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Women's history: teacher training, struggles and achievements

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Abstract

The objective of this article is to understand the relationship between History, the history of women and the dissertations and theses produced by the Nucleus of History and Memory of Education, linked to the Federal University of Ceará. The study analyzes the compatibility of academic productions with the Annales School and its proposals linked to mental processes, representations and everyday life, and with the English School of Marxism and its enthusiasm for History from Below. The research highlights the study of women and reveals historical investigations into women's social, cultural and educational experiences and practices. The research approach is qualitative, and exploratory-bibliographic. Among the works, 14 studies that addressed the topic were found. These data confirm the theoretical-methodological relationship of research with the Schools and the importance of studying women.

Keywords

autonomy; prejudice; visibility; teacher training.

História das mulheres: formação docente, lutas e conquistas

Resumo

O objetivo deste artigo é compreender a relação entre a História, a história das mulheres e as dissertações e teses produzidas pelo Núcleo de História e Memória da Educação, vinculado à Universidade Federal do Ceará. O estudo analisa a compatibilidade das produções acadêmicas com a Escola dos Annales e suas propostas vinculadas aos processos mentais, às representações e à vida cotidiana; e com a Escola Inglesa do Marxismo e seu entusiasmo pela História Vista de Baixo. A pesquisa destaca o estudo sobre as mulheres e revela as investigações históricas sobre as experiências e as práticas social, cultural e educacional das mulheres. A abordagem da pesquisa é de natureza qualitativa, do tipo exploratório-bibliográfica. Entre os trabalhos, foram encontradas 14 pesquisas que abordam o tema. Tal levantamento confirma a relação teórico-metodológica das pesquisas com as Escolas e a importância do estudo sobre as mulheres.

Palavras-chave

autonomia; preconceito; visibilidade; formação de professores.

La historia de las mujeres: formación de profesores, luchas y logros

Resumen

El objetivo de este artículo es comprender la relación entre la Historia, la historia de las mujeres y las disertaciones y tesis producidas por el Núcleo de Historia y Memoria de la Educación, vinculado a la Universidad Federal de Ceará. El estudio analiza la compatibilidad de las producciones académicas con la Escuela de los Annales y sus propuestas vinculadas a los procesos mentales, las representaciones y la cotidianidad; y con la Escuela Inglesa de Marxismo y su entusiasmo por la Historia desde Abajo. La encuesta destaca el estudio sobre las mujeres y revela las investigaciones históricas sobre las experiencias y prácticas sociales, culturales y educativas de las mujeres. El enfoque de la investigación es cualitativo, de tipo exploratorio-bibliográfico. Entre los trabajos, se encontraron 14 estudios que abordan el tema. Esta encuesta confirma la relación teórico-metodológica de la investigación con las Escuelas y la importancia de estudiar a las mujeres.

Palabras clave

autonomía; preconcepción; visibilidad; formación de profesores.

1 Introduction

Addressing the history of women is not an easy task, as it involves talking about prejudices, struggles and achievements. These are episodes in the social, political, economic, and educational fields, faced with the ruling and patriarchal class, which saw – and, in part, still sees – women as subordinate and incompetent for production and academicism; and faced with traditional historians, with a reductionist view, who didn't have any interest or saw female experiences as worthy of constituting a history or discipline.

In the field of economics, the relationship between History and everyday life shows, according to Del Priore (1997), the process of division of labor, implemented by capitalism, justify the division between men and women, qualifying the former as fit for production and public life and considering them as heads of family, and fixing women to the domestic sphere, as mothers.

In the social field, in the words of Le Goff (1990), society is efficient in the qualification of individuals regarding the technological field, but falls short when it comes to social integration, because there are marginalized groups, such as foreigners, young people, the elderly, disabled people, and women, who do not occupy a normal place within the community.

According to Burke (1992), there was prejudice, on the part of traditional historians, in relation to new fields, such as the history of women and of popular culture, seen as independent or contrary to the history of men and erudite culture. The actions of men, especially of large figures, were considered a norm, important for the history of humanity, in general, while the actions of women were underestimated or subordinated to individualized spaces.

In the political field, the demands and confrontations provoked movements in various social and educational sectors. The feminist movement of the 1960s in the United States contributed to the continuation of women's history and "[...] created a collective identity of women, female individuals with a shared interest in the end of subordination, invisibility and impotence, creating equality and gaining control over their bodies and their lives" (BURKE, 1992, p. 67, our translation). The movement led to the participation of students and teachers, who mobilized in favor of the creation of courses in universities for the study of women. This action extended to other parts of the world, including Brazil.

Finally, in the educational field, we are faced with a history of barriers to women's education and myriad difficulties throughout the formative process. Alvarenga (2019), when commenting on women's education in the 19th century, states that the discourse of the time aimed to construct the feminine under the sphere of domesticity and that the representations about women, their social practices and the ways of educating them were multiple and contradictory.

According to Oliveira, Araújo and Silva (2021, p. 3, our translation):

[...] the knowledge of teaching practice, forged in daily life, is so complex and important that it goes beyond the limits of initial training. Teacher training courses still have shortcomings regarding the implementation of a training that takes into account the repertoire of knowledge derived from practice and that is essential to the constitution of the teacher.

In this perspective, we see in this work the trajectory of training and professionalization of female teachers in various educational places and temporalities loaded with antagonism.

Historically, the trajectory of women is marked by numerous differences. However, in recent decades, the study of groups and individuals considered, until then, excluded has been the target of investigation, and women are included in this group, so

they reached the condition of object and subject of History. Thus, women's history is a practice established almost worldwide (BURKE, 1992; SOIHET, 1997).

The inclusion of women in the historical domains is due to the new historiographic tendencies that occurred in France and England in the first decades of the 20th century. In the French scenario, the Annales School sought a new writing for History, based on the analysis of all the experiences of all individuals of a given society; and, in the English scene, the English School of Marxism explored the idea of rescuing those excluded from the historical process and envisioned the participation of popular movements in the struggles for material and cultural achievements against the powerful classes, within a Marxist perspective.

The Annales School was founded in 1929, from the foundation of the *Annales Journal*, officially called "Annals of Economic and Social History", by Lucien Febvre and Marc Bloch, historians and professors at the University of Strasbourg. Both were concerned with the study of new approaches and new objects to History. Another concern was the approximation of History with other human and social subjects, such as Anthropology, Geography, Economics, Sociology, among others. The inclusion of interdisciplinarity expanded the historical field with stories of ordinary people, such as children, slaves, Black people, women, among others, designing new sources and new objects.

The new historiography proposed by the Annales has set a new course for History. This course, comprehensive and total, opened a range of possibilities to make History, much because of other subjects, their theories and methods. This process diversified historiographical actions, constituting the New History. In this perspective, the School intended to replace the traditional narrative of events with a problem History, to contemplate all human activities (BURKE, 1991).

The first generation of the Annales School, constituted by Febvre and Bloch, took place from 1929 to 1949. In this period, according to Canabarro (2008), they addressed certain categories and concepts that characterized the initial generation, such as historiography, interdisciplinarity, economic history, collective consciousness, mental and social representations and rural, problem, sensitivities and religion History.

Bloch, enlisted in the army, was shot in 1944, and Febvre continued to lead the Annales, with the collaboration of Charles Morazé, Robert Mandrou and Fernand

Braudel. In this context, Febvre and Braudel lead the second generation. However, following Febvre's death in 1956, Braudel takes over the direction of the School, maintaining the idea of Total History in all its social dimensions. With the retirement of Fernand Braudel, a new vision appears, focused on the events that surrounded the context of the individual. The third administration of the Annales emerged, under the direction of André Burguière and Jacques Revel, but the main names were Jacques Le Goff and Pierre Nora.

According to Burke (1991), this generation was characterized by great intellectual changes and fragmentation. Several members of the group followed Febvre's project, incorporating into History the concepts of childhood, scent, dream and body; others returned to political History and History of events; and some practiced quantitative History. Among the changes is the inclusion of the study on women and some ideas brought from the United States by members who lived there, such as psychohistory, popular History and symbolic Anthropology. There, the Annales abandon the divisible idea of generations and consolidate the New History, renewing narrative and event History and celebrating problem History, focused on all human activities.

Human actions were also the focus of the English School of Marxism, initially composed of a group of Marxist historians who evidenced culture at the foreground in discussions related to Politics and Social History. This group was linked to the *Past & Present* journal, whose purpose was inclined to the renewal of the theoretical-practical body of Historical Materialism. Three important historians formed the School of Marxist Thought within English historiography, namely: Christopher Hill, Eric Hobsbawm and Edward Palmer Thompson.

In Hill's early works, studies on politics and economics were more prominent than cultural studies, however, in *The world upside down: radical ideas during the English revolution of 1640*, Hill (1987) is more open to new perspectives, to the cultural revolution, hence the focus on workers of various kinds and the lower part of the population.

Hobsbawm, as a historian, has participated since the beginning of the renewal process of English historiography, provoking a revolution in the subject, since the 1930s, when the renewing effects take shape, influenced by Marxist thought. Much of his work is aimed at sociopolitical problems, especially by the subordinate classes, including those

offended, humiliated, hungry, oppressed and rebellious (HOBBSAWM, 1983, 2000, 2001).

Concerning Thompson, his teaching practice influenced History students inside and outside England. His interests were linked to political activism and popular education (THOMPSON 1987a, 1987b, 1987c), an extracurricular action, aimed at ordinary men and women; and his intellectual production, as that of the group, pointed to the establishment of ideas of Social History and History from Below, with the involvement of popular movements, as an active factor of the process.

The production of historical knowledge, from the perspective seen from below, derived from the investigation of all human activities, by women, children, young people and men considered common, a mass that is as much a part of the historical process as the large figures. These individuals' experience is considered unimportant for conventional History, but it is seen by the History Seen from Below as an object of study, because it seeks to understand all the activities and feelings of this contingent's past.

The historical concept called History from Below, according to Burke (1992), emerged in 1966 with the publication of the article "The History from Below", written by Edward Palmer Thompson. Thus, History, with a new field of research, begins to value the experience of ordinary people and all human activities, the theme for research at centers of History of Education, graduate programs in Education, promoting education as a resource of research and transmission that propagates the knowledge of the mass that went "from the attic to the basement".

The experiences and actions of these social subjects, lived and transmitted in different contexts and various environments, foster the History of Education, which, as a field, appears at the end of the 19th century, integrating the Human Sciences, such as Sociology, Psychology and Philosophy. Together, they dialogue to understand the human being and, as a field of research, they expand our universe as historical subjects and contribute to an integral development, through the path of language, scientific and historical culture. It is multidisciplinary, with multiple themes and research objects, such as the history of children, of teaching, of women's education, of young people, among others (MOROSINI, 2006).

Research on ordinary people, including women, can help in the identity of individuals, classes and lower groups, such as the researchers and researched of

dissertations and theses produced by the Nucleus of History and Memory of Education (Nhime).

2 Methodology

The influence of the Annales School and the English School – and their fields of study – permeates, nowadays, the Graduate Programs in History and other programs which have in their curricula the study of History. This is the case of Nhime, from the Graduate Program in Education (PPGE), at the Faculty of Education (Faced), of the Federal University of Ceará (UFC). Nhime follows an educational path that includes the most diverse thematic axes and begins to visit human spaces and activities linked to educational (digital) and cultural practices, which can be researched and transformed into an object of historical-educational study.

It was from our perception of the aforementioned themes and fields of study and the comparison with the works carried out by the Nucleus that the definition of the theme and the formulation of the research problem emerged. This arises from an investigative spirit, eager for answers to the questioned reality, seeking solutions or even understanding of the studied fact. The choice of the problem, as well as the theme, comes from the experience of the researcher in their work environment or their curiosities (LIRA, 2014).

The questions and objectives that involve the history and memory of education with the historic schools were asked based on a debate about the historiographical revolution caused by the Annales School, held in the Nhime room, locus of production of the dissertations and theses analyzed, the same locus where we studied and researched and also where were born the idea and the restlessness of whether the dissertations and theses about common people and women, produced by the Nucleus, could have been influenced or showed a certain relationship with a particular school.

In the structure and investigation of women's history, methodological resources are indispensable. Among them, there are some totally suited to the historical construction of people considered inferior, because there is, in general, no bibliography about them. In this case, the researchers, in order to construct the history of these

people, need to hear their narratives, need to interview them, need to listen to them, that is, they depend on the oral tradition.

The reasons presented constitute the justification of this research, which “[...] consists of a brief but complete exposition of the theoretical and practical reasons that make it important to carry out the research” (LAKATOS; MARCONI, 1991, p. 219, our translation). It is the subjects’ motives and their stories, presented to the academic and non-academic circles, that will cause them to be remembered and their stories to be read, reread and reproduced.

In this context, the theoretical framework is indispensable, because it offers greater scientific rigor to the study, through reviews made by the researcher in search of theories on the subject, accepted by the scientific community, pertinent to the discussion of the theme (LIRA, 2014). To that end, we analyzed a bibliography that contains the theories related to the historic schools and a literature composed of books and articles focused on technique and methods.

The typology of the research is exploratory-bibliographic, with analysis of secondary sources. This is a little explored study, which aims to clarify some concepts and the relationship between them. The research approach is qualitative in nature, since it is a descriptive-interpretative study, attributed to the data and information observed, collected, organized and analyzed (LIRA, 2014).

For the updated survey of research, the State-of-the-Art resource was used, which, according to Ferreira (2002), has bibliographic character, with the challenge of mapping and discussing a theme about a given academic production, among the various fields of knowledge; and the function of responding to aspects, dimensions and conditions when producing certain master’s dissertations and doctoral theses. They receive recognition for developing inventoried and descriptive methodology about academic production on certain topics.

In this direction, the idea was to map, first, all theses and dissertations carried out by Nhime between 2000 and 2018; then point out the theoretical categories adopted by the authors in each research, in order to find a dialogue with women’s History, whose process leads to the technique of analysis, based on Discourse Analysis, from the French perspective, also known as DA, which deals with the critical-social reality.

This procedure reached the dissertations and theses previously defended, a result of the research carried out on the UFC website. The selection was collected in UFC's institutional repository, whose purpose is to gather, store, organize, preserve and disseminate the scientific and intellectual production of the university community. The specific screening of this study was undertaken in the Faced community, in which 2,396 studies were found, among which 109 research defenses were discovered, with 58 dissertations and 51 theses. Among them, 36 masters and 16 doctorate studies about the history of ordinary people were identified (UFC, 2020).

That survey found 14 studies that address the conditions and stories of women, in which we confirmed the influence of the Annales School and the English School and their fields of study, such as mental processes, representations and everyday life, propositions of the first school; and the Social History and History from Below, proposed by the second, in the scientific productions at Nhime/PPGE/UFC.

3 Results and discussion

The result pointed out 14 studies involving the stories of ordinary women, lay women, students, educators, prostitutes, lacemakers, activists and writers. They are stories of women who present reality as is, without plastic remodeling or blinders.

The first example is the dissertation *Who taught you to make lace? The culture of the hills of Mariana-PI as an influence on education by bobbin lace*, in which Meneses (2009) narrates the trajectory of two lacemaking teachers, to understand, from the educational perspective, the production of bobbin lace; the transmission of that custom through orality; and how culture acts on the informal and non-formal teaching-learning of the trade in question.

In the next dissertation, called *Cefam: Specific Center for Training and Improvement of Teaching: homoeroticism, (in)discipline and panoptism – life stories of young normalists in full-time regime at the Institute of Education of Ceará (1992-1995)*, Campêlo (2009) focuses on the life stories of women involved with the teacher training project at the Institute of Education of Ceará, in which the author analyzes the practice and educational results of the pedagogical project and the emotions and feelings inherent

to the relationship between the students, which affects the style and sense of practice and disciplinary conduct during the course.

In another contribution, Araújo (2010) discusses, in *Trajectories of training and professionalization of lay teachers in the municipality of Itapiúna-CE*, the experiences of women in the field of teaching at the same time they were attending classes of primary and secondary school between the years 1960 and 1990, when the difficulties in the face of precarious working conditions due to the historical and geographical elements of the region were evidenced.

In the dissertation *Knowledge and practices of teachers of the 5th grade, raw material for the mathematical learning of children*, Silva (2011) verifies whether the knowledge and practices of teachers are transformed into child learning, according to the indicators of the Basic Education Development Index (Ideb). The research showed that the teachers' knowledge and practices, which are based on training that is permanent, qualified and focused on the child's learning, added to the appropriate conditions, are determinant for a positive result. This response is not only due to training and conditions, but also, according to Schuetz, Gomes and Cardoso (2021), to the actions of teachers, who are active, resignify and intervene in the daily routine of their practice, whose reflection on it leads to the construction of new possibilities of action.

In the biographical field, in *Biographical narratives of Dandara Aragão: informal educational practices, prostitution and the use of drugs in a brothel in the city center of Fortaleza*, Matos (2016) questions a sex worker and teacher of literacy and dance whether educational praxis can be identified in prostitution areas and whether this space can be considered as a constructor of knowledge. Still in the biographical point of view, Ricarte (2018) narrates, in his dissertation entitled *Narratives of professor Ruth Cavalcante: lessons of education, militancy and exile in the period of 1960 and 1990*, the trajectory of life of professor Ruth during the military regime in Brazil.

Another subject that involves the history of women is inserted in the dissertation *The 'silent' zinjidor of Black women from Floriano-PI*, in which Sousa (2016) discusses the contribution of informal education to the construction of a Black woman culture, henceforth the learning of the daily life of these women.

Another contribution comes from Cruz (2017), through the dissertation *Memories and narratives of the Normal School of the Sacred Heart in Ubajara-CE*, in which the

author narrates the formation of the first class of normalist women in the aforementioned entity in the mid-twentieth century. This event represented a significant change for less affluent female students, who could not leave the city for the continuation of their studies.

In the penultimate dissertation, *From the field to the textbook: professional trajectories of rural lay teachers from Lavras da Mangabeira (1972-1992)*, Campos (2018) says that women, as education professionals, with low salary, were forced to remain as farmers, artisans or saleswomen of bread and milk to survive and continue teacher training.

In the last dissertation, *The professional identity of teachers of basic education: meanings attributed to teaching*, Guimarães (2018) addresses the identity constitution of women, their life stories, meanings linked to teaching practice. This, according to the study, is the only option for women with limited spaces and resources, along with the need for other paid activities to provide for the care of the home and children.

The biographical method was used in two dissertations and continues in the first thesis, entitled *Women writers and educators: Francisca Clotilde in Ceará society – from 1862 to 1935*, in which Almeida (2012) reports the struggle of the biographed woman in search of her space in literature and education, in the midst of male intellectuality in provincial Ceará, where female will and desire were not observed.

In the following thesis, *The traditional Escola Normal Cearense arrives in the Fátima neighborhood: formation of the first primary school teachers (1958-1960)*, Araújo (2014) analyzes the history of the first teachers in order to understand the curriculum, the pedagogical aspects, the planning of classes and the preparation of teaching practice or teaching of normalists.

The last two theses enter the field of prostitution. The first discusses prostitution and Christian morality, in *The kingdom of glory and Catholic morality: memory about women's education and prostitution in the city of Crato-CE*, in which Florencio (2016) addresses the daily life of Saudade Street, a social place occupied by women and men who practice prostitution in a space marked by Christian morality, imposed by the Diocese of Crato, Ceará. The second thesis tells the story of 17 sex workers, who attend the downtown brothels in Fortaleza, in *Culture of beauty: prostitution, body and educational practices*. In it, Aranha (2018) analyzes the relationship between women and

educational practices based on knowledge and experiences, on the use of beauty in the construction of a beautiful and attractive body.

Women's history gained traction with the feminist militancy, spearheaded by academia, in the 1960s. Soihet (1997) reports that, where this movement took place, female claims provoked a strong demand for information by academics. They mobilized to establish university courses dedicated to the study of women. As a result of the movement, courses, colloquia and reflection groups were created in American, French and English universities. Studies have multiplied, making women's history a recognizable field at the institutional level. This recognition and research have extended to other parts of Europe and the world, including Brazil.

The relevance of researching about women, according to the words of Paula and Silveira (2014), is in the condition that women be part of a treaty of theoretical, sociological and cultural foundations on the struggle of their dignity and on the cultural aspect in which they are inserted as a person, being useful and capable of productive activity. Women have shown, throughout history, that there is a possibility of conquest in spaces dominated by men. Current women know this, because they have conquered financial independence and the competitive market, despite the daily journeys, family, work and personal longings, but there is much to be conquered and effected, because today's society is still stuck with the prejudices and paradigms of yesterday.

4 Final considerations

Analyzing research about the trajectories of women's struggles, achievements and teacher education enables us to see holistically an exclusionary culture, in which there is a conflict in social relations between genders, indicating divergences in the scientific status quo, since there was the idea of female inferiority, limiting women's social role to domestic activities. With the increasing transformations in society, a more dynamic participation of women as protagonists was demanded, adopting another intellectual stance. In this aspect, the reconstruction of the female role enabled a change in gender relations, so that it could free itself from the old stereotypes and build new ways of relating, behaving, producing knowledge and developing subjectivity.

The Annales School and the English School, among their characteristics, promoted the development of women's History, in the interest of portraying the History of everyday life, giving space and a different perspective view of the past, until then invisible in the eyes of historians. Academic discussions emphasize the cry for women's freedom, freedom of access to education, reading and writing.

Understanding the participation of women, in the historiography of the third generation of the Annales School, is considering a living, concrete and everyday History. On the other hand, we understand the difficulties of historians in doing the trajectory of women in the scientific-intellectual field, due to the scarcity of records. However, barriers were overcome so that new concepts emerged and enabled women to enter the field of History as a great object of study.

The realization of this achievement is recorded, in part, in the scientific works – theses and dissertations – produced by Nhime. Of the 14 studies, 12 were written by women. In this historiography, the women surveyed were also protagonists of their stories, either as normalists or teachers of primary school and lacemaking, whether as lay teachers, prostitutes or militants. Their trajectories and contributions are inscribed in the history and memory of education.

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