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MERCEDES TRENTINI: HER PROFESSIONAL JOURNEY AND INNOVATIVE CONTRIBUTION TO NURSING RESEARCH

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ABSTRACT

Objective: to historicize the professional journey of Mercedes Trentini and her contribution to Brazilian nursing according to her biography.

Method: a qualitative study with a socio-historical approach, whose data were collected through the Oral Biographical History and Documentary Research method.

Results: four categories were established from the analysis of the data: 1) Her insertion in the nursing world and in the Undergraduate Course; 2) Her journey in the Post-Graduate Nursing course; 3) The creation of the Research Center for Nursing and Health Care for People with Chronic Diseases; And 4) The paths taken to create the Convergent-Care Research.

Conclusion: professor Mercedes Trentini characterized herself as an original, innovative person, committed to the nursing profession and, as a result, played an important role contributing to the excellence of the Nursing Graduate Program of the *Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina* as researcher and founder of one of the first research groups in Brazil, and her exemplary contribution to the creation of the Convergent-Care Research Method. In Brazil, this research method has contributed to the strengthening of the implementation of the research results to care practice.

DESCRIPTORS: Biography. History of nursing. Education. Search. Nursing. Nursing models.

MERCEDES TRENTINI: A TRAJETÓRIA PROFISSIONAL E SUA CONTRIBUIÇÃO NA INOVAÇÃO DA PESQUISA NA ENFERMAGEM

RESUMO

Objetivo: historicizar a trajetória profissional de Mercedes Trentini e sua contribuição para a enfermagem brasileira, a partir de sua biografia.

Método: estudo qualitativo de abordagem sócio-histórica, cujos dados foram coletados através do método da História Oral Biográfica e da Pesquisa Documental.

Resultados: a partir da análise dos dados estabeleceram-se quatro categorias: 1) A inserção no mundo da enfermagem e no Curso de Graduação; 2) A trajetória na Pós-Graduação em Enfermagem; 3) A criação do Núcleo de Pesquisa em Enfermagem e Saúde no Cuidado a Pessoas com Doenças Crônicas; e 4) Os caminhos trilhados para a criação da Pesquisa Convergente-assistencial.

Conclusão: a professora Mercedes Trentini caracterizou-se como uma pessoa original, inovadora, comprometida com a profissão de enfermagem, e, em decorrência, desempenhou um importante papel para a excelência do Programa de Pós-Graduação em Enfermagem da Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina como pesquisadora, fundadora de um dos primeiros grupos de pesquisa no Brasil, e sua contribuição exemplar na criação do **Método de Pesquisa Convergente**-assistencial. Este método de pesquisa tem contribuído, no país, para o fortalecimento da implementação dos resultados de pesquisa à prática assistencial.

DESCRITORES: Biografia. História da enfermagem. Educação. Pesquisa. Enfermagem. Modelos de enfermagem.

MERCEDES TRENTINI: LA TRAJETORÍA PROFESIONAL Y SU CONTRIBUCIÓN EN LA INNOVACIÓN DE LA INVESTIGACIÓN EN LA ENFERMERÍA

RESUMEN

Objetivo: historizar la trayectoria profesional de Mercedes Trentini y su contribución a la enfermería brasileña, a partir de su biografía.

Método: estudio cualitativo de abordaje socio-histórico, cuyos datos fueron recolectados a través del método de la Historia Oral Biográfica y de la Investigación Documental.

Resultados: a partir del análisis de los datos se establecieron cuatro categorías: 1) la inserción en el mundo de la enfermería y en el Curso de Graduación; 2) La trayectoria en el Postgrado en Enfermería; 3) La creación del Núcleo de Investigación en Enfermería y Salud en el cuidado de las personas con enfermedades crónicas; Y 4) los caminos trillados para la creación de la Investigación Convergente-asistencial.

Conclusión: la Profesora Mercedes Trentini se caracterizó como una persona original, innovadora, comprometida con la profesión de enfermería, y, en consecuencia, desempeñó un importante papel para la excelencia del Programa de Post-Graduación en Enfermería de la Universidad Federal de Santa Catarina como Investigadora, fundadora de uno de los primeros grupos de investigación en Brasil, y su contribución ejemplar en la creación del Método de Investigación Convergente-asistencial. Este método de investigación ha contribuido, en el país, al fortalecimiento de la implementación de los resultados de investigación a la práctica asistencial.

DESCRIPTORES: Biografía. Historia de la enfermería. Educación. Búsqueda. Enfermería. Modelos de enfermería.

INTRODUCTION

On December 18, 1960, The *Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina* (UFSC) was created, sanctioned by the President of the Republic Juscelino Kubitschek de Oliveira under Law number 3.849, dated the 18/12/1960. It resulted in the union of the Faculties of Law, Medicine, Pharmacy, Dentistry, Philosophy, Economic Sciences, Social Services and The School of Engineering, which had already existed as independent courses in the city of Florianópolis-SC.[1]

New courses began to be created as a result of this union. The intention to create a Nursing Undergraduate Course came from the Board of the Brazilian Nursing Association of Santa Catarina, which in 1966 sent a request containing the reasons and justifications for the implementation of said course to the Rectory of UFSC.

The course was created only on January 24, 1969, under resolution n. 02/69/UFSC, and was the first Nursing Course in Santa Catarina, and was initially coordinated by Professor Eloita Neves Arruda, who later, together with the contracted teachers, expanded the administrative and scientific activities of the Nursing Department.[2-3]

In 1974, the professors of the Nursing Department were aware of the needs to further improve their faculty, and faced with the needs of the country they contacted the Pro-Rectory of Teaching and Research, to discuss the subject and, consequently, the Pro-Reitor then appointed a boar* in order to elaborate a project in relation to Specialization Courses in Nursing. After considering all the information obtained, the board suggested the creation of a Postgraduate Course at a Masters level.[4-5]

The Nursing Department accepted the idea, stimulated by the Rectory, through Ordinance n. 28, of 01/27/76, sanctioned by the Rector Roberto Mündell de Lacerda. The Masters Course in "Adult Health" began in March 1976 with ten students. The temporary coordination of the course was the responsibility of Professor Ingrid Elsen, who had already participated in the planning and organization of the course. The course was administrated together with the Nursing Department, and a secretary from the Pro-Rectory of Planning was selected to assist in the Post Graduate course.[4-6]

The Post graduate course complied with the Brazilian policy which encourages the development of teaching staff, with the creation of *lato* and *stricto sensu* Post-Graduation Courses throughout Brazil. In nursing, it began in 1972 at the *Escola de Enfermagem Anna Nery*, in the *Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro*, when the Master's Degree in Fundamental Nursing was founded.[4]

According to the latest report of the *Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior* (Capes) in 2013, there are now 96 Brazilian *stricto sensu* Post-Graduate Nursing Programs, of which 49 are Master's Degrees, 34 Doctoral and 19 Professional Master's degree.

The Doctorate Course in Nursing was created in 1992 at UFSC, and the first group started in March 1993. This Program enables nurses, recognized as

* Designated board by Administrative Rule no. 231/74, the Pro-Rector of Teaching and Research, Professor Samuel Fonseca: Professors of the Nursing Department Eloita Pereira Neves, Ingrid Elsen, Nelcy Terezinha Coutinho Mendes and Rosita Saupe.

health professionals at an advanced level, to produce health knowledge and to assume a leading role in the educational, care and political field of the area.[3]

Thus, professor Mercedes Trentini stands out as one of the outstanding members of the Post-Graduation Program in Nursing (PEN/UFSC), playing a fundamental role as a result of her training, her scientific production and mainly for introducing new and original knowledge to the Postgraduate Program. Her research investigations were always related to chronic diseases. She was the creator of the Nursing and Health Research Center for the Care of People with Chronic Diseases (NUCRON) in 1986 and later together with Dr. Lygia Paim, was one of the precursors of the Convergent Care Research.

We decided to perform this biographical study by presenting the historical and scientific journey of Professor Mercedes Trentini due to her important participation in the development of nursing in Santa Catarina and Brazil.

The biographies or journeys of nurses have been widely used in nursing in order to emphasize the development of a specific professional area, to guide the creation of nursing schools and professional associations, and to develop nursing applied theories and investigate social and political advances of the nursing profession.[8]

O Laboratório de Estudos de História do Conhecimento da Enfermagem e Saúde (GEHCES), linked to PEN/UFSC, has been conducting the historiography of nursing in Santa Catarina and Brazil since its creation in 1995. Over the years, it has contributed to the production of knowledge regarding the history of institutions, professional identity in nursing, health care especially linked to chronic-degenerative diseases, and has also been conducting biographical studies of important leaders who have excelled in Nursing from Santa Catarina and Brazil.[2,9-10]

This study aims to historicize the contribution of Professor Mercedes Trentini to Brazilian nursing based on her biography.

METHOD

This is a qualitative biographical research with a socio-historical approach, whose data were obtained from an interview conducted with Professor Mercedes Trentini herself. The Biographical Oral History Method was used and consultations were carried out with other documentary sources such as: scientific articles, curriculum resumes of the biographical figure and chapters of books related to the theme. The interview was held in November 2011 at her residence, in the city of Florianópolis and lasted approximately two hours. The interviewee was guided on the research, on her right to participate or not, and she was also presented with the Informed Consent Form (TCLE) and the Letter of Assignment. The biography was validated and its use was authorized after transcription of the interview and with subsequent information adjustments.

The data were analyzed through the Content Analysis Method,[11] and the following categories were established: Her insertion into the world of Nursing and in the Undergraduate Course; Her journey in the Post-Graduate Nursing Course; The creation of the Research Nucleus in Nursing and Health Care for People with Chronic Diseases; And the paths taken for the creation of the Convergent-Care Research. This research was guided by the ethical principles of Resolution 466/12 of the National Health Council, and approved by the Research Ethics Committee of UFSC, with Opinion n. 374/008.

RESULTS

Her insertion in the world of nursing and in the Undergraduate Course

Mercedes Trentini (Figure 1), daughter of Francisco Trentini and Elzira Trentini, was born on May 14, 1931, in Rio dos Cedros, Santa Catarina. She lived in her hometown with her parents and ten siblings until the age of ten. She was the youngest daughter in in her family made up of five men and five women.

Figure 1 – Professor Dr. Mercedes Trentini – Florianópolis-SC, 2016

As a teenager she began her period of postulancy in the 1940s at the College of Sisters of Divine Providence, and continued her religious studies in that congregation, becoming a novice. She made the vows for her subsequent religious consecration. From the 1950's Religious orders such as the Congregation for Divine Providence began to have concerns about the situation of hospitals.

At that time, there were no formaly educated nurses. Mercedes, who had experience, began to work at the *Colégio Coração de Jesus* and later at the *Imperial Hospital de Caridade* (IHC), both located in the city of Florianópolis. She reports that some sisters sought professional training in the Nursing Course, and these same sisters guided others in caring for the sick. In this context, Sister Tonsila is highlighted as a very special friend who worked at the institution.

Throughout the years, Mercedes realized that it would be essential to base and improve her nursing care with support from the theoretical-scientific knowledge of the profession. In order to provide her services in Joinville-SC, she sent a request to the Mayor of the city and was hired to work at the in the *Hospital Municipal São José de Joinville* in the Surgical Center Department. Her desire to become a registered nurse resulted in the city of Joinville awarding her with a scholarship in 1970 so that she could start a Nursing Course in Rio de Janeiro. In 1971, after reflecting on her religious life, she left the congregation with the agreement from the Superior Sister of the Congregation. Mercedes' motivation to attend a nursing course emerged from her experience which she acquired in the several years of work in hospital institutions in the State of Santa Catarina. Her academic education took place in the *Escola de Enfermagem Alfredo Pinto,* which is integrated with the *Universidade Federal do Estado do Rio de Janeiro* (UNIRIO). In this period, she lived in a boarding house that was under the care of two elderly sisters. Although it was excellently located near the Nursing School, and was also inexpensive, the housing had a rather precarious infrastructure and provided accommodation for approximately 60 women.

Her undergraduate class was composed of 60 students, male and female, and was characterized by being a rebellious and outspoken group, as during their course, they constantly criticized the status quo of teaching, in order to contribute to the transformation and improvement of the academic reality of the time. This period was a poignant moment in her life, as she made valuable friendships, highlighting her colleagues Raimunda and Antônio, with whom she used to study with at weekends.

The course was full time and consisted of theoretical subjects and practical classes. Even though she had a good relationship with her fellow students and teachers, Mercedes always considered herself to be a very critical person and as far as her education was concerned, she really believed that university education had much to improve on, as she observed many weaknesses in the didactic-pedagogical training of the teachers of the course. However, some teachers stood out from the others, such as the teacher from the mother-and-child discipline, who was very respected by the medical community because of the effective care provided to the patients.

During the period of the academic course, Mercedes did not participate in academic movements or student group due to the military dictatorship being in effect, which was marked by the repression of freedom of expression, especially in the academic community of higher education institutions. During the period of academic training, she devoted herself exclusively to studies, because in addition to having enrolled in the full-time course, she needed to maintain good grades in order to keep the scholarship grant.

After graduating in Nursing in 1973, she returned to Joinville, where she was required to stay for at least two years, due to the City financing her studies. She resumed her activities as a supervisor of the Nursing Service in the *Hospital Municipal São José.* At that time, there was already a nurse at the institution, who was transferred to the Nursing Assistant Course Coordinator. The faculty of the course consisted of two other nurses, among them, nurse Cleusa Rios Martins who in 1986 joined the Nursing Department of UFSC, and subsequently retired at this institution.

After two years of working at the *Hospital Municipal São José,* the institution's labor resources remained very fragile, both in medical care and in nursing care. Nursing care, for the most part, was still performed by laymen or people from the community or nursing assistants trained within the hospital itself. This situation made Mercedes leave the city of Joinville in search of new professional challenges, as expressed in one of her lines*: I always wanted more, I was always a person who lived in the*

future, I was never content with little.

Thus, in 1975, she saw the capital of Santa Catarina, Florianópolis, as an opportunity to develop her potential as an assistant nurse. She started working at the *Hospital Governador Celso Ramos* (HGCR) in Florianópolis, where she stayed for approximately one year. The following year, in 1976, she did a public civil servant entry examination and was approved to act as a lecturer in the Undergraduate Nursing Course at UFSC. At the time, Professor Rosita Saupe was head of the Nursing Department. Among the teachers who entered during period, she recalls some colleagues such as Alacoque Lorenzini Erdmann from the Administration area and Edilza Maria Ribeiro from the pediatrics area.

The ties with HGCR continued through her work as a supervised nursing instructor at the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and she also taught some theoretical subjects. However, it was during her work as student supervisor in the ICU in HGCR that she developed a very consistent nursing care model with her students, and was recognized by the medical staff of the unit, who constantly asked for her care and guidance. Professor Mercedes emphasizes that the professionalism was fundamental for the recognition in the quality of care of UFSC undergraduates, reporting: [...] *I always had good relationships with doctors, I respected them, but they also respected me* [...] *and I also believe that the way we carry ourselves ensures that we are respected by others.*

Her journey in the Post-Graduate Nursing Course

Professor Mercedes reported that Master Course started in PEN/UFSC in 1976, under the coordination of Professor Ingrid Elsen. Other nursing professors were also part of the *stricto sensu* postgraduate course, such as Eloíta Pereira Neves and Maria Albertina Bráglia Pacheco, who studied at the *Escola de Enfermagem Anna Nery*, in the *Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro* (UFRJ). It is important to emphasize that when she returned to Florianópolis, Maria Albertina assumed the position of coordinator of PEN / UFSC in 1977.

In that same year, Mercedes enrolled into Masters course as a regular student in the second semester group of the program. During this period, she attended classes with one of the most outstanding figures of national nursing: Professor Wanda de Aguiar Horta. Professor Mercedes commented in one of her statements about the importance of the arrival of this professor: *we did not have great teachers, not even from the nursing department. But, Wanda de Aguiar Horta, she was a great teacher. She came from São Paulo with a suitcase full of bibliographies, because we didn't have any here and there was no internet at the time*. Professor Lúcia Hisako Takase Gonçalves came from the city of São Paulo at almost the same time to reinforce the teaching staff of PEN/UFSC.

Professor Mercedes reports that, in her Master's thesis, she carried out a study with patients with kidney failure, who were dependent on hemodialysis. Her adviser was Professor Lúcia Hisako Takase Gonçalves, and counted on the precious support of Professor Maria de Lourdes de Souza, who at that time was doing her PhD at the *Universidade de São Paulo* (USP). Professor Mercedes concluded her Masters and graduated in the first semester of 1980.

During this same period the Capes for the PEN/UFSC were encouraging teachers to complete their PhD abroad. One of the candidates successful in the selection process for the doctorate abroad was Professor Alacoque Lorenzini. The selection required the command of the English language and an interview with the Capes advisers.

Professor Mercedes was not sure if she would be approved in the selection process for the doctorate, because she reports that she told the Capes advisors that she had no fluency in English and was not sure if she wanted to leave the country to study. However, 15 days after her interview, she received a call from Brasilia, informing her of her approval for a specialization course in the USA, funded by Capes, with a paid scholarship for 12 months. Mercedes was surprised and happy at the news. She then asked the Capes officials why she was approved and she was told that they had been told that Professor Mercedes Trentini was a person with great potential and they were sure that they could invest in her training.

In the period in which she began a new stage in his professional career, she reports: *I, as always, was very brave. Ingrid was already doing PhD there, so I wrote her a letter and went to America without speaking English. I went to an English school first, then I attended classes at the university*. In 1981, she moved to San Francisco, California, where she spent a year and six months pursuing a specialization at the University of California, where she developed the *Nursing*

care of chronic patients and was supervised by Dr. Elizabeth C. Carroll.

As soon as she returned to Brazil in 1982, she made a telephone call to Capes officials to ensure her new scholarship so that she could complete the Doctorate course abroad. Professor Mercedes returned the same year to the United States, this time at the University of Alabama, in Birmingham, joining the PhD course, and standing out as the only foreigner in her class.

In addition to furthering her studies in theories and sciences in the nursing area, she studied and learned the aspects related to quantitative scientific research with the use of advanced statistics. Professor Mercedes comments that there was no internet access at the time, however, there were libraries with excellent facilities, which covered a vast scientific literature: *the universities there have a syllabus hat you are required to study. This is a fantastic thing. Imagine now! How many years ago? More than thirty years*.

During her PhD, she said that she learned to do research using the qualitative and quantitative method, and discusses the rich experience she has had with the technological advances that have allowed her to improve the techniques of data collection and interpretation*: we also started to use the computer. At that time, we began to use microcomputers. We did all the statistical analyzes on the computer. It was a computer center. We used computer techniques to get all the data, and that's how we learned how to interpret computer analysis. We learned to interpret.* She furthered her studies in advanced statistics, and participated in approximately six courses in this area, which contributed significantly to the development of even more qualitative and quantitative studies in the nursing area. In 1985, under the guidance of Dr. Suzana Gennaro, she defended her doctoral thesis titled *Nurse's decisions in dialysis patient care.*

After completing her doctorate and with extensive experience in qualitative and quantitative research, Dr. Mercedes returned to Brazil in 1986 to continue working in the Nursing Department and PEN/UFSC. There were some difficulties to readapt to, including the cultural and socioeconomic scenario of the time, but gradually she was able to go through this transitory phase in her life and once again returned to the daily life of the university.

During the 1980s, quantitative research was already widespread in nursing. However, advances in the interpretation of quantitative analyzes, such as complex statistical data, were practically nonexistent. The qualitative research began in a tenuous way, but it reached a level of scientific recognition that is significant in nursing, which remains until the present day. However, Dr. Mercedes demonstrates her concern when she reflects on the weaknesses of scientific rigor that currently exist in this research modality: [...] *qualitative research is also becoming superficial here in Brazil, not all, because we have good researchers. 'Qualitative research is just putting a few sentences together about that people said.' But research is not like that, research is a serious thing. So my biggest disappointment and discontent with the research is that'.*

The creation of the Research Center in Nursing and Health Care for People with Chronic Diseases

Dr. Mercedes' interest in the study of chronic diseases arose when she was still working at the *Hospital Governador Celso Ramos* due to the number of patients with chronic renal failure. This theme permeated her entire academic career, from the completion of her master's thesis at PEN/UFSC, to her doctoral thesis developed in the USA. When she returned to Brazil to teach, she continued working with chronic diseases in the disciplines she taught at PEN/UFSC.

It can be considered that in Santa Catarina, Dr. Mercedes Trentini was one of the pioneers in studies related to chronic diseases. As soon as she returned to Brazil in 1986, she created a project in partnership with Professors Denise Guerreiro Vieira da Silva and Marta Verdi, whose objective was to trace the profile of chronic diseases in hospitals in Florianópolis. Through these studies, it was possible to identify the proportion of people with chronic diseases, as well as to know which were the most frequent type of chronic diseases in hospitalized patients, and how they coexisted with this situation in their daily life.

From the evidence of such alarming data on chronic diseases, the teachers realized the need to build a research group to develop studies in the area. Thus, in 1987, NUCRON was created by professors Mercedes Trentini and Denise Guerreiro Vieira da Silva. The two teachers began to guide various scientific works with adherence to topics of interest of the group. At first, the work was largely focused on quantitative research, and with the gradual rise of qualitative research in the nursing area, the work

began to be guided by the new methodological approach. Among the works developed in the NUCRON, Dr. Mercedes considers that all have equal importance, however studies with ostomized people are highlighted, which gave rise to the Ostomized Support Group (GAO). As a result of the creation of this group, an effective partnership with the NUCRON arose, and numerous researches were carried out in this area, with emphasis on the active participation of Professor Mercedes.

Dr. Mercedes retired in 1991 and then received several invitations to work at universities across the country. In 1992, she became a lecturer at the UNIRIO, in the city of Rio de Janeiro, as a visiting professor. Shortly thereafter, she was hired by the *Rede de Pós-Graduação em Enfermagem da Região Sul* (REPENSUL) to teach in Curitiba, at the *Universidade Federal do Paraná* (UFPR), where she remained for four years. She also worked at the *Universidades do Contestado* (UnC), *Campus de Concórdia*-SC, from 1998 to 2000, and at the *Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Estado do Paraná* (PUC-PR) in the city of Curitiba from 2001 to 2005. She then returned to Concórdia, with the purpose of teaching at UnC once more, where she worked as a teacher in 2008.

Dr. Mercedes also worked in Porto Alegre, PUC, Rio Grande do Sul. Her vast experience in conducting studies with researchers with different backgrounds has made Mercedes commit to the praxis of interdisciplinarity in the scientific world: *We have to act, for the good of science, for the good of health.* She also reports that most of her mentors were not nurses, commenting that there were professionals from the Arts Courses, Physical Education, Physiotherapy, Biology and Psychology.

The paths taken for the creation of the Convergent-Care Research

In the field of scientific research, Dr. Mercedes considers that one of her greatest contributions, in partnership with Professor Lygia Paim, her friend and partner, was the creation of an innovative research methodology, whose objective is to combine research with the care practice, called Convergent-care Research (PCA). This partnership began in the 1990s, when Professor Lygia Paim finished her activities as a visiting professor at UFSC and received an invitation from Professor Mercedes Trentini to participate in the activities of NUCRON as a researcher.

From this moment on, the teachers started their research on care practices. During the development of the "Assistance Practice" discipline in the Masters course, the students list a theoretical-philosophical reference of their preference and then practiced these assumptions in their assistance activities. Thus, the nurses learned to combine theory with practice. According to Dr. Mercedes, the discipline contributed to the students' understanding that, in certain situations, the applied theory in practice needed reformulations to really fit into the practice of care. In order to complete the course the students were required to prepare a report on the activity developed.

Faced with the expressive results obtained from the practices in the discipline, she suggested to Dr. Ingrid Elsen, who also worked in the same discipline, that the final report of the discipline could be considered the principle of the Master dissertation itself. Thus, this proposal was presented to a group of students from the Masters course. Initially, the students were surprised at the suggestion, even questioning the scientific nature of the methodological proposal. However, after understanding the magnitude of the work which needed to be carried out, only one out of the 21 students did not accept the suggestion.

Mercedes states that, over the years, the frequency with which the Master's classes used this discipline as a foundation for their dissertations continued to rise: [...] *and it was so good, the work was so consistent that it was even looking like a study. There were students who worked out their own theories. Here's an idea: this could be a study! That's where we started. After 10 years of experience with these students, we decided to write a book divulging the method in 1999.* This was titled Convergent-Care Research. According to the interviewee*: I think PCA has a future, because our intention was to make something which nurses who work in practice, could evaluate their own practice within the work environment.*

When reflecting on the most memorable moments of her life, Dr. Mercedes highlights: *the Doctorate course was very important for me, because it gave me professional growth, and thanks to God I went to the United States. Also I will say, that it was not without suffering, there was with a lot of suffering and struggle. And the second memorable moment, was the PCA, Research Convergent-care, because it is a challenge involved a lot of courage...*

DISCUSSION

Thinking and writing about the present allows us to understand the historical context of nursing development as a profession, especially from the point of view that interests us, which is to reflect on the ways in which professional identity is treated by the various authors or to emphasize the importance of the history of nursing in order to understand the area and the individual and collective identity construction.[12] In this sense, we have biographies that reveal the history of people and the essential role they played in the professional development of nursing.[8]

Biographies have been used by historians of oral history in order remember important people in history. It is understood by historians as the "diving in the soul", revealing the intimacy of the interviewee, assuming dimensions such as memory or familiar oral traditions, memories.[13]

Mercedes Trentini's career journey resembles, from the outset, the career of many other nurses who, from their role as religious figures in hospitals or schools, decided to start a professional career. Religious nurses who worked in hospitals divided their work in the general services, administrative activities and also leading nursing work.[10] Furthermore, the nursing team at the *Imperial Hospital de Caridade* (IHC), as it was called then, was composed of the Sisters of Divine Providence, assisted by subordinate assistants and some ex-patients who had nowhere to go because they did not have the support of their family or the community.[14] It is noteworthy that the religious work of Mercedes Trentini lasted for approximately three decades, in several hospitals in the State of Santa Catarina, in cities such as Blumenau, Rodeio and Joinville, working in the Surgical Center and later in the Intensive Care Units, continuing to do so after her religious life.

The search for new ways and possibilities to develop herself theoretically and scientifically was what propelled Mercedes Trentini to dedicate herself to a professional academic career. This development was articulated with her search for improvement offered by the Graduate Programs existing in the country or in other countries. Both the creation of Capes and CNPq, with the incentive of research and the creation of Postgraduate Courses, allowed the opportunity not only for scholarships for the Master's and Doctorate Degree in Brazil, but also in other countries, especially , in the United States.

The Capes scholarship policy ensured that Brazilian international academic exchanges were not restricted to the circulation of elites: they were inserted in the field of public education policies and in the formation of frameworks for science and technology.[15] Unarguably, as predicted by the Capes members / advisers / who selected Mercedes for the doctorate program abroad, she really had great potential, becoming one of the most respected nurses in the country.

In the area of nursing, numerous theoretical-methodological approaches have been used, contributing to the enrichment of the body of knowledge of the researches carried out. With this development, methodological options have emerged which are capable of opening the way for greater clarity on the phenomena studied and, therefore, the approximation with qualitative and quantitative methods.[16]

Upon returning from her Ph.D., Professor Mercedes Trentini focused her research on research related to chronic health clients, which resulted with alarming evidence of data on chronic diseases in the country. From this evidence and with the help of Professor Denise Guerreiro, the need to build a research group to develop studies in the area was evident. This situation led to NUCRON being established in 1987.

NUCRON is a group that seeks to develop theoretical-practical knowledge related to the health of people living with a chronic health condition, through research, teaching and care. The areas of interest of the group involve subjects related to health anthropology, the quality of life of people with chronic respiratory problems, ostomies, diabetes, chronic kidney problems and cardiovascular problems. Also research on health education, focusing on the constructivist approach, developing education in groups, especially groups of coexistence.[17] NUCRON has been actively working on studies in this area and published the book entitled "Chronic conditions and care Innovators in health", in 2014 also by Mercedes Trentini, Lygia Paim and Denise Guerreiro, in which they deal with the studies carried out by the group in this area and the use of PCA in said studies.[18]

The idealization of the Convergent-Care Research Method by Professor Mercedes Trentini and Professor Lygia Paim, appeared in the discipline called "Practice Assistance". The purpose of this study was to clarify the definition of the research

problem and to contribute to the search for the most appropriate method for surveying the empirical data.[19]

In the PCA methodological approach, nurses have the possibility to research their care practice in their own work environment. It requires active participation of research subjects, aiming at solving or minimizing problems in practice, or for making changes and/or introducing innovations to health practices.[20-21]

The PCA is currently used in several Postgraduate Programs throughout Brazil, not only in academic courses, but also in professional master courses, and because it is a research modality that maintains a close relationship with the social and objective situation to find solutions to problems , it introduces changes and innovations in the social sphere.

In a bibliometric study carried out in 2012 on the contribution of the PCA in the construction of nursing and health knowledge, produced in Master's and Doctoral courses in Brazil, 67 dissertations and six theses were detected that used the PCA as a research modality, between the years of 2000 and 2008. In these studies, the search for answers to the problems of the practice was verified, contributing with new possibilities of intervention in the different scenarios, not only of the nursing, but of other health professions.[22] An integrative review on the use of PCA published in seven Brazilian periodicals from 2005 to 2010 corroborates with this information. From these reviews, 19 articles were selected that portrayed the growing use of this methodology in the Brazilian nursing scientific production.[23]

PCA has been widely discussed when analyzing the importance of nursing care models for the consolidation of this discipline.[24] This provides the convergence between the academic institutions and the practice of health and nursing, assisting in a safe practice, systematizing nursing care, leading nurses to adopt more solid positions of knowledge construction.

These studies show that throughout her professional, academic and scientific journey, Mercedes Trentini, has left an essential and important legacy that surpasses the barriers of the classrooms which composes of a model of teaching and research. She continues to work as a researcher and producer of new knowledge, increasingly deepening her studies on PCA, aiming to improve it, and increasingly expanding its use in Brazil and Latin America.

As limitations of the present study, it is possible to mention the scarcity of articles that describe and discuss the importance of Professor Mercedes Trentini, both in research, teaching and postgraduate studies in the country. This, in turn, is also a strength, as it allows to point out the importance of this figure in the national and international scenario. The implementation of PCA in the Master and Doctoral Programs of PEN/UFSC, allows students to learn this methodology and bring it with them to their institutions and countries of origin.

CONCLUSION

The results demonstrate the important role that Prof. Dr. Mercedes Trentini has played not only in the UFSC post graduate nursing course, but also in other undergraduate and postgraduate courses in the South and Southeast regions of the country. These results highlight her contribution to Brazilian nursing and even to other areas of knowledge. She has always stood out for being ahead of her time, seeking new challenges and deepening her knowledge in the area of qualitative research; culminating in the structuring of the research method with relevant insertion in the national scope, which is now know as PCA, and has been widely used in the context of nursing research.

This biographical study contributes in an exemplary way to nursing in the state of Santa Catarina and also Brazilian nursing, and even international nursing. Her biography can be considered as a model for future generations of nurses. For the nursing profession, she has left a legacy, scientific knowledge, and the possibilities to modify the practice of care. When it is possible to aggregate theory and practice and practice and theory, it is possible to intervene in practice. In regards to PEN/UFSC, Dr. Mercedes Trentini has characterized herself as an original, innovative and brilliant teacher. Finally, the contribution of the biographical study to the memory of the profession allows a broad understanding of our origins, our successes and dilemmas, and a glimpse of new perspectives.

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