion into the reflections of Chris Husbands (2003) on school narrative “softens the ground”, because, unlike other historians, for Husbands, historical learning at school does not aim to “generate new knowledge” through the development of notions of evidence and historical narratives. The main purpose is to generate new understandings and historical narratives, and one of the ways in which students and teachers give meaning to the past. is to think about the construction of narratives or versions of this past, reconstructing it in the light of the enquiries of its present.

Traditionally, the use of the narrative in class and the relationship that the student establishes with it have been constantly associated with an active didactic approach of the teacher and a passivity of the student. There is a strong presence of over-simplifications that some teachers constantly outline about historical characters and contexts, caricaturing them or presenting them as archetypes of good and evil. The reductions make it difficult for students, in the relationships they establish with the narratives already produced, including that of the teacher, or in the construction of narratives, to use them as arguments and means to achieve an end, that is, the construction of historical understanding. Narrative, therefore, is not an end in itself, but its purpose is to contribute to the generation of understanding about the past, activating the thinking of those who learn. In this way, it needs to be explored in History classes, because narrating means telling and retelling stories, contributing to the reconstructivist nature of the Didactic of History

This means telling stories, but also asking students to recount them: submit them to a critical examination, creating a sense of what I have called verisimilitude and its logic. It involves a constructively sceptical doubt about the nature of the stories we tell. It means relating stories to the organisational principles - the ideas of cause, continuity, change - of complex historical discourse. (HUSBAND, 2003, p. 39).

Looking at the process of building the “disciplinary code of History” (FERNANDEZ CUESTA, 1998) in Brazil, it can be observed that this problem presents several



aspects to be analysed. One of them is the presence of 19th century historical narrative in textbooks and its repercussion on mnemonic teaching. Another is the influence of technical teaching and its correlate in the so-called learning to mark “X” in multiple choice questions.

Moreover, the presence of a certain Eurocentric narrative structure in curricula and textbooks circulating in Brazilian schools has been the subject of criticism by scholars of History teaching, and there are several attempts to promote changes in this direction. However, it can be said that remnants of a certain “disciplinary code” remain in the practice of teachers.

According to studies by Gevaerd (2009), there is evidence of this permanence in teachers’ practices, because from observation of classes, she can conclude that

The emphasis of the lessons was on a methodology in which learning from a memorisation perspective predominated, and this made it difficult for the teacher to focus the learning on the students’ reading and writing of historical narratives. The few narratives developed by them did not reveal the idea of the multiperspectivity of history. Moreover, as the teacher did not start from the students’ previous ideas in order to carry out her pedagogical intervention, in general the narratives produced by the students followed the logic of the textbooks, predominating fragmented narratives.(...) This way of students producing their narratives indicates two fundamental questions. Firstly, from a didactic point of view, the class needs to be modified, because it is necessary to bring the previous ideas of the students as constitutive elements of the learning and teaching methodology of History (...) The second question is the need for the incorporation, by the teachers, of the idea of historical narrative as a way of learning and teaching history (...). (GEVAERD, 2009, pp.290-291).

Faced with the permanence and difficulties of incorporating the idea of historical narrative as a way of learning History, one reports on the positions that Jörn Rüsen proposed, in response to the question: what does it mean to think historically? As a background, the author highlights the fact that “Narrativity appears as an argument if one refers to the relative competences of historical learning and wants to describe and explain them in their specificity; because organised historical learning is considered an indispensable social need and the corresponding competences have to be produced in close relation to history as a specialised discipline” (RÜSEN, 2014b, p.140).

The issue of historical learning as a social necessity and the relationship between skills related to the specialised discipline, a problem which highlights the specificity of historical rationality, the bases of knowledge and historical thinking, as

well as the specificity of practical scientific work to be developed in the reconstruction of the past, are highlighted.

One of the principles of rationality to be emphasized is that which proposes to understand narration as a mental operation of formation of meaning on the experience of time, and historical narrative, because “it means that in relation to experience, the past is interpreted by means of the specific symbolization of a ‘history’, and that this interpretation acquires a guiding function in the culture of the present.” (RÜSEN, 2014b, p.147).

Thus, it is observed that among the bases of knowledge and historical thought, indicative of the methodological renewal of historical learning, is the need for historical learning to be based on multiple perspectives and narratives (Rusen, 2012), elements that should guide the teaching process and the organisation of history classes. Didactically, it is the responsibility of the History teacher to bring his student into possession of scientific knowledge, but this does not mean that history is told by him or her alone and the learning competences are defined a priori, as goals or objectives to be achieved and/or taken as strategies for functional adaptation of the contents to be taught.

The difficulty in framing the formation of historical thinking in predetermined learning goals and objectives concerns the very nature of historical knowledge. In the wake of the discussions initiated by contemporary historiography, it should be noted that storytelling is a vital cultural achievement that shows the potentiality of humanity’s dominance over past, present and future times, as well as its importance in the intentionality of the organization of practical life. This means the individual and collective creation of meanings and temporal experiences that define man as a species. These principles lead to the specificity of historical narrative and history as a specific content of thought, which is formed by the three symbolic qualities of temporal experience: memory, continuity, and intentionality. (RÜSEN, 2012).

In following this path, didactics based on historical learning from a reconstructivist perspective needs to recognise historical consciousness as a process, in addition to seeing it in its own content. Recognizing historical consciousness as a process and learning as narrative presupposes admitting the importance of basing learning on the practical life and cognitive activities of the subject who learns and with which all the teaching of history must relate. As the considerations taken from Gevaerd’s (2009) research indicate, unfortunately, history teaching is more centred on learning the reception of previously selected contents and competences, and has not incorporated the thematisation of the learning

subject's experience, as well as the development of mental operations proper to historical thought.

### **The Science of History as a Reference for the History Lesson**

In general, it has become increasingly clear that, apart from accepting the assumptions of the method of the science of History as a teaching method, the relationship between the forms and functions, or the how and why one learns History cannot be separated, different or autonomous from the science of History.

The problem lies in the status or nature of this relationship and the processes that constitute it. On the one hand, historical consciousness must be taken as the starting and ending point of historical learning, the ability to generate meaning through narrative as the form and function of historical learning, and historical formation of meaning as the main problem of historical learning.

The perspective of the definition and constitution of the concept of historical consciousness that has been developed mainly by the historian and philosopher Jörn Rüsen and its relationship with the teaching of history has, today, as a reference, several investigations, such as those carried out by the English historian Peter Lee and the German historian Bodo Von Borries<sup>8</sup>. According to Barca (2005), researchers have focused their attention on the principles, sources, typologies and strategies of learning in History, under the assumption that intervention in the quality of learning requires a systematic knowledge of the students' ideas, by those who teach. The analysis of these ideas implies a theoretical framework that respects the nature of historical knowledge and that is similarly reflected in the History lesson.

An analysis of textbooks on History intended for teachers<sup>9</sup> showed that the idea of the meaning of historical knowledge for students was not foreign to the different authors at each historical moment. However, it was found that the meaning was not aimed at the formation of historical thought, but the need for a type of citizenship that would enable the integration of young students into the community, the homeland and the world. At the same time, the importance of the meaning of historical learning should be related to the development of the students' interest, always from an intervention determined by something that came from outside the apprentice. Since the work of Serrano (1935) there has been a great emphasis on the

<sup>8</sup> Bodo von Borries. (1943-) German historian and researcher in the field of the Didactics of History.

<sup>9</sup> See SCHMIDT, Maria Auxiliadora. "Aprender a ensinar. Contribuição de manuais destinados a professores" (Learning to teach. Contribution of manuals for teachers.) Curitiba: W&A Editores, 2017.

need for historical learning to be articulated to the students' interests and appropriate to their age group. There was a variety of external determinations, such as the importance of learning the history of one's homeland and of humanity, which produced the elements necessary to constitute the meaning of historical learning.

Among the authors of manuals, the work of Amélia Americano Franco Domingues de Castro, "*Princípios do método no ensino de História*" (Principles of the Method in History Teaching), PhD thesis presented to the Chair of General and Special Didactics, Faculty of Philosophy, Sciences and Languages of the University of São Paulo (1952), stands out. In the introduction of the work, the author emphasizes the scarcity of bibliography on the subject, points out its adherence to the influence of John Dewey regarding the importance of the teaching method as an effective way of achieving the desired results, explaining that, for her, the purpose of teaching and learning history "is not an end in itself, but rather the means available to us to obtain certain results, and that these ends always refer to the learner, target of all pedagogical studies". (CASTRO, 1952, p.6) Castro's concern makes her one of the first authors to relate historical learning to the formation of "historical consciousness", a subject she developed in the chapter "The Student and History".

Now, what did "historical consciousness" mean to the author? It was about taking into account the interests that should be awakened in the students, not developing a learning that emphasized the political and military aspects of History, but showing the struggle for the conquest of science and art, the great movements motivated by ideals, the idea of solidarity and the unity of men. According to her, the historical conscience is the human conscience itself, that which will be obtained without effort through the adolescent's desire to know and participate in the humanity of his time and of his age. (CASTRO, 1952, p.69).

Moreover, to have "historical consciousness" means to learn to have knowledge of certain facts of the past, of the evolution of societies and social institutions, to understand the organization of the different institutions of society, to learn how to be useful to the country and to humanity, to adjust to the temporal dimension in the perspective of continuity between past, present, and future.

The concept of "historical consciousness" does not appear explicitly in other authors. In Castro's own work there are some interesting dimensions of the concept, such as the idea of historical consciousness as human consciousness itself, the formation of the historical consciousness of young people, so that they learn to establish relationships between the past, present, and future, as well as to know and participate in the humanity of their time and age.

However, the author's perspective is that "historical consciousness" is something that does not exist in the young person because of his immaturity, that is, it is something that is learned from elements external to the very cognition situated in the science of history and, above all, as a way for the young student to integrate himself into the society of his time. This leads to the need to problematize the category of historical consciousness, thinking of it as a place and purpose of historical learning from other dimensions.

With regard to historical awareness, one challenge is to interpret the formation of historical awareness with regard to the relationship that young people and children establish with knowledge in various contexts, including formal education, agreeing with historian Estevão Martins<sup>10</sup> that

In the process of building this awareness, educational processes (formal as well as informal) are decisive. The memory collected and learned is thus the object of criticism. This criticism is equally reflective, which could also be called "metareflexive". Why metareflexive? Because in this educational process, in the first line, the agent is confronted with the direct experience of practical life in time, which can be called immediate individual experience. This individual is also confronted, however, with the accumulated stock of systematized reflections, organized in second order concepts of an immediate nature, obtained through learning, contact, coexistence, and tradition. When dealing with these concepts, the individual reflects on a meta level, since he or she can contrast the reflected traditions he or she finds with the immediate experience and with the concepts he or she elaborates, mediately, on the same historical time experiences object of the proposed concepts, taught, conveyed, mediated by others. These third parties can be both the other individuals with whom one lives spontaneously and those who act in the formal educational processes of History teaching, for example, in the school environment. (MARTINS, 2017, p212).

For those who deal with historical learning in formal education, Martins' observations draw attention to several elements involved in the teaching and learning relationship, such as the importance of taking into account the subjects' historical memory, the tacit experiences of practical life and tradition. They should be taken into account in the relationship with the systematised knowledge proper to formal education. It is also believed that the relationship with knowledge presupposes a process of subjectivation, in which "the actor represents himself as a critical subject confronted with a society defined as a system of production and

<sup>10</sup> Estevão Chaves de Rezende Martins. (1947-). Historian and researcher in the area of History Theory. Professor Emeritus of the University of Brasília.

domination". (DUBET<sup>11</sup>/MARTUCCELLI<sup>12</sup>, 1997, p.113) and, therefore, is based on the subjectivity of those who learn, including there the interests and conditions of reception, such as conflicts, prejudices and stereotypes. It also indicates the real possibility of the subject's action in and for knowledge, as well as his intervention in practical life.

This reference to individual and social experience with knowledge enables a dialogue with the category historical consciousness as the place and purpose of learning, particularly, as Rüsen (2012) states, in two aspects: The first concerns the inclusion of aspects of the subjectivity of teachers and students as processes of individualisation and socialisation in which historical self-understanding significantly affects the identity of each of them. The second, no less important, anticipates the importance and significance of historical knowledge in practical life.

In relation to historical learning, it is an experience and cognitive process that requires the student to focus on himself, from his relationship with historical knowledge. And so, the content worked in class, which does not provide this, does not lead to a real historical learning. The relationship between learning and historical literacy is constructed from these considerations as a constitutive process of the nature of Reconstructive History Didactics.

### **Historical Literacy and the History Lesson**

The concept of historical literacy is based on the idea that History is a public form of public knowledge that has developed principles for dealing with the past. But it is a study of the past that has to follow some criteria (LEE,2008, p.15), such as:

- \* to think historically presupposes producing good arguments about the issues and assumptions related to the past, appealing to the validity of history and the plausibility of its statements;
- \* to think historically means to accept that we are forced to tell different stories from those we prefer to tell;
- \* to think historically means to understand the importance of respecting the past and treating people from the past as they would like to be treated and not to plunder the past to serve certain interests of the present.

<sup>11</sup> François Dubet (1946-). French sociologist, reference in the field of Sociology of Experience. He was director of the School of Advanced Studies in Social Sciences.

<sup>12</sup> Danilo Martuccelli (1964-) Professor of sociology at the Université Paris-Descartes, faculty of human and social sciences, Sorbone. His works deal with social theory, political sociology, the sociology of the individual and individuation.

On the basis of these criteria, the concept of historical literacy has been formed, referred to in the science of History itself, because “if we want to state that we are teaching History, instead of other ways of thinking about the past, it is crucial that students understand that there is a form of knowledge of History and that knowledge of the past is not just a matter of personal opinion”. (LEE, 2008, p.13).

To arrive at some indications of what it means to have a historical literacy, it is important to return to the idea that historical learning comes from the need to develop the competence to give meaning (meaning) to time, which is evident when subjects narrate history, building coherent forms of communication of their historical identities. At this point, there appears a direction of historical literacy, which is the need to develop and work on mental operations of historical consciousness, triggering the narrative, because it is only from this that knowledge becomes conscious and self-knowledge. The subject increases his or her capacity to reconstruct the past as a historical past and not only as a practical past or dead past. It follows that historical learning is only learning when it changes the patterns of interpretation of the past, which presupposes a process of dialogical and not passive internalization of historical knowledge, in addition to exteriorization, in the sense of changing the relationship with practical life and with the other.

In this direction, it is worth remembering the existence of an organic relationship between narrative competence and the creation of individual and collective identities. This relationship occurs because the subjects, through the narrative, are able to develop approaches to themselves and to the other, and this requires a consciousness of their own historicity. On the other hand, in narrating his or her life and that of the other, the subject invents himself or herself and institutes his or her belonging in the world. He forges himself in and through narrative, creating a feeling of continuity in time and a feeling of internal coherence, which allows him to interpret himself, narratively, as a singular subject, but tinged with social and cultural elements. Finally, historical literacy can be characterized as the function of the History Lesson of forming historically literate subjects who are minimally capable, according to Peter Lee (2008), of doing some things, such as

- \* have an image of the past that allows them to orient themselves in time, which requires mastery of certain historical contents or a coherent substantive understanding of the past;
- \* have a knowledge of how to develop an explanation and narrative of the past, which presupposes the mastery of substantive and second order ideas that collaborate to organise the past, making knowledge of what happened possible.

From the philosophy of history, Peter Lee, in his work *Towards a concept of historical literacy*<sup>13</sup> dialogues with Jörn Rüsen's theory of historical consciousness to address the constitution of historical learning, from the construction of the concept of historical literacy

Jörn Rüsen's consideration of historical consciousness suggests some principles for building a concept of historical literacy. A first requirement is that students understand something of history, such as a "commitment to enquiry", with its own identifying marks, some organized characteristic ideas, and a vocabulary of expressions to which specialized meaning has been given: "past", "happening", "situation", "event", "cause", "change" and so on. This suggests that students should understand, for example: - how historical knowledge is possible, which requires a concept of evidence; - that historical explanations can be contingent or conditional and that the explanation of actions requires the reconstruction of the agent's beliefs about the situation, values and relevant intentions; - that historical considerations are not copies of the past, but can nevertheless be evaluated as answers to questions in terms of (at least) the scope of the document they explain, its explanatory powers and its congruence with other knowledge. (LEE, 2006, p. 136).

With this dialogue, it signals the idea that history is counter-intuitive and summarises the assumptions of historical literacy into three main components, which can be considered the tripod of the process of didactic reconstruction of the past and which all students should learn:

- \* that historical knowledge is only possible through the concept of evidence;
- \* that historical explanations may be contingent or conditional and that the explanation of actions requires the reconstruction of the agent's beliefs about the relevant situation, values and intentions;
- \* that historical considerations are not copies of the past, but can be evaluated as answers to questions in terms (at least) of the document they explain, its explanatory powers and its congruence with other knowledge. (LEE, 2006, p.136).

In the same direction, the Portuguese historian Isabel Barca considers historical literacy as a set of skills of interpretation and understanding of the past, associated with the development of historical consciousness. She suggests that this need for temporal orientation requires multiple identifications, at various scales (from local

<sup>13</sup> EDUCAR EM REVISTA. Dossiê Educação Histórica. Curitiba: Editora da UFPR, número especial, 2006, pp.131-150.



to global), and the consideration of diverse points of view, presented either by historians or by other sources for History. (BARCA, 2006, p. 93). One of the contributions that influenced the constitution of these reflections was Peter Lee's definition of the elements that interfere with pupils' historical learning

There are substantive concepts, such as farmer, taxes, dates, events, which are very important. Although the understanding of substantive concepts is very important, in England we are beginning to take into account other types of concepts as well, the "second order concepts". It is this kind of concepts, such as narrative, account, explanation, that gives consistency to the discipline. (LEE, 2001, p.15).

In 2005, Lee, in the article - Putting Principles into Practice: Understanding History - published as part of the How People Learn<sup>14</sup> project, presents in greater depth the substantive and second order concepts. In addition, he presents and examines some second order concepts, such as time, change, empathy, causality, evidence and narratives. (LEE, 2005, pp.31-77)

In the same terms, Jörn Rüsen addresses historical concepts as "linguistic resources of historical sentences" and can thus be considered as "explicitly or implicitly expressing the temporal quality of states of affairs in the human past, a quality that these states possess in a certain relationship of meaning and significance with the present and the future" (RÜSEN, 2007b, p.92), indicating an essential quality for concepts to be historical. Thus the historian does not deal with "gender concepts" such as "peasant", "work", but "peasant in the system of servitude of the Middle Ages", "work in modern societies".

The second order concepts, designated by Peter Lee, thanks to Rusen's theorization can be included in "historical categories" such as continuity, progress, development, revolution, evolution, epoch, "which designate general temporal contexts of states of affairs, on the basis of which they appear as historical. They do not refer directly to any state of affairs, but establish the historical quality of the temporal change of states of affairs". (RÜSEN, 2007b, p.92-93), as well as the "proper names", e.g., Napoleon III, Progressive Party, who "designate states of affairs of the past in their singular occurrence; they refer to them directly, without specifying their own historical relevance in the context of the temporal process in which they occurred". (RÜSEN, 2007b, p.93).

<sup>14</sup> Project How People Learn: Mind, Experience and School, National Research Council, 1999, National Academy Press. Committee on How People Learn, Washington, D.C., 2005.

In this way, the problem and importance of historical learning has been elucidated from a conceptual substratum, formed by historical substantive concepts, proper names, second order concepts and historical categories. The question of the relationship between historical thought and historical consciousness also remained.

In this field, Rösen (2012) establishes counterpoints with German authors such as Karl-Ernst Jeismann<sup>15</sup>, who defined some elements of historical thinking, such as analysis, evaluation and judgment, which would gain historical status when related to the historical issue. Rolf Schörcken's proposal is also problematised by the author when he states that the students' understanding of world history can be passed on, not only by means of content, but from a structured consciousness of thought and processes that are behind the content and, by remaining hidden in the subject who learns, would be determined by behaviours related to the production of identities, loyalties and sympathies. According to Rösen (2012), both Jeismann's and Schörcken's orientations may be relevant as operations of historical consciousness, when they appear as factors in the process of forming sense of historical narrative.

However, more than that, for the author, learning must be based on historical thought forms elaborated by the subject who learns, and it is with these thought forms, organically linked to the act of narration, that the teaching of History needs to relate. According to Rösen's assumptions, historical learning occurs when the subject develops, through the historical narrative, a sense for the historical experience in such a way that he can orient his existence towards himself and others, in the flow of time. In this sense, the perspective of learning can only be oriented in the direction that the subject is (re)constructor of his knowledge.

It is here that a dialogue with constructivist psychology makes sense and relevance, as a basis for a theory of teaching and learning History, but only to establish parameters between the specificity of History and the practice of historical learning, regarding the processes of interaction between those who teach and those who learn, as well as between the learners themselves.

According to Rösen (2012), this is not just about "implementing", "applying" or "mediating" the content under the umbrella of learning objectives or skills, but about the fact that teaching itself and History find their meaning in human practical life and historical knowledge and its learning processes become vitally useful. This is because historical learning must lead to a sense of historical commitment, where it is perceived that, in the function of orientation, what is at stake in the student's own

<sup>15</sup> Karl-Ernst Jeismann (1925-2012). German historian and didacticist.

identity is the interaction with others. Thus, for Rüsen (2012), learning history means learning to narrate it in such a way that, in it and with it, we can find the recognition, without which we would not like to be or be able to be, and the sense of history is not reduced to a compulsive or violent self-affirmation with all the painful consequences for those involved, but is open to a permanent increase in temporal experiences that are processed in a continuous movement, between the experience of the diversity of the other and the affirmation of the self. This openness of historical awareness can be grasped by the fact that students have received different interpretations of historical experience, so that they obtain their autonomy through an act of choice.

### **Learning and the History Lesson: repercussions on teaching practice**

The need for historical learning to be based on multiple perspectives and narratives is an assumption for learning theory referenced in the theory and philosophy of History and this is one of the principles that should guide the teaching and learning process in the organisation of history classes. From this point of view, it cannot be accepted that history is “told by others” (the teacher) and the narrative competences of the students are considered as anticipated pedagogical objectives and taken as strategies for functional adaptation of contents. The student’s self-activity is fundamental for him/her to operate his/her identity in an argumentative discursive way, necessary for the temporal orientation.

It is therefore important to stress that the methodological principle of multiperspectivity in history classes must be recognised as essential. It means that historical experiences need to be presented in such a way that they cause an identification with the involvement of students, from the divergence between different points of view. This is because

Biologically, no one can visualise (see) for the other, we see things from different perspectives. Culturally, no one can experience and feel for the other. We experience the same things from different places, looks and cultural sensibilities. This simple observation, if we carry on, brings with it the measure of the difficulty we face when we dedicate ourselves to History or, more specifically, to the Didactics of History. (DIEHL, 2004, p.41).

Among the repercussions in the practice of history teaching is that the subjectivity of the student leaves, in the transformation of the experience that concerns him (and this also means: objective), two ways of appearing: (a) the first is indirect, through identification with those who have been subject to historical

thematic development; (b) the other, directly, through reflection on their own points of view, in the reconstruction of historical development. Thus, the history class should not and cannot avoid a previous participation, with which the students bring their own points of view and their perspective of historical interpretation. Moreover, “to learn History as a science, intentional and rationally organized procedural forms are necessary”. (DIEHL, 2004, p.45).

In this process, it becomes important to understand historical consciousness as a mental process, as a set of operations of the consciousness (emotional, cognitive and pragmatic), which differs from other sets that are conceptually clear and which, in their specificity, can be made explicit. This mental process is essentially made explicit through the “historical narrative,” which synthesizes the three dimensions of time in the representation of a global sense. “Continuity” or “passage of time” is the categorical definition of this fundamental continuous determination, which combines the process of historical formation of meaning from the temporal experience of the three dimensions to the unity of a consistent sense of coherence in social communication and human self-understanding, being an important form of socialization and individualization.

Thus, historical consciousness can be used as a reference for the formation of historical identity, since with it, subjects (individual and collective) can exceed the limits of their lifetime, at the same time they are placed in the change of time to which they are subjected. At the same time, they gain a permanent subjectivity. In this perspective, there is no historical learning if there is no apprehension of processes of apprehension of one’s own experience, which presupposes a didactic based on the experience of time that activates, amplifies, and modifies meanings about that experience, through the historical narrative.

The school, although not the only one, is considered to be the primary space where the relationship with systematized scientific knowledge occurs. Thus, dialogue with educational theories that seek to understand the meaning of schooling processes is fundamental. The emphasis is particularly on the processes of teaching and learning, in the face of the decline of the school as an institution with the “function of”, to understand it as the space of experience (individual and social) of the subjects with knowledge, in the wake of the studies developed by researchers such as Charlot<sup>16</sup> (2000), Dubet, (2006), Dubet/Martuccelli (1998).

<sup>16</sup> Bernard Charlot (1944-) French education philosopher. Since 2006 he has been a guest researcher at the Federal University of Sergipe.

The discussions on school as a space of reproduction/production of knowledge have broadened the concept of “school” to the whole environment in which the relationship with knowledge can occur, taking as a reference concrete subjects - the child pupil; the young pupil, guiding the school to underestimate, for example, the existence of youth culture and its correlated youth condition, historically determined.

Renewal in the face of new educational theories indicates paths to be followed. On the one hand, it should be stated that the teacher (historian) can never be a mere reproducer/transmitter, depositor of knowledge in the students, but needs to establish, in his professionalization, an organic relationship between teaching and research. This relationship does not imply transforming teaching into research, but understands that the articulation between the way in which one thinks as a teacher and the condition of living the activity of a teacher are historically produced. In this sense, it is important to overcome the perverse logic of the technical division of labour, which has historically separated those teachers who are authorized to produce knowledge from those who are only allowed to transmit it.

On the other hand, the need to understand the idea of the pupil as a historical invention and thus seek to see children and young people as historical, social and cultural constructions, understanding their historical learning also from the historical and objective conditions in which they build themselves.

From these presuppositions comes the elective affinity with the principle that the purpose of historical learning is the formation of the historical consciousness of the subject child and young person and that this subject is in dynamic relationship with the historical culture of the society in which he or she lives. Examples of the apprehension of the principle of historical consciousness as the starting and ending point of historical learning can be seen in the research carried out by Silva (2011) and Divardim (2012), indicative of different ways in which History teachers take into account the learning of their students. The first researcher analysed the learning conceptions of history teachers, randomly chosen in different schools.

His work took into account the way in which these teachers incorporated in their teaching proposals the idea of the culture of the young primary schools’ student, what purposes they saw in history teaching and what activities they developed to verify the learning of their students. Besides detecting a near invisibility of the culture of young people at school, Silva (2011) found a distance between the historical knowledge meant by teachers and their proposals for verifying learning, as this relationship was due to pedagogical conceptions distant from the epistemology of History, motivated in large part by the pedagogical ideas with which teachers were

“trained”. (SILVA, 2011, p.116). However, despite this distance and the near invisibility of the culture of young people at school, he identified concerns among teachers that pupils’ learning was significant, as some of the teachers interviewed said

Thinking about this question of taking their daily life, I was talking about the Crusades, then I spoke about the Turks and at the same time they happened, that invasion of the Jews on the ship there, then I used the Turkish flag to say that the ship was Turkish, that it had the flag hanging, I brought the issue to the war of Israel and the Palestinians and I think they watching it on TV was a nice way, so, that was a way and I’m continuing, I hooked up with the Hebrews and it meant a lot to them to understand the content. It seems to be working. (TEACHER MARINA, 2010. Apud SILVA, 2011, p.104)

The contents that can have a relationship of, now there are some contents that, now, it is difficult to establish a relationship. When, it’s always like this, when I can start from their lives to the content the class is very fantastic, better. Now there is some content that you can’t make a relationship with the student’s lives, but if you can do it, enchant them with those contents that have a relationship with their lives, then they enchant themselves in a general way with the history that they can learn from other contents that do not have a relationship with their lives. (TEACHER JOSÉ MARIA, 2010. Apud SILVA, 2011, p. 109)<sup>17</sup>

There is an emphasis on the concern for historical learning from the practical life of the students, which is one of the prerequisites for the development of historical consciousness. However, the cognitive processes of learning are centred on the relationship with the substantive concepts or on the content of History itself, from a view already aprioristically formed by teachers. This approach minimizes the possibility for students to develop specific cognitive skills in the science of History, such as the construction of evidence, empathy and historical narrative, thus building orientation and meaning for their practical lives.

Unlike Silva, Divardim (2012) selected a group of teachers who had already had contact with the theory of historical consciousness to assess to what extent they were able to incorporate the assumptions of this theory into their learning conceptions. Analysing, in the teachers’ speeches, the ways in which they indicated how they evaluated the learning of their students, he found some categories that

<sup>17</sup> Translator’s Note: Both extracts were translated as approximately as possible to their original form. The weirdness of some sections is due to the fact they are probably a transcription of an oral interview.

expressed cognitive processes related to historical thinking or historical consciousness

So, I really believe that from inferences of sources, from evidence. When the student has some, he sketches it out, even if not in terms of a narrative formed, but when in the relationship with the source he establishes this relationship of evidence, and makes it explicit through an inference, I believe that there is Historical Learning (TEACHER JOSÉ ARNALDO, 2011. Apud DIVARDIM, 2012, p. 122)

I think that understanding and knowing the inequalities that have occurred in relation to Afro-descendants in Brazil and he begins to show himself, when he begins to question the opinion that he had, that it was a popular opinion that exists that “quotas should not exist”, when he begins to use history to place himself perhaps in favour of quotas<sup>18</sup>. And, argumentatively speaking. I think that is an example of historical learning. (TEACHER MARCOS, 2011. Apud DIVARDIM, 2012, p.135)

Then I develop some documents, analysis of some documents, text readings, some images, in the case of the eighth series I work on films. And I want to see what this clash will be like when I start showing them other sources, for example, the history of exclusion, of racism, of slavery, what a prejudice can do in a society and I want to see what, how it will relate to this interpretation of them as different, I want to see what it will still be like. (TEACHER ARMANDO, 2011. Apud DIVARDIM, 2012, p.124).

The examples learnt from Divardim’s (2012) research are indicative that teachers, when appropriating categories of historical cognition from the perspective of the development of historical consciousness, can glimpse other possibilities for the historical learning of their students, such as the transformation of the source (historical document) into evidence from the work with the development of inferences by students, the relationship between students’ present and their past (indicated here when the student questions his own opinion, after the acquisition of a certain historical rationality and the concern shown by the teacher, with the construction of the students’ “argumentative mode”).

From these considerations it is valid to conclude that there is the possibility of the learning of History being considered by teachers themselves, no longer as the acquisition of facts or contents that show the events of humanity through the

<sup>18</sup> T.N. The quota system in Brazil is a public policy that works to ensure that some groups of people have access to opportunities where they are disadvantaged by a variety of situations. In this sense, when a quota system is adopted in a selection process, say in a public University, a percentage of the openings is reserved for people who are part of a certain social group, such as blacks, indigenous people, and low-income people.

centuries. On the contrary, the fundamental assumption that History as a science is a specific way of cognitively elaborating the knowledge that emerges from the deficiency of all men, “who act and suffer the consequences of the actions of others, of being guided in the midst of the changes they experience in their world and in themselves” (Rüsen, 2001: 12).

In this sense, one of the main consequences in assuming historical awareness as a reference for a reconstructive didactic of history, is the narrative as a concrete expression of this process and requires the unconditional acquisition of narrative competence by students and teachers, from the perspective of multiperspectivity and plurality. This process involves the development of historical cognitive skills, such as identifying and working with sources and, from these, constructing argued historical explanations and their expression through narratives, whether “short” or not. On the other hand, if it is the “needs” for guidance in present life which place learners in relation to the past and the future, this indicates that teachers are able to identify, contextually, certain needs of themselves and their pupils and, therefore, are able to build up sense of guidance from the relationships they establish with the past, with reference to their present. According to Oakeshott (2003), the link between the past and the present must be made on the basis of the distinction between what has been conventionally called “practical past” and “historical past”, because our daily existence includes references to multiple pasts.

The practical past includes, among others, the encapsulated past (the sum of the experiences of individuals independent of remembrance), the remembered past (of memory) and the consulted past (of psychoanalysis). There are also the material traces or evidence of the past that are in museums, archives, which can be called the registered past, which the historian uses, through what Marc Bloch called tortuous reading, to construct the intrigues of history, and therefore the past challenged, the historical past. It is important to point out that both the practical past and the historical past have in common the fact that they begin in the present. The centrality of historical learning in the formation of historical consciousness is based on the understanding that conditions must be provided and obtained in order to make intentional choices about the past.


Therefore, the important question is to know what past one wants, what uses history has for practical life and how History can be learned. This question can be observed in the speech of one of the teachers investigated by Divardim (2012), when they state that the student begins to show himself when he begins to question the opinion he had about themes involving the needs of young students in their practical



lives, around themes of relevance to contemporary Brazilian society, such as problems related to slavery, racism and the presence of afro-descendants in our history. These themes and the new possibilities of dealing with them in the didactics of history, fertilized by the theory of historical consciousness, open new ways to overcome canonical forms of teaching and learning history and can guide the procedures of the History Lesson.

In general, the existing gaps, either in evaluation criteria for textbooks or in guidelines in curriculum proposals, in relation to a conception of historical literacy have led to the “sequestration of historical cognition”. The use of this concept finds reference in the works of Faria and Meneghetti (2001), who analyze the action of the current production model and its capacity to “kidnap the subjectivity of the worker and establish mechanisms of psychological control, subsuming it to the logic of capital”. Thus, subjectivity - or using the expression employed by Dubet (1997), the consciousness that subjects have of the world and of themselves, can be captured or sequestered, restricting, but not hindering, processes of subjectivation, by which the subject represents himself and acts as a critical subject, confronted with a given society and system of production and domination.

It is possible, by homology, to think that the relationship between the conception of learning and the teaching method, which has subsidized the teaching of History in schooling processes, has acted to hijack the historical cognition of students, when they establish ways of teaching and learning that restrict, but do not invalidate, the possibilities of forming a historical counterconsciousness. In this sense,



The great change (of the 21st century) was the fact that today, for the first time in History, we have the physical, concrete, sometimes exciting, sometimes stimulating, sometimes disquieting, sometimes terrifying sensation that we are involved in the world and that, in all our actions, we involve the whole world. We can no longer consider - and this is progress - anything and no one, no country and no people, as something distant that has nothing to do with us. All this entails enormous changes; enormous hopes and enormous dangers. For the first time, we are concretely living in a universal age, but with a feeling of profound threat. (MAGRIS, 2009, p.6).

In the wake of the reflections presented, historical literacy in the 21st century assumes the purpose of forming historical consciousness, with reference to reconstruction, not of a practical and dead relationship with the past, but of an increasingly complex historical relationship, in which historical consciousness is the bearer of the orientation between the present, the past and the future, in the sense of

turning inward (the role of the constitution of identities) and outward (from the perspective of alterity).

From the point of view, when thinking of the relationship with historical knowledge and, therefore, the teaching and learning of History as the internalization of a certain historical consciousness by the subjects, one can speak of internalizing in order to maintain and conserve or subjectivate, that is, internalizing more action of the subjects, with a view to interventions and transformations in practical life. These principles are intrinsically related to the formation of historical thought, one of the purposes of the History Lesson.



## Formation of Historical thought as the purpose of the History Lesson

The tears and clashes of the History teaching profession are manifestations of the clashes of the option for teaching. In a way, they express the very ambiguity of expectations regarding the teaching profession, which oscillates in being seen, sometimes as a priesthood - the teacher as a savior of souls for the world, the nation or the revolution, sometimes as a spokesman for the true past, a catcher of differences and indeterminate things. After all, what is the point of teaching History? And, even more, why did the students need to learn History, if not to go to the next grade and/or pass the university entrance exam? How can we teach a History that contributes to the construction of the students' autonomy, so that they are recognized and released in their originality in the understanding and rescue of their history? (SCHMIDT, 1998, p.56). The clashes and tears become more complex in the face of the discussions that take place in the field of History as a science, and the problem of meaning has been one of the elements of these discussions in the field of the theory and philosophy of History<sup>1</sup>.

From the point of view of the philosophy of History, some main questions presented themselves when discussing this subject, revolving around questions

<sup>1</sup> See, for example, BODEI, Remo. Does history have a meaning? São Paulo: EDUSC, 2001.

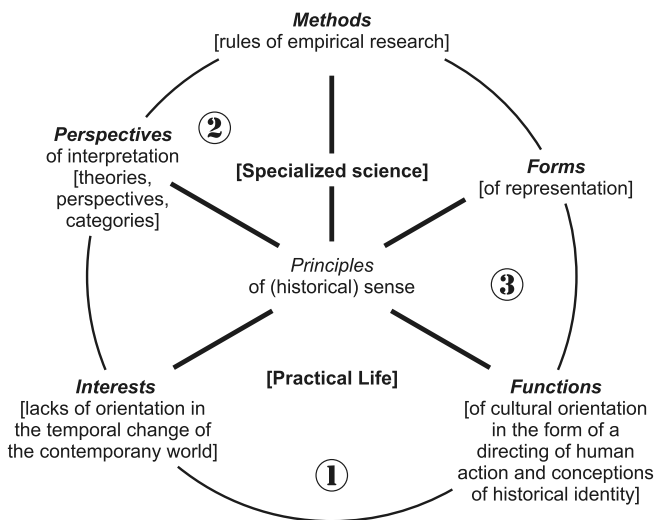
such as: does History have a meaning? Is there a sense of History or a sense in History? In the text *Sentido da História: significado e implicações culturais* (Sense of History: meaning and cultural implications) - the historian Estevão Martins (2017) explains the path he has travelled in his reflection on the theme

One question concerns the issue of the meaning of history itself. We are not interested in that question here, even if it occupies significant space in the so-called speculative philosophies of history. Another question concerns the process of understanding (apprehension) and interpretation of the historical phenomenon(s). It is within the framework of this second question that the present (author's) reflection on the meaning of history is situated, as that imprinted by the agent to his action and reconstructed by the historian in the process of scientific construction of historiography, in accordance with the contemporary methodical canon. (MARTINS, 2017, p.108)

In the wake of Martins' thought, it can be said that the object of reflection for the Didactics of History is not a theoretical and philosophical analysis, with the aim of answering the question of the meaning itself of History. Nor does it aim only to elucidate the process of understanding and interpreting the historical phenomenon. Regarding the perspective of the History Lesson, the main concern is to understand how the problem of assigning meaning can be relevant to historical learning, and what the specificity of this relationship is.

In the dialogue with the thought of the historian Jörn Rüsen, it is observed that the principles of historical meaning assume centrality in the disciplinary matrix of History, made explicit in the form of the five factors: lack of orientation (of the temporal change of the internal and external world); conceptions (perspectives, categories, theories); methods (of the elaboration of past experience); forms (of presentation) and functions of orientation (direction and motivation of action, articulation of historical identity). The disciplinary matrix presents a systematic set of factors or principles of historical thought, determinants of the science of History as a specialized discipline. These principles or foundations can be reconstituted for historical learning by taking, as a starting point, what, in everyday life, emerges as historical consciousness or historical thought, which is established due to our lack of orientation, caused by our suffering due to the action of time.

Thus, the starting point of the process of establishing historical rationality that demands the learning and formation of historical thought, are our interests that make it possible for us to live - the interest in orienting ourselves in the flow of time, in the appropriation of the past by knowledge, in the present.



Source: MARTINS, E.C.R., 2016, p.102

Now, as Estevão Martins states, “it is up to each generation, not to say each individual - to ask oneself the meaning of history as an experience of time reflected by man” (MARTINS, 2017, p.108). In this way, an indispensable relationship with historical learning is configured, since we learn history because our practical life imposes certain interests related to the need for orientation in the flow of time (past, present, future), a demand that requires the appropriation of the past, from the present, by historical knowledge. This occurs, as Jörn Rüsen says, because historical learning is fundamental for men if they are to live their own lives”. (RÜSEN, 2001, p.3). Thus, the process of historical learning has to be generated in and by the fundamental needs of human practical life in time - the interests arising from the need for specific reflection on the past, which require criteria of meaning, models of interpretation of the past. According to Martins

The category ‘historical constitution of meaning’ defines the second form of the matrix, which Rüsen associates with the typology of historiography. For the author, the historical constitution of meaning is an original function of historical thought, whose specialisation leads, along the path of methodical research, to the historiographic narrative. One of the striking features of this way, which has been consolidated throughout the author’s reflection, is the interdependence of the various types of meaning (traditional, genetic, exemplary, critical), with the prevalence of traditional meaning and under the transversal influence of critical meaning. This version of the

matrix thus composes the three perspectives of approach adopted by Rüsen: historical thinking, the constitution of historical meaning and the technical production of historiographic narrative. (MARTINS, 2016, p.101)

It should be noted that the criteria for assigning meaning regulate men's reflective relationship with the world and with themselves, as well as deciding how to interpret the change of man and his world. Without meaning, the lack of direction cannot be satisfied, for

All historical thinking is based on a constitution of specific meaning, dedicated to the experience of time. In order to decipher this mental performance as the foundation of human historical consciousness, the mental activity of the constitution of meaning can be broken down into four naturally interdependent components, even more, imbricated: experience or perception, orientation and motivation (RÜSEN, 2015, p.42).

In his book - *Culture makes sense. Guidelines between today and tomorrow*<sup>2</sup> - Jörn Rüsen explains the meaning of historical formation of meaning as "the fifth necessity of mental procedures and activities through which past experience is interpreted and updated as history" (RÜSEN,2014a, p.179). Here, the paradigm of situated historical cognition is based on the principle that there is no historical understanding without an understanding of the meaning of temporal change. However, this understanding needs to be constructed with reference to the subject's insertion into the practical life of the present and on the basis of historical enquiries that make possible the meaning of this same present through the past. This understanding also presupposes that the subject learns to structure the idea of time cognitively, not only from the individual point of view, but, above all, related to the idea of humanity, because learning history is learning to temporalize humanity.

For historical learning to take place from the processing of the temporal experience, some challenges must be taken on, such as including the dimension of interpretation, i.e., what is learned must make sense to the learner; - the dimension of orientation, i.e., the process of temporal change must be articulated "to my time, to the time of the other and to the time of the other that includes me. In this case, the main question would be - "how do I put myself in this situation of temporal change? It means giving a practical version to the interpretation of time and it has an external side - it is the world; and an internal side, that of human subjectivity. Another dimension is that of motivation, in which the learner subject needs to learn

<sup>2</sup> Portuguese Title: *Cultura faz sentido. Orientações entre o hoje e o amanhã.*

to situate and insert his or her life objectives, both individual and collective, in the flow of time. For History Lesson it means that the work with the process of formation of meaning can be carried out from the experiences of young people and child learners, but it must also be organized, methodologically, for this purpose

Historical learning becomes translucent, in terms of the theory of meaning, to dimensions and factors that are present both in everyday life and in an elaborate historical culture and that naturally play a decisive role in each and every learning process. Historical formation of meaning can be explored as much as given from the lives of children and young people as it is organised as a matter of learning processes, and this in a way that is both elementary and complex. (...) what is to be learned in and from the human past is exactly what makes it meaningful as history, and this significance can be learned in the ways of experience, interpretation, orientation and motivation in its difference and interconnection. (RÜSEN, 2014a, p.185-186)

In the text “Can yesterday be improved? On the transformation of the past into History”, published in Brazil in 2011, Jörn Rüsen considers that the sense of history is linked to expectations for the future that go beyond the experience of the past and thus history can be the place of the utopian and historical time is the place of the landless. From this perspective, the question can be asked about the usefulness of history for the future and what implications this would have for the historical constitution of meaning. It should be noted that all historical knowledge has a guiding function, which is mediated by fundamental criteria of meaning. These criteria mediate between experience and meaning, and without them it would not be possible to interpret historical experience. From the criteria of interpretation, the past gains a status for the present, becoming loaded with meanings and thus can become a reference for guiding human action and suffering. They become criteria of cultural orientation, that is, a representation of the temporal course which gives practical life both the experience of the past and the expectation of the future. These criteria make it possible, on the one hand, to break with the teleological perspectives of the assignment of meaning, present in the old forms of historical thought, such as in the traditional narratives of textbooks, permeated by the “traps of historical quadripartism”. On the other hand, they make it possible to realise that historical learning works from the present, in the “counter-current of the flow of time”, as Jean Chesneaux<sup>3</sup> (1995) states.

<sup>3</sup> Jean Chesneaux (França: 1922-2007). Historian. He was a professor at the Université Paris Diderot and in the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales.

Much of contemporary historiographic discussion presents a consensus that History is no longer structured in a teleological manner. Thus, one of the possibilities of present and past articulation is to admit the reconstructive nature of History. It means thinking of a non-teleological History, detached from the principle of causality, that is, one that is not interested only in the causes, but in the conditions of possibilities. Reconstructive History assumes freedom as the determinant of action, and maintains that the goals of action are not connected to a teleological representation, but to the interpretative and meaningful character of the goals themselves. It is a teleology of praxis, which stimulates human freedom.

In this perspective, dealing with issues of History teaching leads to options for paths that can indicate possible ways of elaborating historical thinking, so as to constitute meaningful learning for young people and children. In this journey, the work of the German historian Bodo von Borries<sup>4</sup> presupposes that the problem of History teaching in contemporary times must take into account, above all, the construction of historically different ways of thinking, which involve questions of race, language, age, sex, religion, culture, region, class, power, wealth, profession, consumption, lifestyle and mentality. Furthermore, according to the author, “a story is written or told from a point of view, from a specific community and from an identity of a certain community, this is called the “concreteness of identity”. (BORRIES, 2016, p.86).

From an entire history of historiography we know that cities, clans, families, convents, religious communities, dynasties, minorities, classes, and cultural subcontinents have their own histories and historians” and “the methodological access, how to know about selectivity, perspective, hypothetical character, and narrativity of history. Is as important as a standard content or a thematic approach”, therefore, “we cannot forget that all ‘canonical’ choices are very complicated and basically controversial. The so-called ‘facts’, the ‘narrative’ synthesis and the current consequences (‘messages’) cannot be deduced from a logical and unambiguous way. They are interdependent and constitutive of each other in a spiral way. In a democratic and pluralistic society there is no right and authority to prescribe a certain interpretation for all citizens or all students. (BORRIES, 2016, p 89)

Historical learning that does not take over certain shortcomings in the orientation of human life in time may not motivate cognitive interest in the past, whether in children or young people. Because the deficiencies of orientation in time activate

<sup>4</sup> Bodo von Borries (1943-) German historian and didacticist, he was one of the coordinators of the project Youth and historical consciousness.



and demand the process of formation of historical thought, based on the understanding of the meaning of temporal change, articulating the relations between present and past and looking to the future, according to the interests and needs of those who learn.

### **Reflections on historical thinking**

A position on historical thinking necessarily requires the perspective on a theory of knowledge. That is, it requires choices, not only of content, but also of strategies of the processes of how to know. If they have already been called skills, nowadays knowledge strategies have been called competences or, more specifically, historical thinking competences. With regard to how to conceptualize them, the competences have been defined in different ways, in the context of multiple educational theories.

It is assumed that the formation of historical thought is a systematic process of the relationship with scientific knowledge, which involves multiple aspects. One of the aspects to be highlighted is that every interpretation of the world, every form of knowledge of the real is situated in and from social relations, that is, relations between subjects in determined historical contexts, such as social class, groups, political perspective, material interests and cultural conditioning of subjects. The relationship with knowledge mediates the relationship with the world, reality, practical life and means that it forms a reading of the real. Through knowledge, human beings establish bonds with reality mediated by symbolic elements, languages, in and from a dialogic space produced in and by social interaction, including conflict. Thus, practical life or “praxis”, understood as a process of the subjects’ relationship with nature, from the interaction between human beings, is the founding category of this relationship, and cannot be confused with a simple social and political transformation of the real, since it implies questions such as an interpretation of the world beyond its mere transformation and going beyond the simple unity between theory and practice, since both are the same movement of reality (sometimes unconscious), each with its relative autonomy.

It is not a question of the movement either of pure thought or of pure practical action, but of a unity, and often this unity of the movement is hidden, for example, by the social division of labour which has been causing the tensions concerning the human world. In this regard, Rösen (2015) points out the possible mergers in this field of tensions, such as: nature/culture - above/below - centre/periphery - internal/external (personal and social identity) - domination/resistance - act/behaviour - master/slave - human/non-human, among others. Tensions are made explicit in and

by culture and it is necessary to grasp them from the material basis. It is in this field of tension that the meaning of the subject is found and inserted in the contingency and as a producer of the senses of social transformation.

For Rösen, this is a critical relationship with knowledge, but not only from the perspective of its deconstruction or denaturalization of reality, but also from the perspective of a (re)construction, marked by epistemological contestation (MIGNOLO, 2009). Thus, it is important to highlight that the reconstruction of historical knowledge through historical learning has an organic relationship with praxis. The specific scientific way of reconstructing the past through historical knowledge starts with and returns to practical life, in such a way that it interferes with the lives of those who realize it (individually and collectively).

The production and formation of historical consciousness, always related to practical life, is part of this process. Starting from this relationship, making explicit its own nature, that is, historical consciousness as the sum of the mental operations that constitute the interpretation of temporal evolution, with the aim of an intentional orientation in time and about time. Having as its guide the relationships between experience, intention, and action, historical consciousness becomes productive of the constitution of the meaning of the experience of time. Thus, meaning cannot be confused with a point of view, but the sum of them constitutes the basis for making decisions about the objectives of the subjects. That is, historical knowledge produces meaning when it allows the reconstruction of the past as an experience endowed with meaning and its articulation with the orientations present in contemporary action. This requirement indicates the need for learning that does not deny historical knowledge and its possibility of constituting a scientific perspective of the past by the formation of historical thought.

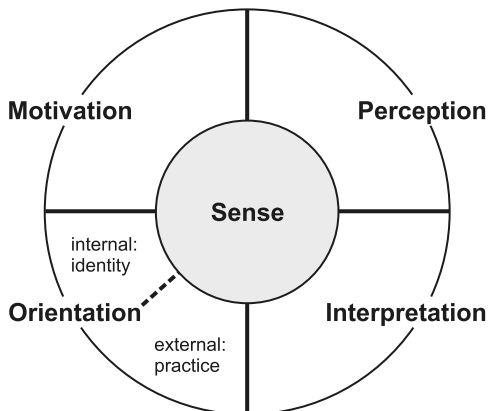
Historical thinking is based on a constitution of specific meaning, dedicated to the experience of time. In order to decipher this mental performance as the foundation of human historical consciousness, Jörn Rösen breaks down the mental activity of the constitution of meaning into four naturally interdependent, yet more imbricated components: experience or perception, orientation and motivation.

From the relations between the elements, in the formation of historical thought, the movement of generation of meaning has its initial impulse by the experience of problematized temporal change, because it puts into question the organization or ordering of the life of the subjects. The experience of change, in turn, imports the need for the interpretation of this movement, demanding forms of individual and collective orientation from the subjects, within the existential culture. Thus, "From

the interpreted experience of time may arise, in the very framework of the orientation, motivations for human action". (RÜSEN, 2015, p.43).

**Picture 1**

The four mental operations of the constitution of meaning according to Jörn Rüsen



Source: Jörn Rüsen, 2015, p.42.

The centrality of the attribution of meanings by the historical narrative was also pointed out by Jörn Rüsen in his matrix of the science of History, which became a reference for authors such as Peter Lee, Stéphane Lévesque<sup>5</sup> and Peter Seixas<sup>6</sup>, for the elaboration of matrixes or foundations of the Didactics of History.

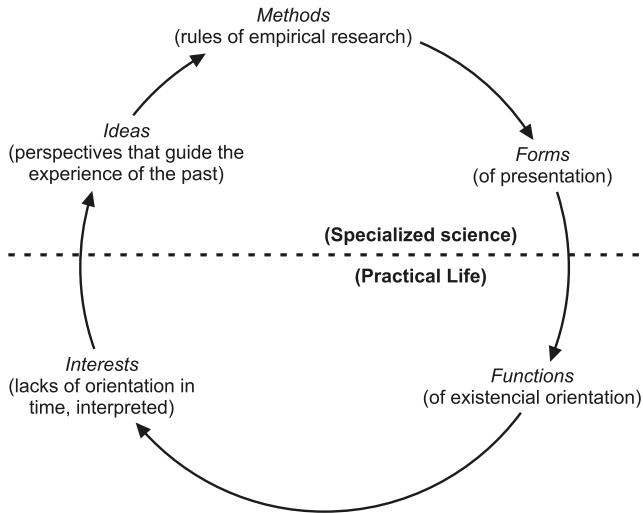
The English historian Peter Lee used the first version of Rüsen's matrix to support his proposition of the concept of historical literacy. It is important to indicate Peter Lee's emphasis on the fact that Rüsen rejects historical learning as the acquisition of "objective" facts, arguing that the process of learning embraces thinking strategies and methodologies that involve the student's practical life and their relationship with science, "By recognizing history as something that transcends 'common sense' orientation, but still linking it in complex ways with actions in the everyday world, Rüsen's consideration of historical consciousness suggests some principles for constructing the concept of historical literacy" (LEE, 2006).

<sup>5</sup> Stéphane Lévesque is an Associate Professor of History Education and Director of the Virtual History Lab at the Faculty of Education, University of Ottawa, Canada.

<sup>6</sup> Peter Seixas, professor at the University of British Columbia, director of the Historical Thought project, founder of the Centre for the Study of Historical Consciousness.

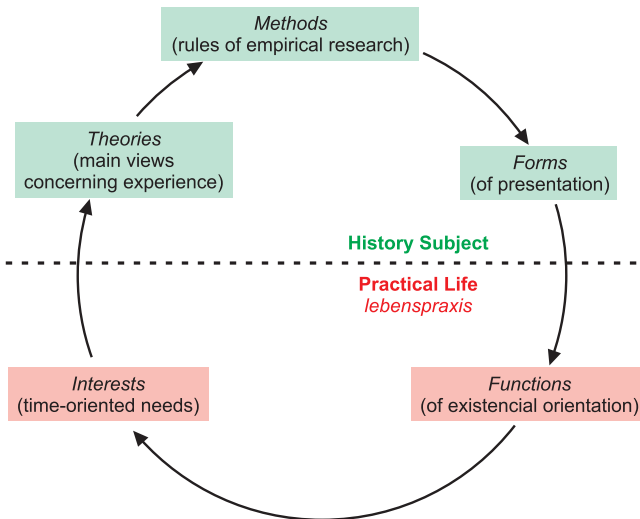
### Jörn Rüsen's First Matrix

2001 - Razão Histórica (a) - E.C. MARTINS p. 35



### Jörn Rüsen's First Matrix adapted by Peter Lee

Source: LEE, 2006, p.134.<sup>7</sup>



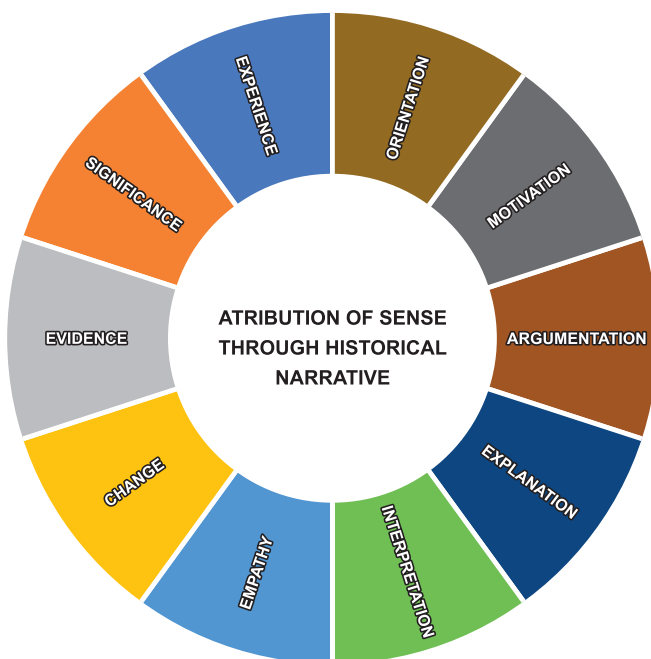
<sup>7</sup> LEE, Peter. Em direção a um conceito de literacia histórica. In. Educar em Revista. Dossiê Educação Histórica. Curitiba: UFPR, 2006, pp.131-150. See also BARCA, I. Literacia e consciência histórica. Ib. pp.93-112.

## Cognitive strategies of the historical thinking

Always stressing that practical life is the starting and ending point of the work with the formation of historical thinking and the integrated nature between them, with the purpose of the construction of meaning, some categories were systematised that may be worked on as competences of historical thinking and be constitutive of the orientation of the didactic processes, such as the organisation and planning of teaching and assessment activities.

### Constitutive categories of the competences of historical thinking

MATRIX: COMPETENCES OF HISTORICAL THINKING



Adaptation: Maria Auxiliadora Schmidt (2019)

Source: Seixas&Peck, 2004; Lee, 2005; Rusen, 2015.

The proposal of a matrix of the competences of historical thinking has as its main objective to give references for the mode of operation of historical learning, with a view to attaining one of the goals of the Didactics of History which is to construct the competence of attribution of meaning by historical narrative.

The referential for the analysis of the proposed categories is the philosophy and theory of History.

**1. Argumentation:** The development and learning of argumentation has as a general purpose to give voice to the characters and subjects of History, always observing who argues and for whom. The construction of argumentation is related to the questions that one asks of the past, starting from the experiences of one's own past or of the present, going in search of the experiences of the past. From the questions, search for elements in the sources to build explanations based on the structures and contexts and/or on the actions of the subjects, inferring reasons to explain why History happened in one way and not in another, intertwining particularities with totalities. Argumentation is important to give credibility and plausibility to ideas, and students need to learn to construct arguments and show how they have constructed them.

**2. Significance:** Learn to distinguish between what is historically significant and what is trivial. Know how to explain what has to do with one's own life, the life of the other, the relationship of one's own life with the life of the other and the opposite.

**3. Evidence:** Acquire the ability to elaborate information from the use of sources (goes beyond learning the use of sources). Evidence provides arguments for post-narrative thinking.

**4. Change:** Articulate how permanences and continuities are structured from different contexts.

**5. Empathy:** Differentiate values of today's societies with those of the past, noticing the different perspectives of different subjects.

**6. Interpretation:** Ability to answer questions in a retrospective, perspectival, selective, sequenced, particularised, communicative and argumentative manner.

**7. Explanation:** Know how to construct causal relations, interspersed and temporalised, in a descriptive, genetic, structural, definitory and/or pluricausal way.

**8. Motivation:** To learn to infer and relate history to the action/experience of the subjects, individual and collective characters. Based on these, choose ways of acting in the present.

**9. Orientation:** It can be internal (identity) and/or external (praxis). Learning the various levels of orientation: 1. of the experience of time (before, after, change, contingency); 2. of the experience of change that occurred in the past itself; 3. of the perspectives used to interpret the experiences of the past (e.g. periodizations); 4. of the perspectival understanding of the changes that occurred in the past; 5. of the level of meanings attributed to temporal change (concept of time course).

**10. Experience (Perception):** Experience-based thinking has a pre-narrative character (e.g., individual recollections and the factuality of the narrated prior to the relationship with the sources). It is important to learn to expand experiences qualitatively and quantitatively in relation to the past.

In general, the questions related to the development of temporal orientation in historical learning were dealt with from the perspective of psychology, which strongly influenced the approach to the relationship between learning and temporality, permeating curriculum proposals and textbooks, particularly in the 1970s and 1980s<sup>8</sup>. Several works were published on the theme, also establishing suggestions for the organisation of curricula based on the categories time and space. The issue of temporality was treated as the development of temporal notions, characterized by the apprehension of chronological time, duration, changes and permanence, among others. From the end of the 1980s onwards, other issues became part of the concerns. As an example, we can cite the classic study by Elza Nadai and Circe Bittencourt, both professors of History teaching at USP (University of Sao Paulo), in which they reported the complexity of the issue and described a research they conducted with students of the 5th grade of primary level (today it would be the 6th grade of primary schools). Among other issues, the authors highlighted the importance of discussing the question in the context of the political and social meaning of the discipline of history and identified that

When the teacher informs about the mastery that his students have over the notion of time, he refers fundamentally to the learning related to chronology. The notions of year, decade, century and millennium of the Christian calendar, that is, the counting of time in a uniform, regular and successive way is, in general, referred to as the notion of historical time. There is also among teachers, the concern about periodization, the present-past relationship (...). (NADAI/BITTENCOURT, 1988, p.75).

The moment was one of criticism of the work with chronological temporality and incorporation of the relationship between temporality and culture, “It results that this information (chronological time) must be added to its historical relativity, distinguishing that chronological time, the counting of time, is a historical event, that is, it is the fruit of a certain culture”. (NADAI/BITTENCOURT, 1988, p.86).

<sup>8</sup> A classic text that became a reference for the teaching of history in the 1980s was ZAMBONI, Ernesta. Desenvolvimento das noções de espaço e tempo na criança. Cadernos Cedes (10). 63-71, 1984.

In the 1980s there was a boom in the debates about historiographical renewal with the diffusion, in Brazil, of the production of the French “New History” and the beginning of the publication of works by the English New Left. Moreover, the translation into Portuguese of Jean Chesneaux’s book - *Devemos fazer tábula rasa do passado*<sup>9</sup> (1995) - contributed to the questioning about the historical quadripartism, Eurocentric in nature, which predominated (and still predominates) in curriculum proposals and textbooks.

In some curriculum proposals of the 1990s it is possible to see the presence of new perspectives of work with temporality, as can be observed from the research of Gusmão (2014), about the conception of time present in the National Curricular Parameters for Secondary Education (PCNEM, 1999). According to the researcher, the mentioned curricular proposal constantly reiterates the option for using the Braudelian time of short, medium and long duration - “It is emphasized the time as a human construction and the historical time as a cultural construction of people in different times and spaces. The expression “consciousness of the past” is mentioned based on Eric Hobsbawm’s theory and associated to the duration and succession of events”. (GUSMÃO, 2014, p.99).

The category of temporal orientation, present in the paradigm of historical learning situated in the theory of historical consciousness, offers the possibility of thinking about temporality and its relationship with learning and teaching in another way, because it does not propose the development of notions of time, but indicates the meaning of temporal orientation and its relationship with the understanding of historical change. Moreover, it indicates that the understanding needs to be built, having as reference the insertion of the students in the present and from historical enquiries that enable the meaning of this same present, by means of the past. This understanding also presupposes that the subject learns to structure the idea of time cognitively, not only from the individual point of view, but, principally, related to the idea of humanity.

The driving forces behind these challenges indicate fundamental questions to underpin the aims of historical learning, such as: the challenge of the historical experience - what did I perceive?; the challenge of understanding other people’s past - what does it mean?; the challenge of orienting the temporal dimension of one’s own life - where is my place in time? and the challenge of choosing one’s own motivations - what can I do in the future? Among the outcomes of learning based on

<sup>9</sup> An approximate English translation would be: *Should the slate of the past be wiped clean?*



these assumptions would be a quantitative and qualitative expansion of the capacity to interpret a lived historical experience, an increase in the competence to use lived historical experience (historical knowledge) to temporalize one's own world and identity, to shape individual aspirations on the basis of an empirically plausible idea of temporal change in the course of humanity in time, and to motivate others to carry out their own experiences in accordance with the idea of one's place and one's place in the process of change in time.

The references to these dimensions and their challenges suggest the importance attributed to historical action as a fundamental category of historical learning. In this sense, the reflection of Peter Seixas (2012) on "historical action" as an important strategy of historical thinking, which requires the use of memory or temporal consciousness, stands out because

An agent takes actions, based on intentions, which are formed by the memory of past experiences, or the understanding of the past. At the same time, understanding the past is of little practical use in the present for someone who does not understand himself as an active agent. The central problem of action, as this appears to people, is the degree to which they are able to achieve what they set out to do. Social theorists have established a dichotomy between action and structure. This is useful as we extend yesterday's or the previous day's individual decisions and actions to broad social formations in historical epochs (SEIXAS, 2012: p.4)

While making these considerations, Seixas (2012) proposes two orders of reflections. The first one refers to the problematic of the relative autonomy of human action, immersed in relations with the structures and social limitations, which leads, according to the author, to questions such as "How much autonomy do we have? How much of our lives is coerced by the conditions into which we are born?". In this sense, he states

We are active participants in the creation and destruction of the worlds in which we live and this is a key component of our collective action. Structure and action are therefore two sides of the same coin. The constant exercise of this action, however, depends on our understanding of the past not only as personal memory but as history, and on the relationship with wider social structures whose genesis and changes lie beyond our lives as individuals (SEIXAS, 2012: 6).

In the second reflection, he delves into historiographical production in order to gather subsidies for analysing the perspective in which certain historians have taken on the problematic of "historical action". Thus, he points to the position of Thomas

Carlyle on historical action in the variant of “Great Men”; of Charles Taylor, whom he calls “a philosopher of history-action”, stating that “jumping from Carlyle to Taylor, we move from “Great Men” as the area of human interest, to the modern search for meaning in what Taylor calls “ordinary life” (SEIXAS, 2012:7).

In the same direction, Seixas points to the movement that took place in England and led to a democratization of historical action, involving historians such as Edward Thompson and Eugene Genovese, whose project was “to bring historically marginalized peoples into the discipline, not simply as passive agents, but as active participants” (SEIXAS, 2012:9).

The theoretical considerations pointed out above lead to the proposition that there is an important relationship between understanding temporal orientation and historical action as fundamental categories for historical learning, within the theory of the formation of historical consciousness.

In the relationship some milestones, markers and meanings conferred to the change can be observed which serve to verify how young people and children understand and to whom they attribute historical action. Used for the analysis of the narratives, they can contribute to verify if the teaching of History has been able to respond to some challenges of historical learning, such as: the challenge of the historical experience - what did I perceive?; the challenge of understanding other people’s past - what does it mean?; the challenge of the orientation of the temporal dimension of their own life - where is my place in time? And finally, the challenge of choosing one’s own motivations for action - what can I do in the present and in the future with regard to my own life and that of others?

The predominance of certain “canons” as landmarks and temporal markers of historical actions and their relations with historical changes, whether in relation to Brazilian history or world history, have shown the absence and/or exclusion of contents which could expand, quantitatively and qualitatively, the experiences of young students in relation to orientation in the flow of time, for example, the absence of experiences of the history of ordinary people and of young people’s own history, making meaningful historical learning difficult.

This is problematic when taking the formation of historical consciousness as a reference for historical learning, because

**The need to understand the possibility and limits of action is what brings historical action into the province of historical consciousness. Historical consciousness can even be redefined as the understanding that things change over time in fundamental**

ways - that worlds are made and unmade -, that ordinary people play a role in historical change, and that orienting oneself in relation to historical change is a central task for all people (SEIXAS, 2012, 14).

On the other hand, the world history narrated in textbooks, despite highlighting markers related to wars, conflicts, dictatorships, terrorism, as drivers of change, in a clear demonstration that they understand that History “is not rosy”, causes concern the fact that such narratives are not accompanied by positions or arguments that these markers are articulated to processes of dehumanization of humanity itself. Nor do they show possibilities of involvement of young students in the history of the country and the world. As Jörn Rüsen emphasized, the key word is “involvement” and the relationship with practical life.

Apprehended not only as a methodological principle, the problematic of the relationship with practical life needs to be seen as an issue whose pertinence should be clarified in the theory and practice of the History teacher. An analysis of the Curricular Parameters of History for High School,<sup>10</sup> shows that one of the main focuses of the proposal was to take the context or the contextualization as the foundation of the teaching and learning process.

The meanings attributed by the document to the contextualization category have their origin in Resolution 03/1998, of the National Education Council, which had based the curriculum guidelines for high school, including the ones for History. Among other issues, this document, authored by the counselor Guiomar Namó de Mello, proposed the contextualization as a pedagogical principle that defines the way of organization and treatment of curriculum content

The contextualized treatment of knowledge is the resource that the school has to remove the student from the condition of passive spectator. If well worked it allows that, along the didactic transposition, the teaching content causes significant learning that mobilize the student and establish between him and the object of knowledge a reciprocal relationship (...) In fact, the contextualization can be understood as a particular type of interdisciplinarity in that it points to the treatment of certain disciplinary content as a context of others. (BRASIL, CNE/CEB, 1998, p.37)

<sup>10</sup> See SCHMIDT, Maria Auxiliadora. Formação da consciência histórica ou desenvolvimento de competências: considerações sobre o ensino de História para jovens brasileiros. In. Revista Diálogos. Maringá: Programa de Pós-Graduação em História, v.19, n.1, pp.87-116, 2015.

The adoption of this principle, in the view of the curriculists, was due to the historical inadequacy of the programs and textbooks of high school to the reality of young people and their daily experiences - The context that is closer to the student and more easily exploitable to give meaning to the contents of learning is that of personal life, daily life and coexistence (BRASIL,CNE/CEB, 1998:40). For a counterpoint to this view, we resort to Kuenzer (2000)<sup>11</sup> who, opposing to the idea of contextualisation suggested in the document, points out some considerations. Firstly, according to the author

everyday life is not explained in itself, but through the history that is made by real men and women, who establish relations between themselves and with the world through work in its dimension of human praxis; relations that are of exploitation or solidarity, of submission or domination, in view of the different distribution of the means responsible for the production of wealth and, consequently, of knowledge. (KUENZER, 2000, p.74).

Thus, Kuenzer continues, it is necessary to specify what everyday life is about, as well as the meaning it will have, depending on the contradictory social places occupied by the different subjects. In second place, to Kuenzer

Likewise, not everything that needs to be learned can be contextualized, in view of the historical character of scientific production. If we take this concept in relation to immediate reality or practicality, these ways of conceiving education would reduce it to a utilitarian version. (...) What and how to teach in a contextualized way, therefore, are defined rather by the purposes to be achieved than by immediacy or by the practical needs posed by a supposedly neutral context. These purposes concern concrete people living in real situations which need to be understood in themselves and in their articulations with the totality of social life. (KUENZER, 2000:74-75).

The understanding of the pedagogical principle of contextualization as the student's ability to relate and/or apply knowledge to everyday life situations, as present in the guiding document of the national curriculum parameters for secondary education, is based, as explained by the rapporteur of the document, on David Stein's concept of "situated learning"

<sup>11</sup> I would like to register here the joy of having participated in the project - High School. Building a proposal for those who live from work - coordinated by the researcher Acácia Kuenzer, with the support of the government of Mato Grosso, during the administration of Governor Dante de Oliveira, which resulted in the work of the same name. See: SCHMIDT, Maria Auxiliadora. História. In. KUENZER, Acácia. Ensino Médio. Construindo uma proposta para os que vivem do trabalho. São Paulo: Cortez, 2000, pp.203-230.

The official document explicitly states that this concept is based on David Stein and his idea of situated learning (Brasil, 1999, v. 1, p. 141-142), based on the experience of everyday situations, according to the students' interests, and on the development of activities detached from the pure transmission of concepts. For Stein (1998), to situate learning means to place thought and action in a specific place of meaning, involving learners, the environment and activities to produce meaning. All knowledge is constructed in a situated way, in a given context, in order to be transferred to similar situations. (LOPES, 2002, p.7).

In relation to these assumptions, Boron's (2001) reflections on "artificial prachism", characterised by the presence of a certain anti-theoretical impediment to conventional knowledge, strengthened by the demands of the labour market and which rewards pragmatic and realistic attitudes, and punishes critical spirit and theoretical inclination, are enlightening.

To the theoretical framework based on the concept of situated learning and on the principle of contextualization, present in the proposal for High School, it is added the orientation for teaching based on the development of competencies. This perspective was introduced in Brazil in the 1990s, through the so-called "Pedagogy of Competencies" and is well explained in the Curricular Parameters for Secondary Education, announced through different types of competencies, such as complex cognitive competencies (intellectual autonomy, creativity, problem solving, analysis and prospection); general type competencies (ability to keep learning) and basic cognitive competencies (abstract reasoning, ability to understand new situations). General competences for insertion in the world of work are also highlighted. At the same time, the implementation of teaching by competencies, came accompanied by the imposition of the evaluation of results, *which ended up installing a bureaucratic logic in education systems, focused on such measurements and comparisons with international standards.* (ALMEIDA, 2009:88).

One of the biggest problems caused by the adoption of the pedagogy of competencies is the fact that the specific knowledge ceases to be a reference for learning and teaching, eventually being valued certain activities aimed at developing skills established a priori, and they constitute a mode of political governance of teaching practices, disqualifying the formative dimensions of the knowledge constituted (ALMEIDA, 2009:97). In the same direction, we agree with Kuenzer (2002) that these formative dimensions are the centre of the schooling process, which differentiates it from other spaces, such as those attached to professional work and which respond to the demands of certain specific practices. This is what the author

found in her research with workers on oil rigs. In the results of this investigation, Kuenzer apprehended the importance they give to the development of certain skills necessary for the world of work. However,

The school is the place to learn to interpret the world in order to transform it, from the domain of the categories of the method and contents that inspire and that become practices of human emancipation in a society increasingly mediated by knowledge. The place to develop competences, which in turn mobilize knowledge but are not confused with it, is the productive social practice (...) It is up to the schools, therefore, to play with quality its role in creating learning situations that allow the student to develop the cognitive, affective and psychomotor skills related to intellectual work, always articulated, but not reduced to the world of work and social relations (... Attributing to the school the function of developing competences is to ignore its nature and specificity as a space of appropriation of socially produced knowledge and, therefore, of intellectual work with reference to social practice (...). (KUENZER, 2002, p.8).

Now, taking Kuenzer's considerations into account, one can conclude that the tripod of contextualisation, everyday life and competences seems to sound strange to the world of contemporary historiography, for which the axiological and formative nature of historical knowledge is nothing new.

This assertion, added to the prescriptive intensity presupposed in this tripod, becomes even more worrying when coupled with the principle of interdisciplinarity also assumed in the proposal for Secondary Education, which led History to compose, together with other subjects such as Philosophy, Geography and Sociology, a single and diffuse area called Human Sciences and their Technologies.

Moreover, it was suggested the construction of projects, by each school, for the methodological treatment of the different subjects, revealing a certain perspective of interdisciplinarity in which the substantive and epistemological contents of the reference sciences are pulverized, which would not be at all inappropriate from the point of view of the principles that govern the curriculum proposal in question, in view of the principles of contextualization and daily life, as well as the pedagogical reference of the competencies. However, these principles would have little meaning and relevance if historical learning and therefore the teaching of history were to be considered within the framework of the formation of historical consciousness.

## **The interpellation to the past as a presupposition of the History Lesson**

The relationship between science and practical life with regard to historical learning highlights the dynamic processes of the relationship between present, past and future. In the field of history didactics, this is a constant and systematically present concern in discussions and reflections. The research in textbooks on History Didactics with the aim of understanding the process of construction of the conceptions of learning in the scope of the teaching of History in Brazil, also provided the contact with thinkers who influenced the authors' ways of dealing with the relationship between present and past.

One of the most inspiring of changes in the teaching methodology was John Dewey, either through direct contact with his works, or through the interpretations made of them, mainly with regard to the importance of the contents of History being always linked to the present of the students. In 1913 the work *L'enfant et l'école*<sup>12</sup> by the American philosopher and educator John Dewey was published. The work had an introduction by the psychologist Edouard Claparède, at the time one of the directors of the Bureau of the New School of Geneva. Like others by the author, it had great repercussion in Brazil, through a French translation, since it was never translated into Portuguese. This repercussion occurred in the context of diffusion of the New School ideology in Brazilian society, a moment in which the work of J. Dewey was one of the most significant references. The specific reference to this book can be explained by the successive citations of the ideas presented in it, mainly in the renovating proposals for the teaching of History that started to be disseminated in Brazil, either in publications aimed at teachers, or in the methodological instructions of curricular reforms forwarded in the country, particularly in the period from 1935 to 1962. It is in the thought of J. Dewey that these proposals found support to propose a rupture with the learning of History based on the study of the past for the past.

As this author states, if we understand history as the study of past facts, it is very difficult to legitimize its presence in school programs, because

**The past is the past and we must let the dead bury their dead. The present and the future call us too insistently to allow ourselves to plunge the child into an ocean of facts that have disappeared forever. We must above all consider history as an explanation of the forces and forms that present themselves in social life. This social life is the atmosphere we breathe; the present and the past are indissolubly interwoven". (DEWEY, 1913, p.119).**

<sup>12</sup> DEWEY, John. *L'école et L'enfant*. Paris Declachaux&Niestié, 1913.

With the concern in relating the learning of History to the interests of the child and the social life, Dewey provided the necessary orientation to the rupture with the study of the past for the past, predominant in the teaching of History in Brazil. From the dissemination of Dewey's ideas, the present/past relationship was definitively installed as one of the main and lasting indications for the methodology of History teaching in Brazil. An example of this can be found in the National Curricular Parameters of 1998, where it is stated that *it is the teacher's task to create teaching situations for the students to establish relations between the present and the past*. (BRASIL/PCNs, 1998: 77). Keeping the tradition inaugurated by J.Dewey, the concern in taking the student's present as a reference for learning the relations with the past became an uncontested adoption among the History teaching specialists.

Such concern, in the framework of theoretical references that point out the relations between history learning and historical consciousness, deserves to be turned on its head, indicating some questions, such as: - should History teaching start from the student's present for the study of the past, or should it start from the past that is present in the present, to establish the relations with the past to be analyzed? - in what ways is the past present in the present? - which past to choose and how to choose it? In the wake of the assumptions made, the starting point of the science of History is the interests that men have in order to be able to live - to orient themselves in the flow of time, to take possession of the past, through knowledge, in the present. Now, if this is the starting point of the science of History, it can also be assumed as the purpose of learning History. It is understood that history is learned because practical life imposes certain interests related to the need of orientation in the flow of time (past, present, future) and of taking possession of the past, from the present, through knowledge. Thus, it can be admitted that it is in the past that the essentiality of historical learning resides, always from the present.

Taking the past as the starting point of historical learning is not an easy task for the History teacher, but we must admit that we can only go to the past by means of the traces we find of it in the present, because these traces provide the bridge to enter the past itself. This process may remind us of the symbolic ritual that existed among the Greeks and Romans, based on the belief that building bridges was a sacred activity, because it meant joining destinies that the gods had separated.

In this perspective, going to the past can be considered a bridge-building activity, starting from its fragments that exist in a certain present and that have continuities with parts of the past that are objects of interest, but would be disconnected from the present. Thus, the present can be seen as a firm and secure ground, where



traces remain, from which bridges to certain pasts are designed and not to the past in general, taking as a starting point traces and fragments of the past chosen to build those bridges. It is understood that historical learning needs a two-way road and this construction requires an ethical commitment to the present, from which those who teach and those who learn can identify a past of interest and meaning for the subjects involved in the teaching and learning process.

Going to the past, in the historical learning process, can be considered from the perspective that the important thing is not to learn history, that is to learn the content of history, but, the important thing is to know how, from the deeds, History emerges. The first approach, that is, the perspective that the important thing to learn is to accumulate the contents of history is still considered a canonical presence in history teaching. An example of this is the fact that the competent teacher has been considered the one who identifies the events of the past, organizes his thoughts (discourse) about them and then presents them to his students, even critically, relating them somehow to aspects of the present. Thus, the historical content becomes a report about how the past was represented by the events and the teacher's way of thinking, such as the "explanations", "comparisons", "interpretations", has shown a didacticization of the past or a didacticized past, presented under the form of what is conventionally called "school knowledge".

In this particular, the past can be identified as the content to be studied in History and its legitimacy is marked by the argument of the authority of the hegemonic school culture in a certain society, as well as its instrumental relation with the historical culture of each epoch. Historically, it has been observed that, in teaching practice, the relationship with the past based on knowledge has been based mainly on two assumptions:

1. The proposition that History is a "mimetic" or camouflaged image of a concatenation of events, selected as historical facts, which could be shown as they actually happened, identical to the history taught about them;
2. The understanding that the historical narrative of the history taught is a means of communication, employed by teachers, related to a subject or theme that, most of the time, is unknown to the learning public. These learners are seen as unable to understand historiographically how the past is constructed, or how history is produced.

At the same time, from the last decades of the 20th century, in the field of History teaching a debate has been proposed around the difference between a lived

past, a told past and a taught past, that is, between the production of historical knowledge and the teaching of History. The teaching of History became concerned with finding a past to be taught, learned and also that announced imperative guidelines for the actions of certain communities, in the sense of placing them in a temporal or historical dimension.

This concern stems from the very need for the past, as Lowenthal (1998) states. The ideas of this author on the subject still need to be further expanded in order to contribute to an understanding of the need for the past as a principle of a theory of historical learning. The fact is that the need for appropriation of the past is proper, not only to individuals, but to the collective of society (groups, classes). This appropriation is intimately linked to the process of us making ourselves what we will be, just as the past we receive is an intrinsic part of what we are and of what we are not. Thus, in relation to historical learning and the attribution of meanings, it is valid to conclude that there are several ways in which we relate to the past, among which is included the properly historical appropriation. In this perspective, there is a concern about how historical learning at school is leading children and young people to appropriate the past, often taking paths filled with anachronisms. To reflect on this concern, it is important to indicate some questions:

1. How can we get to know the way in which children and young pupils have appropriated the past;
2. How the past is present in the present of teachers and of children and young pupils.

In the search for an understanding of the types of past and their meanings, some reflections of Oakeshott, (2003) may be pointed out, considering that this author presents proximities with the works of Rüsen, main author for the systematization of elements for the construction of a theory of historical learning. Among the issues pointed out by Oakeshott are:

1. The fact that history is a distinctive mode of understanding the past. This mode of understanding would be, according to him, related to an idea of the past, an idea of event, an idea of meaningful relationship between events, and an idea of change. It is this mode of understanding that endows with historicity what needs to be learned. In this sense, it justifies the defence of the existence of a distinct and specific mode of historical cognition and, therefore, of historical learning.
2. The author presents different conceptions of the past, such as the practical, encapsulated, remembered, consulted and registered past. These conceptions have

the present as a reference and can be crucial as supporting elements for historical learning, as far as it is assumed that the teaching of history must start from the past which is in the present of who teaches and who learns, and not start from the “present” as something generic and abstract.

3. In upholding the necessary and logical relationship between present and past, Oakeshott says that the present is questioned by the past, as is the future, because it is the present that determines how the past is to be sought, or evoked. It is this present/past relation that qualifies the present and also qualifies the future. This assumption leads us to think that, for History teaching, the present does not have a meaning of chronological temporality, but, more than that, the present is an ontological principle, because it is the present that gives sense and meaning to teaching and learning.

For Lowenthal (1998) there are some possibilities of making the relation present/past/future, understanding the past as an attribute of our being. The past is the content of human experience, but it takes a conscious effort to recognise it as a domain that coexists in the present, but in a different way from it. In this sense, thinking historically presupposes learning to give the past its own existence and trying to disentangle it from the present in which it exists. The author also admits that we can go to the past from memory, relics and history, but the past has to be treated as a strange country, where things are done differently because what is known as the past was a present at another time.

From Lowenthal's reflections, some categories or positive attributes can be gauged as guiding the going to the past, such as the ideas of Antiquity; Precedence; Distancing; Continuity; Terminality and Succession. However, according to this same author, going to the past is not free of its evils and threats and it becomes important to think it from some care or, as Nietzsche (2005, p.68) states, we do not want to serve history if it does not serve life. It is in this perspective that the idea of the future is placed as constitutive of the attribution of meanings by historical learning.

The concern with the present/past/future relation also signals the reflections of Koselleck (1993). The author understands the past as a space of experience and the future as a horizon of expectations, and can be analysed in a dialogue with Rösen (2010c) and his three operations of historical learning, experience, interpretation and orientation, that is

The three operations can be analysed and distinguished from each other at different levels or dimensions of historical learning. The occupation of historical consciousness as historical learning can be approached when it brings about an

increase in the experience of the human past, both as an increase in the historical competence that gives meaning to that experience, and in the ability to apply those historical meanings to the guiding frameworks of practical life. (RÜSEN, 2010, p. 84).

Thus, one can understand the past as a relevant dimension of history and, therefore, of its teaching, and this does not mean defending the study of the past for the past. If it is important to take the past as an object of teaching and learning history, it is even more important to reinvent the ways to go to the past, to endow it with significance from the present and the future.

It emphasizes the perspective that the important thing is how historical thinking can be learned, not only by the four operations of historical constitution of meaning (experience, interpretation, orientation and motivation), but also “and more properly, by the four types of historical constitution of meaning (traditional, exemplary, genetic and critical are valid as forms of learning”.(RÜSEN, 2015, p.253). In the reconstruction of his typology, Jörn Rüsen points to the maintenance of the three levels: traditional, exemplary and genetic, stating that the level of critical consciousness plays a key role in the passage from one level to another. He also makes an interlocution with what he calls “the deficits of evolutionary psychology” in relation to studies about historical consciousness

The evolutionary psychology of cognitive competence has rarely given attention to human historical consciousness. At the very least it has never bothered to clarify the levels of competence and their interconnection in the handling of historical experience as it has done with time and moral consciousness. It has remained stuck on the idea that normative competence and the related capacity for generalisation constitute the most developed form of human thought for dealing with the (moral) orientation of life. This corresponds, within the framework of historical consciousness, to the observation that exemplary thinking is dominant in the processes of historical education and training, in which it is precisely a matter of attaining general normative competence. Nevertheless, this cognitive level can and must be transposed to a higher level, in which the genetic type of the constitution of meaning predominates. (RÜSEN, 2015, P.255).

We do not intend to enter into a discussion with evolutionary psychology and its interfaces with historical learning, but we would like to highlight the difficulty in finding answers, in this field of knowledge, to the basic question about the purpose or social meaning of learning historical contents. The search for dialogue between a learning theory based on history and a pedagogical theory which suggests paths for

the meaning of historical learning in pupils' education can be achieved on the basis of an interlocution between the historian Jörn Rüsen and the educator Paulo Freire<sup>13</sup>.

On the one hand, Paulo Freire, in establishing some fundamental principles of the *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970), affirms a typology of consciousness related to the worldviews of the students and educators, divided into three types: semi-transitive consciousness, naive transitive consciousness, and critical consciousness. On the other hand, Jörn Rüsen, places the process of constitution of consciousness in a temporal perspective, validated by the historical thought formation, which happens in the temporal process of human life. However, this process happens a posteriori because, while the person is experiencing history in his/her life, he/she cannot be thought or considered historically, and this condition Jörn Rüsen calls historical pre-thinking. It is at this level that Paulo Freire's so-called semi-transitive consciousness can be located, in which reality is perceived in an ahistorical way, and the subject sees himself without possibilities of transformative action in practical life. Fatalistic views subordinated to the precepts of the dominant common sense fill the human mind and explain past experiences, that is

In its near immersion in reality, this mode of consciousness fails to grasp many of the challenges of the context, or perceives them distortively. Its semi-intransitivity involves a certain obliteration imposed on it by the objective conditions. (...) It is that at this level of near-immersion, what we call "structural perception" of the facts, which implies a true understanding of their reason for being, is not easily verified. Thus, the explanation for the problems is always found outside reality, sometimes in divine designs, sometimes in fate (...) (FREIRE, 1970, p.120).

This level of consciousness, according to Rüsen, can be considered the first reflective level at which historical pre-thinking takes place and which is nowadays called construction. For him, the way this construction occurs by cognition and conceptual argumentation is strongly tinged by the preconceived views of history that exist in present life. At this level, history is a real element of social life, a pre-established cultural condition or circumstance under which historical thinking occurs. The past, present in the conditions of cultural life, constructs the constructor because practical human life is guided by pre-established conventions or traditions.

<sup>13</sup> Paulo Freire (Brazil 1921/1997) was a Brazilian educator, pedagogue and philosopher. He is considered one of the most remarkable thinkers in the history of world pedagogy, having influenced the movement called critical pedagogy. He is also the Patron of Brazilian Education.

In Paulo Freire's naive transitive consciousness, "the capacity for capturing is expanded, and not only what was previously unperceived becomes so, but also much of what was understood in a certain way is now understood differently" (FREIRE, 1970, p.123). This level presents a historical perspective more focused on contesting the past without alternatives for the future and can also be considered the level of consciousness which, according to Rösen, is the starting point for historical learning, because "historical learning begins with an "input" of historical experience into students' prior historical consciousness" (RÜSEN, 2010b, p.53).

According to Freire (1970), the passage from naive consciousness to the formation of critical consciousness requires a process of explicitness, in which injustice becomes a clear perception for consciousness, enabling subjects to insert themselves in the historical process and making them enroll in the search for its affirmation. Moreover, says the author, critical consciousness enables the subjects to inscribe themselves in reality in order to better know and transform it, training them to face, listen to, and unveil the world, seeking an encounter with the other, establishing a dialogue from which knowledge results, because, "men, challenged by the drama of the present hour, propose themselves as a problem. They discover that they know little about themselves (...) and they make a problem of themselves. They ask questions. They answer, and their answers lead them to new questions. (FREIRE, 1970, p.29). He relates his conception of critical consciousness to the construction of a historical sense in people, and self-consciousness is already a step towards the construction of critical consciousness, as he reproduces the speech of a worker, in his work *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, "I cannot say that I have understood all the words that have been said here, but I can affirm one thing: I arrived at this naive course and, upon discovering myself to be naive, I began to become critical. This discovery, however, neither makes me a fanatic, nor gives me the feeling of demonization." (FREIRE, 1970, p.23).

In this Freirean concept, two of Rösen's (2010) typologies of historical consciousness intersect: the critical type and the genetic type. In critical consciousness, "history functions as a tool with which to break, 'to destroy,' to decipher continuity - so that it loses its power as a source of orientation for the present". (RÜSEN, 2010b, p.67) Moreover,

**Historical-critical thinking injects elements of critical argumentation into moral reasoning. It calls morality into question by pointing out the cultural relativity of values, which contrasts with assumed and apparent universality, by discovering the factors of temporal condition that contrast with a false timeless validity. It confronts**

validity claims with evidence based on temporal change: the relative power of historical conditions and consequences. (RÜSEN, 2010b, p.68).

The conception of genetic historical consciousness advocated by Rüsen (2010b) announces the formation of historical consciousness, as a principle of historical learning, based on a rationality based on human action, whose reference is the dialectic of historical experience, from individual and collective experiences. For him, it is this historical consciousness that gives life a “conception of the course of time,” “deals with the past as experience, and “reveals the fabric of temporal change in which our lives are tied, as well as the future experiences toward which changes are directed.” (RÜSEN, 2010b, p.59). This conception molds moral values to a “temporal body,” transforming them into “temporal totalities,” that is, it recovers the historicity of values and the possibility for subjects to problematize themselves and seek answers in the relations between past/present/future, because

We allow history to be part of the past, yet at the same time we grant it another future. It is the change itself that gives meaning to history. Temporal change has been stripped of its threatening aspect and has become the path on which the options are open for human activity to create a new world. The future effectively surpasses, exceeds the past in its right over the present, a present conceptualized as an intersection, an intensely temporal knot, a dynamic transition. (RÜSEN, 2010b, p.69).


This possibility, as Freire (1970) states, may be indicative of the recognition of dehumanization as an ontological and historical reality and may also lead to the question whether humanization is possible, indicating possible paths for the meaning of historical learning in the formation of students and teachers.

### **Humanism as the foundation of History Lesson**

The perspective of learning directed at the formation of historical thought allows the teaching of History to be thought of from the insertion of the subjects in the movement of reality, from a contemporary perspective. With this, students and teachers have the chance to apprehend the world and humanity’s past concretely, recognizing them as something that concerns themselves and the other, not as something abstract, but as a “historical challenge, in its contradictory relationship with the dehumanization that takes place in the objective reality in which we live. This means that dehumanization and humanization cannot occur except in the very history of men” (FREIRE, 1987).

Still, for Paulo Freire, this process of humanization only occurs with the emancipation that does not take place within the consciousness of men, isolated from the world, but in the praxis of men within history that, implying the relation conscience-world, involves the critical consciousness of this relation, indicating that it is necessary to realize and perceive what it means to become human in other times and places, because “there are no shadows that cannot be considered History. But History is not rosy, History is conflict. History is also a process of overcoming inhumanity. This process suggests the need for a teaching of history, in which the necessary competencies for the production of historical thought are articulated to a project of education thought from the perspective of the insecurity of historical identity, of the pressures related to cultural diversity, of the criticism to western thought, and of a new relationship with nature and with the other, for this relationship is fundamental to the understanding of the world. A necessity that needs to be articulated with a sense of urgency to think beyond the clashes between competencies and historical consciousness. These are challenges to be met in light of the principles of a new humanism, one that temporalizes “humanity into a comprehensive concept of universal history, within which every form of life in its individuality is hermeneutically recognized.” (RÜSEN,2015b, p.25).

If the learning of History is thought of as the possibility of internalization of a certain historical consciousness by the subjects, different possibilities can be pointed out. One can speak of learning history in the sense of internalizing knowledge to maintain and preserve certain situations, or one can speak of the possibility of internalization as subjectivation, that is, internalization plus action by the subjects with a view to interventions and transformations in practical human life, since the new humanism is updated and should



**Integrate the shadow of inhumanity into the idea of humanity based on the principle of human dignity. As a principle of anthropological dignity, it has utopian elements and must be understood as a reaction to the capacity of every human being to commit the most cruel and terrible crimes against humanity. This fundamental ambivalence of humanity is a permanent stimulus for historical change - both at the level of the motivation for human action and at the level of historical understanding and cultural orientation. Moreover, humanism can open the perspective of historical experience to the hitherto fundamentally ignored dimension of human suffering. (RÜSEN, 2015).**

Thus, whether in terms of maintaining or changing a particular conception of the world, the need to change, in a lasting and concrete way, the historically existing



ways of internalizing knowledge is fundamental, challenging the currently dominant forms of cognition

is not, therefore, about having knowledge, but about ways of knowing, about cognitive principles that determine the application of knowledge to problems of orientation. It is a matter of cognitive competence in the temporal perspective of practical life, of the relationship of each subject with himself and the communicative context with others. Naturally, these competencies depend on the contents of knowledge. They cannot be empty of the experience of past time, elaborated and interpreted cognitively. (RÜSEN, 2007, 101)

The overcoming of historical learning based on the principles of contextualization and the development of competencies as possibilities of a relationship between science and practical life can be thought of from the insertion of the subjects in the movement of the real. It is the movement through which they have the chance of concretely apprehending the world and humanity's past, recognizing them as something that concerns themselves and the other, not as something abstract, but as a "historical challenge, in its contradictory relationship with the dehumanization that takes place in the objective reality in which we are. This means that dehumanization and humanization cannot occur except in the very history of men (FREIRE, 1970:158). For Freire, this process of humanization only occurs with the emancipation that does not take place within the consciousness of men, isolated from the world, but in the praxis of men within history which, implying the relation consciousness-world, involves the critical consciousness of this relation. (FREIRE, 1970, p.159). For Rösen, this indicates that it is necessary to realize and perceive what it means to become human in other times and places, because there are no shadows that cannot be considered History. But History is not rosy, History is conflict. History is also a process of overcoming inhumanity. (RUSEN, 2015a,p.29).

This process indicates the need for a teaching of history in which the competences necessary for the production of historical thought are articulated to a project of education thought from the perspective of the insecurity of historical identity, of the pressures related to cultural diversity, of the criticism of western thought and of a new relationship with nature and with the other, since this relationship is fundamental for the understanding of the world. A necessity that needs to be articulated with a sense of urgency to think beyond the clashes between competences and historical consciousness, whose attribution of meaning is a fundamental principle of historical learning.



# The Methodology of a History Lesson

One of the first innovative proposals for the methodology of History teaching, which incorporated the new relationship with learning based on situated historical cognition, was the “Workshop Lesson”, proposed by Isabel Barca (2004). The author takes as a reference the theory of conceptual change<sup>1</sup> and suggests a model of lesson in which the teacher plays the role of social investigator of the students’ previous concepts, in order to develop a process of pedagogical intervention, whose main objective is to work on the three main competences in History:

1. Interpretation of sources: reading diverse historical sources, with diverse supports, with diverse messages, cross-referencing the sources in their messages, in their intentions, in their validity, selecting the sources with criteria of methodological objectivity, for the confirmation or refutation of descriptive and explanatory hypotheses. 2. Contextualized understanding: understanding or trying to understand human and social situations at different times and in different spaces, relating the meanings of the past with their own attitudes towards the present and

<sup>1</sup> The conceptual change model emerged from an analogy between the growth of scientific knowledge and the learning of science. The most notable influence was that of Kuhn, with his description of the history of science as an alternation of periods of normal science and scientific revolution. The conceptual change model is thus a metaphorical extension of the understanding of conceptual change in the new philosophy of science into the domain of learning theory. In. Forms of constructivism: conceptual change theory and contextual constructivism. EL-HANI, Charbel Niño/BIZZO, Nelio Marco Vincenzo. Available at [www.abrapecnet.org.br/enpec-ii-enpec-trabalhos](http://www.abrapecnet.org.br/enpec-ii-enpec-trabalhos). Acesso em 12/01/2020.

the projection of the future, raising new questions, new hypotheses to investigate, which is, in short, the essence of the progression of knowledge. 3. communication: expressing one's interpretation and understanding of human experiences over time with intelligence and sensitivity, using the diversity of the media currently available. (BARCA, 2004, p.135).

Referring to the results of investigations that were being carried out by English historians, such as Peter Lee and Rosalyn Ashby, the author reaffirms the importance of History classes being guided by the new learning principles that form historical thinking, such as:

1. Significance - the more elaborate understanding of historical knowledge is related to tasks and activities carried out in concrete contexts that are meaningful to children and young people.
2. Experience - historical concepts are understood gradually, based on the relationship with common sense concepts, with the experiential culture of children and young people.
3. Explanation - it is relevant to take into account the explanations that children and youngsters make based on the relations they establish with their experiential culture. Moreover,

The development of historical reasoning proceeds with oscillations and not in an invariant way. Children, adolescents, and adults alike may think in a simplistic way in certain situations and in a more elaborate way in others. Interpreting the past does not mean just understanding a finished version of History that is reproduced in the textbook or by the teacher. The interpretation of the "contradictory," that is, of the convergence and divergence of messages, is a principle that integrates genuine historical knowledge. (BARCA, 2004, p.139).

The new conception of learning based on situated historical cognition imposed the challenge of proposing a specific teaching methodology for modes of learning that could incorporate the process of formation of historical thought and historical consciousness of young people and children. It means, mainly, the proposition of a new didactics of History, which led to a deepening of the dialogue with philosophy and theory of history, particularly with Ruseian thought.

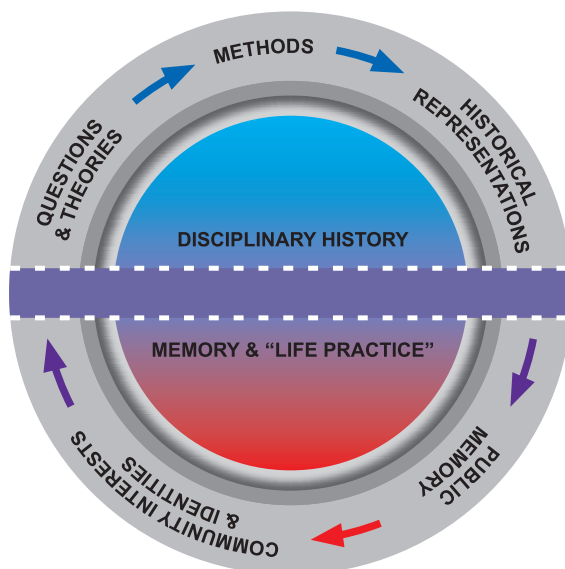
Jörn Rüsen's conceptions concerning the Didactics of History were presented by him, especially, in two matrices: the matrix of the Didactics of History and the Matrix of Historical Thinking. Both were taken as main references for the development of the "History Lesson", suggested as a proposed methodology of history teaching, which has as reference the situated historical cognition. In the matrix of the "History Lesson" were incorporated questions such as the tensions between historical culture

and school culture, the inclusion of contents related to controversial themes in the history of Brazil, as well as the place and the meaning of memory and historical heritage in historical learning.

The matrix of the science of History also became a reference for authors such as Stéphane Lévesque<sup>2</sup> and Peter Seixas<sup>3</sup>, for the elaboration of matrices or foundations for the Didactics of History. An incursion into the authors' proposals was enlightening in order to understand how they appropriated the Ruseian model.

The Canadian historian Peter Seixas used Jörn Rüsen's first matrix as a basis to develop a proposed matrix for the didactics of History Education.

### Matrix of the Didactics of History Education by Peter Seixas



Source: SEIXAS, Peter (2015)<sup>4</sup>

For Seixas, the questions of historical learning and, therefore, of teaching, which constitute the Didactics of History, are subject to certain needs imposed by the

<sup>2</sup> Stéphane Lévesque is Associate Professor of History Education and Director of the Virtual History Laboratory at the Faculty of Education, University of Ottawa, Canada.

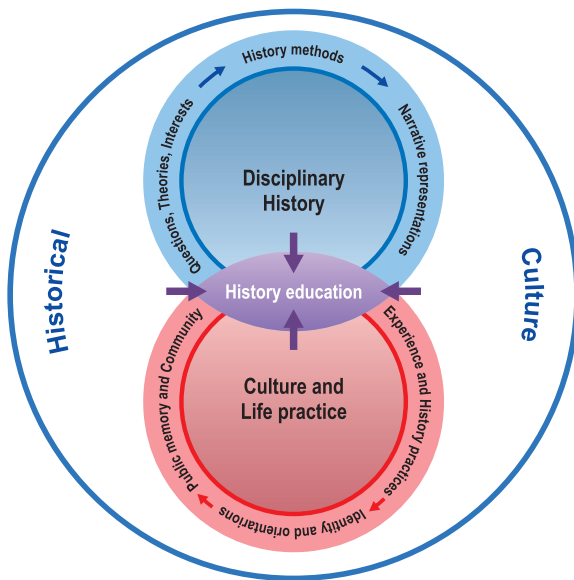
<sup>3</sup> Peter Seixas, professor at the University of British Columbia, director of the Historical Thought project, founder of the Centre for the Study of Historical Consciousness.

<sup>4</sup> SEIXAS, Peter. A History/Memory Matrix for History Education. In: *Public History Weekly* 4 (2015) 6.

reality of different societies. For this reason, he considers it fundamental to start with questions such as: What history is being told? Whose history is being taught?

In this regard, he believes it is necessary to take into account that historical thinking and narrative representations form public memory and construct identities, and vice versa. In the figure by which he adapted Jörn Rüsen's matrix, history education, represented in the center, has the significance of a bridge with practical life and is where teachers have relative autonomy in their classes. It is also the place between historical thinking and memory that is located in practical life. Thus, memory becomes relevant in the relationship between the learning of History and its teaching. The also Canadian historian Stéphane Lévesque included the category historical culture in his adaptation of the Rusenian matrix.

### Matrix of the Didactics of History Education by Stéphane Lévesque



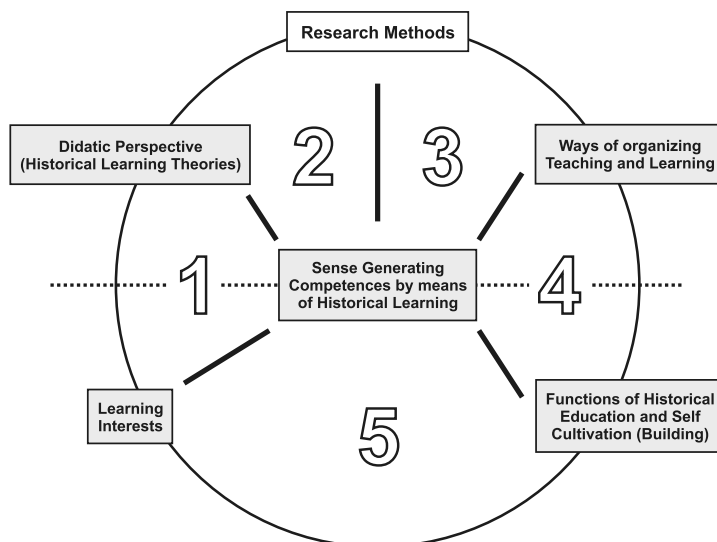
Source: LÉVESQUE, 2016<sup>5</sup>.

The matrix adapted by Stéphane Lévesque proposes to encapsulate the essence of historical thinking and narrative in a broad cultural context, which includes

<sup>5</sup> LÉVESQUE, Stéphane: Going beyond “Narratives” vs. “Competencies”: A model for understanding history education. In: *Public History Weekly* 4 (2016)

education and its relationship with historical culture. It follows from this, according to the author, that science history, practical life, and history education contribute to different approaches and practices, as well as to generate interpretations. He includes history education at the intersection between history science and practical life because its position is strategic for students to learn the skills of historical consciousness, such as researching, reading and analyzing sources, including historiographical ones, as well as the competence to construct historical narratives for different purposes. Moreover, it places the practices of different communities within historical culture, that is, within a discourse of totality, in which societies are able to understand themselves and their futures by interpreting and narrating the past. It is noteworthy that the authors mentioned above do not include the centrality of the principle of attribution of meaning by historical narrative, nor do they refer to this category as the foundation of the learning process. Probably because they have adopted the first matrix by Jörn Rösen, where this category does not appear yet, also included in his representation of the Didactics of History.

### Jörn Rösen's History Didactics Matrix



Source: RÜSEN, Jörn, 2016<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> RÜSEN, Jörn. *Contribuições para uma teoria da Didática da História*. Curitiba: W&A Editores, 2016. p. 25

The method suggested by the matrix includes the essential relationship between the practical life of the subjects - teachers and students - and the science of history, when proposing a teaching and learning process, since it is the starting and ending point of history teaching. The starting point are the needs and interests of the subjects, always related to the world in which they are and may be involved. These interests become indicators to go to the theories of learning, depositaries of historical concepts, whether substantive (related to the contents of history), or epistemological (related to the cognitive processes of historical thought, such as historical evidence and explanation).


The path towards the reconstruction of the science method in the classroom presupposes, among others, that in the teaching and learning relationship that occurs in History classes, there is not a “didactic transposition” from sage knowledge to school knowledge, but the same constitutive process of the production of historical knowledge, proper to the science of History, must be followed. In this case, for example, the work with historical sources becomes fundamental as a principle of the teaching method. Banking education, that is, the method in which the student is a mere depository of previously selected contents, can finally be abandoned. The ways of organizing teaching and learning refer to the moment when both teacher and learner assume the narrative status of the science of History. The return to practical life indicates the moment when the knowledge taught and learned reveals the meaning and sense of temporal orientation of those involved in the teaching and learning process, teachers and students.

This indicates the core of the matrix of the “history lesson” for the Reconstructivist Didactics of History, which is the process of construction of meaning, based on knowledge that produces the involvement of subjects in their own self-knowledge, in the knowledge of the other and of the world, as well as in action with a view to transforming the world in which they live.

One of the fundamental points in the proposed matrices is the organic relationship between practical life (bottom floor of the matrix) and science (top floor of the matrix), suggesting the essential relationship between the practical life of the subjects - teachers and students - and the science of history when a teaching and learning process is proposed. Thus, the first question to be answered is what is practical life in the relationship between the teaching and learning of History, which should be understood as the point of departure and arrival of historical learning.

## First “History Lesson” matrix

The starting point for the proposition of the matrix of the “Historical Lesson” was the disciplinary matrix of History and the matrix of the Didactics of History by Jörn Rüsen. (SCHMIDT, 2019). The matrix of the Didactics of History of the aforementioned author is grounded in a conception of historical learning situated in the science of History itself, thus deriving in a consequent teaching methodology, whose basis and foundation is also referenced in the epistemology of the science of History. The Reconstructivist Didactics of History, referenced in the formation of historical thought, may allow the subjects involved in the teaching and learning relationship to reconstruct, in classes, wherever they take place (museums, classrooms) the methodical process of the production of historical knowledge, because

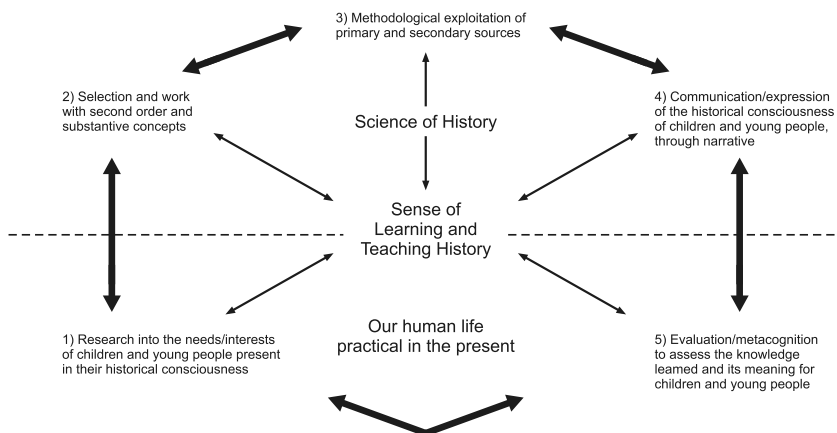


The History class is the moment when the teacher can offer his student the appropriation of existing historical knowledge, through an effort and an activity through which the student will return to the activity that built up this knowledge. It is also the space where a battle is fought over knowledge itself: on the one hand, the teacher’s need to be the producer of knowledge, to take part in the production of historical knowledge, to contribute personally. On the other, the option of becoming just an echo of what others have already said. (SCHMIDT, 1998).

It is believed that, by using the methodology of the “Historical Lesson”, the teacher will be able, together with his students, to follow the path of the production of historical knowledge in his classes. This does not mean that the objective is to transform students into historians, but to contribute to the formation of historical thought and historical consciousness. The first “Historical Lesson” matrix was used as a reference for a proposal of teaching methodology and included in the Curricular Guidelines for the Teaching of History in the Municipal Teaching Network of Curitiba, Paraná (CURITIBA/SMED, 2016).

The central element of the matrix is the formation of meaning through historical learning, based on the relationship between practical life and the science of History. The process of investigating the needs and interests of the children and young students is the first step. This activity takes up, in another way and with another perspective, the investigation of previous concepts, as postulated in Isabel Barca’s Workshop Lesson, since the purpose is not to lead to the process of change or greater complexity of ideas, but to carry out the journey of the methodical science, for the formation of historical thought and development of the competence of meaning attribution.





Source: Matriz da Didática da História de JÖRN RÜSEN (2016, p 25).

Adapted by SCHMIDT, M. A, 2016.

The proposal was structured on the basis of a process that obeys certain factors that, in the practice of the history lesson, occur interdependently:

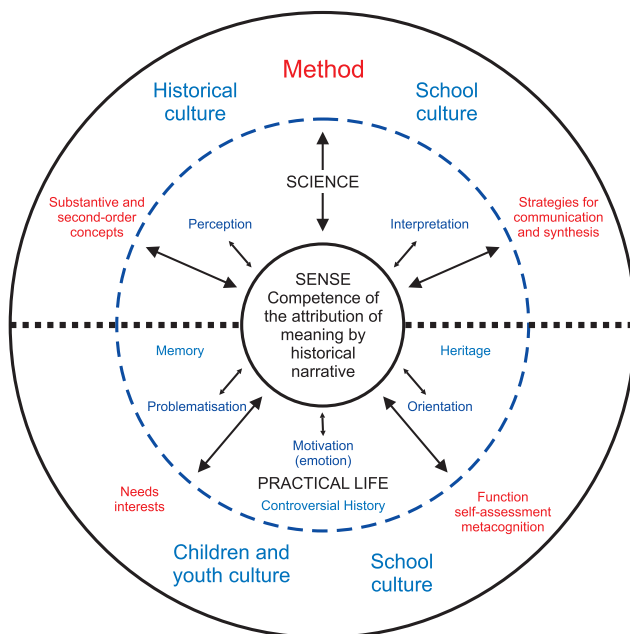
- 1) Considering that all children and young people have a historical consciousness, based on the way they give meaning to their experience in time, it is fundamental to investigate the lack of orientation in their practical life and the interests that these subjects express when they start working with a new content of History.
- 2) After children and young people express their needs and interests regarding the new content of History, the teacher selects the substantive and second-order concepts to be worked on, taking these temporal needs and interests as a starting point.
- 3) Considering the procedures adopted by the historian in the production of historical knowledge, the teacher methodologically organizes his teaching practice based on the work with historical sources - primary and secondary, problematizing and questioning them, allowing children and young people to interpret and problematize these traces of the past in the light of their practical life in the present.
- 4) After the teacher guides the work of producing historical knowledge, the children and young people produce narratives that express their historical consciousness based on interpretations and problematizations that emerge in the work with the sources. It is important to emphasize that the reference to

sources and the use of time markers can be considered important indications that the narrative of children and young people has a historical nature.

- 5) The continuous assessment and the systematization of the assessment, from the perspective of metacognition (what the subjects know about what they have learned), make children and young people realize their own learning process. The understanding of the processes mobilized from the investigation of the needs and interests of these subjects to the production of a narrative that expresses their historical awareness, allows children and young people to become aware of their cognitive processes, attributing meanings and giving meaning to what they have learned. (CURITIBA-SMED, 2016).

### Second “History Lesson” matrix

The first proposal of the History Lesson was restructured based on a process that obeyed certain factors that, in the practice of the history class, occur interdependently. It is considered that the category culture, as has been pointed out, articulates the processes that form the relationships between practical life (praxis) and science. This relationship is not alien to the concerns of history teachers. It is one of the reasons for adhering to the category of social practice as the starting and



ending point of learning and teaching history. However, despite an explicitness of the concept, within the scope of the philosophy of education, there were not enough elements for an objective articulation with the learning and teaching of history. Resorting to Jörn Rüsen's matrix was a possibility, because, just as the perspective of social practice (SAVIANI, 1999) allows for the articulation between the subject and the world, in the scope of the appropriation of scientific knowledge, the Rusenian matrix makes it possible to clarify the specific process of the relationship and appropriation of historical knowledge.

In the dynamics of the path suggested by the matrix, from the social practice are recognized the needs and interests of students, moving towards scientific knowledge, from the problematization, because, "the problematization represents the moment of the process in which this social practice is put into question, analyzed, questioned, taking into account the content to be worked and the social requirements of the application of this knowledge. (GASPARIN, 2002, p.36).

The relationships between science and practical life, suggested by Jörn Rüsen in the disciplinary matrix of History and also in the matrix of the Didactics of History, are also part of the nature of the learning process, as well as the emphasis on the competence of attributing meaning through historical narrative. To learn history is to learn to narrate oneself and the world in which one lives, for, according to Rüsen, narrating is a cultural practice of interpretation of time, anthropologically universal. And this holds true for historical and non-historical narrative. The specificity of properly historical narrative, the author suggests, is given by some characteristics, such as the fact that the events that are articulated narratively actually occurred in the past, its internal cohesion is conceived as a temporal evolution linked to experience and as meaningful for the subjects' self-understanding and orientation, and the constitution of meaning must be linked to the experience of time, for the past to become present in contemporary practical human life.

In this particular, the historical constitution of meaning contains all possible ways of making the past present, such as civic celebrations, congratulatory speeches, historiographical texts, exhibitions, historical games. The inclusion of reconstructivist history narratives in History classes enables teachers and students to generate new ways of understanding and interpreting the relations between present, past and future. It is worth remembering that in the teaching of History in Brazil there was a subordination of the attribution of meaning constructed by the presence of the great master narratives, related mainly to the secular powers, such as the history of the nation and of western civilization. Moreover, with the process

of “pedagogization” that occurred in the scope of the separation between academic history and school history, there was a separation between the subject that learns and the object of learning that made the relation with the historical experience (past, present and future) lose its meaning, since the simple presence of the past as content and object of learning is not enough. Learning historical narrative explicits meaning when it articulates:

1. Content - when it makes sense of what is being talked about. That is, it makes a new relationship explicit, either qualitatively - what pasts are significant for learning? And quantitatively - which pasts are important for learning?
2. Form - makes explicit how the difference between past, present and future is represented, as well as their relationship, being able to make understood and accepted.
3. Function - makes one understand the purpose of History.

As the Matrix of the History Lesson points out, the starting point of the formation of meaning is the relationship with praxis, from which start the questions we ask of the past, the “historical questions”

What is it that provokes the asking of historical questions? I consider that there are two possibilities that drive the activity of meaning formation in historical consciousness through questions: (a) a movement that starts from the experiences of the past and (b) a movement that starts from the experiences of the present and leads to the experiences of the past. In the first modality of the movement, the past attracts because of its empirical presence in the form of traces, monuments, relics, objects, sensory perceptions. The past is addressed to the human being of the present, and this reference makes the latter address the past by asking about it. (...) Another modality of asking about the past starts from the present. It is about the very common and possibly universal phenomenon of the constitution of historical consciousness from the experience of a temporal rupture, a temporal divergence, a discontinuity, a rupture of the continuity of the experiential orders that stimulate historical memories and narrative formations of meaning. Such a rupture is a phenomenon of the present. (RÜSEN, 2014b, pp. 176-177).

It should be stressed that the importance of the relationship with the present in the process of historical learning goes beyond what has been proposed, be it as a way of relating the content to the daily life of the students, or the principle of contextualization, as already discussed in chapter three. The relationship with the

present does not involve and is not realized only with an aspect or strategy of teaching methodology, but acquires a guiding status in the relationship with knowledge and with the option and selection of certain contents and not others.

The fundamental relationship with praxis as a starting and ending point is also a pedagogical option or a didactic-pedagogical principle. Gasparin<sup>7</sup> (2002) in his book - *Uma Didática para a Pedagogia Histórico-Crítica (A Didactics for Critical-Historical Pedagogy)*, analyzes the importance of social practice in the relationship between teaching and learning, taking as a reference the ideas of the educator Dermeval Saviani,<sup>8</sup> from the ideology of critical-historical pedagogy. For Saviani (1999), the starting and ending point for learning is the social practice in which students and teachers are immersed, whether in a closer or more remote relationship

**The Initial Social Practice, the first moment of pedagogical work, consists in seeing the reality and becoming aware of how it is placed as a whole and in its relations with the content that will be developed in the process. The second step consists of questioning this reality and also the content (...) The teaching-learning process, in this case, is a function of the questions raised by the social practice and taken up in a deeper and more systematized way by the content. According to this theoretical-methodological proposal, the major social issues precede the selection of content. (GASPARIN, 2002, pp. 36-37).**

It is necessary to take into consideration the fact that, despite being common to teachers and students, the way in which each one experiences and assumes the specifically historical experiences, demands and needs of time orientation, present in practical life, is not the same. Teachers and students are different agents with different levels of understanding and it is from this assumption that the path towards science can be realized. The consolidation process of the proposal of the Historical Lesson took into consideration the horizontal and vertical interdependence among the factors that make up the method of History:

- 6) Both those who teach and those who learn have different ways of manifesting their historical consciousness, expressing intercultural aspects of the way they give meaning to their experience of time and in time. Thus, it is fundamental that the starting point of the learning process is the survey and categorization of the needs and interests of the agents, always starting from

<sup>7</sup> João Luiz Gasparin, Associate Professor at the University of Maringa, in the area of Education.

<sup>8</sup> Dermeval Saviani (1943) Brazilian philosopher and educator, creator of the Critical Historical Pedagogy, of Marxist referential.

the way each one is inserted in practical human life, remembering that the way teachers understand their insertion in practical life explains different understandings of the students. The needs and interests may be investigated, for example, based on their relations with memory and the material and immaterial historical heritage, which explains the presence of these elements in the matrix of the “Historical Classroom”.

- 7) The investigation of the needs and interests from questions asked to the social practice, will express the needs and interests of the learners in relation to the subject studied, raising possibilities of work with the substantive concepts or contents of History, as well as with the cognitive strategies of historical thinking or epistemological concepts, such as interpretation and orientation. The selection of the substantive and epistemological concepts to be developed is always a job to be done by the teacher.
- 8) Considering the procedures adopted by the historian in the production of historical knowledge, the teacher methodologically organizes his/her teaching practice based on the work with historical sources - primary and secondary, problematizing and interpellating them, allowing children and young people to interpret and problematize these traces of the past in the light of their practical life in the present. The interpellation of the past from the sources has as its starting point the issues or questions raised by the agents in the context of their practical life.
- 9) After the teacher has oriented the work of producing historical knowledge, the children and young people, using different languages (such as comics, written narratives, etc), produce narratives that express their historical consciousness based on interpretations and problematizations that emerge in the work with the sources. It is important to emphasize that the reference to sources and the use of time markers can be considered important indications that the narrative of children and young people has a historical nature.
- 10) The continuous assessment and the systematization of the assessment, from the perspective of metacognition (what the subjects know about what they have learned), make children and young people realize their own learning process. The understanding of the processes mobilized from the investigation of the needs and interests of these subjects to the production of a narrative that expresses their historical consciousness, allows children and young people to become aware of their cognitive processes, attributing meanings and giving meaning to what they have learned. (CURITIBA-SMED, 2016).

In the matrix of the History Lesson, the category “meaning” assumes the role of a key concept in historical learning, encompassing the form, content, and function of teaching and learning. The centrality of the attribution of meaning in historical learning qualifies the perspective of Jörn Rüsen’s “reconstructive history”, which seeks to make the past emerge meaningfully from the present. It reinforces the agreement with the author that it is not a construction of the past (which can make it an “arena of confrontation of current interests”), but a re-construction, which means “thinking of the past as a temporal chain of conditions of possibilities for man to shape the world and connecting expectations of the future to that chain.

Past experiences always become historical when they connect directly, with meaning and significance, to the present. In this conception the past emerges, significantly, in the present and is no longer an imposition of ends, but an open relation to the future.” (RÜSEN, 2015). Bodo von Borries, in a work published in 2011 - “Coping with burdening history”, translated and published in Portuguese in 2016 - suggests some initial definitions regarding what he called “burdening history”. For him, the learning of this kind of historical knowledge has to take into account some fundamental assumptions. One of them concerns the necessary conditions for effective history learning, such as the fact that new insights need to be related to old ones, need to positively connect emotions and be relevant to life.

Thus, learning from heavy experiences of harm, injury, guilt/shame (or all of these) are much more difficult than learning from affirmative instances of victories, glories, and satisfactions. For him, the Holocaust and other mass crimes of National Socialism are good examples of this burdening history. Thus, historical learning includes the process of conflict and that of change as a mode of action in relation to historical consciousness, and engaging with burdening history is a mental work and intellectual activity of historical consciousness. This involvement is not positive and becomes incomplete in certain situations, such as when burdening history is taken as a synonym for conflicting and vendetta histories; as the history of the conquerors (of the cynicism of power); as the history of the losers or “underground history”. Still, for the author, this involvement is very complex, because people need experiences to relate to the other and to continue together and this involves, besides the undoubtedly necessary analysis of historical events and their interpretations, a process of taking distance from our own past and from the other, without forgetting, each one, our own history, with the main objective of seeking conditions and chances for a common future, in spite of histories that are conflicting. Moving towards a definition of what “burdening history” is, Bodo von Borries (2016) states that this

perspective includes feelings of guilt, responsibility, shame and grief, but that these issues need to be apprehended, taking into account certain problems.

With regard to the feeling of guilt, this cannot be considered as something that involves individual or collective punishment, but rather an accounting for certain deeds of the past, without a transfer of guilt and involvement of future people or generations, as this can be considered illogical and archaic. With regard to the feeling of responsibility, this does not mean that members of later generations, who were born in countries where crimes against humanity were committed, are disconnected from some special relationship to the past, or are not involved, unlike other people in the world. For the author, even though no one can inherit the guilt for a crime, he or she can inherit the consequences and costs of the crime. This can be called responsibility.

Shame is a very strong and uncomfortable feeling and the temptation to escape shame is also strong and this includes closeness and distance at the same time in the present and past relationship. Another decisive feeling, in the case of the heavy or burdening history, is grief and one has to ask what elements constitute the feeling of grief in the case of the history. The author cites the example of the Holocaust, which contemporary German youth mourn and grieve. He includes themes such as the murder of Jews and slaves - or the honour, the self-image, the territory of their ancestors, lost. One of the important questions to ask is - What and who is mourned? (Borries, 2016). According to Bodo von Borries, learning history is not a solitary cognitive process, but also involves emotions and moral judgments. Thus, linking and connecting certain pieces of the past may be important, but it is not enough. The question is how to construct a convincing and valid narrative and how to handle its effects for the present, and in this case the mental act of assimilating, digesting and overcoming burdening histories is decisive.

The contemporaneity of the debate about “burdening history” can be evaluated by its adoption as the theme of the congress organized by the American Educational Research Association (AERA) – *Research on Teaching and Learning Difficult Histories: Global Concepts and Contexts* – held in 2015 at HUNTER - City University of New York. The organizers of the event, Terrie Epstein<sup>9</sup> and Carla Peck<sup>10</sup> opted for the concept of “difficult histories” –

<sup>9</sup> Terrie Epstein is a professor and researcher of Education at Hunter College and the CUNY Graduate School PhD Program in Urban Education.

<sup>10</sup> Carla Peck, professor and researcher in Social Studies at the Faculty of Education, University of Alberta.



we mean historical narratives and other forms (standards, curricular structures, learning historical memories) that incorporate painful, traumatic, and/or violent events into regional, national, and global narratives of the past. Teaching and learning difficult histories are among the most sensitive issues in humanities education, still necessary for reconciliation and judicious civic participation. Research about teaching and learning difficult histories can not only help young people's broader and deeper contemporary historical understandings. They can also enhance their civic identities as they learn to understand, reflect on, and act upon the complexities of today's increasingly interdependent world. (EPSTEIN/PECK, 2015).

If for Bodo von Borries, the concern with civic formation is not present in the assumptions and foundations of "burdening history", for the two authors this is an important theme, as well as the relations between these debates and the formation of identities. As can be observed in many countries of the world, themes related to the so-called difficult history have been objects of political debates and discussions.

One of the most controversial issues of History teaching, in Argentina, concerns the subject of the Falklands War. In an interview published in the Supplement Mais, from the newspaper Folha de São Paulo, in 2004, the Argentine historian José Luis Romero, evokes the complexity of this theme in the historical consciousness of the Argentinians

It is a question left in brackets because of our recent political history. Argentine democracy was born thanks to the defeat in the Falklands. With it, the army overthrew itself. And the question we should have asked, but didn't so that there would be no division of opinion, is what do we disapprove of the Army nation? Do we disapprove of the fact that it went to war or that it lost it? Nobody wanted to discuss this because it was important to maintain a unity of social forces against the military, and this question would divide opinions. We need to know whether we still believe that the Falklands are ours for historical reasons. It is very disturbing to realize that we don't talk about this. So it can't be ruled out that at some point a mad general will reclaim the islands and drag us into a new conflict. (Romero,2004, p.17).

The topic of the Paraguay War has concerned not only researchers and History teachers, but also influenced cultural relations between different countries and rulers. In 2015, during a trip to Paraguay, Pope Francis, in the sermon he delivered at the shrine of the Virgen de Caacupé, city of Caacupé, stated that the Paraguayan War was an "unjust" conflict, due to the decimation of more than half of the country's population. Moreover, said the Pope, it is thanks to the valor and abnegation, especially of Paraguayan women, that it was possible to raise the defeated country,

because - *You have the memory and the genetics of those who rebuilt their lives, the faith and the dignity of your people.* (Available at [www1.folha.uol.com.br/mundo/2015/07/1654559](http://www1.folha.uol.com.br/mundo/2015/07/1654559). Accessed in 11/07/2015).

Historically, attempts to introduce themes that could be framed as “difficult history” in Brazil have provoked controversy. One of the situations in which this happened was in the 1980s, with the so-called CENP Project - Coordination of Studies and Pedagogical Norms of the Secretariat of Education of the State of São Paulo, which introduced the teaching of thematic history in curriculum proposals. During the month of July 1987, the newspaper Folha de São Paulo published a series of reports that can be indicative of how the press and part of the public opinion in the state of São Paulo and in Brazil questioned the change. One of the headlines of the newspaper Folha de São Paulo stated that, with Cenp’s curriculum proposal, “*History will be reduced to domination and resistance*”. This happened, according to the article, because the curriculum proposal suggested, as the axis of the teaching process, the theme labor and societies are presented as resulting from social conflicts, such as the Brazilian society that could be treated from the different forms of organization of workers, labor unions, land conflicts and agrarian reform. In this sense, as published in the newspaper, the History proposal, like the entire project of the Cenp, had a populist slant, as it *threatened to replace knowledge by pure ideology, leading to an education that many do not hesitate to qualify as “pamphleteering”*. (History will be reduced to “domination and resistance”, 29.7.1987, p.9). Still in the same periodical, in another article, the opinion of historian Carlos Guilherme Mota <sup>11</sup>, from USP, is registered. He stated that

I don’t know the details of the project, but I think any effort to critically review and update the curricula is valid. This can be a starting point for the University to help bring about a true cultural revolution, helping to meditate on the questions of historical formation of this society that, whether we like it or not, is in the Third World. Any curriculum reform focused on, for example, History of Latin America, Africa and Asia, even to the detriment of more distant themes, such as the History of Egypt, can even be positive. (MOTA,30/07/1987, p.A17).

The difficulties faced by Cenp’s proposal culminated with the publication in the mainstream press of the position of the professors of the University of São Paulo on the history curriculum. According to the same newspaper Folha de São Paulo, of

<sup>11</sup> Carlos Guilherme Santos Serôa da Mota (1941-) Brazilian historian. Professor and researcher at the University of São Paulo.

August 6, 1987, 55 professors of the History Department of USP took an official position and “supported the proposal of professor Zilda Gricoli Iokoi that says that the History Department has as its principle and practice the acceptance of different conceptions of History, exercising pluralism in teaching and research activities”. (USP professors reject limitations of Cenp’s proposal for History. 06/08/1987: A18).

However, reportedly, the term “difficult history” was publicly used in Brazil in the interview granted by historian Lilia M. Scharcz and anthropologist Heloisa M. Starling, authors of the book *Brasil, uma biografia*, published in 2015. In an interview to TRIP magazine they point out what they consider some tense and shameful moments in Brazil’s history. (As sete maiores vergonhas do Brasil, 10/07/2015).

The episodes selected by the authors were: 1. Genocide of the indigenous populations; 2. The slavery system; 3. The Paraguayan War; 4. Canudos; 5. Politics of the Vargas Government; 6. Clandestine centres of human rights violations; 7. The Carandiru Massacre.

This is, of course, a selection based on criteria that the authors themselves defined. The publication of this interview on the internet provoked a series of comments from internet users, some agreeing, others criticizing the absence of other episodes that they also considered shameful, such as the Candelária massacre and the murders carried out by police death squads. Based on other criteria, one could select episodes such as the land conflicts and attacks against homosexual minorities that have spread throughout Brazil. Moreover, the history of racial discrimination would be a theme to be included in the country’s difficult history.

It is important to remember the progress achieved after the proposition of Law 10.639/03, which introduced the mandatory teaching of indigenous and Afro-Brazilian cultures, as well as the introduction of the history of Africa in the curricula and textbooks. However, even after a decade of that law, research is still needed whose results can contribute to debates about how teachers deal with the teaching of these aspects of this “difficult history” of Brazil, as well as issues involving their learning by students. Thus, it is observed that, besides the scarcity of debates about themes/episodes of Brazilian history that could constitute a frame of reference of the called “difficult history”, the investigations about the teaching of these themes are in its initial phase. One of the researches that indicate the difficulty of teaching certain episodes of our history, is the work of Andresa Costa’s master’s degree, “O ensino de história e as representações dos sem-terra nos livros didáticos: 1985-2005”<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> In English: History teaching and the representations of landless people in textbooks: 1985-2005.

(2011). In an article based on her thesis, the author points out the tensions and difficulties that permeated the teaching of this theme in her history classes for young students:

In my first year as a history teacher in a private school, I presented the topic of Agrarian Reform to the children of the 6th grade classes, as the school curriculum had required. What I did not foresee was the impact that my pedagogical practice would have on some of my students' parents. After a class discussion on the problem of poor land distribution in Brazil, I was called to an administrative meeting with the school supervisory service. I needed to justify in more detail and perhaps even rethink my theoretical options, administrators told me. The history classes were looking "too revolutionary," and the children had returned home that week. After that incident I started to pay more attention to the various discourses on social movements involved in the Brazilian agrarian question. I became interested in the narratives that circulated in newspapers, magazines and television programmes about landless people. That was when I realised that they were very similar in content to those I had heard at school among my students. My attention turned to the school. I chose to analyze a set of twenty-three history textbooks published between 1985 and 2005. The option for such a volume of textbooks is justified by the rarity of the theme in each didactic publication. I problematized my object of research based on a broader set of works, paying attention to the recurrences, displacements and ruptures that the few pages dedicated to the landless issue presented. (COSTA, 2011, p.1)

Considering the fact that, as Costa (2011) has found, textbooks present a type of discourse that can lead to hostilisation of social movements rather than to properly historical understandings and interpretations. The valorisation of the importance of content related to controversial issues also resulted from the research that introduced the categories memory and heritage, included in the Matrix.

The inclusion of the category memory was assumed in the wake of Lévésque's reflections. One cannot deny the complexity of working on the relationships between memory and history, inserted in the scope of the discussions of the theory of History, or even of History teaching<sup>13</sup>. Despite not entering into the intricacies of the discussion, we highlight, especially, a dialogue with the perspectives of Aleida Assmann (2011) and Regine Robin (2016) about the category of memory, a component of practical life fundamental for the establishment of a didactic relationship with the science of History. In Assmann, we cite the idea of "functional

<sup>13</sup> With regard to the relations between memory and the teaching of History, see, for example, the classic book by Suzanne Citron - "Teaching History Today. Lost and found memory. Lisbon: Livros Horizonte, 1990.

memory”, with the meaning of legitimation, delegitimation, distinction; of “cumulative memory”, as present in archives, museums, libraries, remnants and, mainly, in his conception of “memory of places”, that is, of generations, sacred, mythical places, exemplary memories, honorary places, ruins, as well as traumatic memories, which makes it possible, for example, to enhance the relationship with the practical life of traditional communities and social movements. In Regine Robin’s perspective, we emphasize the relations that the author makes between memory and the colour of oblivion, painted by demolition, substitution, erasure and amnesty in relation to the past; the rhythms of memory related to short time - of iconoclasm, of tailor-made memories of newly opened archives; of medium time - as the memory of displacements and of long time - as the memory of genocides and massacres, which allowed us to understand, for example, the negationist movements so present in the contemporary world. The heritage category can be understood from the work developed by Pinto<sup>14</sup> (2016), namely when she states that

(...) what we call ‘heritage’ is a reconstruction of the past in the present society, in the sense of understanding, in an empathetic way, values and identities that link past and present. The past is essential for our sense of identity; the security of ‘I was’ is a necessary element for the security of ‘I am’. The ability to identify with our past gives meaning, purpose and value to existence. (PINTO, 2016, p.35).

The author seeks to articulate the relationship between heritage consciousness and historical consciousness, based on research on heritage education carried out in the city of Guimarães, Portugal, challenged us to include the category of heritage in the Matrix of historical learning. The insertion of the categories historical culture and school culture was carried out in the upper part of the matrix, only for reasons of graphic presentation. In fact, the constitutive elements of the relations and tensions between historical culture and school culture, categories already analysed in chapter three of this work, are relevant, both from the theoretical point of view and from the point of view of the relations with practical life. The same refers to the categories child culture, youth culture and school culture.

The research of Lourençato<sup>15</sup> (2017) - *A juventude frente a História: embates entre as propostas de documentos oficiais para o ensino médio e o significado da história como disciplina escolar*<sup>16</sup> - analyzed official documents for secondary


<sup>14</sup> Maria Helena Pinto, historian and research associate at the University of Porto, Portugal.

<sup>15</sup> Lidiane Camila Lourençato. History Teacher, PhD in Education.

education, with the aim of knowing the meanings they attribute to youth, and to historical learning. At the same time, it sought to analyze how teachers and young people in high school related to the meanings of learning proposed by the documents. In the work - *Cinema e educação histórica. Jovens e sua relação com a história nos filmes*<sup>17</sup> - Souza<sup>18</sup> (2014) started from some initial hypotheses, such as the interest of young people in cinema considered as an element of youth culture, certain films as enabling access to historical knowledge, and the difficulties of young people in dealing with the past portrayed in films.

The work of Azambuja<sup>19</sup> (2013) - *Jovens alunos e aprendizagem histórica: perspectivas e princípios metodológicos*<sup>20</sup> - sought to understand the historical learning of young people, in relation to their culture, based on the work with popular songs. Fronza<sup>21</sup> (2012) on the other hand, in his doctoral thesis - *A intersubjetividade e a verdade na aprendizagem histórica de jovens estudantes a partir das histórias em quadrinhos*<sup>22</sup> - moves forward in the sense of analysing and explaining how a certain artefact of youth culture - comics - can develop cognitive strategies that are properly historical, and their possibilities and limits.

By way of example, these works are fundamental contributions for the inclusion of the category youth culture as constitutive of the Matrix of History Lesson, as well as to signalize specific learning forms of young people. Despite the diversity of the objects related to the learning of History, the investigations show that it is important to make explicit the necessary relations and mediations to be made between culture, the juvenile condition and the learning of History. The proposal of the “History Lesson” indicates some possibilities, such as overcoming the “didactics of copying”, in which the students are passive receptors of historical knowledge transmitted by the teacher, and the use of textbooks as a reference for the teaching of the “true history” to be learned. Moreover, it announces a path to be built towards the training of the teacher as an investigator, enhancing the unity between theory and practice as a possible synthesis in the teaching work.

 <sup>16</sup> In English: Youth facing History: clashes between the proposals of official documents for secondary education and the meaning of history as a school subject.

<sup>17</sup> In English: Cinema and History Education. Young people and their relationship with history in films.

<sup>18</sup> Éder Cristiano de Souza, professor and researcher at the History Department of the University of Latin American Integration-UNILA.

<sup>19</sup> Luciano de Azambuja, professor and researcher at the Federal Institute of Education of Santa Catarina.

<sup>20</sup> In English: Young students and historical learning: perspectives and methodological principles.

<sup>21</sup> Marcelo Fronza, professor and researcher at the History Department of the University of Mato Grosso.

<sup>22</sup> Intersubjectivity and truth in the historical learning of young students based on comics.



## Final Considerations

The historian who researches  
is also a teacher and the teacher  
who teaches is also a historian.

(Schmidt, 2020)

Approaches to historical learning, as a rule, are centred on the experiences of the students. The role of the teacher has been minimized in the process, and particularly valued in terms of his or her work in teaching. There is much talk and debate in the field of public policies for education about the processes of teacher training, thought of above all as the acquisition of better ways of teaching the contents and making the students learn better too.

The relationship between teaching and research, as well as the uncompromising defence of the recognition of the basic school teacher as a producer of knowledge, is one of the main premises that sustain the proposal of the History Lesson, since

(...) the relationship of the intellectual with knowledge is at the same time an individual and social cognitive relationship, which presupposes a re-appropriation of the means of production of knowledge through the acquisition and development of the intellectual means of production of that knowledge, because intellectual production, understood as a process of intellectual work, is characterized by the elaboration of theoretical products, in addition to the fact that knowledge is not derived from gratuitous or fortuitous actions, because it requires conscious effort and intentionality in its production. (GONZALES, 1984, p. 211).

A counterpoint is proposed with the idea that the teacher has the merit of contributing to the didactic transposition of scientific knowledge to school knowledge. It is argued that it is up to the teacher to reconstruct, in the History lesson, the path of the method of the reference science, that is, the path and the method of knowledge production. Thus, the History Lesson defends that the historian who researches is also a teacher and the teacher who teaches is also a historian, contesting the dichotomisation between those who teach and those who research, admitting it as a historical construction which resulted in the process of detachment within the cognitive dimension of historical culture, due to the process of specialisation of History as a science. (RÜSEN, 2010).

It can gradually be seen that the separation between the Didactics of History and academic History contributed to the formation of a “disciplinary code” proper to History (FERNANDEZ, 1998), which pushed the questions of teaching and learning of History tendentially to the scope of school culture, and it was from this readjustment that the cognitive dimension came to be articulated with the political dimension of historical culture. In this process, the questions related to historical learning, and therefore to its teaching, left the agenda of historians and entered, as a priority, the agenda of educational theories and policies and, therefore, the forms and functions of schooling. As a result, it can be said that the problems and crises which occur in the cognitive dimension of historical culture are now also part of the crisis of schooling. In the context of this crisis, the political element of historical culture is guided by the aims of educational policies and is therefore essentially sieved by the interests and determinations of hegemonic power relations.

The relationship between education and the construction of hegemonic processes was well presented by Gramsci (1989), from whom we can refer to the idea of construction by consensus and by coercion, and construction by consensus has been the dominant theme in these processes. As far as the meaning of the function of the historian teacher is concerned, the division of labour has already been made explicit since the very first official documents related to their training, as can be seen in Directive 292, of 14 December 1962, also known as Valnir Chagas Directive (the name of its rapporteur). In this document, there is a separation between the specific content subjects and the pedagogical subjects aimed at the teacher’s education. In this separation, a notably instrumental nature is attributed to the pedagogical disciplines and the nature of teaching is thought of as a task of application of the specific content, for which the future teacher should be trained, particularly through teaching practice and internship



The Teaching Practice should be carried out in the community schools themselves, in the form of internships, as “residencies” of the Medicine courses. Only in this way will the future masters be able to really apply the knowledge acquired, within the possibilities and limitations of a real school, and have experience of the teaching act (BRASIL, 1962, apud URBAN, 2011, p.54).

According to Urban (2011) the most highlighted aspects in this Directive are, among others, the concern with a teaching focused on the student, a very present perspective in the pedagogical theory of the period, which has as reference the ideology of the “New School” and the great value assigned to Didactics, thought in terms of methods and teaching practices. In this sense, student and method are the key words that guided this legislation relevant to teacher training, in which the teaching practice, allied to Didactics and added to Psychology, constituted a fundamental tripod (...) (URBAN, 2011, p.54-55).

In 1986, therefore, practically 25 years after the implementation of the Valnir Chagas Directive, the Secretariat of Higher Education - SESU-MEC requested a group of historians to make a diagnosis of the history courses in Brazil.

The report released by the group of consultants, with regard to the training of the History teacher, highlights the importance of the teaching practice being located in the space related to the History Departments, that is, having verified the dichotomy between the training of the historian teacher and the historian researcher, the authors suggest, as a solution

1. It is not enough for teaching practice to be taught by teachers with a degree in History; there must be a real and permanent presence of the Department in this area;
2. There is a need for greater integration between the History Departments and the Departments or Faculties of Education (debates, meetings, seminars, reciprocal presence of teachers in the Departments), as there is still a long way to go due to the conflict between the prevailing conceptions of History among historians and educationalists. (MEC/SESu, 1986, Apud Urban,2011, p.57).

In both documents it is possible to observe the maintenance of the division of labour which was instituted in and by the historical process of the constitution of History as scientific knowledge, in the context of the expansion of schooling in western capitalist societies. Being lacunae in this respect, mainly in the diagnostic document, a pragmatic way out is observed, with the assumption of the disciplines related to teaching by the historians themselves in the History Departments. This

diagnosis was one of the documents that fed the Directive 492/2001, which proposed the curricular reformulation for the courses of teacher education in Brazil. Two decades after the diagnosis, another survey would be appropriate to analyse the impact caused by the change of disciplines to the History Departments, as occurred in several institutions.

It should be borne in mind that Directive 492 is part of a set of Brazilian laws, curriculum guidelines, government programmes (such as the PNLD) which are embedded in educational reforms initiated in the 1990s and which

Such reforms are articulated on the basis of common interests, with proposals from Multilateral Organisations (MSOs) which have stood out in the coordination and formulation of a set of educational policies for the world (...) Sharing bourgeois interests with various countries, the MSOs, via different tactics, establish goals, define priority and strategic sectors and organise the execution of their agenda in the medium and long term (OEI, UNESCO, CONSED, BANCO MUNDIAL) (EVANGELISTA/TRICHES, 2013).

The World Bank document *Education Sector Strategy Update (ESSU): achieving Education For All, broadening our perspective, maximizing our effectiveness*, published in 2006, updates the guidelines and forecasts for the relationship between education and development in emerging countries, particularly as a factor for poverty reduction, already published by this Bank in 1990. In addition to advocating a policy of results and a culture of evaluation, one of the problems highlighted in the studies carried out by OM (Multilateral Organisations) was the teacher deficit. Thus, one of the goals set for 2015 was to attract more teachers and train them at low cost, that is, to professionalise the teacher.

In this same context, and according to the work published under the title “Globally Structured Agenda for Education” by Roger Dale (2004), the professionalization category was elected as one of the pillars of educational reforms and gained many supporters among different categories because, according to Shiroma and Evangelista (2011), it welcomed claims related not only to professional training based on the development of skills to exercise a trade, earned by accredited institutions and higher education, but also those related to career, wages and formation of councils that would confer the right to professional practice.

The perspective of professionalization is present in LDB 9394/96, when it creates the name - “education professionals” - and guided guidelines and educational reforms from the 1990s. In this sense

The reformers insisted on the need to adapt the curriculum and the teacher to reality, claiming the anachronism of both, highlighting their inadequacy to the demands of the modern world, the demands of new skills and competencies demanded by the labor market. They disqualified university courses of teacher training, pointed out as long, essentially theoretical and not very flexible. (SHIROMA/EVANGELISTA, 2011, p. 130).

In the perspective pointed out by Dale (2004), in the context of globalization that hypervalorizes the devices articulated to the maintenance of the capitalist system, to the detriment of other possibilities and principles, the construction of consensus is not discarded, on behalf of governability and the educational policy is transvested as a solution for the democratization of cultural goods, access to knowledge and information. This demands the teacher's professional reconversion - from a traditional teacher, to innovator; from accommodated, to creative; from unmotivated, to continuous learner, from theoretical to competent in practice.

Professionalization centered on practical competence is explicitly demarcated in the Directive 492/2001, with the expansion of the number of hours required for the practical training of the teaching historian, provoking interrogations and contestations from some members of the academia. From the same perspective of centrality in professionalisation through practice, the National Curricular Guidelines for Teaching Degrees and Bachelor's Courses were published by SESu/MEC in April 2010. In its Introduction, the document (BRASIL, 2010), proposes an organic relationship between the education of the Brazilian population and the technological development of the country

For any contemporary country, the elevation of schooling represents an elevation in social standards, through cultural consolidation, improvement in the quality of life, social inclusion and greater freedom in the construction of each citizen's destiny. In Brazil, this is no different. As the increase in schooling is consolidated, all social indicators increase. Higher education, in turn, has a dual role in social development: besides building citizenship by training well-qualified professionals, for the challenges of increasing technological complexity present in all areas of human activity, it should also seek innovative solutions. (BRASIL, SESu/MEC, 2010).

Given the context in which it was proposed, as well as the principles of professionalisation inherent in them, the dichotomisation bachelor degree and teaching degree is assumed as an official proposal, and the teaching degree can be reduced to a 3-year training (the bachelor degree is a 4-years training).

In the historian's fashion, questions can be constructed in the sense of seeking to understand, inform, describe, whatever objective is proposed, with regard to questions such as: which historian do you intend to train? To what end? What are the commitments of the bachelor and/or licentiate historian? There are no answers to these questions, other than those of an instrumental nature such as: the bachelor is to work in... the licentiate is to work in .... Thus, it is not even possible to deduce what the concept of the "researching historian" and the "teaching historian" are and for what society and for what purposes they are trained. However, conceptions of the " researcher historian and teacher historian" seem to be explicitly differentiated.

For one, training is provided over a longer period of time, with more science-specific content; for the other, training is provided over a shorter period of time, although with more hours and with a diversification of subjects of an instrumental nature, showing "a restriction in the content of teacher training, centred on a perspective of instrumental knowledge, and a widening of teaching functions (...) Concern is expressed with the efficiency and effectiveness of the teaching work, inserted within a rationalising, technical and pragmatic logic". (EVANGELISTA and SHIROMA, 2007, p.536). This instrumental perspective, based on rationalizing, technical and pragmatic logic has imposed the primacy of teaching as an action to the detriment of the teacher as a subject. (EVANGELIST / SHIROMA, 2007).

It is within this logic that practice finds its place and gains adherence, by consensus, through curricular proposals, evaluation projects and training courses for History teachers, i.e.,

**The concrete measures for the exercise of political-ideological control over teachers involve their training and professional performance. In other words, the reform of the 1990s, and its continuation in the new century, affected all spheres of teaching: curriculum, textbook, initial and continuing education, career, certification, training locus, use of information and communication technologies, evaluation and management. (EVANGELISTA and SHIROMA,2007, p. 537).**

In relation to these assumptions, we can add the already explained reflections of Boron (2001) on the "artificial practicalism", characterised by the presence of a certain anti-theoretical impediment of conventional knowledge, enhanced by the demands of the labour market and which rewards pragmatic and realistic attitudes, and punishes the critical spirit and theoretical inclination.

To the theoretical framework based on the concept of situated-based learning and the principle of contextualization, present in current curriculum proposals, it is

added the orientation for teaching based on the development of competencies. This perspective was introduced in Brazil in the 1990s, through the so-called “Pedagogy of Competencies” and is well explained in the Curricular Parameters for Secondary Education, announced through different types of competencies, such as complex cognitive competencies (intellectual autonomy, creativity, problem solving, analysis and prospection); general type competencies (ability to keep learning) and basic cognitive competencies (abstract reasoning, ability to understand new situations). General competences for insertion in the world of work are also highlighted. At the same time, the implementation of teaching by competencies, came accompanied by the imposition of the evaluation of results, which “ended up installing a bureaucratic logic in education systems, focused on such measurements and comparisons with international standards”. (ALMEIDA, 2009, p.88).

One of the biggest problems caused by the adoption of the pedagogy of competencies, is the fact that the specific knowledge ceases to be a reference for learning and teaching, ending up being valued certain activities aimed at developing skills established a priori, and “they constitute a mode of political government of teaching practices, disqualifying the formative dimensions of the knowledge constituted” (ALMEIDA, 2009, p.97). In the same direction, we agree with Kuenzer (2003) that these formative dimensions are the centre of the schooling process, which differentiates it from other spaces, such as those attached to professional work and which respond to the demands of certain specific practices.

This is what the author found in her research with workers on oil rigs. In the results of this investigation, Kuenzer apprehended the importance they give to the development of certain skills necessary for the world of work. However, says the author

The school is the place to learn to interpret the world in order to transform it, from the domain of the categories of the method and contents that inspire and that become practices of human emancipation in a society increasingly mediated by knowledge. The place to develop competences, which in turn mobilize knowledge but are not confused with it, is the productive social practice (...) It is up to the schools, therefore, to play with quality its role in creating learning situations that allow the student to develop the cognitive, affective and psychomotor skills related to intellectual work, always articulated, but not reduced to the world of work and social relations (. ... Attributing to the school the function of developing competences is to ignore its nature and specificity as a space for appropriation of socially produced knowledge and, therefore, of intellectual work with reference to social practice (...). (KUENZER, 2003, p. 8).

Thus, a pragmatic perspective of knowledge is configured in which individual knowledge “is reduced to immediate perception and tacit knowledge. We are facing a theory of knowledge as an everyday phenomenon, particular, idiosyncratic and not assimilable by scientific rationality”. (Duarte, 2000, apud Scalcon, 2008) and the documents that have underpinned the proposals for the training of the teaching historian, as well as their professional performance, are indicative of this “epistemological pragmatism” (SCALCON, 2008). In the same way, this perspective has found shelter in certain authors, considered references for the formation of teachers in Brazil. In this direction, it is worth mentioning the concepts of “epistemology of professional practice - “a set of knowledge actually used by professionals (teachers) in their daily work space to perform all their tasks” (TARDIF, 2002, p.225), as well as the “reflective practice” (PERRENOUD, 2002) - according to which teachers, from their own practice, are able to perform reflections and produce knowledge related to their profession.

In an article published in 2007 under the title “*Propuestas para el nuevo paradigma educativo de la historia*”<sup>1</sup>, the historian and researcher of the University of Santiago de Compostela, Carlos Barros, announced that a new paradigm for the training of history teachers is being imposed, “from above”, convergent in various aspects and specific according to its suitability in each country. For the author, “this new paradigm has had an explicit acceptance in many Latin American academic sectors and also implicitly of administrative order in Europe, as shown by the controversial and important project for Higher Education “Tuning Educational Structures in Europe and the categorical recommendation of the European Union in favour of education by competencies”. (BARROS, 2007, p. 3).

The consolidation of proposals for the training of teaching historians in non-academic master’s degrees is one of the key aspects of this project, constituting an arm of the so-called Bologna Agreement of 1999. This is a document produced by the European Confederation of Rectors’ Conferences and by the European Association of Universities which proposes, among other things, “the organisation of an educational system that enables the mobility of teachers and students, as well as employability, for which it presupposes the organisation of compatible higher education courses in all universities (...)”. (URBAN, 2009, p.129).

<sup>1</sup> In English: “Proposals for the new educational paradigm of history”



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The "History Lesson: A proposal for the Didactic of History is a methodological proposal for the classroom related to guiding principles, with new ways of thinking about historical learning. Proposing a new didactics for the teaching of history, the History Lesson works with two main references: The Didactics of History and The Matrix of Historical Thought of Jörn Rüsen. Its proposition has been systematised on the basis of the thought that articulates the tension between historical culture and school culture. The core of the matrix of the 'history lesson' is the process of constructing meanings from the knowledge that produces the subjects' involvement in their own self-knowledge, in the knowledge of the other and of the world, as well as in the action aimed at transforming the world in which they live. Thus, the key word in the History Lesson is involvement.

