



About custom, the invented traditions and women's education in Brazil¹

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Abstract

This work aims to discuss the foundations and the way how the gender division based in the biological sex and the gender roles division was institutionalized in the Brazilian school. Methodologically based in documentary and bibliographic research this work highlighted distinct registers from laws and sparse decrees in the last 200 years, which can explain the invented traditions within the school and imposed to woman as elements of belonging into a specific gender. Theoretically, it assumes Hobsbawm (2018) binomial custom-tradition in order to unmask the temporalities of the mentioned tradition. Finally, this work highlights powerful elements for the invented traditions through and within school, that led to an education where women must be shaped and prepared under a male supremacy shield.

Keywords: History of education. Women's history. Laws. Traditions.

Sobre o costume, as tradições inventadas e a escolarização das mulheres no Brasil

1

Resumo

Este trabalho tem por objetivo discutir os fundamentos e a forma como foi institucionalizado, na escola brasileira, o costume da divisão dos gêneros baseada no sexo biológico e na divisão de papéis. Metodologicamente baseado na pesquisa bibliográfica e documental, evidenciam-se distintos registros a partir de leis e decretos esparsos nos últimos 200 anos que explicam as tradições inventadas dentro da escola que impõem à mulher elementos de pertença a um gênero. Teoricamente parte-se do binômio costume-tradição de Hobsbawm (2018) para desvendar as temporalidades dessa tradição. Em termos conclusivos, aponta-se os elementos que se constituíram forças preponderantes para as tradições inventadas pela e dentro da escola e que desembocaram numa educação em que as mulheres devem ser moldadas e preparadas sob a égide da superioridade masculina.

Palavras-chave: História da educação. História das mulheres. Legislações. Tradições.

Sobre costumbres, tradiciones inventadas y escolarización de la mujer en Brasil

Resumen

El presente trabajo tiene como objetivo discutir los fundamentos y la forma en que se institucionalizó en la escuela brasileña la costumbre de la división de género basada en el sexo biológico y la división de roles. Desde un punto de vista metodológico, partiendo de una investigación bibliográfica y documental, mostramos distintos registros de leyes, decretos en los últimos 200 años que explican las tradiciones inventadas al interior de la escuela que impone a las mujeres elementos de pertenencia a un género. Teóricamente, se parte del binomio costumbre-tradición de Hobsbawm (2018) a fin de develar las temporalidades de esta tradición. Como conclusión, se indican los elementos que constituirían fuerzas preponderantes para las tradiciones inventadas por y dentro de la escuela, y que dieron como resultado una educación en la que la mujer debe ser moldeada y preparada bajo la égida de la superioridad masculina.

Palabras clave: Historia de la educación. Historia de la mujer. Legislaciones. Tradición.

Introduction

2

Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

And the woman said unto the serpent, we may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

[...]And he said, who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? And the man said, the woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.

[...] Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.

And unto Adam he said, because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded



thee, saying, thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life (GENESIS qtd. in HOLY BIBLE, 3,20. 1-24).

Eve, a biblical character of the Old Testament, urged to eat of the “forbidden fruit,” even though she was warned by God not to do so, under penalty of dying, not only did she eat it, but she gave it to her companion Adam, who had also been warned of the danger of disobedience, but, like Eve, did not comply with it. “Then both their eyes were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons” (GENESIS qtd. in HOLY BIBLE, 3:7, p. 7). After attributing the respective punishments due to disobedience, God, through Moses, to whom, in the Jewish tradition, the writing of the book of Genesis is credited, He carries and gives meaning to the structure of a custom that had been constituted based on invented traditions, such as the biblical commandments, the price that must be paid for disobedience and the roles attributed to man and woman. “And the Lord God said, Behold, man is as one of us, knowing good and evil: and now, lest [...] he should eat, and live for ever, the Lord God hath cast him out of the garden of Eden” (GENESIS qtd. in HOLY BIBLE, 3:22, p. 7). From now on, according to Biblical text, Adam and Eve start to live at the mercy of by means of its work and of what the life, without protection, could cause to them. As Genesis itself addresses, this has incurred much work, betrayals, murders, incestuous generations, and so many other things that the Bible brings as narratives of its authors.

Let's take a look on this tradition background, which is based on original sin and women inferiorization. The roles attribution contains symbols that constituted the genres through commandments, principles, rules, codes and teachings. The roles fulfillment assigned to the man and the woman, still in the childhood (such as son/daughter, boy/girl, some game and/or craft performer, depending on the family economic power, in short, a human being apprentice), it constitutes one of the path stages in which we learn, constitute, experience models, transmute, practice and become him or her. The biblical text, both in the Old and New Testaments, it is updated in liturgies, which are manners and moral lessons directed and propagated by the human elders and then by the members of the former Church (legitimate representatives of God on earth). In this sense, the roles of man and woman have been constituted and legitimized throughout history.

Based on the examples collected throughout the books that compose the Bible – which is worth mentioning, it was and still is a cultural base, in addition to being religious, of the Western Christian world – we can say that, even having as a basis the moral teachings based on the idea of sin, forgiveness, heaven, hell, good and evil, there are several examples of men and women who resulted from their teachings. As much as the guidance and examples of humility, charity, hope and love were propagated as those that should be followed, the weight of original sin and everything that descends from it would also have to be fought, because it was present, even if unwillingly of the virtues required for a good human being. From this conception, a range of penances and punishments was born in order to heal the evil. It was precisely on this notion that a series of models and ideas were thought and architected, and the traditional roles division was being settled.

4 The temporalities of this invented tradition, according to Hobsbawm (2018), they consist, over all, of three aspects/ rituals/ strong events. The first is linked to the epigraph and it refers to how, first Eve, as a woman, and then Adam considered a man disobeyed God. The passage explains and attributes to Eve the vulnerability in the face of temptations and the idea that it was she who led man to sin and, therefore, it is mainly her fault for all the evil that derives from the act of disobeying. It was from her as a kind of anti-model that the pertinent roles were attributed to the man and the woman.

The second is the path that led to the strong, virile and provider man and the virtuous, fertile and obedient woman, which is embodied in the narratives related to the biblical characters descended from Cain (his brother Abel murderer) and Seth (the good son), the sinful couple descendants. Redemption was the man and woman path in search of forgiveness and the consequent growth due to the experiences lived and populated by trials, practices, punishments, rewards and learning, carried out in a process constituted by successive rituals whose function was to lead to female purity and male superiority. There are several episodes of moral background mentioned in the Bible that led to the remission of sins (whether original or lifelong). True trials and challenges to the supposedly provoked and conditioned Creator wills. Overcoming sin – those who sin will “die” – and being born, from death, a virtuous being, conscious, perfected, mature, capable, grown, transformed, whose stereotypes fall into figures very close to the Catholic saints.



Finally, the third ritual, the proof that what was requested was reached, the consecration: the purity of the soul, belonging to a genre and the permission to move forward, the consent to reproduce. Such consecration contains, on the reverse, infertility, the pain of early loss or the 'second chance'. There are small rites within the greater rite, which is that of the flesh conjunction: after the "marriage", carried out under previously established norms and there is a few or nothing to do with romantic feelings, new arrangements are triggered, and they are castrating, but also of ingenuity that fall within the delimitation of roles: to the man, the obligations of the providing father role; to the woman, a virtuous mother. This phenomenon crosses millennia and, even today, even with countless men and women constituting themselves in other ways, including contemplating other non-binary genres, it constitutes a successively reified ritual, centuries after centuries.

It is a long journey invariably "ordered" by the Creator and directed by his representatives on Earth and that goes from the union between man and woman to their descendants. Hard path that eliminates or submits the different, but that also led to an awareness and the construction of identities, subjectivities, beyond a tolerance range to the "new" human constitutions. It is necessary to move from an ideal life to real life, which makes "consecration" a broader aspect that contemplates the LGBTQIA+ community and new family typologies.

Historically, the prejudice attributed to intersexes is inexplicable in the absence of this ritualization. There are traditional currents that in the incessant search for the maintenance of binarism report and label any non-binary sexual orientation as sin. As a counterpoint, other intersectional currents increasingly seek to know the meaning and degree of sociocultural comprehensiveness that made possible the transformation of a ritual of sexualization, circumscribed to the male-woman binomial, into a collective academicization and extended to compulsory and school universalization. Still, this intersectionality seeks to break with the religious rite hold back taken in its axis, man-woman, as a nuclear family. Associated with this binary decline is the crisis of the nuclear family and its relationship with society. Will such a decline/death of binarism constitute a (re)birth?

The attribution of roles from the sexes and the Catholic tradition and, by extension, Christian presents different cycles, in the course of which the biological sex takes place, but not only it, because successive metamorphoses and conformations of the body have consecrated themselves, culminating in the

subject formation regardless of their biological constitution; therefore, no longer limited to religious segments at all levels, including those thought and executed by the school.

Analyzing the school rites, Magalhães (2017, p. 716) clarifies that "[...] in all school cycles there are repeated liturgies, albeit with different nature and accomplishment. But, in the long course, it is the same rite, replicated and multiplied, as if it was a succession of scales". When the author adds to his analysis the school constituent elements thought by Mèlich (1996 qtd. in MAGALHÃES, 2017), such as time, space and symbols of organization and effectiveness, in addition to school subjects, it helps us to think of school subjects as the result of their rites and as their potential reproducers inside and outside school. It is a way of thinking very close to Bourdieu and Passeron (2012) in "Reproduction"; however, distinguishing itself, because the school is attributed to the creation and ritualistic of norms.

In this sense, what is sought in this text, from intentionally caught legislation scattered over time, it is to discuss, in addition to these foundations hitherto listed, the creation, institutionalization and updating of the gender division custom based on biological sex and the roles division and, very particularly, the roles attributed to women, observing how the school was used for this. To this end, we will seek to highlight, from Magalhães (2017), the school rites in different records and manifestations, that is, the presence and variations of tradition, with emphasis on the school women education. We will also discuss how the school far from being a neutral institution, but constituted as a place of creation, conservation and resonance of socially constituted symbolic structures.

6

About rites, customs and traditions

Seeking to "debate the structure, foundations and timeliness of the rite, and particularly the educational rite and the school rite", Magalhães (2017, p. 716), from the school records, explores the history of institutions based on the assumption of education as a condition and human factor. According to the author, the school is an indispensable element for the formation of the human being. Without it, without its "service," the experience of humanity might not come out to its satisfaction. In this perspective, understanding its history and



rites it is a sine qua non condition to understand what are the results from it. As Magalhães himself (2004) states, when dealing with educational institutions:

A student-centered investigation including sequencing for beyond of schooltime, on the one hand, and the geographical zones, on the other hand, reveals how the educational institutions are implemented and how they affect the fate of a given territory, as well as the implications of culture, action and school and educational representations on the identarian and sociocultural groups and neo-communities construction (MAGALHÃES, 2004, p. 150, emphasis added).

Such meanings, in addition to conceiving the school and its rites and everything that results from it, leads us to question: how are school rites created? How are they instituted, institutionalized, legitimized? and why? Finally, what rites contribute to the preservation of traditions that dictate the division of roles based on biological sex?

When dealing with the double term custom-tradition, Hobsbawm (2018) makes it clear that:

The 'traditions' objective and characteristic, including those invented, it is the invariability. The real or forged past to which they refer imposes fixed practices (usually formalized) such as repetition. The 'custom', in traditional societies has a dual function as a motor and as a steering wheel. It does not prevent innovations and may change to some extent, although it is evidently too much over the requirement that must appear compatible or identical to the previous. Its function is to give any desired change (or resistance to innovation) the sanction of the precedent, historical continuity and natural rights as expressed in history (HOBSBAWM, 2018, p. 8-9, emphasis added).

7

The inevitability and dependence of customs on variability, as well as from tradition to invariability, they have been assisted throughout history. It is not uncommon for the customs and traditions in which we rely as a condition of existence and which, once questioned as to its meaning, we see no reason. When we specifically approach educational institutions (schools and universities, with their models and androcentric discourses), as well as when we look at the countless generations that of these institutions resulted, we notice the custom as the basis of methods and traditions as inventions that consolidate them and seek to

legitimize ideas and practices departing from male and power-held subjects, which includes dictating rules and actions. Whatever the ways of educating, the boy and the girl are educated from a predetermination from biological sex. That's the way it's been. In the history of Brazilian education stages, this separation was announced since colonial times.

As heirs of the Portuguese tradition, this perspective has been present since the first law, dated on October 15, 1827, which sought to regulate education in Brazilian lands post-Independence. In this law, there is the creation of schools for boys and girls. Even before it, in colonial Brazil, there was the Pombal movement, which made it clear, from the encyclopedic ideals of Antonio Ribeiro Sanches, that the woman – noble, worth mentioning – should be educated in the cloister, because:

[...] if these will be well-behaved in the knowledge of truly History and Religion, civil life, and duties, reducing all the education of these Noble girls to Geography, sacred and profane History, and to lordly handwork, as needlework, painting, and to upholstering, they did not lose as much time reading love stories and verses that are not sacred: and other pastimes, where not only the mood is wasted, but sometimes it corrupts; but the peyor of this life communicates to their children, brothers, and husbands (SANCHES, 1992, p. 192).

8

In other words, what was taught to women not only prepare them for domestic life, but divert them from a supposed evil path – as well as the families they were going to constitute as wives and mothers. The idea of original sin and the vile condition of women due to the Adam and Eve myth as announced in our epigraph, thus it becomes an integral part of educational science or what it should combat/eliminate. In an attempt to equate the possibilities of education, a tradition in the educational field was invented, sustained and based on a tripod whose ballast refers to the condition of biological sex, that women are mentally and physically vulnerable and fragile.

Based on the studies of Thomas Loqueur and Michel Foucault, Fabíola Rohden (2001) helps us to understand how Medicine helped in the maintenance of tradition, until the nineteenth century when the sexual difference and gender roles gained more defined contours. Especially because it was in the nineteenth century that the Medicine, through its scientists, demystified the idea inherited from the Greeks about single sex, so forceful until the Renaissance. If, until the Renaissance, the idea of what distinguished man from woman was the



penis growth, being the man the most powerful because of his organ at the end of the 16th century, when the body was unveiled in all its aspects by science, the difference between the biological sexes became evident. Despite this, it still fueled the idea of female inferiority, since only scientific discovery was not enough to equal them in terms of rights and duties. There was, as there is still, in the 21st century, the “social marks and cultural inscriptions” so dear to the differences of sex and gender; in other words, the difference between the sexes and their singularities was recognized, but not gender equality, and, in this difference, man remains “traditionally” superior. Rohden thus explained:

Among the most addressed topics, by physicians: the nature of the uterus and ovaries, virginity and puberty. This transition to the reproductive phase of female life, so evidenced by the appearance of menstruation, it is thematized in association with the fear of masturbation and nymphomania. At the same time, the idea of feminine frigidity is conceived and the consequent understanding that the woman's sexual pleasure was not necessary for procreation. There is also an idea of a supposed women moral fragility, more subject to sexual mismanagement, dissimulation, lying, whimsy, and endowed with mediocre intellectual skills (ROHDEN, 2001, p. 29-30).

Also, according to Rohden (2001), on the one hand, the medical discourse made clear the sexual differences and gave the woman a status no longer of sinful and inferior, as religion supposed, but of being susceptible to interactions and integrations of social life. On the other hand, the women participation in societal circles was still subordinate to their sexual condition, and this was loaded with symbols built by customs that although they were gaining new contours, served as a rule to tax and classify women according to their behavior: on the one hand, those considered mundane, depraved, prostitutes, witches, tomboys, hysterical, among others; on the other, the fragile, demure and homely, a mother and religious model, faithful wife, saint, among other typologies that attributed to women an adjective that qualified them socially. It was precisely to interfere in this double – depraved x demure – and support the medical discourse, woven under a science perspective, and therefore a “truth” exponent, that the school was triggered from a new model, once it was considered to have an:

[...] educational system that did not prepare the girl for the responsibilities of life, which she binds on humanity ghastly consequences

that do not escape even to an unscrupulous observer, it urges the medical staff, which is aware of the effects of an education that excludes the whole notion of physiology, to raise its voice in favor of the public education reform, because according to Balzac and repeated by Pestalozzi, 'le future des nations repose sur l'education des mères de famille' (RENNOTTE, 1895 qtd. in BRENES, 1991, p. 146).

10 In this crusade, the participation of doctors was significant and decisive, as it gave the school elements that forged it and, more than that, boosted it as a space for socialization and reproduction of medical precepts, soon conforming a custom that was beginning to modernize. Although the arguments were distinct, the woman continued as inferior, now no longer sinful, but fragile and, once again, submissive. As mentioned, this tradition was initiated with religion and it found clinical elements for its perpetuation in culture and support in the school environment. For that matter, we highlight as crucial moments the declaration of independence, on September 7, 1822, the Proclamation of the Brazilian Republic, on November 15, 1889, and the political opening, which occurred in 1985, in addition to the provincial and state laws, we had national educational reforms that assists us to understand this invented tradition, which had a driving force at school.

Among the legislations, we highlight for this analysis, the Law of General Education of October 15, 1827, which "orders the creation of first-letter schools in all cities, villas and most populous places of the Empire"; Decree No. 7,247 of April 19, 1879, which "reforms primary and secondary education in the municipality of the Court and higher education throughout the Empire"; Decree No. 981, of November 8, 1890, which "approves the Regulation of Primary and Secondary Education of the Federal District"; Decree-Law No. 4,244, of April 9, 1942 (Organic Law of secondary education); Law No. 4,024, of December 20, 1961, which "establishes the Guidelines and Bases of National Education"; and Law No. 9,394, of December 20, 1996, which "establishes the national education guidelines".

Such legislations are read through Faria Filho's (1998, p. 211) point of view based on Derrida, whom the importance of legislation as a source is explicit, since only they reveal to us "[...] the legal order of the pedagogical process, as well as establishing [...] the discursive repertoire that the legislation makes available and set in motion bearing in mind to shape the pedagogical



field". In this sense, such laws can be conceived from two angles: first, as the product of a period; second, as the yearnings of what was desired. Therefore, they are crucial elements to understand how rites are forged and how customs and traditions are invented and perpetuated.

The Laws, school and tradition

From the Independence of Brazil and its first Constitution in 1824, the primary education was conceived as free and for "all citizens" (Art. XXXII). Also, in this Constitution it was determined, in its article XXXIII, the establishment of "Colleges, and Universities, where would be taught the elements of Science, Fine Arts, and Letters". Seeking to fulfill this determination, the first Law of General Education was created. It was October 15, 1827, when the decree was sanctioned and, based on it, the Lancaster or mutual method was officially implemented in Brazilian schools, as well as its view, although distorted, on the need for women's school education. It was through such legislation that women came to be idealized as a subject of education, despite being already educated in the domestic sphere, as Vasconcelos (2007) reveals when dealing with the nineteenth-century Brazilian education. In Article 11, it was established that there would be "schools for girls in the most populous cities and towns, in which the Presidents in Council deem necessary". In Article 12:

The Masters, in addition to what is stated in Art. 6, excluding the notions of geometry and limited to the instruction of arithmetic only its four operations, will also teach the gifts that serve to domestic economy; and those women, who being Brazilian and recognized integrity and more knowledge in the assessments made in the form of Art. 7., they will be appointed by the Presidents in Council (LAW OF GENERAL EDUCATION, 1827, emphasis added).

Analyzing such legislation as the product of an era, what is perceived is that in an attempt to follow what occurred in the rest of the world, since women's education was already a reality, it was institutionalized. Certainly, it was shaped by religious and medical parameters, but it was an increasingly imperative practice, given the real needs for training. The education offered to D. Pedro II's first teacher, Mariana Carlota de Verna, it reveals the type of education that was

already used in Europe, and although it took place domestically, it was required in Brazil (VASCONCELOS, 2017).

This law reveals to us the search for the invented tradition that women were intellectually fragile sedimentation. Excluding Geometry – a branch of Mathematics that is dedicated to forms –, limiting Arithmetic to 4 operations, excluding fractions, power, logarithm etc. and teaching gifts that echo in the domestic economy, such as sewing, embroidering and cooking, it was evidently a Brazilian interpretation of the Lancaster method. This was due to some defenders of such circumscription were optimum for the women and that such limitations had been fruit of the historical time. However, it is precisely to these marks of coloniality and androcentrism in Brazil that we dedicate ourselves in this text. Analyzing the Lancasterian method transposition from England to Brazil, Ferreira and Schwartz (2014) not only show Lancaster's ideas and conceptions about the education of English women, but also explain how Brazil took over the author's ideas from wrong translations.

According to the researchers, the author of the method, Joseph Lancaster was based on some assumptions that deserve to be highlighted. The first was that especially the lower classes women participated in the education of men; the second was that men and women learned equally; the third stated that women could support themselves and their families and leverage the English economy by working in industries. For this, they should be taught as men and considering their "natural" vocations, which could be incorporated into the textile industries, they should learn more, such as working with needles. In Brazil, however, this handwork was understood as cutting, sewing and embroidery aimed at the domestic environment, an environment in which Geometry was not necessary and in which the 4 mathematical operations, associated with reading and writing, and Christian religious principles were sufficient. In summary, the authors explain:

In the gap of geometry, the domestic work of sewing and embroidery was suggested, in a wrong literal translation of the expression needle work; of the Lancasterian Method. It should be noted that, if in Lancaster the needle work; was the work with needles, a manual skill taught to prepare labor for manufacturing weaving, in Brazil, the mistaken translation ended up directing the woman to domestic sewing activities (FERREIRA; SCWARTZ, 2014, p. 69).



This "misinterpretation" was in line with the tradition based on the idea that, with mental utensils provided by the schooling process, women could read forbidden books, exchange love letters, humiliate men and commit the sin of vanity and they would cost in excess to the public coffers. Thus, what can be apprehended, despite this being the first Law of General Education and being the law that introduces and institutionalizes women as a subject of school education, is that, also by her, especially by her guidelines, we see the beginning of ritualistic that ended up encouraging customs and legitimizing the tradition that differentiated genders from the female sex.

When we "enter" in the schools of that period, we can realize how the rites based on the division of the sexes and genders attribute to the female condition a place of imprisonment of their bodies, their minds and desires. All of them shaped not only by the school buildings and spaces in them distinct for boys and girls, but also by the obligation of the skirt and the "combination", which, together with the idea of morality, limited the movements and the appearance of the body. The types of games prohibited, such as those with the ball, among many other conditions also had the intention of preserving/limiting the woman in the face of her moral and corporeal "fragilities".

As a result of a social demand for trained midwives, the Law of October, 1832, which established the Faculties of Medicine of Rio de Janeiro and Bahia for men, also created the midwives' course for women. According to Mott (1999), the midwives without any training finding, associated with the refusal of parturients to doctors' care and the deaths of children for reasons that could be solved by medical science, it was a reason for the childbirths course creation. However, given the requirements and the little appreciation, the demand was minimal. Still, through the author's view:

Despite the multiple reasons given for instructing midwives, very little has been done. The recognition of a regular education needs for midwives' instruction does not seem to have been an indisputable issue in Brazilian society during the nineteenth century. If the midwives' course creation projects reveal the concern with the subject, the restriction to operating only two schools throughout the empire, the requirements for admission, the lack of practical teaching, the delay in creating a maternity school, in addition to the lack of effective supervision to prohibit the exercise of the profession to those who did not have a diploma, it seems to say that this concern was very restricted (MOTT, 1999, p. 135).

Five decades after the Law of General Education creation, the school access situation began to change in the legislation for women, but nothing in relation to the rites. The Decree No. 7,247, of April 19, 1879, which "reform primary and secondary education in the Court municipality and higher education in the entire Empire", in its § 3, makes it clear that "in current 1st grade schools, or those the will be established, for the female sex, it will be received students until the age of 10 years"; and in § 20 it states that "registration referred to in § 16, 17, 18 and 19 was allowed to female individuals, for whom there will be separated seats in classes". These items dealt respectively with the General course, the Pharmacy course, the obstetric course and for dental surgeon. This decree also emphasized under what conditions the enrollment of women would take place, since age was also a decisive factor for their acceptance in the courses.

When such determinations are put into practice, the female condition takes on the ascension in the intellectual and professional hierarchy, especially when it is added to the number of women who have already emerged in the periodical press. However, it cannot disregard the way in which such "permission" occurred and how it affected the number, profile and permanence/withdrawal of those who entered in the Brazilian higher education courses, at the time restricted to Medicine, Law and Engineering, in addition to Philosophy and Theology, offered in Catholic Seminaries for priests training.

There were few interested women and fewer those who were able to enter – because of the demands –, even rarer those who actually enrolled university and graduated in the nineteenth century. When Barreto (2016) and Barreto e Silva (2021) analyzed the trajectories of Josepha Águeda and Maria Amélia Cavalcante de Albuquerque, they expose the types of rites and obstacles that women had to overcome to study Medicine in the 1800s, given the customs and traditions that insisted on putting them in the place of inferiority, including within educational institutions. To get an idea, the enrollment should be made by parents or husbands and when in classrooms, women, even adults, they had separate room to attend classes. They still had to deal with nicknames and public scorn that they were afflicted with. Among insults as "tomboy", "fragile" and "prostitutes", the women who dared to enter higher education had to deal with many obstacles creating shields and tactics to help them following the imposed rites to graduate, in addition to their studies. And it is worth mentioning that this did not guarantee work, respect or even their livelihood.



With the Proclamation of the Republic in 1889, the military, engineer and member of the Republican party Benjamin Constant was elevated to the position of Minister of Instruction, which he held for just over a year, when he died. In this brief period of time, however, he was responsible for Decree No. 981, of November 8, 1890, which "approves the Regulation of Primary and Secondary Education of the Federal District". In this sense, he coordinated three profound changes in the teaching of the Federal District that indirectly impacted education in the country: the strengthening of normal state schools and federal secondary public schools (previously there was only Colégio D. Pedro II) and the non-mandatory religion teaching. He also proposed the teaching focused on the Humanities replacement by science-based teaching, more precisely in the positivism of which Physics and Mathematics were the main sciences. Such a change — which met most of the complaints who saw religion as a backwardness and science as the means of a country economic ascension — also disfavored female education. This is because, by valuing mathematics and excluding much of its content from the female school's curriculum, the women rise, that could count on science as an important element, was, once again, postponed.

It should be noted that the educational reforms initiated by Benjamin Constant in the beginning of the 20th century, they had great difficulty to get out of the paper, there weren't buildings to house the schools, there were no teachers to work in them and a large part of the population did not understand the schooling importance, since the school's role as the nation progress assistant was not yet recognized by all. In addition, we had a recent past of slavery and a significant increase in population — about 17 million of inhabitants. This increase was also due to the growing number of immigrants who arrived here to work in agriculture, having a percentage of almost 85% of illiterate people, about 13.5 million of inhabitants.

The Benjamin Constant reform, which, despite not having been put into practice as originally thought, it served as inspiration for all the others that succeeded it, whether they were against it or in favor of what the Prime Minister of Education of the Republic proposed. From Epiácio Pessoa (1901) through Rivadávia Correia (1911) and Carlos Maximiliano (1915) to the initial state reforms in the 1920s, all of them had as a principal schooling and literacy, in order to meet the demands of the recent republican nation. Such demands had the workers training as a goal, as explained by Bomeny:

Those who inhabited the lowest step of the hierarchy were exactly the least protected from the State all kinds of prejudices, attendance or attention. Brazil entered the twentieth century as a highly stratified society and governed by a small elite, mostly white people. The ideas that labor would conform orderly and more disciplined mentalities, and that countryside establishment would avoid urban upheavals supported the Republican ideal that transpired in the reform programs then proposed (BOMENY, 2015, n/p).

At this stage, the education of women despite attempts to convince their importance to achieve progress and the fact that schooling is the means to empower everyone indistinctly followed with customs. In addition, the tradition intensified that women should continue with the destinations imposed on them, either by their parents, by religion, by their husband, by their male children, or by the State.

Analyzing the curriculum for men and women, the division between sexes is evident and how roles continue to be forged without the experience and the successful examples of women pioneers in specific areas. We bring, as an example, 2 elements in the text of the positivist Benjamin Constant² reform that express the features of the offered education: first, to keep the determination of different schools for boys and girls followed by a direction and also specific school teaching. In other words, man teaches man to be man and woman teaches woman to be woman. Excepting for boys up to 8 years old, in which it was understood that, clothed with the maternal spirit, female teachers could teach in male schools and that boys up to this age could attend female schools.

A second element contained in the text, which is linked to secondary primary schools, it is that "practical notion of the ideas of masculine and feminine, singular and plural" should be taught and that girls should continue to teach, as in the Empire, needle work, in addition to "Froebelian exercises. Folded, woven, braided. Modeling elements" (BRAZIL, 1890, § 2).

When Tarcísio Vago (2000) investigated the school culture and the children bodies cultivation in the city of Belo Horizonte in the first two decades of the twentieth century, especially after the reform of Primary Education promoted by the Minas Gerais government in 1906, he shows not only what was thought about and for the small bodies from Belo Horizonte, but, above all, how school was fundamental to the project. In the research, Vago (2000) highlights what had been thought of as ideal, personified in the 1906 reform.



In this perspective, the school space combined with the curriculum was decisive for what we understand here as the invention of the tradition as understanding the school as a space that dictates how bodies should be and what they should be allocated for. He explains:

Anchored in assumptions of a decanted scientific rationality, highlighting its harmony with racist and hygienist theories that circulated in the country, in its new mold, the school was designed as an institution capable of introjecting in children ways judged as superior, ways considered civilized, guiding them to assume behaviors entirely different from those they had. In this movement, the children's bodies became the target of the school's investment, being placed at the center of educational practices: constituting it, or reconstituting it, rationally became the school's attribution (VAGO, 2000, p. 126).

Thus, in Belo Horizonte, the school was also activated in other cities, in other states, in other countries. As Durkheim (2013) would say that the school has the function of being a place where the older generation seeks to promote in the younger generation knowledge considered essential for what is considered civility. It is a place, therefore, that presupposes physical, intellectual and moral states established by and for society. Not without reason the school need to capture and echo what society wants and determines in the name of the common good, in the name of the civilizing process, in the name of a culture supremacy to the nature detriment. In this perspective, in modernity, man and, by extension, the human is considered the fruit of education and, therefore, superior to nature.

Thus, the spaces that constitute school and that last without many changes are potentiators of many male practices, at the same time that they limit female practices. It is not unknown by the history of Brazilian education how school architecture was designed and executed in favor of the division of the sexes, after all there are still ritualistically spaces destined for men and women and nothing more.

The Organic Law of Secondary Education (Decree-Law No. 4.244, of April 9, 1942), created during the New State, under the command of Getúlio Vargas and under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Health explains, in its title III, the continuity of the tradition, since, when guaranteeing female secondary education, it defines it as follows:

Art. 25. The following special requirements shall be complied with in female secondary education:

1. It is recommended that secondary education for women be carried out in educational establishments of exclusive female attendance.
2. In secondary schools attended by men and women, their education will be provided in exclusively female classes. This rule alone will leave to invigorate for a specific reason, and given special authorization of the Ministry of Education.
3. The subject of domestic economy will be included in the third and fourth grades of the high school course and in all grades of the classical and scientific courses.
4. The methodological orientation of the programs will focus on the nature of the female personality as well as the woman mission within home (BRAZIL, 1942, Art. 25).

18 The century has changed, the political regime, the idea of school, but not the women conception and how, what and why they must learn. Even after the woman had been educated, graduated as a teacher, physician, lawyer, among other professions, and had her participation in politics effectively since 1932, the school felt the duty to reserve for her a supposed exemplary formation, eminently feminine and orchestrated from the male baton, in which the most essential aspect was the home commitment.

The 1960s was another watershed in Brazilian politics and national education. If, on the one hand, we had the first law that established the Guidelines and Bases of National Education (Law no. 4.024, 1961) it was in April 1964 that Brazil underwent a sudden change in politics. The anti-democratic regime leveraged a series of changes that strongly reverberated in the Brazilians lives and education, which included a new Constitution and the reformulation of the Law of Guidelines and Base (Law no. 5.692, August, 1971), which among other things led to cuts in subsidies for education. From the point of view of access and curriculum of educational institutions, such legislation did not condition sexual differences, at least explicitly. This situation was maintained mainly with the political opening in 1985, from the 1988 Citizen Constitution and the new law that established the Guidelines and Bases of National Education, Law No. 9,394 of 1996, in force until today.

From the point of view of legislation, the difference between the sexes and the allocation of roles with losses for women are no longer regulated. As if



they were all “equal before the law.” In such legislation, the words “woman”, “man”, “girl”, “boy”, “male” and “female” are not even found. Thus, due to the modern scientific and pedagogical conceptions, the school started to be governed by the equality of sexes and genders, from a normativity perspective. This had a very positive impact on women's access to school, as demonstrated by the censuses on literacy and schooling of women who, from 1980 to the last, in 2010, bring them as a majority literate, schooled and in higher education³. However, culturally and traditionally impregnated with the differentiations and the consequent treatments given to one and the other sex and gender, the school still contemplates, in its structure, this distinction, mainly because its teaching staff still carries sexist formations and habits arising from this androcentric culture that was established in the school space, even having it as a space of reproduction.

Thus, men, women, biological sex, gender roles are a conceptual sequence that has been established and still remains hierarchically in the school space. They are representations that express a dynamic, a desire, a vision of the world of religion, customs, tradition, which, although they do not correspond to the field of education and school specifically, make up, what, based on Magalhães (2017), we call educational sociocultural. Such concepts, sometimes mediated by regulations, sometimes by behaviors and practices, combine behavior rules that have cemented them culturally and sustain the tradition.

In this sense, the school was constituted as a space that gives sequence, reproduces or even encourages mechanisms for the difference's reproduction. Its rites contemplate a division and an order that give foundation to the school prejudiced structure. Even today we contemplate the fruits of claims of groups that think and conceive the school as a place of access and permanence for all, the rites still need to be discussed, otherwise the school will remain unfair and reproductive of inequalities – as Bourdieu criticizes and as required by those who argue that “boys wear blue and girls wear pink”. This leads us to understand that throughout its existence, especially over the last 200 years in Brazil, the school has been structured by pedagogical currents that condition its *raison d'être*, based on the need for education, civilization and progress, the educational rationality that seeks to meet the need to educate was conceived based on sexual differentiations, that impacted and insist on impacting the division of social roles.

Conclusion

Hobsbawm (2018) points out how traditions are invented. According to his view:

The term invented tradition means a set of practices that are normally regulated by tacitly or openly accepted rules; these ritualistic or symbolic nature practices aim at inculcating certain values and behavior rules through repetition, which automatically implies a continuity of the past (HOBBSAWM, 2018, p. 8).

Thus, the school has been one of the spaces in which practices are forged and put into practice due to the maintenance of traditions. Through school culture from the perspective of Juliá (2001, p. 10) – as “[...] a set of norms that define knowledge to teach and conduct to inculcate, and a set of practices that allow the transmission of this knowledge and the incorporation of these behaviors [...]” –, the school reproduces customs, which insists on forming boys and girls, men and women, when it tries to shape their subjectivities and identities, as if that was its role.

20 Throughout history, we can notice that whether from religious ancestry, or through medical and/or positivist thought, or in the name of honor and good customs, the school has served the traditions. As we tried to share in this text, one of them has been the differentiation of genders based on biological sex to the detriment of the female gender. After all, as Magalhães (2017, p. 719) points out the “[...] key holder of the written culture, school culture influences the cultural and artistic canon and legitimizes collective memory”. As such, it has printed in the pages of the history of education in Brazil, the marks of an androcentric culture.

What we seek to unveil in these pages was precisely the path that this tradition has taken and that comprises a succession of phases through which school education has passed and involves legislation, spaces, times, methods, curriculum, teacher training, among other aspects that make up learning and the right to education. And, regardless of any change or improvement in the field, the relationship that one has with biological sex and gender still follows the traditional argument that women should have different treatment and gain cause for male culture, in most cases. This is because traditions have become increasingly important, since it is understood that a country without traditions does not sustain



itself. Therefore, in their name, symbolic and ritual complexes that carry customs and legitimize traditions as an important factor of culture, memory and history are created.

Certainly, despite still being receptive to discourses and practices no longer compatible with the diversity that prevails in the 21st century, the school has acquired new contours and configurations, since it is involved in several movements related to the right to education, differences, sexual orientations and gender identities. In order that, at this year when we celebrate the 200 years of independence of Brazil, when traditions are evoked and history is called the scene as processes authenticator, it is essential that we keep in mind how traditions are invented and how the school is part of this process.

Notas

- 1 This article is the result of a research funded by CNPq (Chamada Universal MCTIC/CNPq 2018) and counted on Capes/Proap resource for translation and spelling correction.
- 2 Especially in the 1920s, August Comte's positivism was one of the main elements that contributed to the idea that women should be educated, since they were the first teachers of their children – which was also understood as a natural vocation for teaching.
- 2 In 1920, from the 7,493,357 literate people, 4,470 were men and 3,023,289 were women. This male supremacy remains, according to the 1940, 1950, 1960 and 1970 Censuses. It begins to change later, resulting, according to the 1980 Census, in female leadership, as of the 69,793,993 literate people, 34,862,490 were women and 34,841,503 were men. Although, this situation was strengthening; in the last Census of 2010, women are in the leadership of the 3 levels of education. To be clear, from the 157,628,796 literate people, 81,188,216 were women and 76,440,580 were men.

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