

# THE GRANDPA'S MATH BOOKS

David Barba

Departament de Didàctica de la Matemàtica i les C.E.  
Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. Spain

The years from 1936 to 1939 were a time of Civil War in Spain. The conflict brought to an end the progressist ideas of the Second Republic, and cut off any impulse for innovation in the different regions of Spain.

Concerning mathematics and education, proposals coming from foreign authors such as Decroly and Montessori had profoundly influenced teacher training during the years before the war. English textbooks were translated into Spanish to *modernize* the learning of mathematics, and interesting proposals written by Spanish authors became broadly diffused in the form of textbooks. It was a moment of change and renovation for the whole of

Europe, but abruptly stopped in Spain because of the war.

New perspectives opened up the sixties when *old* teachers - those plenty of enthusiasm before of the war- worked, hand with hand, with recently graduated teachers. It was again a moment of change and eagerness for recuperating their history, which we also wanted to recuperate by consulting their textbooks and their class notes; by chatting with those *young teachers*, the grandpas and grandmas of today. The result of this experience permits us to value



many things we do today in our school with a different perspective: mental calculations; manipulation of different materials and use of drawing tools; sequence for presenting contents, etc. And the most beautiful thing that this experience permits us is to gather so many grandpa's hopes about teaching mathematics, so many histories of life!

The presentation shows some examples extracted from the books we consulted and from the interviews we made.