

ABSTRACT

The approval of the *Lei de Bases do Sistema Educativo* (Law 46/86, of the 14th of October) by means of a wide parliamentary consensus in the Assembly of Republic, constituted the starting point for an education reform in Portugal that was demanded for a long time and whose need was reinforced by the new current challenges of the adhesion of Portugal to the European Community.

With the publication of the Law nr 287/89, of the 29th August, the so called *curricular reform* was on its way – the most important slope of the educational reform – settling down new curricular plans for basic education. From the school year of 1990/91 onwards, the generalization of the new programs with the consequent adaptation of school textbooks to the new educational reality takes place. With the publication of Law nr 6/2001, of the 18th January, what is called the *curricular reorganization* of the basic education is carried out. Its generalization began at schools in the school year of 2001/2002 and its reference picture still remains active. Therefore, it is essentially on the temporary horizon situated among the *curricular reform* (1989) and the *curricular reorganization* (2001) that we will center our study.

Even though the themes of History's specific domain appear approached in the first cycle of basic education, integrated in the subject "Local and Environmental Study", History only begins to appear as an autonomous subject after the second cycle, maintaining nevertheless an association to Geography.

History is, within the group of the subjects of basic education, one of those which will possess larger formative possibilities in the perspective of a citizenship education. Based on the programs and school textbooks of these two subjects of basic education – History and Geography of Portugal (second cycle) and History (third cycle) – we will try to follow an investigative course which can make us realize, on the one hand, the extent and the way how the perspective of a citizenship education has been consubstantiated in the guiding documents of the curricular reform and new programs of the two subjects, and on the other hand, how the intentions contained in the new programs have a correspondence in the discursive texture of school textbooks and in the recommendations for pedagogic work.