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BETWEEN THE MADEMOISELLE AND THE MISS IN DOMESTIC SCHOOLING IN NATAL: TRAVELING TEACHERS IN NORTHEASTERN BRAZIL

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ABSTRACT

The research discusses the representation of foreign traveling teachers in Domestic Schooling in Natal, northeastern Brazil, in the 1910s and 1920s. It presents documentary sources from the National Libraries of Brazil, Portugal and France. Analyzes the object in the light of categories of the historiography of education and authors such as: Chartier (1990), De Certeau (1994; 1996), Douki; Minard (2007) and Rogers (1995; 2014; 2018). It highlights the significant exchange relationship between Brazil and other foreign institutions, especially Normal Schools, for the arrival of teachers and the departure of Brazilian graduates from the Domestic School of Natal to participate in training courses in Switzerland and Belgium. Among the main profiles of teachers to work in domestic education are the following: *mademoiselle* and *miss*, as archetypes of women teachers, single and foreign, coming in the case under analysis from Europe and the United States.

Keywords: History of Education, History of the Teaching Profession and Teacher Education, Domestic Schooling, Traveling teachers.

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ENTRE A MADEMOISELLE E A MISS NO ENSINO DOMÉSTICO EM NATAL: PROFESSORAS VIAJANTES NO NORDESTE DO BRASIL

RESUMO

A pesquisa discute a representação em torno de professoras viajantes estrangeiras em atuação no Ensino Doméstico em Natal, nordeste do Brasil, nas décadas de 1910 e 1920. Apresenta fontes documentais provenientes das Bibliotecas Nacionais do Brasil, de Portugal e da França. Analisa o objeto à luz de categorias da historiografia da educação e de autores como: Chartier (1990), De Certeau (1994; 1996), Douki; Minard (2007) e Rogers (1995; 2014; 2018). Destaca a significativa relação de intercâmbio entre o Brasil e demais instituições estrangeiras, sobretudo Escolas Normais, para a vinda de professoras e ida de brasileiras egressas da Escola Doméstica de Natal para participar de cursos formativos na Suíça e na Bélgica. Entre os principais perfis de professoras para atuação no ensino doméstico estão a mademoiselle e miss, como arquétipos de mulheres professoras, solteiras e estrangeiras, provenientes no caso em análise da Europa e dos Estados Unidos.

Palavras-chave: História da Educação, História da Profissão Docente e da Formação de Professores, Ensino Doméstico, Professoras viajantes.

ENTRE LA MADEMOISELLE Y LA MISS EN LA ENSEÑANZA DOMÉSTICA EN NATAL: MAESTRAS VIAJERAS EN EL NORESTE DE BRASIL

RESUMEN

La investigación discute la representación de las maestras viajeras extranjeras que trabajaron en la Enseñanza Doméstica en Natal, en el noreste de Brasil, durante las décadas de 1910 y 1920. Presenta fuentes documentales de las Bibliotecas Nacionales de Brasil, Portugal y Francia. Analiza el objeto de estudio a la luz de categorías de la historiografía de la educación y de autores como Chartier (1990), De Certeau (1994; 1996), Douki; Minard (2007) y Rogers (1995; 2014; 2018). Destaca la significativa relación de intercambio entre Brasil y otras instituciones extranjeras, especialmente las Escuelas Normales, para la llegada de maestras y la salida de brasileñas egresadas de la Escuela Doméstica de Natal para participar en cursos de formación en Suiza y Bélgica. Entre los principales perfiles de maestras que trabajaban en la enseñanza doméstica se encuentran la *mademoiselle* y la *miss*, como arquetipos de mujeres profesoras, solteras y extranjeras, provenientes en el caso analizado de Europa y Estados Unidos.

Palabras-clave: Historia de la Educación, Historia de la Profesión Docente y Formación del Profesorado, Enseñanza Doméstica, Maestras viajeras.

INITIAL QUESTIONS

The research sought to analyze the foreign influences on female education in Brazil, in the decades from 1910 to 1920, period in which was installed the Domestic School of Natal, inspired by the *École Ménagère*, from Switzerland¹. During this period, there was a significant exchange relationship between the country and other foreign institutions for the arrival of teachers and the departure of Brazilian graduates from the institution to participate in training courses in Switzerland and Belgium. Among the main profiles of teachers to work in domestic education are the following: *mademoiselle* and *miss*, as archetypes of women teachers, single and foreign, coming from Europe and the United States.

The institution Domestic School of Natal, was installed in the capital of Rio Grande do Norte, Brazil, being a pioneer for Domestic Education in Latin America. Its foundation occurred within the framework of the so-called League of Education of Rio Grande do Norte (LERN), founded on July 13, 1911, by Henrique Castriciano², poet and intellectual from Rio Grande do Norte who was twice in Europe, from where he brought ideas and concerns presented to Brazilian society about the education of women.

With regard to the League of Education, its statute records the commitment to the instruction and education of women from the installation of educational establishments in support of the public power:

Art. I - It is founded in Natal, capital of Rio Grande do Norte, an association called 'League of Education', aiming, in general, to assist the public authorities in everything that concerns the instruction and education of the people, and, in particular, to found schools for the instruction and education of women.

Art. II - To achieve the end to which it proposes, the league will found nursery, primary, secondary and vocational schools, establish libraries and cooperatives throughout the territory of the state and promote the creation of regional leagues, also promoting civic festivals, conferences, congresses, school excursions, exhibitions and publications of books and magazines (Liga de Ensino do Rio Grande do Norte, 1911, p. 1).

For its operation, the League of Education had the social fund, as it was called, which was composed of the following accounting "a) of the jewels and monthly fees of individuals and associations; b) of the subsidies of the Union, the state and the municipalities; c) of the quotas and contributions of the regional leagues" (Liga de Ensino do Rio Grande do Norte, 1911, p. 124).

¹ In Fribourg, Switzerland, the first International Congress of Domestic Education took place in 1908, in which it was defined in four categories to be treated: domestic education in primary school; domestic education to adults or attached to secondary education; professional training of teachers of domestic education; progress of domestic education since the Congress of Fribourg, social importance of this education (*Revue Pédagogique*, 1914).

² Born on March 15, 1874, in the city of Macaíba, Rio Grande do Norte, the son of Eloy Castriciano de Souza and Henriqueta Leopoldina de Souza. He died in Natal on July 26, 1947. He was a writer, journalist, essayist, critic, founder of the Liga de Ensino (League of Education, in English) and the Academia Norte-Rio-Grandense de Letras (Academy of Letters of Rio Grande do Norte, in English). He was secretary of the Governor of the state of Rio Grande do Norte Alberto Maranhão (management started in 1900), state prosecutor in the government of Antônio José de Melo e Souza (1908). He was vice-governor of Ferreira Chaves (1915).

In Decree No. 239, of December 15, 1910, the Government of the state of Rio Grande do Norte established the subsidy to institutions:

Art. 159. The government will subsidize, in the most convenient way and within the forces of the budget, those institutes and private schools that, by their destination and pedagogical organization, deserve public favor, in the judgment of the Board of Instruction.

Art. 160. The establishments subsidized by the state will be subject to the immediate supervision of the General Directorate that, by its proposals, will aim at the Regulation or Statutes adapted.

Art. 161. The State Government shall deprive of subsidy any establishment which contravenes the respective Regulations or Statutes or which refuses modifications for the sake of pedagogical progress, on the proposal of the Director General (Rio Grande do Norte, 1910, p. 140).

On September 1, 1914, the Domestic School of Natal was inaugurated “thanks to the good offices” of the then Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Lauro Muller and the diplomat representing Brazil in Switzerland, Dr. Raul do Rio Branco, and with the sponsorship of the State Government. “For 4 years, renowned teachers were hired who organized the Domestic School of Natal, along the lines of the *École Ménagère* of Freiburg, Switzerland” (Escola Doméstica de Natal, 1914-1964, p. 13).

The Newspaper *A República*, on September 15, 1914, reported the beginning of the work of the institution after a lecture by foreign headmistresses:

Today, the courses of the Domestic School of Natal, recently founded in this city, began to operate under the distinguished direction of the distinguished teachers Hélène Bondoc and Jeanne Negulesco. The following ladies of our society are enrolled: Amélia Dulce Cavalcanti (internal), Maria Galvão Filha; Esther de Fontes Galvão, Doralice Lustoza Barros, Maurila de Brito Guerra, Maria Mafalda de Miranda Galvão, Maria Guiomar De Meira Lima, Maria Geruza Lustoza Da Câmara, Evangelina Lustoza da Câmara, Anna Santina Soares de Araújo (semi-internal). The headmistress of the school, *Mademoiselle* Hélène Bondoc, before starting the course work, gave a lecture to the students on the duties incumbent on them in that house of instruction. The students and other people present were pleasantly impressed. Enrollment remains open (Escola Doméstica, 1914, p. 1).

From The Newspaper *Renascença* from Recife, the November 9, 1914 issue of *República*, reproduced the subject “A modern school”, signed by J. Grillo. The columnist praised Henrique Castriciano, noting as “an outbreak of progress’ the installation of the Domestic School:

These schools aim exclusively at the education of women, in the threefold pedagogical aspect – physical, moral and intellectual – seeking to form courageous wives and worthy mothers, who in practical life do not look at the futilities of a false civilization and know how to help their companions [...] The Rio Grande do Norte that prays comes to give a lesson to Brazil to carry out such company, could not trust in our abstract and mnemonic culture, only of compendiums; it brought from abroad, from the homeland of Guilherme Tell, two professionals trained in Fribourg and, under their direction, set up the school of the capital, which will serve as a model for the many congeners, which will emerge in the interior, future outside. They do not seek to make doctors and intellectuals to summarize pretentious literatures, but mothers of families, imbued with their most noble mission, who are strong and healthy and educate, according to the American maxim *learning by doing* preparing the winners of tomorrow in the vital conflict (Grillo, 1914, p 1).

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Brazil brought the teacher-training teachers H       Bondoc, Jeanne Negulesco, Leonora James, Isabel Baird, Julie Seriv  , Allexandra Von Schimnielpfeig, Edwirges Schuller to act as first headmistresses and teachers of the institution throughout its first decade of operation. They were educated in the Normal Schools of their countries and acted in favor of the education of women. In the period when the predominance of French female teachers was a reality in the school, the influence of their culture occurred in the menus (all written in the French language) and in the way of dressing of the people who were part of the school.

In 1913 arrived by ship in Manaus bound for the city of Natal the piano teacher, *Mademoiselle* Bruela (Hoje no vapor Manaus, 1913, p. 1). In 1922, the headmistress of the school, *Miss* James, applied to the League of Education for the employment of two English teachers. *Miss* Helen Gearing to become head of Household and Laundry and *Miss* Henrietta Davis to direct the chairs of French, English and Physical Culture and Games. From France came *Mademoiselle* Lucille Groper to direct Sewing classes During this period, the school had nine foreign female teachers on its faculty. One can thus understand the French influence on the dress of the girls of the Domestic School of Natal. Always the *dernier cri* of fashion. (Rodrigues, 2007).

The domestic schools were a reality in Europe in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The implementation of domestic and professional education took place through the Normal School in countries such as France, Switzerland, Belgium, England and the Netherlands, with the aim of giving an active role to women. The researches show the formative inspiration of the teacher-training teachers in the French matrix of the Normal School, reference for the other institutions created in the same historical substrate in different countries, and that exerted a strong influence from the circulation of knowledge for teaching in pedagogical manuals and compendiums. In particular, Switzerland also became the reference for home education, especially after the city of Fribourg hosted the International Congress on Domestic Education.

The Domestic School of Natal constituted a network of international relations, establishing itself as strategic for Brazil and Latin America, by advocating the promotion of a “modern education for women” based on domestic education.

The Portuguese matrix also served the Brazilian models, especially from the relations with the language, through which one had access to the ideas in circulation by compendiums, pedagogy manuals, among other devices. The relationship between Normal School and Domestic School in the professional training of women also arises from this research, since the discipline domestic economy was part of the teaching program of normal schools (Nascimento, 2013; 2018), corroborating the recommendations of the event that took place in 1908, in Fribourg, Switzerland.

In Lisbon, professor Ant       Alfredo Alves (1913) reported to the Portuguese Society of pedagogical studies what happened at the second International Congress of Domestic Education, based in Belgium. In the document records the existence of the *       M        * das

Laranjeiras as a central experience of institutions of this type in Portugal, but also highlighted the experiences of professional education of women in Normal Schools in the country.

In the 1910s, homeschooling in Brazil took place in contexts of enthusiasts, intellectuals and political leaders, such as Henrique Castriciano. In the following decade, there are deliberate intentions for the expansion of offers and articulation of ideas to the Associação Brasileira de Educação (Brazilian Education Association – ABE).

During this period, the two reference institutions were the Domestic School of Natal and the Osório Foundation in Rio de Janeiro. Regarding the sociability of Brazilian and foreign intellectuals, there is a close relationship between ABE and the Brazilian Federation for Women's Progress (Federação Brasileira pelo Progresso Feminino, in Portuguese), among others. Gathered on the occasion of the lecture on Domestic Economics at the Polytechnic School of the University of Rio de Janeiro (Escola Politécnica da Universidade do Rio de Janeiro, in Portuguese), as evidenced by the material of Newspaper *O Paiz* to honor the Belgian Paul de Vuyst:

The conference was very well attended, being present among others professor Agostinho Reis, director of the Polytechnic School, who chaired the session, Dr. Lyra Castro, president of the National Agricultural Society; Ms. Stella Duval, president of *Pró Matre*; Ms. Jeronima Mesquita, head of the Federation of *Bandeirantes*; Bertha Lutz, of the Brazilian Federation For Women'S Progress; Ms. Wein schenk, president of the Women'S Social Center; Ms. Stella Faro, president of the Association of Brazilian Ladies; Ms. Floripes Anglada, president of the Teachers' League; Miss Armanda Alvaro Alberto, director of Merit Rural School; Ms. Lacombe, director of the Jacobina course; Ms. Branca Osorio de Almeida, Filho... Also attended Dr. Carneiro Leão, director of public instruction; deputies Bento Miranda, Juvenal Lamartine, Fidelis Reis, professor Heitor Lyra, president of the Brazilian Education Association; Professor Hasselmann and Revalut, of the Higher School of Agriculture; Dr. Delgado De Carvalho, Teixeira Soares, Henrique Castriciano (**Founder of the Domestic School of Natal of 1914**), M. Conti, ambassador of France; Mr. Streel, chargé d'affaires of Belgium; Mr. Chancellor, the American ambassador, and many other illustrious characters. (*O Paiz*, november 29, 1924, p. 5, emphasis added)..

In addition to politicians, ambassadors and the Brazilian intelligentsia, the representations of women's associations were present, with emphasis on Bertha Lutz, whose exchange with Belgium and with the Speaker Paul de Vuyst himself, allowed the discussion within the ABE and other institutions in which she worked. The Professional and Domestic Education Section of the ABE was created on December 02, 1924, with the proposal to discuss and implement actions around Domestic Education, encompassing the agricultural economy in order to make viable bills that would guarantee the creation of schools of this modality in Brazil. The aforementioned association had the objective of promoting the implementation of other similar institutions:

With a program shaped by the Natal school, with identical purposes, both could serve as the basic type of modern school, where women do not disdain home and even rural work, and prepare to be an educator, administrator, guide, thus becoming the collaborator of man in the great work of aggrandizing the Homeland (Oliveira; Silva, 2004, p. 47).

Henrique Castriciano's goal with the creation of the domestic School of Natal was not to reproduce the Swiss school in Rio Grande do Norte, but to modernize local education, with imposing buildings, school programs and educational practices that valued the current ideas in European society. In the late 1920s, the institution had its first Brazilian headmistress, Miss Maria Emiliana Silva, with management from 1927. As an expression of exchange, graduates of the Domestic School of Natal, took the improvement course in Belgium, with emphasis on Miss Santa Guerra and Alix Ramalho Pessoa, awarded a scholarship by the then Governor Juvenal Lamartine, for having won distinction throughout the course. Both ran the institution.

In the first two decades of operation, the relations with foreign teachers coming to Brazil stand out, the trips of Brazilian graduates from the Domestic School of Natal for improvement, for the international actions involved in the time frame (with emphasis on the congresses), with strong relations between political and educational leaders.

BETWEEN THE *MADemoiselle* AND THE *MISS*: REPRESENTATIONS ON FEMALE PEDAGOGICAL CELIBACY

How women teachers *practice* gender and play with the norms of this category in their representations? This is a founding consideration in an investigative research that drives the search for bringing together the different aspects of the lives of women teachers in the area of the history of education. It is an inviting question to reflect on the dynamics of gender in historical memory.

Paraphrasing Maria Arisnete Câmara de Moraes (2002, p. 24) "the way in which individuals produce the social world, aligning or confronting themselves through the dependencies and tensions that unite and oppose them" is always relevant. Even more so when historically some of these subjects are objects "excluded from history", as Michelle Perrot (1988) emphasized.

If we agree with Michel de Certeau (1994, p. 152) that "a fact is an indicative", we need to recognize the invisibilities or exclusions of women as a historiographic object-subject. At the same time that we know that "the ways of doing" organize theoretical production, we need to insert them or put them in evidence, because they also participate in the historical construction. This is also a possibility as a researcher affiliated with the History of Education.

From readings and research in the field with an approach to gender relations, women's history, we identified that the studies of Françoise Thébaud (1995), Pierre Bourdieu (1996), and (1998) and Michel Foucault (1999), especially with their analysis of the disciplinary process, continue to influence research. Similarly, the works of gender historian Joan Scott (1990) and gender theorist Judith Butler (2010) are frequently included in the references.

For Rebecca Rogers (2018), class and power often appear in studies as if they were genderless, despite studies showing how gender operates in the construction of class relations and how power operates from a gender perspective. In line with this perspective, it is envisioned to deepen the analysis of the training and performance of women teachers, recognizing them as important educational agents. We are interested in the representation of these women and

their activities, but also with what “strategies” and “tactics” they had to operate in the male universe of decisions.

In the sense given by De Certeau (1996, p. 100), we understand strategy as calculation or manipulation of the relations of forces that becomes possible from the moment in which “a willing subject can be isolated”. In tactics one plays “with the power of the other”, with what the other allows him. That is, from the performance of women in the “environment controlled by the other”, in this case men, which tactics stand out and how they reacted to the strategies of isolation of their powers of participation and decision.

Thus, it is relevant to highlight the affiliation to Cultural History that allows the historian to focus on the productions of the subjects and, in this way, builds its own symbolic system (Chartier, 1990, p. 77). We chose Roger Chartier (1990) and his concept of representation for the dialogue of the analyzes, for which it allows us to “see something absent”, which supposes a clear radical distinction between what it represents and what is represented. On the other hand, representation is the display of a presence, “the public presentation of something or someone”. This is because, this concept considers the work of classification and delimitation that produces the multiple intellectual configurations, through which reality is contradictorily constructed by the different groups.

In a similar way, it sheds light on practices that “aim to make a social identity recognized, to display a proper way of being in the world, to symbolically signify a status and a position”. Also noteworthy are the institutionalized and objectified ways in which “representatives” (collective bodies or individuals) visibly and perpetually mark the existence of the group, class or community. (Chartier, 1990, p. 24).

Even if circumscribed to the perspective of Peter Burke (2010, p. 143), in recognizing the importance of French historiographic intellectual production and the revolution operated by it, the dialogue is extrapolated for the purpose of expanding the interlocutors. This is how we understand Lawrence. Stone (2011, p. 116) about prosopography, for which it is used as a tool with which to attack two of the most basic problems in history: the first refers to the origins of political action (the unveiling of the deepest interests that are considered to reside under the rhetoric of politics; the analysis of the social and economic affiliations of political groupings; the revelation of the functioning of a political machine and the identification of those who manipulate).

Stone (2011) discusses a perspective to investigate common characteristics of actors in history through the collective study of their lives. In its sense, the prosopographic method consists of establishing a universe to be studied and then investigating a set of uniform questions – about birth and death, marriage and family, social origins and inherited economic position, place of residence, education, size and origin of personal wealth, occupation, religion, experience in positions and so on.

In partial perspectives, we used this conception to analyze the women teachers that we investigated for their belonging to the social group circumscribed to the delimited period.

Thus, “the various types of information about individuals in the universe” (Stone, 2011, p. 15) were brought together, later juxtaposed, combined and examined in search of significant variables.

Similarly, we seek to find internal correlations with other forms of behavior or action. From this methodological and analytical operation, a categorization took place that placed them directly in relation to women’s education and the training and performance of foreign women teachers in Brazil in favor of an educational project for the country.

It is in this way that we arrive at the representation of the ideal of teacher for the performance in domestic education: that of the single woman, without children. This representation is constructed from the profiles in action in the Domestic School of Natal, which have always been the *Mademoiselle* and the *Miss*. As a duty of “missionaries”, these selfless women teachers left their countries of origin to act in favor of the education of other women, aligning themselves with foreign educational projects, appropriating cultures and pedagogical practices forged in the country of operation (Rogers, 1995).

Meanwhile, in Brazil, the so-called Female pedagogical celibacy was discussed, which designed the profile of women as teacher-trainers, as well as their destination in professional performance in primary schools and women’s education. Amorim (2012) and Menezes (2009) highlight that women teachers were expected to be single or widows without children. “Unmarried girls were advised to remain pure and to remain virgins until marriage. As for married women, they should fulfill the fidelity devoted to the spouses at the time of marriage. Widows were recommended to remain in their celibate state” (Amorim, 2012, p. 97).

In turn, Nestor Lima (1927, p. 4-6) affirmed the incompatibility between the social roles assumed by women:

You can’t be a good teacher and a good housewife at the same time. What practice teaches us daily and persistently, is that the exercise of the two functions – domestic and pedagogical – if they are not absolutely incompatible, are at least harmful to the perfection, regularity and usefulness of each of them.

Amorim (2012, p. 103) highlights, however, the interlocution of women in the period with Nestor Lima, highlighting the discussions of the professor Rita Sampaio from Rio Grande do Norte and the lawyer Orminda Bastos, from Rio de Janeiro, for whom being celibate was not a prerequisite to act as a teacher and be a good professional.

Despite this, research shows the selflessness of women teachers, whether lay or linked to religious orders, were dedicated to the formation of new generations in their countries or in foreign lands. Rogers (2005) in his bibliography recommends a history of traveling educators (*travelling teachers*) who accompanies these women in their stay in foreign lands and is interested in the phenomena of appropriation of cultures and pedagogical practices forged in another country. This bias is consistent with a historiography that considers the

education of young women from the perspective of cultural transfers characteristic of global history or transactional history (Douki; Minard, 2007; Espagne, 1999).

The “connected” history has its contributions and adds to the historiography of French women (Rogers; Thébaud, 2010). Rogers (2009) emphasizes that there are, however, several studies focused on the space of women and gender in the field of religious history and colonial history, research that allows us to think about a history of cultural transfers around religious congregations and their schools for girls (Bruno-Jofré, 2013).

The studies reiterate the importance of assuming an optic for the sexual writing of a transnational history (Saunier, 2013), of an approach that pays attention to the circulation of people and educational models between France and foreign countries.

PROFILE OF WOMEN TEACHERS: *TRAVELLING TEACHERS* IN THE NORTHEAST OF BRAZIL

The category vocational training of women teachers, like female education, is not universal. Thus, it is essential to recognize their singularities, even understanding that to some extent these stories may be connected with each other; or even that we recognize the coexistence of educational projects in dispute or in dialogue. In the history of gender and the performance of women teachers, this approach has produced relevant studies, such as the interlocutors we chose in our research: Morais (2003; 2006; 2019), Machado (2005; 2009; 2013), Almeida (1998), Rogers (2014; 2018), Vidal (2002), among others.

The reflection on how women teachers made use of their fundamental places of modernity to express their aspirations in the exercise of their social roles, constructing representations, is something genuine. From a biographical perspective, it is important to corroborate the history of women teachers and their educational actions. In the historiography of education from Rio Grande do Norte, the contribution of Morais (2003; 2006; 2019) and his collaborators stands out in particular. This production has important repercussions and constitutes a relevant point for the continuity of research.

It emphasizes the necessary research on the performance of foreign-born educators from countries such as Germany, Denmark, France, the United States, Ireland, Romania, Switzerland, who have performed a fruitful performance, whether in public, subsidized or confessional institutions, and expands the investigative possibilities in a perspective of gender analysis and transnational history (Rogers, 2018). From this fact, we point out different educational scenarios in the same space and time for women’s education and performance, whether for later public or private performance.

And we ask ourselves: How did “fragile women” arrive in countries where a foreign language was spoken, found and directed an institution that later became prestigious and a reference in Latin America? How they organized themselves to preserve the principle of *école ménagère* or adapt it according to the context? How did you negotiate your relations with the host state? What impact did they have on the development of women’s establishments

and, in particular, on gender relations in the country? These women deserve a closer look at their lives and the strategies and tactics adopted by them.

Studies of the history of Education demonstrate in several countries, but also in Brazil, that educational and political reformers used models of foreign reality to argue for or against changes in schooling, in general, and for women, in particular. Similarly, the formation of teachers, the Constitution of school forms and cultures were influenced by these conceptions which were translated into local reality. But education for Brazilian women also took on European and North American contours. What do these “cultural appropriations” reveal? (Burke, 2010, p. 17).

It is evident in this case that educational reforms depended rhetorically on examples of what was happening elsewhere, but also that reformers needed the impact of international comparisons to advocate for change. So much so that education legislators used this knowledge of reality in their instruction/public education speeches and reports. It is thus that in the historiography of education there is a connection between the stories of the teaching profession and normal schools (Cardoso, 2014; Araújo; Freitas; Lopes, 2008), the emergence of the school, the organization of school work and the curriculum (Gondra, 2018; Magalhães, 2010; Souza, 2008), the feminization of teaching (Almeida, 1998).

The transit of foreign women on educational mission in Brazil is latent from the action of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Brazil with foreign institutions in favor of the foundation of the domestic school, inspired by the *École Ménagère*, from Switzerland.

In the same period in Brazil, normal schools received women for training and later work in primary teaching. The Domestic School, in turn, was responsible for the education of women for the home. A vestige of distinct educational projects, although the formative nucleus of the woman teacher was common: the normal schools. A relevant sign of this difference concerns the participation of the relative of Manoel Dantas, then Director General of Public Instruction of the state of Rio Grande do Norte. He makes a laudatory article to the institution with the title *A ação social e educativa da Escola Doméstica* (The social and educational action of the Domestic School) highlighting that a relative had graduated that year, in the educational establishment in which women would have access to the “domestic professional knowledge that is indispensable to them” (Dantas, 1921, p. 31).

Why did Inês Dantas not study at the Normal School of Natal that functioned under the conceptions of the then director? In this regard, the record of unrestricted government support for the implementation of a foreign model of female education to train wives, daughters, sisters of political leaders in other perspectives is still relevant, although equally shaped by male expectations regarding public performance and the meanings around this fact. Manoel Dantas (1921, p.31) stated: “women are today more than ever concerned with serious things, transforming the old concept of ‘angel of the home’ into the modern principle of housewife”.

The school administration, in the first decade of the institution's foundation, was exercised by foreign teachers, through a contract between the government of the state of Rio Grande do Norte and Domestic School of Natal, mediated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Brazil. Professors Hélène Bondoc and Jeanne Negulesco, both graduates of the Fribourg School in Switzerland, were part of the institution's management during the period of 1914 to 1918. Later, professors Leora James (American) and Alexandra Von Schimnielpfeig (German) held the same position, who remained in the direction of the establishment during the year 1923. Edwigs Schüller, of Brazilian origin and German parents (Germany being the place where she lived at the time) was hired to exercise the mandate in the period of 1924. The Irish Isabel Baird took over during the year 1925 and the French Julie Serive was the last foreigner to take the position of director in the year 1926. At that time the institution received students from various regions of the country: northeast, north, southeast.

If on the one hand, we shed light on the history of female education, coeducation, teacher training, understanding how education corroborates the construction of representations about femininity, on the other the history of masculinity has been relegated. There are few studies on the subject, but we have always established the existing relationships of otherness, especially when evidencing how male teachers assumed the positions of greater representativeness at times, such as the directions, inspections of teaching, decision-making, higher salaries, representation in diverse groups with more recognized social *status*. In this particular case, we have the character Henrique Castriciano as the idealizer and articulator of the educational project in favor of women's education.

They constituted an "intellectual elite" in which women participated. According to Vieira (2015, p. 6), the Brazilian intellectual elite, formed at the end of the nineteenth century, acquired social prestige and political power, resulting from their positions as men from rich and traditional families. For the said author:

This generation of lawyers, journalists, doctors and writers was made up, for the most part, of men from the highest social strata, although some women stood out. This male predominance and wealthy social origin reveals economic and gender issues. The social origin of intellectuals is explained by the axiom: unequal distribution of wealth equals, as a rule, the unequal distribution of culture and knowledge. The gender problem also has a well-known and shared premise, since, according to the prevalent representations at the time, it was up to men to occupy public space, while women were reserved for private space, household chores and family life. There are many exceptions to these structural and cultural logics, yet they only confirm the rule. (Vieira, 2015, p. 6).

The analysis of economic and gender issues are relevant to understand the concepts of Bourdieu (1998). By the cultural and symbolic capital accumulated in the form of titles and commendations, positions in the faculties and academies of letters and science, erudition and eloquence, either by frequent trips to Europe and/or possession of books and pieces of art, men stood out and exercised power. "These positions authorized them to act, on different

fronts and from prestigious social places, in favor of certain projects, in order to forge and affirm the social identity of the intellectual as a collective political agent” (Vieira, 2015, p. 6).

What is clear is that women teachers were on the side of the political group managing education. They lived in the same social circles as the administrators of Public Education, the Domestic School, the Normal School and the Teachers’ Association³, largest existing class association in the period. At the same time that they published in the Journal in circulation, they advised them on all existing social devices. Were they really subaltern? What spaces did they occupy? How was the transit of these educational and social actors? It is worth highlighting the female directors of the Domestic School of Natal, although the intellectual managers of the project are the political commanders.

There are many questions raised. Under the bias of polyphony and dialogic of sources, as pointed out by Barros (2019), one way to try to answer questions is listening. To answer these questions, we chose: women teachers, graduates of foreign Normal Schools, responsible for the education of women in the Domestic School of Natal, the first institution in the state of Rio Grande do Norte, in Latin America, to promote the education of “young women of society” for the home, from a training for domestic work.

Thus, from the stories and the protagonism of the teachers’ actions emerge important categories of analysis, underlying education, as well as asymmetries in relation to the social roles of women and men. The women teachers and their brief biographical profile and professional performance were listed:

1. **Hélène Bondoc.** Of Romanian nationality, teacher graduated from the school *Ménagère*, in Switzerland, she was the first headmistress of the Natal domestic School, created in 1914 by the League of Education of Rio Grande do Norte, having served in this role between 1914 and 1918;
2. **Jeanne Negulesco.** Of Swiss nationality, graduated from the School of Fribourg, Switzerland, she also served as headmistress of the Domestic School of Natal between the years 1914 and 1918, sharing the direction with teacher Helene Bondoc;
3. **Leora James.** Of American Nationality, she has served as the headmistress of Virginia State and North Carolina State High Schools. She served as a teacher and headmistress of the Domestic School of Natal from 1919 to 1922. She conducted the chairs of Chemistry, pedagogy, algebra and calligraphy (A REPÚBLICA, 1917);
4. **Isabel Baird.** Born in Denmark, she was headmistress of the Domestic School of Natal in 1925 (died the same year);

³ The sociological changes of the primary teaching staff, produced in the XIX century, created conditions for the birth of the first professional associations. The emergence of this corporate actor constitutes the last stage of the professionalization process, signifying the faculty’s awareness of their own interests as a social group (Villela, 2000, p.101).

5. **Julie Serive.** Of French nationality, she served as headmistress of the Domestic School of Natal in 1926. She was the last foreigner to assume the direction of the institution;
6. **Mademoseile Bruela**, came from Geneva, Switzerland, in 1913 to teach Piano at the Domestic School of Natal;
7. **Miss Helen Gearing, Miss Henrietta Davis, Mlle. Lucille Groper.**

As a whole, the stories and professional performances show the multiple ways of being a woman and a teacher in the time frame. The teachers were in different professional spaces. Teaching has become women's work (Louro, 2004). According to Almeida (1998, p. 63), "women's work has historically suffered pressures and attempts at ideological and economic control by the male element and social instances, as has been pointed out by researchers and, especially, researchers from several countries". Similarly, women's teaching work, in addition to the regulatory process of the capitalist system, is also linked to this model of normalization required by male rules and is accentuated by the control that the social system intends to exercise over women, in these same plans. It corroborates, therefore, the intentions of amplifying the analysis of these surrounding realities to women teachers.

CONSIDERATIONS

Research findings reveal how foreign models were adapted to the local context of the *École Ménagère* in Natal under the guidance of miss or mademoiselle instructors. These teachers arrived by ship at Brazilian ports before traveling onward to Rio Grande do Norte via rail. Their sustained presence was facilitated by prominent politicians and intellectuals, including Manoel Gomes de Medeiros Dantas, who hosted the school's first directors—Hélène Bondoc and Jeanne Negulesco—in his residence. Such support was crucial in enabling these foreign women to establish themselves in the region.

There is still a lack of research that focuses on the comparative perspective of domestic education institutions for women and, it is believed, that the relationships between Brazilian establishments and other realities such as the North American, Portuguese, French, Belgian and Swiss are close. At the same time, it is evident the link between the profiles of teachers based on *miss* and in the *mademoiselle*, or even in the Portuguese "raparigas" and Brazilian ladies. This is where we start with this research and analysis.

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