

Education of the body: notes for the historicity of a notion¹

Educação do corpo: apontamentos para a historicidade de uma noção

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ABSTRACT

This paper assumes the hypothesis that an *education of the body* is produced, in the long-term, by different subjects and institutions for the purpose of creating common gestures and uses of the body, aiming at taking care of oneself, one's appearance and, moreover, the protection of one's strengths. In this sense, this education produces, in the long-term, advices, prescriptions, regulations on the body and, therefore, establishing educational processes. This text examines and analyses some of these educational processes captured in a set of sources constituted by religious texts, treatises on painting, romances, treatises on good manners and civility produced between the 12th and the 18th centuries. The brief analysis presented here shows the existence of an abundance of references about the body and the gestures in these records, constituting undoubtedly an adequate starting point to outline notes on the historicity of the notion of education of the body.

Keywords: Education of the body. History of the body. Education.

RESUMO

O texto parte da hipótese de que, em uma longa duração, uma *educação do corpo* é lentamente elaborada por diferentes sujeitos e instituições, com a finalidade de criar gestos comuns, usos comuns do corpo voltados ao cuidado de si, de sua aparência e, mais amplamente, da proteção de suas próprias forças. Trata-se, assim, de um tipo de educação que, neste tempo longo, produz, seja de forma silenciosa, seja de forma eloquente, conselhos,

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prescrições, normas voltadas ao corpo, constituindo, assim, processos educativos. O texto examina e analisa alguns desses processos educativos capturados em traços no conjunto de fontes constituído por textos religiosos, tratados de pintura, romance, tratados de boas maneiras e de civilidade produzidos entre o século XII e XVIII. Para os propósitos e o espaço deste texto, a breve análise realizada demonstra a existência de uma abundância de referências ao corpo e aos gestos nesses registros e constitui, sem dúvida, um bom ponto de partida para esboçar apontamentos acerca da historicidade da noção educação do corpo.

Palavras-chave: Educação do corpo. História do corpo. Educação.

Looking for threads...

The education of the body is a notion presented in small traces, often discrete, barely visible, while in other times shown with grandeur. A careful look can capture these threads, even more, when considering the following question: how are bodies educated in a long-term²? If we start from the hypothesis that an *education of the body* is, at the same time, diffuse and focused, spontaneous, and specialized, this ambiguous, imprecise, and extensive scenario deserves attention and analysis. It is composed by details found in the interstices of texts written by scholars, religious people, physicians; characters in novels; in the angles and shadows of paintings; in the carvings of statues that reveal body shapes from marble, stone, and wood.

Thus, in a diffuse or precise fashion, we can see little by little the emergence of a body education³, understood as part of a general scenario of public concerns and social management (CORBIN, 2005). Massive educational processes are set into motion much before and beyond school, countless of them guided towards body manifestations, physical expression of gestures, movements, and emotions, demanding adequate learning to each occasion and activity (DUERR, 1998; ELIAS, 1994; SANT'ANNA, 2011; THOMAS, 2003).

2 I work here with the category *long-term* as used by Fernand Braudel (1969).

3 This theme has been studied in Brazil by many researchers from different theoretical frameworks and with different meanings. See, among others, Bassani and Vaz (2003), Soares (1998), Soares (2014), Taborda de Oliveira and Linhales (2011), Taborda de Oliveira and Vaz (2004), Vaz (2003), and Vaz and Bombassaro (2012).

The place held by the studies and research on manners, sensibilities, and private life in the scope of the *Annales* School has unquestionably echoed the emergence of a new research object: the body or, more precisely, its practices and representations (BLOCH, 1987; CORBIN; COURTINE; VIGARELLO, 2005; DUERR, 1998; ELIAS, 1994; FEBVRE, 1962; HAROUCHE, 2008; LE GOFF; TRUONG, 2003; LÉVI-STRAUSS, 2003; MAUSS, 2003; SCHMITT, 1990; VIGARELLO, 1978, 2014). Thus, to welcome this new object, education needs to be thought from other references and, mainly, broaden its scope. It can then be conceived as an expression of broad cultural processes established from the “[...] knowledge and practice of uses and behaviors of a society, aiming to introduce individuals and groups on different spheres of public life [...]” (SOARES, 2014, p. 219).

Little by little, from these loose threads left in time, it is possible to grasp an idea of an education that pays special attention to gestures and behaviors whose expressions are inscribed in the body⁴; it would then be established by countless creations and recreations of broad educational processes, drawn to turn the body into an expression of civilization. In effect, weaving the threads of this notion may indicate, on one hand, more precise delimitations of the objects to be investigated and, on the other, to broadening and the problematization of education beyond school.

If anatomy (MANDRESSI, 2003; SOARES; TERRA, 2007; TERRA; SOARES, 2014) is responsible for the materiality of the lifeless body, therefore without movement, education will consider its physical and physiologic dimensions, as well as its forms of expression, because this education, simultaneously broad and specific, will be responsible for this living body. All that concerns the body, from its intimacy to its physiology, but also its feelings and emotions will be, little by little, outlined by culture and its specificities, becoming the object of an increasing specific education. New educational processes targeting the body are continuously been improved.

This text examines some educational processes captured in traces on the following sources: a) Hugues de Saint-Victor, *De institutione novitiorum* (12th century); b) Thomas d’Aquin, *Somme théologique* (13th century); c) *Decor Puellarum* (1471); d) Leon Batiste Alberti, *Della Pittura- On Painting* (15th century); e) Leonardo da Vinci, *A treatise on Painting* (15th century); f) Erasmus of Rotterdam, *On Civility in Children* (16th century); 7-François Rabelais, *Gargantua* (16th century); g) Antoine de Courtin, *Nouveau Traité de la civilité qui se pratique en France parmi les honnestes gens* (18th century).

4 In a classic text of Marcel Mauss (2003, p. 405, author’s highlight), “The techniques of body”, “the word *education* arises in a broad way and we can read that [...] in the art of using the human body itself, the fact of *education* prevailed. The notion of education could overlap those of imitation”.

The analysis of these sources allowed an initial configuration of a cartography of gestures and behaviors, as well as notes on what could be called educational processes anchored on the body during a long period of time. Two concepts are crucial, within these ample educational processes, to develop our thought on the notion of *education of the body*: civility and courtesy. If civility was considered a moral rule, everyone should fill an educational role on the social regulation level and on those related to physical hygiene and moral perseverance, courtesy was the demonstration of different social conventions, depending on places and times (ELIAS, 1994; MARGOLIN, 1994; PICARD, 1995; REVEL, 1991; ROUSSEL, 1995; THOMAS, 2003, 2014).

These concepts are important as they guide pedagogies and techniques of social and individual bodies, present in medieval times with a religious nature and gradually influence the didactic and courtesan literature typical of the laic universe. These highly prescriptive literature will consider gestures and broader control over oneself as central to establish the bases of numerous sociabilities in the Western world. The body is the place where civility and courtesy are inscribed, thus, it should demonstrate a harmonious, orderly, and beautiful expression. This didactic literature aims to catalogue what – supposedly – refers to the uses of the body and the behaviors of individuals in society; and compile pedagogies that will change what people believe should be changed (DUERR, 1998; ELIAS, 1994; THOMAS, 2003). Thus, what we call educational processes towards the body is slowly structured in different areas of society.

Gestures, behaviors: about educational processes facing the body

When alluding to broader educational processes, we want to point out the existence of a type of organization in which advices and prescriptions are disseminated, and, in a way, assimilated and relatively put into action. Gestures take a central stage and are understood as auxiliary in the organization of societies – from the most solemn one to the most ordinary, unconscious, repetitive, and common in every life, when observed they allow the “[...] historian to enter in the deepest workings of a society [...]” (SCHMITT, 1990, p. 20).

In the long-term that overlaps the Middle Ages, the author affirms that

[...] gestures should express hidden realities, the inner person (“the soul”, its vices and virtues), while on the contrary, “the discipline” of gestures corresponds to the exterior of the body and can contribute to renew the

inner man. From that, also faced by the gestures, the privileged attention given to the parts of the body considered more “expressive; the face and the look [...] and the hands that seem to “speak” (SCHMITT, 1990, p. 26, author’s highlights).

These “hands that seem to speak”, this “expression of hidden realities” that the body translates so well and that needs to be ordered, compose broad educational process in which lie the ambitions to know and to produce increasingly more specific and specialized ways to educate the bodies. We would be faced by a regulation and an administration of distances and proximities between bodies and objects in the space, between duties and obligations, of deference to reestablish continuities. As written by Claudine Harouche (2008, p. 51-52, author’s highlights),

[...] the gestures in the establishment of institutions lead to resuming neglected, forgotten connections, to reestablish a certain continuity between the *geste* – epic, narrative, history– and *gestures*, body conducts, individual to each one. We need to consider the gestures that structure, symbolize, materialize, illustrate the *geste* as founding elements of legal and political institutions; and then try to discern and define the role of posture, attitudes, movements of the models of collective behavior, in the institutional systems[...].

The gestures will the object of texts written by Middle Age clergymen⁵, and this prescriptive, detailed, and comprehensive literature will be resumed in later periods and will be used as a base for a broader body education, that will reach laic society. These works translate a need to wake the gestures, common demeanors and behaviors, common systems in those who intended to live in proximity (THOMAS, 2003, 2014). An ideal of courtesy that preconizes a harmonious social life among peers is expanded and deepened, used as a reference in the later centuries. It is a type of knowledge that lies upon values such

⁵ These medieval clergymen were supported by ancient texts, taking some aspects from the works of Horace, Cicero, and Seneca, in which modesty guides an understanding of the body and behaviors (LE GOFF, 1994; SCHMITT, 1990). Modesty was defined as “[...] a virtue that supports behaviors, each movement, and out activity to go beyond and above excess [...]” (SCHMITT, 1990, p. 173).

as kindness, modesty, distinction, cleanness, moderation, sobriety, restraint, sense of justice, becoming a ritual that deeply involves individuals and structures their relationships (DUBY, 1984; LE GOFF, 1990, 1994; THOMAS, 2003, 2014).

Around the 12th century, a pedagogy of gestures gains a prominent space, and a new genre of Church literature emerges: “the instructions” or “the institutions for novices”. According to Schmitt’s (1990) analysis, the most important theoretical work about gestures in that century was *De Institutione novitiorum*, by Hugues Saint Victeur (in English, Hugh of Saint-Vitor), written around 1140. In its pages there are countless advices, recommendations, and specific references to the body, pointing out concerns regarding the lack of finesse among the monks, especially “[...] the anarchy of their spirits through agitations [and] febrile disorder of the members of their bodies [...]” (HUGUES DE SAINT-VICTOR, 1997, p. 49). Thus, the need to cultivate discipline, considered as “[...] an orderly movement of all members and a decent disposition of the body, be it regarding its posture, or related to its actions”.

Another work written a little more than a century later resumes these premises. The *Summa theologiae*, written by Thomas Aquinas between 1265 and 1273, highlights what should excel regarding that body, that is the modesty concerns external action, that is,

[...] modesty in the outward apparel [...] Moral virtue consists in the things pertaining to man being directed by reason. Now it is manifest that the outward movements of man are directable by reason, since the outward members are set in motion at the command of reason. [...] (THOMAS D’AQUIN, 1970, p. 304)⁶.

The behaviors at table are part of this set of gestures and movements of the body that should be learned and incorporated. In the work of Hugues Saint Victeur (1997, p. 49), before mentioned, these are detailed between chapters 18 and 23; here are some excerpts: “[...] one should not eat from the dish with their hands [...] one should not place their fingers inside the glass [...] It is particularly inconvenient to wander one’s eyes and curiously look around or, better saying, imprudently”.

The simple acts of drinking and eating – certainly biological but also social and cultural acts – reveal the emergence and the slow incorporation of

6 1st ed. [c. 1265 a 1273].

norms by individuals and groups (THOMAS, 2011). Jacques Le Goff (1965, p. 439), when referring to a “medieval civility”, pointed out that the gestures and behaviors at the table were central dimensions of these civilizing processes, and “[...] food [...] the first occasion for dominant classes in society to portray their superiority in the essential domain of appearance [...]”. These gestures at the table demonstrated a domain over the body and a confrontation against any rusticity in physical expressions; in extension, there was the incorporation of new gestures of courtesy, for instance, of cleaning the hands with clean and scented water. “[...] In the end of the 12th century, table manners emphasized the need of cleanliness. We can see in different texts the following phrase: ‘Wash your hands before dinner and when taking your soup [...]’ (THOMAS, 2011, p.74). At this period, this small gesture is not yet connected to health, disease, or even prevention; the focus here was on courtesy, a certain polite attitude, part of an education, which implied a public behavior in agreement with others; they were physical expressions that should be changed.

The set of new gestures and behaviors that marked distinction, found in the recommendations within medieval monasteries, later reached the urban cultured elites and were drawn in and between the lines on subsequent works; on them the gestures learned, agreed, and ritualized accentuated the need of distance between individuals, as well as the use of certain objects in the everyday life, such as handkerchiefs for the snot, or cutlery, which gradually substitute the fingers. Slowly the individual interiorizes the notion that touching food could be repugnant to someone else’s eyes (ELIAS, 1994; MARTIN; DUMOULIN; THELAMON, 1992; THOMAS, 2003).

Civility, which grows and establishes itself in the Renaissance, emerges from this “medieval civility”, referred by Le Goff; this didactic, moral and courtesan literature prepares, in a way, the great works in the theme during the Renaissance, symbolized by classic works, such as, among others⁸, *On Civility in Children* (also translated as *The education of Children*) by Erasmus of Rotterdam (1978). The success of this work, published in 1530, approximates, for a long time, civility and good manners. Its content translates a certain continuity of this prescriptive literature flourished in the monasteries. Erasmus highlights the physical behaviors, such as how to behave at the table, to blow your nose, to spit, the ways of looking and walking. In the following excerpt, we can read that

7 Jacques Le Goff (1965) tends to review these periods of civilization processes, established by Elias (1994), to whom Renaissance would be the central period. To Le Goff, and other medievalists (THOMAS, 2011), this process had started four centuries before.

8 Two works from the period are: *The Book of the Courtier* by Baldassare Castiglione, in 1528, *Galateo*, by Giovanni dela Casa, in 1558.

[...] men should pay attention to their appearance, their gestures, and their ways of dressing, as much as their intelligence. A well-educated child should not shake his arms, gesticulate with fingers, move the feet, or talk more with the body than with the tongue; summing up, a child must have the same decorum when at play as when at the table [...] the step should not be excessively slow nor hurried – the former is typical of an insolent person, the later of a careless one [...] (ROTTERDAM, 1978, p. 70-105).

Finally, for Erasmus, “[...] educating your body, managing your gestures is as important as knowing the fine letters [...] the gesture becomes a discourse in itself [...] the attitude of the body allows [...] judging the attitudes of the soul” (BARRAL-BARON, 2015, p. 5-13). Traces of these ideas on the general administration of the body and gestures, so didactically presented by Erasmus, appear in other works in the period, such as the novel *Gargantua*, written by the physician and author François Rabelais (1986), in 1543.

On its pages we find prescriptions on the need to transform the rebel nature of the giant, teaching him to master his gluttony, to be discrete in his gestures and actions, to incorporate elements of a hygiene under construction, indicating the need to clean the hands, the mouth, and the face for meals, and the cold-water shower after physical exercises. It is a second education, in which stands out a balance between intellectual, physical, and moral activities, and the giant’s body should express traces of civility and courtesy, in which table decorum is imposed and rude and non-harmonious gestures are repelled. Rabelais (1986), plays with the ambiguity and the differences of body perception present at the time and described in this literary tradition of giants who must be taught the rules of coexistence, of joy, and carnal pleasures. A scholastic *Gargantua* and a humanist *Gargantua* coexist in the novel and reveal the pedagogies and the policies in vogue at the time.

Simultaneously breaking away and continuing this line, in the 18th century there is a widely disseminated literature genre: the civility treatises. They feed on both the medieval civility and the Renaissance humanism. The *Nouveau traité de civilité*, by Antoine de Courtin (1728), has the following recommendation:

[...] When at the table you should not blow your nose unless you use your own handkerchief hiding this action as much as possible [...] you should never [...] burp and spit [...] All these actions are indecent and repulse all those around you. [...] It is completely uncivil[ized] to clean your teeth in front of others [...] (COURTIN, 1728, p. 206-217).

In the same treaty there are other excerpts on the broader use of the body while in public: “[...] you should never make hand gestures while speaking; this shows those who have nothing to say [...]” (COURTIN, 1728, p. 118). We see here clear traces of what Erasmus wrote in 1530, when arguing in favor of restraining the body and the gestures: “[...] when seated the child needs to keep the knees close, as well as the feet, which should not be apart, as this is not appropriate [...] when seated, the child must not wave the arms, as do the crazy, nor impatiently move the hands [...]” (ROTTERDAM, 1978, p. 37- 80).

These recommendations continue for a long period and are found in other textual genres which also pay a great attention to the body: the treaties on painting and others targeting the education of youth, with many marks from the orientations of religious texts when referring to gestures and how they translate the soul, feelings, and emotions. On their pages, there are precise indications of gestures, behaviors, clothes, colors, and body movements considered acceptable or not.

As pointed out by Schmitt (1990, p. 46), “[...] gestures are equally necessary to communication. If a motionless painting can touch us, the strongest reason are the gestures, because they [...] express feelings and makes us understand the ideas: they allow the mute to communicate [...]” or, as written by Le Goff (1990, p. 81), gestures are “[...] the identification code of status, of condition, of Christian’s value, gestures can also identify the heretic, thus it is through gestures that one can recognize the laic, the pious, the saint. [...]”. When analyzing Renaissance painting, art historian Michael Baxandal (1991) affirms that originally gestures religious will increasingly be used to model profane objects.

We present here some excerpts of the treaty on painting written by Alberti (1992, p. 114-119)⁹, in the 15th century, a text full of recommendations of this type, in which the physical representation of mental and spiritual aspects appear to be a central concern. Thus, he tells painters that “[...] the movements of the soul are known by the movements of the body [...] That is why it is important that painters know the movements of the body; [...] Painting should have soft and gracious movements, suitable to what takes place in it”. In another Renaissance text, *A Treatise on Painting* by Leonardo da Vinci (1827)¹⁰, there are precise indications on the attitudes, and he explains that:

9 1st ed. [1435-1436].

10 It is a set of texts written throughout his life, gathered, and published for the first time in 1651, many years after his death.

[...] In men are portrayed attitudes respecting their age or rank, which vary as required to sex.

[...] Women and Young women should never be painted with their legs in array or overly open; this shows audacity or lack of modesty, when closed they show shame (DA VINCI, 1827, p. 98-115).

We can read here a dialogue on the conventions and agreements dear to the public life which condemns all excess and glorifies delicate and modest gestures, especially on young women. A century before Leonardo, Alberti (1992, p. 118) pointed out that, in painting, “[...] the movements and poses of young women [should] be light, full of simplicity, a preference for the sweetness of the soul than for gallantry [...]”.

A similar recommendation is found on the pages of *Decor Puellarum*, a manual targeted to young women, written in Venice in 1471. We can read clear indications on how to use the hands in the following excerpt:

[...] be the touch, that is, the beautiful habit of the hands that never touch any part of the body, neither your own or that of others, unless by extreme need, with all honest one can have; and then, lingering and always going with the right hand over the left in the waist level [...]in front of you [...] with the grace which suits all virtuous women. [...] (DECOR PUELLARUN, 1471, p. 52-53).

This is a gesture inscribed in countless paintings between the 14th and 16th centuries¹¹, as it expressed what was suitable for the public life and, mainly, to women: modesty and body restraint.

Historian Peter Burke (2000), when dealing with “the language of gestures in the beginning of modernity”, resumes texts written between the 14th and the 15th centuries, to refer to a long tradition that recommended women to always show shyness and modesty, taking short steps, smiling without showing the teeth and, in general, portraying restraint “[...] when walking and moving the body;

11 Among others, the paintings *Mona Lisa*, of Leonardo da Vinci (1503), and *Three princes of Saxony* by Lucas Cranach (c.1535), in which the characters smile without showing their teeth and have their hands close to the waist, one on top of the other, model gestures suitable for women, as indicated by the painting treaties and manuals, as cited in the article.

because a linger of the eyes, a rushed walk, and an excessive movement of the hands cannot be done without losing dignity [...]” (BURKE, 2000, p. 103-104).

The rhythm of the steps, the intonation of the voice, the lingering of eyes, the ways of looking, the use of the hands. An education of the body starts to gradually be catalogued and, in a way, disseminated; in it we find contention, moderation, modesty, discipline, but also self-control, courtesy, and amiability. It is an acute attention to gestures and attitudes, the most private and the most public ones, be it regarding one’s own body or someone else’s. As highlighted by Philippe Ariès (1991), between the 16th and 18th centuries these new attitudes were broadened, and singularly affirmed themselves in the 18th century. To Vigarello (2014, p. 27-33), in the 18th century¹²

[...] The body is, above all, if not exclusively, the relation with the world. It is the place in which things are proved, communicate with each other, measured, evaluated.

[...] with the Enlightenment, for the first time the individual proves its existence circumscribed to the space of the body [...]”.

Between gestures and movements, the specialization of body education

It would be possible to infer that, in the extensive and complex scope of ideas and ideals created in the 18th century, there was the broadening of brand-new educational processes towards the body; there started an understanding that immobility implied physical fragility, lack of vigor and health. Procedures, techniques, pedagogies made body movement into a privileged object¹³; but orthopaedics still prevailed, with its concepts and actions towards a motionless body, through external frames, as corsets and several devices that corrected allegedly deviations of nature inscribed in the body. The lack of mobility continued (SOARES, 2016; VIGARELLO, 1978, 2000).

12 Corbin (2001) notes that since the 18th century the body becomes the center to perceive emotions.

13 We can refer here to the work of Jean-Jacques Rousseau; he joined the physicians in confronting the use of corsets and the artificiality of the clothes and behaviors of the court at the period, urging for an education that considered outdoor games and exercises; see Rocha (2009); Rousseau (1976), 1st ed. [1755]; Rousseau (1992), 1st ed. [1755]; Vigarello (1978); Vigarello (1993).

However, even in the scope of orthopaedy, central in the period, there were traces of change and a criticism towards immobility and a new understanding that movement could correct what “nature” had inscribed in the body. Andry de Boisregard, an orthopedist, in a work from 1741, praised body action over its passivity. He starts to understand muscle power in its correction and opens doors to the ideas that movement could correct deviations. These ideas contribute to level physical exercise with correction devices and, simultaneously, point to two categories of movement: those that correct and those that educate (SOARES, 2016; VIGARELLO, 2000).

A pedagogical literature more targeted on the body emerges on the second half of the 18th century (VIGARELLO, 1978), wishing to confront the devastating physical degeneration of the European population in the period. As the idea that immobility fragilizes the body was already accepted, it was up to procedures and prescriptions to regenerate, restore, and, above all, educate the bodies of that population. If body exercises were at the same levels of “devices” that corrected the natural deviations of the body, they could now, in the shape of Gymnastics and besides new practices of hygiene, face physical degeneracy. They were part of a base of ideas of prevention, regeneration, and healing.

It would be worth to also highlight the importance of hygiene and sanitation, as well as their impacts in the sharp decrease of deaths observed in European countries in the period, due to the control of diseases and epidemics (BOURDELAIS, 2001; FOUCAULT, 2008; GONDRA, 2004; ROCHA, 2003).

Besides the treaties on good manners and courtesy, also emerged those focused on hygiene; the slow way of hygiene practices in the long-term, their modifications, and incorporation of moral and sanitary aspects in their procedures clearly express educational processes on the body. Since the second half of the 18th century, hygiene started to be part of the manuals on good manners, courtesy, and ceremony; unprecedented representations of the body and its education are produced (DUERR, 1998; ELIAS, 1994; THOMAS, 2003; VIGARELLO, 1978, 1985, 2002).

Between the statement that cleanliness contributes to body vigor and health, and not only as an expression of politeness and courtesy, typical of the time, the protocols and conventions of hygiene have not ceased to widen since the 18th century, also emphasizing physical exercises, gymnastics, outdoor games, and sports. Gymnastics are timidly mentioned at that time; horseback rides, outdoor walks, various games, river and sea baths, and dances are evoked to portray the movement of the body. As highlighted by Vigarello (2000, p. 74), “[...] the Enlightenment intends to give to *physical exercises* the same revolutionary extent given to thought, that is: making it educational and useful to all”.

Here there is a key rupture, the creation of more sophisticated and specialized educational processes regarding the body, as learning would not be those related to gestures of courtesy and civility. At that moment, the goal was to develop a global efficiency of the body within its new representation, that is, a vigorous, firm, active body. Thus, “[...] in the second half of the 18th century [...] a “physical education”, a “corporal education”, a “medicinal education” are created. Unprecedented expressions and projects renovating the old hygienic tradition [...]” (VIGARELLO, 2000, p. 74). There is the inauguration of a place of *physical exercises* in the education of individuals, now not as just for the correction or the control of the body (SOARES, 2016; VIGARELLO, 2000). Gestures, attitudes, and movements in the work and leisure works are described in detail and appear in different manuals¹⁴.

[...] A new mentality is created, a new way of dealing with the body in movement is affirmed, creating then a fertile ground for what was dear to the Enlightenment [...] the dissemination of knowledge and practices, the universalization of instruments, the scientific affirmation of knowledge of and on the body in movement (SOARES, 2016, p. 59).

Gymnastics, its methods and techniques, devices and spectacles, become a specific type of body education, as written by SOARES (1998), leading to the emergence of new meanings in the broader scope of the education of individuals and groups, beyond orthopaedy, still in vogue in a period of great transformations, scientific, cultural, and political displacements which will interfere in the classic perspective of body exercise, in which postures witnessed the control of passions (VIGARELLO, 1978).

This moment of profound ruptures allowed and ensured a more precise, specialized, body education. From the methods and schools of gymnastics (MORENO; BAIA, 2019; QUITZAU, 2016; SOARES, 1998) widely disseminated in Europe in the end of the 18th century, there is an open array of initiatives to establish specific and specialized educational body processes. This was the case of modern sports in the turn of the 18th to the 19th century. Between the obligation and the pleasure, sport has modernized educational processes and competed with gymnastics in the education of the body in the city. More

¹⁴ As is the case of the manual of games published by Guts Muths (1959), in 1796, focused on games with recovery exercises for the body and the spirit, shown in the studies of Quitzau (2016).

than training the body and learning from the more rigid discipline typical of gymnastics, modern sport brought the ambivalence and the almost unconscious body practice through playing, as pointed out by Andre Rauch (1983).

Since the second half of the 18th century, we could perceive the emergence of a new sensibility that encompasses unforeseen ways of body education, breaking away from old representations in which immobility was the norm. New ways of body education emerge, expand, and become increasingly more sophisticated. The movement not only corrects, but educates, regenerates, preserves forces, and increases the vigor of the bodies; the body in movement is the focus of an education seen as a broad process of inserting individuals and groups in different areas of public life (RAUCH, 1983; SOARES, 2014, 2016; VIGARELLO, 1978, 2000).

Remarks... Almost final

In the long-term, this slow time, almost immobile, in the words of Braudel (1969), permeated by ruptures and continuities, different registries that are transformed and making emerge body-oriented educational processes. In this article, we have briefly examined some of these grand processes from a set of works and authors, which aimed to create common gestures, rules to assimilate common behaviors, common uses of the body, inducing individuals to take care of themselves, their appearances, and protected their own forces, then contributing to life in society. Our time frame ends in the 18th century, a moment of great ruptures in which new corporeal educational processes take their places and gestures and movements are required in the leisure world, as well as body healing and regeneration and, more broadly, its education, seen as a type of prevention. On the threads of time previously weaved it was possible to perceive traces of a broad body-oriented educational process, be it on the scope of controlling its physiology, gradually perceived and singularly lived in different societies and communities (DUERR, 1998; ELIAS, 1994), be it on the countless representations that groups, individuals, and societies build about themselves. These processes, sometimes discrete, others incisive and eloquent, reach the bodies and corroborate the creation of networks of sociability, production of information, knowledge, and practices, ensuring and ordering the relations among generations (SOARES, 2014). Our purpose here was to evidence and examine some processes set into motion in different spheres of individual and collective lives in the long-term, even if with some imprecisions.

The brief notes presented here on the notion of *body education* show that there are elusive and dispersed objects, problems scattered with time. Here, the sources analyzed certainly answer questions made at the time they were posed and would not be the same today. However, finding an abundance of references to the body and gestures in this works is, undoubtedly, a good starting point to draft some notes on the historicity of this notion.

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