



**The artisan's gesture in the production of school furniture:
Pedro Rispoli's furniture factory in the first decade of the 20th century¹**

O gesto do artesão na produção da mobília escolar:
a fábrica de móveis de Pedro Rispoli na primeira década do século XX

El gesto del artesano en la producción de mobiliario escolar:
la fábrica de muebles de Pedro Rispoli en la primera década del siglo XX

Gecia Aline Garcia

Universidade Federal do Paraná (Brasil)

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8934-3741>

<http://lattes.cnpq.br/8992617314992914>

gecia.garcia@gmail.com

Gizele de Souza

Universidade Federal do Paraná (Brasil)

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6487-4300>

<http://lattes.cnpq.br/3383060643884789>

gizelesouza@ufpr.br

Fátima Branco Godinho de Castro

Universidade Federal do Paraná (Brasil)

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9431-1798>

<http://lattes.cnpq.br/3827762461607142>

fatima.abgc@yahoo.com.br

Abstract

The objective of this article is to investigate the production experiences present in the creation of school furniture in Paraná. Thus, the study begins with the work of Pedro Rispoli, an Italian immigrant who made furniture for public education in Paraná from 1904 onwards, and ends in 1909, a period in which his steam-powered factory – Mobiliário Artístico – gained national notoriety in the commercial and artistic scene. The repertoire of sources that make up this study is composed of iconographic documents; local and national newspapers; reports from government agents; government correspondence and minutes of the Museu Maçônico Paranaense. As theoretical contributions, we use Ulpiano T. Bezerra de Meneses (1994) to understand artifacts as vectors of relations, Inés Dussel (2019) to understand artifacts as active objects and providers of experiences in the social fabric, Richard Sennett (2020) on the notion of experience and craftsman in the process of making things, and Michel de Certeau (2014) to understand the historical operation and the “Arts of Making”.

Keywords: School material culture; School furniture; Paraná education; School material provision.

¹ This research was funded by Capes and CNPq. English version by Ana Maria Dionísio. E-mail: dionisio.anamaria@hotmail.com

Resumo

O objetivo deste artigo é investigar as experiências de produção presentes na elaboração do mobiliário escolar paranaense. Deste modo, o recorte inicia-se com a atuação de Pedro Rispoli, um imigrante italiano, que confeccionou móveis para a instrução pública paranaense a partir de 1904, e encerra-se no ano de 1909, período em que a fábrica a vapor deste sujeito – o Mobiliário Artístico – ganha notoriedade em âmbito nacional, no cenário comercial e artístico. O repertório de fontes que compõe este estudo é composto por documentos iconográficos; jornais de circulação local e nacional; relatórios dos agentes governamentais; correspondências governamentais e atas do Museu Maçônico Paranaense. Como aportes teóricos, utilizamos Ulpiano T. Bezerra de Meneses (1994) para a compreensão dos artefatos como vetores de relações, Inés Dussel (2019) para a compreensão dos artefatos como objetos atuantes e proporcionadores de experiências na trama social, Richard Sennett (2020) sobre a noção de experiência e artífice no processo de feitura das coisas, e Michel de Certeau (2014) na compreensão da operação histórica e das “Artes do Fazer”.

Palavras-chave: Cultura material escolar; Mobiliário escolar; Instrução paranaense; Provisão material escolar.

Resumen

El objetivo de este artículo es investigar las experiencias de producción presentes en la elaboración del mobiliario escolar paranaense. De este modo, el recorte comienza con la actuación de Pedro Rispoli, un inmigrante italiano, que confeccionó muebles para la instrucción pública paranaense a partir de 1904, y finaliza en el año 1909, período en el cual la fábrica a vapor de este sujeto – el Mobiliario Artístico – gana notoriedad a nivel nacional, en el escenario comercial y artístico. El repertorio de fuentes que compone este estudio está conformado por fuentes iconográficas; periódicos de circulación local y nacional; informes de los agentes gubernamentales; correspondencia gubernamental y actas del Museo Masónico Paranaense. Como aportes teóricos utilizamos a Ulpiano T. Bezerra de Meneses (1994) para la comprensión de los artefactos como vectores de relaciones, Inés Dussel (2019) para la comprensión de los artefactos como objetos actuantes y proporcionadores de experiencias en la trama social, Richard Sennett (2020) sobre la noción de experiencia y artesano en el proceso de creación de cosas, y Michel de Certeau (2014) en la comprensión de la operación histórica y las “Artes de Hacer”.

Palabras clave: Cultura material escolar; Mobiliario escolar; Instrucción de Paraná; Provisión de útiles escolares.

Introduction

The materiality of things plays a role in the complexity of networks; it is not an effect, but rather constitutive of their plot.

(DUSSEL, 2019b, p.4).

The historiographical tradition of the 19th century is marked by epistemological concepts based on the strict control of writing. In the search for “what really happened”, in the light of Leopold Von Ranke (Funari, 2008), historical research procedures should be constructed with normative, reliable and neutral documents. According to Pedro Funari (2008, p. 83), written documentation became “synonymous with History, to such an extent that, to this day, we use the expression prehistory to refer to a past without writing. Due to its philological origin, History therefore maintains a very strong connection with the written document”.

From this perspective, Paulo Knauss (2006) explains that, even though they belong to the universe of the oldest traces of human life, material culture and visual culture were disregarded as first-order sources to the detriment of a hegemonic stance that saw written documents as an authentic standard. This may have caused, for a long period, the loss of valuable information for historical knowledge, since disregarding images as sources of History, in addition to “leaving aside an abundant record, older than writing, [...] may also mean not recognizing the various dimensions of social experience and the multiplicity of social groups and their ways of life” (Knauss, 2006, p. 100).

Inés Dussel (2019a), with the same point of view, also discusses the potential of visual and material culture and its interaction with school culture. According to the author, the material turn in historiography, inspired by the social history of objects, allowed us to understand, based on a “history from below”, the common gestures of everyday life. By enabling investigative studies through iconographic and material empiricism, “the history of education assumes an ethnographic sensitivity, a desire to map or document the experiences that involved people and objects through their material traces” (Dussel, 2019a, p. 41). Thus, including objects and things as active participants in the social fabric, according to Dussel, is to see them as actors and agents that also shape educational content and processes.

In other words, the material turn does not seek to animate the inanimate (it is not that objects suddenly “come to life”), but rather to give objects an unintentional but influential thickness and capacity for action in the course of human history. We are what we are through our interaction with objects, just as they are through these interactions (DUSSEL, 2019a, p. 38).

Therefore, in dialogue with these initial considerations, the objective of this study is to investigate the production experiences present in the elaboration of school furniture in Paraná. For Richard Sennett (2020), scholars of material culture are dedicated to the study and knowledge of past experiences and the process of making things can bring important clues, such as the understanding of what was considered good and appreciable for a certain group. Thus,

to learn from things, we need to know how to appreciate the qualities of a garment or the right way to scald a fish; good clothing and well-prepared food allow us to imagine the broader categories of “good”. A friend of the senses, the cultural materialist wants to know where pleasure can be found and how it is organized. Curious about things in themselves, he or she wants to understand how they are capable of generating religious, social or political values (SENNET, 2020, p. 18).

Our investigation begins with the Pedro Rispoli’s work, an Italian immigrant who made furniture for public education in Paraná from 1904 onwards. The closing section of this debate is the year 1909, a period in which this individual's steam-powered factory – *Mobiliário Artístico* – gained notoriety nationwide, in the commercial and artistic scenarios. We consider Pedro Rispoli to be a craftsman, since he is dedicated to his work with a deep commitment to quality and excellence, demonstrating a technical mastery that goes beyond simple mechanical skills. The craftsman, in Sennett's view (2020), represents someone who works at the intersection between thinking and doing, in which practice and reflection complement each other. This professional is not only concerned with producing something functional or meeting a market demand, but also with achieving a level of skill that transforms the act of creating into a rich and meaningful experience. The notion of “doing things well” is central to Sennett’s concept of craftsmanship, highlighting the importance of personal involvement and dedication to work as a form of cultural expression.

We believe that the creative process of furniture making by Pedro Rispoli developed a complex production that took into consideration both the artisanal gesture with artistic expressions and the industrial handling in mass production. In the context of Rio de Janeiro, Solange Ferraz de Lima (2008) points out that the Director of Pedagogy, Menezes Vieira, considered ornaments as processes that aesthetically qualified industrialized objects. Thus, the prestige value of the pieces was doubled, “the reason for this much-needed presence of ornament is answered in the following information: it is the ornamentation that gives ‘artistic stamp and elegance’ to these objects produced on an industrial scale” (Lima, 2008, p. 163). With that, we believe that this proposition is not very far from the context of Paraná; the school desk may have, even fleetingly, expressed an artistic language within one of the faces of the school material culture.

The repertoire of sources that make up this study is composed of iconographic documents, local and national newspapers, reports from government agents, government correspondence and minutes of the Paraná Masonic Museum. As theoretical contributions, we use: Ulpiano Bezerra de Meneses (1994), to understand artifacts as vectors of relations; Inés Dussel (2019a; 2019b), to understand artifacts as active objects that provide experiences in the social fabric; and Michel de Certeau (2014), to understand the historical operation and the “arts of making”.

Regarding theoretical perspectives on school material culture, our article is anchored in the studies that make up the book “*A Teia das Coisas: cultura material e pesquisa em rede*” (2021), organized by the authors Andréa Cordeiro, Gecia Garcia, Ana Paula Kincheski

and Júlia Kanazawa. In order to consider other epistemological bases for studies of school material culture, we use the work “*Cultura Material Escolar em Perspectiva Histórica: Escritas e possibilidades*” (2018), organized by Vera Lúcia Gaspar da Silva, Gizele de Souza and César Augusto Castro.

Finally, we also base ourselves on the concept of “experience”, based on Richard Sennett (2020), since the author considers it as an ongoing practice that involves the development of skills over time, especially in the context of craftsmanship. Experience does not refer only to the accumulation of years of work, but to the ability to learn, refine and deepen knowledge through constant practice. Sennett sees experience as something that is built in the relationship between thinking and doing, in which the craftsman not only repeats learned techniques, but also adapts and perfects them based on the situations faced and the challenges encountered. This experience is reflected in the quality of the work, the depth of the skill developed and the ability to respond creatively to the demands of the craft. For Sennett (2020), experience is fundamental to mastering artisanal work, as it is what allows the craftsman to “do things well”.

1. “To the Artistic Furniture”: Pedro Rispoli’s furniture factory and Paraná’s Public Education

Pedro Rispoli was an Italian immigrant who arrived in Brazil in 1895. Three years later, his civil registration was already mentioned in the newspaper *A República*: “twenty-four years old, son of Ângelo Rispoli, married, artist and resident of Riachuelo street” (*A República*, Electoral Listing, 1898, p. 2). In the capital of Paraná, Pedro Rispoli was the owner of “Mobilário Artístico”, a steam-powered factory that, in addition to making “any style of furniture”² (*A Notícia, Anúncios*, 1906, p. 3), also repaired musical instruments and had a large stock of pine and *imbuia* wood and furniture (*A Notícia, Anúncios*, 1906, p. 3).

Pedro Rispoli began to gain notoriety in providing furniture for public education in Paraná in the first decade of the 20th century. In previous studies (Garcia, 2020; Garcia; Souza, 2022; Garcia 2024), we found that this individual provided services to important schools in the urban setting of Curitiba, such as: *Ginásio Paranaense*, *Escola Normal*, *Grupo Escolar Dr. Xavier da Silva*, *Jardim de Infância*, and *Grupo Escolar Dr. João Candido*, located in the city of Ponta Grossa.

We know that these buildings were not the main maintainers of public education in Paraná. For the most part, primary education was provided by isolated schools, for example, which operated concurrently with other types and models of school. José Carlos Araújo, Vera Valdemarin and Rosa Fátima de Souza (2015), when discussing the contribution of comparative research to writing the history of primary school in Brazil, argue that, in addition to the configuration of the “model school (school group and model school), there were many other variations of primary schools that facilitated the schooling of children in the different regions of the country.” (Araújo; Valdemarin; Souza, 2015, p. 34). The authors add that,

therefore, models and variations of primary school emerged from school groups, isolated and grouped schools, current designations and

² The spelling of historical sources has been kept as in the original. (in Portuguese)

other denominations found in different states: minimum school, rudimentary, rural, urban, mobile, itinerant, singular, grouped, promiscuous, combined, rustic, elementary, public primary school, park school, rural school group, school for rural workers, school farm, fishermen's school, private school, municipal school, typical rural schools, among others (Araújo; Valdemarin; Souza, 2015, p.34).

There was not only a diversity of school typologies and designations, but the coexistence of these models or school configurations. In other words, in parallel, the presence of the model school persisted in Brazil, prevailing mainly in urban spaces, a locus of greater visibility and republican rhetoric, which coexisted with the provision of primary school – urban and rural – of what was conventionally called isolated school. This heterogeneity can only be understood when subjected to analyses of the “specific conditions that shaped educational actions” (Araújo; Valdemarin; Souza, 2015, p. 34).

In the specific conditions examined here in this study, it is important to highlight the role of carpenters in providing materials for urban school spaces that are considered exemplary. Thus, the choice of Pedro Rispoli to make the furniture for the “showcases of the Republic” does not seem unusual to us, since the geographic location of these school buildings and their very materiality provide evidence

that they did not serve a broad group of the population, but served as important symbols that demarcated political strength, recorded government action and **disseminated an ideal of school that promised the achievement of progress, modernity and redemption. Whoever sat on their benches would have a “guaranteed” place in the social fabric.** (Gaspar da Silva, 2006, p. 181, our emphasis).

Cynthia Greive Veiga (2016), in “*Educação Estética para o Povo*”, states that, at the turn of the 19th to the 20th century, one of the strategies used by the State to construct the sign of modernity was precisely intervention in the physical environment. In this way, moving around the urban landscape would become a favorable place for contemplation to accustom the gaze to the appreciation of beauty. Thus, “building ‘school temples’ was much more than directing a space specifically for teaching: it was carrying on its walls and facades the signature of a State that was modernizing” (Garcia, 2020, p. 130).

In Paraná, education “for beauty” was present in the rhetoric of several government representatives. The president of the province, Carlos Augusto de Carvalho, for example, justifies the installation of specific buildings for school purposes as an environment for intervention in obtaining the “**sense of beauty**, [and in the development of] habits of order, cleanliness, attention and economy and at the same time increase school attendance and establish instruction popular on a broad and solid base” (Carvalho, 1882, p.90, our emphasis).

From this perspective, Pedro Rispoli's refined carpentry seemed to be in tune with the material and hygiene requirements that the educational actors sought for the installation of new schools. The first indication of the refined character that draws our attention in Pedro Rispoli's production is the receipt for his commercial enterprise, a delicate piece of paper measuring 16 centimeters in height and 21 centimeters in width. In Figure 1, we will pay attention to other characteristics of the receipt that may provide clues about the style used by Pedro Rispoli in the manufacture of his furniture:

Figure 1 - Receipt for services provided by *Marcenaria Mobiliário Artístico* to public education in Paraná



Source: Rispoli, Ap. 1282, 1907, p. 62. Paraná Public Archives Department.

The name of the factory provides clues about the furniture-making process: “*Ao Mobiliário Artístico*” (Artistic Furniture) suggests a refined production process, adding to the process of producing goods characteristics exclusive to the carpenter's craft and an artistic approach. According to this document, the steam-powered factory met a considerable demand: 100 pine desks, 4 tables, 4 armchairs, 5 blackboards and easels, and 1 mechanical counter. Our hypothesis is that the industrial production process of these pieces of furniture was hybrid: sometimes they were produced using an industrial method, sometimes they were made with a more artisanal approach. This proposition begins with a piece of information present in the receipt that may indicate the artistic nature employed by Rispoli. The lilies that surround the factory's name and the owner's name, in lilac and green tones, may highlight the *Art Nouveau* style that was very popular at the time. According to Rodrigo Fernandes Pissetti and Carla Farias Souza, *Art Nouveau* became known in Italy as “Stile Floreale (or style of lilies or style of waves)” (Pissetti; Souza, 2011, p.18).

In light of these issues, it is worth noting that *Art Nouveau* was an artistic and design movement that flourished between the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, approximately between 1890 and 1910. It emerged as a reaction to the historicism

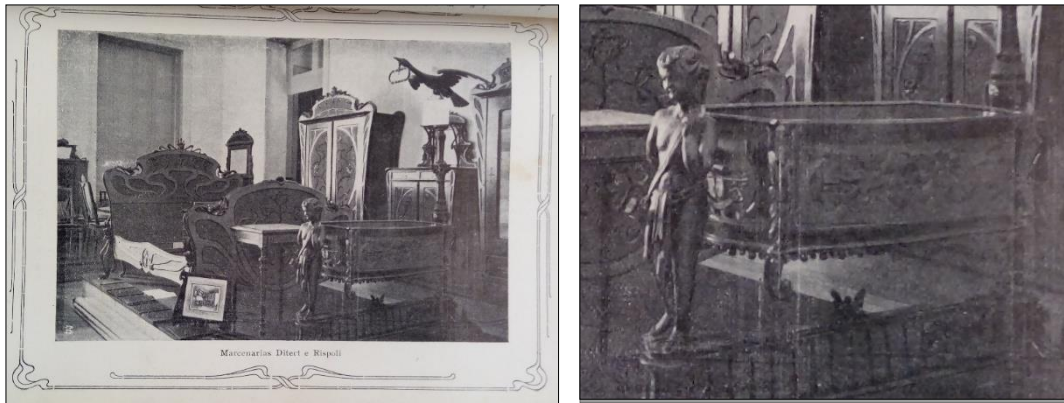
and rigidity of traditional artistic styles of the time, seeking an innovative visual language that reflected the modernity and technological progress of the period. This language is characterized by its curved and fluid lines, inspired by natural forms such as plants, flowers, animals and organic elements. The movement incorporated an aesthetic that valued ornamentation and the integration of visual arts, architecture, interior design, and decorative arts. Elements such as stained glass, worked metals, ceramics, furniture, and typography were used in a cohesive manner to create harmonious and aesthetically unified environments (Pissetti; Souza, 2011).

Arabella Galvão (2020) describes Art Nouveau as a style full of rich and dynamic decorative motifs, inspired by plant forms, such as algae, aquatic plants, lilies, orchids, and exotic flowers, in addition to incorporating faunal elements, such as birds, butterflies, dragonflies, and even snakes. Solange Ferraz de Lima (2008), when analyzing the dissemination of these ornaments in the context of industrial society, highlights that *Art Nouveau*, especially in France, reaffirmed the country as a “world center of good taste and refined, artisanal, avant-garde production, accentuating a characteristic that had already been attributed to it since the 12th century” (Lima, 2008, p. 161). Lima also observes that this artistic movement was linked to the political project of consolidating the French republic and the ambition of international projection in the economic scenario.

In order to conclude this first section, two factors stand out: Rispoli’s provision of services to public education at a time when the republic wanted to “make itself visible”; and the intuition that the creative process of Rispoli’s furniture making involved ornaments characteristic of *Art Nouveau*. But what other outcomes can “artistic furniture” reveal to us? For Ulpiano T. Bezerra de Meneses (1994), artifacts are not mere products, but vectors of social relations. This means that, beyond the physical segments, we have the complex challenge of identifying the social appropriations of these artifacts and how they interfere with human experiences. That said, we still need to know what and who were the furniture produced by Pedro Rispoli committed to? What effects of reception and appropriation did this materiality have on the entrepreneur's social fabric? We will continue in the next section.

2. Subjects, objects and actions: furniture as a vector of relations

Anyone who leafed through the pages of the Paraná newspaper *A República* on February 3rd, 1908 would come across the opportunity to participate in the National Exhibition that would take place in Rio de Janeiro in June of the same year. According to the poster, interested manufacturers should go to the office of the central committee established at the Paraná Museum, from 8 am to 5 pm, to evaluate and select their products for participation in the “*Exposição Preparatória do Paraná*”, which would open on February 24th. Subsequently, the selected objects would be exhibited nationwide. In a note, the poster guaranteed: “all products destined for the Exhibition will be transported free of charge on the railways, provided they are addressed” (*A República, Exposição Nacional*, 1908, p. 3). Among the selected products was the crib manufactured by Mr. Pedro Rispoli, as shown in Figure 2 below:

Figure 2 - Furniture room of the Paraná section – 1908

Source: Martins, 1908, p. 49.

This image was produced to compose the “Catalogue of the State of Paraná: agriculture, industries, liberal arts and livestock”, which would represent the State of Paraná at the National Exhibition, held in the capital of the Republic in 1908³. Both the products on display and the materiality of the catalog itself ended up serving as advertising for the natural and industrial articles of the state of Paraná (Garcia, 2024).

Regarding this issue, Sandra Jatayh Pesavento (1997, p.14) highlights that the exhibitions functioned “as a synthesis and externalization of the modernity of the ‘new times’ and as a showcase for the inventions and goods made available to the world by the factory system”. In the case of Paraná, Pedro Rispoli’s *Mobiliário Artístico* represented both common and luxury furniture, displaying living room furniture made of “multicolored *acouta-cavallo*⁴, consisting of: 1 sofa, 6 simple chairs, 2 armchairs and a centerpiece” (Martins, 1908, p.50). However, the artifact that most caught the attention of the Rio de Janeiro community was the crib featured in the aforementioned photograph (Figure 2). It was made of *imbuia* wood, “with allegories in bas-relief” (Martins, 1908, p.50). If we observe the columns supporting the crib, we can notice the carved stem ornaments, in addition to the representations of foliage and other vegetation on the side of the furniture, which may indicate an *Art Nouveau* design. The furniture in the exhibition room itself bears traces of *Art Nouveau*, with inlays and carvings that accentuate the sinuosity, curves and stem-shaped supports.

In view of the above, an important fact to note is that Pedro Rispoli had a brother – Paschoal Rispoli –, information that provides us with interesting clues about the artistic process of marquetry⁵ in the manufacture of furniture. Marquetry is the art of composing a design, a mosaic, with pieces of different objects. It is an activity that leaves the artisan's fingerprint on the object, as if the artisan were saying “I made this” or even “I am here, in this work”. In this sense, artisanal work is artistic work, which allows us to affirm that the

³ As Carneiro (2013) points out, the opening dates of the exhibitions were tied to commemorative milestones. The 1908 *Exposição Nacional* was held to commemorate the centennial of the opening of Brazil's ports to international trade. In addition to this event, the President of the Republic at the time, Affonso Pena, in his opening speech, emphasized the importance of the National Exhibition in assessing the country's economic situation. Thus, the opening of the Exhibition in Paraná was also linked to another ceremony: the inauguration of the new interim president of the state, Alencar Guimarães.

⁴ *Acouta-cavallo* is the raw material used, the type of wood.

⁵ Marquetry: is an “ancient resource for furniture manufacturing, many people wonder what marquetry is. In general, we can define it as a technique that is based on the work of applying and decorating different materials in a way that results in furniture with an interesting aesthetic finish. This work can be done with stone, metals and wood veneer for marquetry, the latter being the most popular.” Available at: <https://www.vivadecora.com.br/revista/marchetaria/> Accessed on 07/26/2023.

artisan works in the field of creation. This is not to praise the artisanal way of producing objects, but it is necessary to highlight some characteristics of the artisanal way of producing. In the form of artisanal production, we highlight Sennett's (2020) contribution in which “artisanal skill designates a basic and permanent human impulse, the desire for a job well done in itself” (Sennett, 2020, p. 19).

According to the newspaper *O Dia* (1957, p. 4), Paschoal Rispoli was a native of Calabria/Italy, married Joana Rispoli in Naples and, after the birth of his first child, came with his family to Curitiba in 1894. The journalistic rhetoric says that this man was “an excellent sculptor and woodcarver, maintaining a modern workshop” (*O Dia, A Colônia Italiana no Estado*, 1957, p. 4), in which he worked in marble and fine paintings. According to the news, as soon as Paschoal Rispoli arrived in Brazil, he sent for his two brothers: Pedro Rispoli and José Rispoli. Pedro and Paschoal Rispoli were partners in the carpentry business, running a steam-powered factory called “*Mobiliário Artístico*” (Garcia, 2020). However, the partnership was dissolved in late 1908, as published in the newspaper “*A República*”:

The undersigned inform the Commerce in general and anyone interested that on this date they amicably dissolved the partnership they had formed in this Capital for the exploration of the carpentry industry, with all assets and liabilities being the responsibility of Pedro Rispoli, with the partner Paschoal Rispoli withdrawing. Satisfaction of his profits will be paid (*A República*, 1908, p. 02).

The first, Pedro Rispoli, as we already know, built his career in the furniture business, while the second, Paschoal Rispoli, became a violin teacher. This information demonstrates the great artistic capital that the Rispoli family possessed, from music to visual arts. Paschoal⁶ Rispoli (Figure 3) was born on February 22nd, 1868, in Italy and became a naturalized Brazilian citizen. He was married. He was hired by the Ministry of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce in February 1910 and appointed master of the carpentry workshop on January 31st, 1912. (*A República*, 1910, p. 1). He also worked at the *Escola de Aprendizagem e Artífices* of Paraná, as a master of the decorative painting and ornamental sculpture course (*A República*, 1910, p. 2). On October 18th, 1929, he filed his retirement application. (*A República*, 1930, p. 5).

Before being hired by the Ministry of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce, Paschoal Rispoli actively participated in the Italian Commission for the celebrations of the 4th Centenary of the discovery of Brazil, when he contributed to the creation of the banner commemorating the date.

⁶ There are variations in the spelling of Paschoal's name. It also appears as Paschoali in Codex 821 (DEAP). In this study, we will assume the first spelling.

Figure 3 - Paschoal Rispoli

Source: Masonic Museum of Paraná

In Figure 3, the portrait of Paschoal Rispoli is duly identified with the Masonic symbols, the compass and the square. Paschoal Rispoli became known in the capital of Paraná for his decorative and ornamental works and as a member of the Guiseppe Garibaldi Masonic Lodge (Pacheco JR, 1997, p. 354). The “Italian descendants, in their entirety, founded it on June 2, 1902, with the *Brevê Constitucional do Grande Oriente do Brasil*(GOB) for the Scottish Rite – Registration 779. On April 26, 1939, due to the circumstances of the Second World War, it merged with the Dario Vellozo Lodge.⁷” In Masonic circles, Paschoal Rispoli was known as the “sculptor”, among other things, for having decorated the *Visconde do Rio Branco* Lodge (*A República, Nova Loja Maçônica*, 10/28/1913, p. 1).

After the meal, everyone gathered again and headed to the temple, located a short distance from the Rio Branco station. This temple, although temporary, was decorated with great artistic taste, and this work was due to the intelligent sculptor Paschoal Rispoli, from the *Escola de Aprendizizes Artífices*. The session began at 11 a.m., presided over by Colonel Antonio Ricardo do Nascimento (Pacheco JR, 1997, p. 354).

Based on this work in Masonic architecture, we cannot fail to establish a connection between architectural discourses and the designs conceived for school furniture. According to Marcus Levy Bencostta (2013), in a study about French furniture and the projects of two avant-garde architects in the first half of the 20th century, it was common for the style of furniture to follow the “transformations and experiences of architectural discourses and projects aimed at the construction of school buildings” (Bencostta, 2013, p. 21). From this perspective, Bencostta explains that, among sculptors, decorators, architects, and even carpenters of this period, it was

⁷ Source: Historical Synthesis. August and Respectable Symbolic Lodge of the Cross of Masonic and Chapter Perfection, Dario Vellozo No. 1213. Available at: <http://www.lojadariovellozo.com.br/>

common for them to share artistic expressions and see themselves as artists. As we can see with the Rispoli brothers, both called themselves and they are described in the Paraná press as artists.

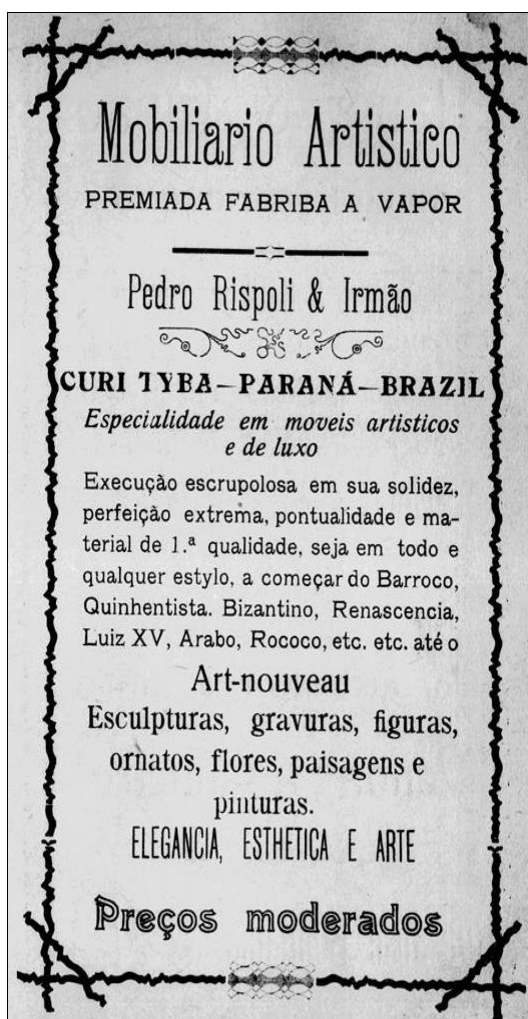
When reviewing Paschoal Rispoli's work in decorating the Masonic temple, it is important to point out that the Rispoli brothers' influence among the educated elite of Curitiba was not exclusively due to their artistic expertise in furniture production. Both were Freemasons and frequented Masonic lodges in the city of Curitiba⁸. Important figures in public education were also affiliated with Freemasonry and had a direct relation with Pedro and Paschoal Rispoli. The former had his furniture production approved by the inspection of the then General Director of Public Education, Victor Ferreira do Amaral, for services provided to the *Ginásio Paranaense* in 1904. Both Rispoli and Ferreira do Amaral frequented the Masonic Lodge “*Fraternidade Paranaense*”. Paschoal Rispoli sculpted a bust of Dr. Jayme Drumond dos Reis, who was a member of the *O Conselho Supremo do Grande Oriente do Paraná* – a Masonic power founded in 1902 (*A República, Trabalho Artístico*, 1916, p. 1).

This information is interesting because, among the delegates appointed to compose the judging committee for the artifacts that would be part of *Exposição Preparatória do Paraná* – which would later be featured in the National Exhibition of Rio de Janeiro in 1908 – was Jayme Drumond dos Reis himself, who at the time also provided services to the Public Education of Paraná. We do not want to minimize the artistic competence of the Rispoli brothers based on the decision of the delegates for the selected artifacts, but rather to show that, for better or worse, the Rispoli brothers were part of a timely network that could give them prestige in their artistic and commercial field.

The furniture made by Pedro Rispoli circulated in the editorial office of the Rio de Janeiro newspaper *O Paiz*. According to an article published in the newspaper, the furniture manufactured by this gentleman was among the objects expected to be displayed at the National Exhibition, such as the “two complete sets of living room and bedroom furniture, which are said to be beautiful” (*O Paiz*, 1908, p. 03). Regarding the carpenter’s notoriety, the editorial team adds: “They belong to the manufacturer of the crib that **we mentioned earlier** in the news about the Paraná section, Mr. Pedro Rispoli” (*O Paiz*, 1908, p. 03, our emphasis). Pedro Rispoli’s popularity grew in the Rio de Janeiro press due to the businesses that this man intended to establish in Rio de Janeiro. According to the newspaper, this gentleman wanted to set up an agency and warehouse for his furniture, which “due to the difference in living and working conditions in the two places, are sold at a much more favorable price than those of manufacturers in Rio de Janeiro” (*O Paiz*, 1908, p. 03).

On April 16th, 1909, the newspaper *A República* announced the general list of winners at the National Exhibition – Paraná section, in the category of common and luxury furniture, Pedro Rispoli was awarded the gold medal. It is interesting to note that in that same year, Pedro Rispoli took laugh at the national award to qualify its factory. As can be seen in its new advertising poster, Figure 4:

⁸ Both Pedro Rispoli and Paschoal Rispoli attended the Masonic Lodge “*Unione e Fratellanza*”, “*Loja Fraternidade Paranaense*” and the “*Loja Acácia Paranaense*”. Available at: http://www.museumaconicoparanaense.com/MMPRaiz/LojaPRate1973/GOIPR_902_Hist_AcaPara.htm

Figure 4 - Poster of the *Premiada Fábrica a Vapor – Mobiliário Artístico*

Source: *Almanach do Paraná*, 1909, p. 399.

In addition to the award at the 1908 *Exposição Nacional*, the poster uses the specialty in artistic and luxury furniture as a qualifying seal. Thus, we have the Rispoli brothers, now in partnership, presenting the skills they master in the making of furniture: Baroque, 16th century, Byzantine, Renaissance, Louis XV, Arabesque, Rococo; and in capital letters, centered, the reference to *Art Nouveau* is made. The wording of the poster also announces: “Elegance, Aesthetics and Art”, without further ado, as if contemplating the furniture, later, would be enough to prove the adjectives written in the advertisement.

Pedro Rispoli and Paschoal Rispoli are immersed in a production experience that reflects the “craftsmanship”. This concept, which goes beyond the desire to produce a job well done in one’s own right, is characterized by a trajectory marked by production practices that include a distinct artistic language, evidenced by participation in local and national exhibitions. These exhibitions were crucial in establishing a seal of quality for their creations. The awards obtained in these events were widely publicized on commercial posters, configuring an effective marketing strategy to promote the sale of products. According to Richard Sennett (2020), the “craftsman’s making” refers to a work process that transcends mere technical execution and delves into deliberate practice and critical reflection. The author sees the craftsman’s work as a combination of manual skill, creative thinking, and attention to detail. Thus, we observe that the actions

of the Rispoli brothers demonstrate a personal involvement with the work, in which continuous practice, social networks, and experience allowed these enterprising craftsmen to hone their skills and achieve a high level of mastery. Therefore, Pedro Rispoli's furniture production was not merely functional, but also commercially, aesthetically and culturally significant.

In conclusion

Subjects, objects and actions would be the primary elements that define the empirical field on which pedagogy, as with other social sciences, is constructed as knowledge and discipline (ESCOLANO BENITO, 2017, p.31).

The exercise of considering school furniture as authentic pieces of research revealed one of the facets of school material culture. By examining the design of furniture intended for republican schools, we discovered a complex network that ranged from artistic language to ideological disputes, including the impact of the Masonic horizon. Aligned with republican precepts, Freemasonry influenced, albeit in a specific way, the front and interiors of Paraná schools, imprinting a signature that reflected the principles of the rhetoric of progress, modernity and beauty.

In the context of these issues, Pedro Rispoli's production experience highlights the importance of artisanal skill and manual labor in the production of school furniture in Paraná. Although "*Mobiliário Artístico*" was a steam-powered factory, the artisanal nature still marked the practice with a careful approach, characterized by the constant interaction between theoretical knowledge (artistic languages), manual practice and industrial production. Within this cultural, political and pedagogical context, the furniture created by Pedro Rispoli functioned as a true postcard, granting it both commercial and artistic prestige. We believe that his brother, Paschoal Rispoli, played a crucial role in introducing Pedro to the knowledge of marquetry, sculpture, refined painting and decorative ornamentation. In this way, "*Mobiliário Artístico*", despite being a steam-powered factory, integrated the artisanal gesture, that is, the need to imprint the master's personal characteristics on the objects, reflecting an art of making.

In view of this, as Michel de Certeau (2014) advises us, we conclude that these combinatorial operations, which also make up a culture, reveal "the action schemes" present in the appropriations, experiences and consumption that circulated in the material culture of Paraná's school environment in the first decades of the 20th century.

References

ARAÚJO, José Carlos Souza; VALDEMARIN, Vera Teresa; SOUZA, Rosa Fátima de. A contribuição da pesquisa em perspectiva comparada para a escrita da História da escola primária no Brasil: notas de um balanço. In: SOUZA, Rosa Fátima; PINHEIRO, Antonio Carlos Ferreira; LOPES, Antônio de Pádua Carvalho (org.). *História da escola primária no Brasil: investigação em perspectiva comparada em âmbito nacional*. Aracaju: Edise, 2015, p. 27-45.

BENCOSTTA, Marcus Levy. Mobiliário escolar francês e os projetos vanguardistas de Jean Prouvé e André Lurçat na primeira metade do século XX. *Educar em Revista*, Curitiba, v. 49, p. 19-38 2013. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1590/S0104-40602013000300003>

CARNEIRO, Cíntia Braga. *O Museu Paranaense e Romário Martins: a busca de uma identidade para o Paraná*. Curitiba: SAMP, 2013.

CERTEAU, Michel de. *A invenção do cotidiano: 1. Artes de fazer*. Tradução de Ephraim Ferreira Alves. 22ª Ed. Petrópolis, RJ: Vozes, 2014.

CORDEIRO, Andréa Bezerra; GARCIA, Gecia Aline; KINCHESECKI, Ana Paula de Souza; KANAZAWA, Júlia Naomi. *A teia das coisas: cultura material escolar e pesquisa em rede*. Curitiba, PR: UFPR/NEPIE, 2021.

DUSSEL, Inés. Historias de cavernas, pupitres y guardapolvos: Los aportes del giro material em la historia de la educación. En: Arata, N. y P. Pineau (org.), *Latinoamérica: la educación y su historia. Nuevos enfoques para su debate y enseñanza*. Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires: Editorial de la Facultad de Filosofía y Letras Universidad de Buenos Aires, 2019a, p. 35-55.

DUSSEL, Inés. Historicising girls' material cultures in schools: revisiting photographs of girls in uniforms. *Women's History Review*, 29(3), 429-443, 2019b. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/09612025.2019.1611124>.

ESCOLANO BENITO, Agustín. *A escola como cultura: experiência, memória e arqueologia*. Tradução e revisão técnica de Heloísa Helena Pimenta Rocha, Vera Lucia Gaspar da Silva. Campinas, SP: Editora Alínea, 2017.

FUNARI, Pedro Paulo A. Os historiadores e a cultura material. In: PINSKY, Carla Bassanezi (org.). *Fontes históricas*. São Paulo: Contexto, 2008.

GARCIA, Gecia Aline. *Itinerário moveleiro: o provimento material escolar para a instrução primária paranaense - anos finais do século XIX e início do século XX*. Dissertação (Mestrado em Educação) – Setor de Educação, Universidade Federal do Paraná, Curitiba, 2020.

GARCIA, Gecia Aline; SOUZA, Gizele de. Pelo fio do nome: relações transnacionais no processo de provimento material do Ginásio Paranaense (1892-1906). *Educação e Pesquisa*, v. 48, e248461, 2022. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1590/s1678-4634202248248461por>

GARCIA, Gecia Aline. *Idealização, fabricação e circulação dos móveis escolares: uma investigação sobre a(s) cultura(s) do provimento escolar (1906-1928)*. Tese (Doutorado) – Setor de Educação, Universidade Federal do Paraná, Curitiba, 2024.

GALVÃO, Arabela. *História do Mobiliário*. Apostila do curso de Design UFPR, 2020.

GASPAR da SILVA, Vera Lucia. Vitrines da República: os grupos escolares em Santa Catarina (1889-1930). VI CONGRESSO LUSO-BRASILEIRO DE HISTÓRIA DA EDUCAÇÃO. Uberlândia (MG), 2006. *Anais [...]*. Uberlândia (MG), 2006.

GASPAR da SILVA, Vera Lucia; SOUZA, Gizele de; CASTRO, César Augusto. *Cultura material escolar em perspectiva histórica: escritas e possibilidades*. Vitória: EDUFES, 2018.

KNAUUS, Paulo. O desafio de fazer História com imagens: arte e cultura visual. *ArtCultura*, Uberlândia, v.8, n.12, p.97-115, jan.-jun. 2006. Disponível em: <https://seer.ufu.br/index.php/artcultura/article/view/1406>.

LIMA, Solange Ferraz de. O trânsito dos ornatos Modelos ornamentais da Europa para o Brasil, seus usos (e abusos?). *Anais do Museu Paulista: História e Cultura Material*, São Paulo, v.16, n.1, p.151-199, jan. 2008. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1590/S0101-47142008000100005>

MENESES, Ulpiano T. Bezerra de. Do teatro da memória ao laboratório da História: a exposição museológica e o conhecimento histórico. *Anais do Museu Paulista: História e Cultura Material*, São Paulo, v.2, p. 9-42, jan./dez. 1994. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1590/S0101-47141994000100002>.

PACHECO JR, Walter. *Entre o compasso e o esquadro*. Londrina: Trolha, 1997.

PESAVENTO, Sandra Jatahy. *Exposições Universais: espetáculos da modernidade do século XIX*. São Paulo: HUCITEC, 1997.

PISSETI, Rodrigo Fernandes; SOUZA, Carla Farias. Art Déco e Art Nouveau: confluências. *Revista Imagem*, Caxias do Sul, v. 1, n. 1, junho-dezembro 2011.

SENNETT, Richard. *O artífice*. 9ª ed. Rio de Janeiro: Record, 2020.

SOUZA, Rosá Fátima de; PINHEIRO, Antonio Carlos Ferreira; LOPES, Antônio de Pádua Carvalho. (org.). *História da Escola Primária no Brasil: investigação em perspectiva comparada em âmbito nacional (1870- 1930)*”. Aracaju: Edise, 2015.

VEIGA, Cynthia Greive. Educação Estética para o povo. In: LOPES, Eliane M. Teixeira; FARIA FILHO, Luciano Mendes de; VEIGA, Cynthia Greive. (org). *500 anos de educação no Brasil*. Belo Horizonte: Ed. Autêntica, 2016, p. 519-550.

Fontes

ALMANACH DO PARANÁ, Ilustrado com finíssimas fotogravuras. Editores: Annibal Rocha e Cia. Typografia da Livraria Econômica, Rua 15 de Novembro, 53. Curitiba, Paranguá e Ponta Grossa, 1909, p. 399. Hemeroteca Digital Brasileira – BNDigital – Biblioteca Nacional.

A NOTÍCIA, Anúncios, 5/5/1906, p. 3. Hemeroteca Digital Brasileira – BNDigital – Biblioteca Nacional.

A REPÚBLICA, Alistamento Eleitoral, 23/8/1898, p. 2. Hemeroteca Digital Brasileira – BNDigital – Biblioteca Nacional.

A REPÚBLICA, Exposição Nacional, 3/2/1908, p. 3. Hemeroteca Digital Brasileira – BNDigital – Biblioteca Nacional.

A REPÚBLICA, 23/12/1908, p. 2. Hemeroteca Digital Brasileira – BNDigital – Biblioteca Nacional.

A REPÚBLICA, 08/03/1910, p. 1. Hemeroteca Digital – BNDigital – Biblioteca Nacional

A REPÚBLICA, Escola de Artífices, 4/3/1910, p. 2. Hemeroteca Digital Brasileira – BNDigital – Biblioteca Nacional.

A REPÚBLICA, Nova Loja Maçônica, 28/10/1913, p. 1. Hemeroteca Digital Brasileira – BNDigital – Biblioteca Nacional.

A REPÚBLICA, Trabalho Artístico, 31/10/1916, p. 1. Hemeroteca Digital Brasileira – BNDigital – Biblioteca Nacional.

A REPÚBLICA, 28/01/1930, p. 01. Hemeroteca Digital Brasileira – BNDigital – Biblioteca Nacional.

CARVALHO, Carlos Augusto. Relatório apresentado a Assembleia Legislativa do Paraná. Curitiba, Typ. – Perseverança de J. F. Pinheiro, Praça do General Osório: 1882.

GOVERNADORES DO PARANÁ. Governadores maçons do Paraná. Disponível em: http://www.museumaconicoparanaense.com/Governadores_do_Parana.htm. Acesso em: 1/12/2020.

MARTINS, Romário. *Catálogo do estado do Paraná*. Oficinas Graficas M. Orosco e Cia: Rio de Janeiro, 1908.

O DIA, A Colônia Italiana no Estado, 30/8/1957, p. 4. *Hemeroteca Digital Brasileira – BNDigital – Biblioteca Nacional*.

O PAIZ. O Paraná na Exposição Nacional. Rio de Janeiro, 13/8/1908, p. 3. *Hemeroteca Digital Brasileira – BNDigital – Biblioteca Nacional*.

RELAÇÃO DAS LOJAS NO PARANÁ. *Lojas Fraternidade Paranaense*. Disponível em: http://www.museumaconicoparanaense.com/MMPRaiz/LojaPRate1973/0555_Hist_Loja.htm. Acesso em 1/12/2020.

RELAÇÃO DAS LOJAS NO PARANÁ. *Loja Unione e Fratellanza*. Disponível em: http://www.museumaconicoparanaense.com/MMPRaiz/LojaPRate1973/0779_Hist_loja.htm. Acesso em: 1/12/2020.

RISPOLI, Pedro. Nota de pagamento. Ap. 1282, 1907, p. 62. *Departamento do Arquivo Público Paranaense*.