

# Childhood and Education in times of dictatorships in Brazil, Spain and Portugal

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## Presentation

The History of Childhood certainly gained another relevance with the publication of the book *L'enfant et la vie familiale sous l'Ancien Régime*, by Philippe Ariès, in 1960, which presented us with a controversial vision of the evolution of the family and the place of child in society between the middle ages and contemporary society. In a way, History emerged, in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, for the study of a topic that Medicine, Law and, above all, Psychology and Pedagogy had been cherishing, at least since the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Of course, interest in childhood comes from previous centuries, but today we can agree with Ellen Key who prophesied, at the beginning of the century, that we were facing the century of the child. In fact, the effort to dignify and understand childhood had effects on successive policies in most countries, which does not mean that the situation of children has changed simultaneously in different territories and population groups. If it is true that we can highlight an ideological and pedagogical path since the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with the League of Nations adopting the Geneva Declaration on the Rights of the Child, drawn up by Eglantyne Jebb, and which came to be recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the States Parties and proclaimed, in 1959, by the General Assembly of the United Nations and even more pronounced when, in November 1989, the United Nations unanimously adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child, much remained to be done in favor of the recognition of childhood in the world until the end of this millennium. On the other hand, the countries experienced regimes that did not give the same importance to childhood and had to face cyclical situations that hindered the implementation of policies consistent with scientific statements and the articulations of international declarations. Attention to children and the way in which the recognition of childhood is affirmed depends largely on the economic, political, social and cultural circumstances of countries and regions and also on the conditions involving different social groups and the beliefs that govern them. The situations and visions place children in very different educational environments, regardless of whether we consider the same chronological period and identical political regime. The most consistent studies on the History of Childhood are those that look at children and attitudes towards them in their context, seeking an understanding of the possibilities that society faces and without prior judgments. But History remakes itself whenever it is viewed differently and new elements are added to the questioning of the past. Therefore, we believe that it is still necessary to continue with historical studies on the situation and education of children to understand how much they are hostages to the fate of their birth and the material and cultural conditions that surround them, hence the reason for this dossier. The aim was to provide an opportunity to reflect on the situation of children's education within the framework of political dictatorships that prevailed in different decades and in different countries.

The set of articles in this dossier, a total of ten, addresses different geographically situated issues, distributing their research across Brazil, six, one with focus on Spain and the rest on Portugal. Using different sources and sometimes resorting to cross-referencing them, this body mobilizes archival sources, legislation, the press and different periodicals, as well as other publications, namely textbooks and school manuals. As a whole, they analyze and discuss education and teaching in Brazil, Spain and Portugal, during times of dictatorial regimes, during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Three of these articles present studies focused on

childhood education, whether from the perspective of pedagogical discourses, the analysis of foster care institutions or state policy options aimed at childhood. Another article presents representations of children from a publication of the time. Two others explore institutions that support children and young people, with a focus more on their ideological integration or in the world of work. Finally, one of the studies scrutinizes educational literacy policy and the use of unqualified teaching agents.

The dossier opens with For an understanding of the slow and inevitable evolution of Early Childhood Education: Analysis of the discourse on Early Childhood Education in the Portuguese Estado Novo (1933-1974), authored by Carla Vilhena, António Gomes Ferreira and Luís Mota focused on the analysis of discourses on childhood education, based on a set of education and teaching magazines that circulated in Portugal during the 41 years of the Estado Novo, capturing the evolution of the validity and prevalence of a vision of a welfare nature (1933-1944), supported by a medical-hygienist discourse, for the predominance of a psychopedagogical discourse combined with the primacy of the Montessori method, revaluing the educational function concomitantly with the defense of the generalization of pre-school education.

Following this, an article signed by Elizabeth Figueiredo de Sá and Betânia de Oliveira Laterza Ribeiro, entitled Assist and Educate: The National Children's Department and its actions in Cuiabá-MT (1940-1948), focuses on the implementation, in terms of state, of the bases of protection for motherhood, childhood and adolescence defined by the Getúlio Vargas government through the objectives established when the National Children's Department (DNCR) was created. Mobilizing periodicals, bulletins and other publications from the DNCR, alongside the legislation, the authors note the assistance initiatives in the State of Mato Grosso, characterizing the investment made in childcare, within the framework of the National Department of Children and the Brazilian Legião da Boa Vontade (LBV).

Based on the figurational sociology of Norbert Elias, in *O Lar Santa Rita* in the municipality of Dourados/MS: the origins of care and the "civilizing etiquette" (1965-1982), Priscila Demeneghi da Silva Vargas and Magda Sarat combine the analysis of sources and institutional documents relating to the management of Lar Santa Rita, between 1965 and 1982, with four interviews with individuals who were part of the institution's history, to describe it as a space that received children with a history of abandonment and whose program and activities were characterized by creating, care and educate in accordance with the cultural standards of Golden society from the sixties to the eighties of the 20th century. In *Narrations for the fascistization of childhood* in the book "O Brasil É Bom" (1938): *Pinocchiate à brasileira?*, Ademir Valdir dos Santos based on the analysis of the book *O Brasil é bom*, published in the late 1930s, by the National Department of Propaganda (D.N.P.), develops a comparative study, using content analysis, with the pinocchiate produced in the environment of Italian fascism, allowing it to uncover how the aforementioned book contains the concepts it mobilizes, the explanations it calls for, as well as in the warnings and orders regarding the foundations of human action recommended for Brazilian children, "fascitizing" narratives.

Samanta Vanz, Elisângela Cândido da Silva Dewes and José Edimar de Souza sign *Representations of Nationalism and Patriotism in the Primary Education Schools of Caxias do Sul (1939-1955)* which transports us to the universe of school culture in primary education, in the forties and fifties of the last century, in a municipality in the state of Rio Grande do Sul. The study is based on a diverse corpus of documents – photographs, circulars, teaching programs, an education and teaching periodical, other products from the local press – analyzed from the perspective of history cultural and consequent perception that these sources, as forms of expression by subjects, contain representations. From the documentary analysis, it is evident how the ideas of renewing pedagogical practices were disseminated coexisting with practices that promoted behaviors to strengthen the patriotic spirit, through the bias of nationalist ideas of a Brazilian citizen model.

Seeking a reading of the school as a means of operationalizing and strengthening the ideas of the Brazilian civil-military dictatorship (1964-1985), using documentary and bibliographic sources, textbooks and the legislative body subject to content analysis, Rosimar Serena Siqueira Esquinsani and Sidinei Cruz Sobrinho, in *Childhood and school culture: textbooks and the marks of the Civil-Military Dictatorship from 1964 to 1985*, problematize school culture and textbooks using, in particular, those on History and Social Studies and Moral and Civic education, highlighting the use of the school as a vehicle of that civil-military power, revealing how the school constituted an arena for the adoption of discursive strategies aligned with the context and circumstances of the dictatorship.

Margarida Louro Felgueiras and José Pedro Amorim, based on a literature review and the use of archival sources, present us with an understanding of the policy for creating school posts/teaching posts. In *School leaders and literacy of poor children in Portugal (1930-1976)* they show how this educational policy option achieved literacy for the most disadvantaged sections of the population and those who lived in rural or peripheral urban areas. The teaching agents, designated as school regents, were characterized by being, in general, holders of qualifications at the 4th class level, because they were recognized as having good moral behavior and because they demonstrated adherence to the regime. They earned half the salary of a normalist, usually worked in their places of origin and constituted an almost exclusively female body. According to the study presented, its role contributed to making communities more impervious to different behaviors and values, as well as translating into a control mechanism for teaching staff.

The socio-educational proposal of the Military Regime present at FUNABEM and the 1st Minors Forum constitutes a study to understand the relationship between work and education in the socio-educational proposal aimed at poor children and adolescents during the Military Regime, based on documents from the National Welfare Foundation Minor (FUNABEM). Authored by Maria Escolástica de Moura Santos and Mayara Macêdo Melo, this article focuses on three axes, the educational purposes and means, the relationship between the educational proposal and the ideology of national security and the link between assistance and education for poor children and adolescents and the preparation of cheap labor for the job market. Using content analysis, the authors highlight the centrality of education in ensuring the conformity of minors to the current social order, guiding training towards manual trades, whose purpose was to mold “adults useful to themselves and the nation”.

Patricia Delgado-Granados and Bárbara de las Heras Monastero, the authors of *The Social Assistance of the Falange and the identity construction of the new childhood in the Franco dictatorship*, focus their attention on the theme of childhood during the dictatorship of Francisco Franco (1939-1975), from the Falangist institution “Auxílio Social”, which was responsible for “disciplining the child’s soul and resocializing the school population in the territories of the defeated”, highlighting the mechanisms used to construct the identity of the “New Child” which differed from the a reality known to the children who attended “Auxílio Social” and served to promote social acceptance of the regime. Exploring news and documentaries, the authors reveal a propaganda instrument that served the audiovisual dissemination of national-unionist and national-Catholic values.

In *A Mocidade Portuguesa (MP) and Mocidade Portuguesa Feminina (MPF): education and national identity in the Salazar period*, Amanda Marques de Carvalho Gondim and Edson Tenório da Silva draw on a set of publications from both institutions – *Jornal da MP*, the Bulletin of the National Commissariat, the Bulletin for leaders of MPF Centros Primários and the newspaper *Lusitas* – to highlight the importance of the two organizations for the dissemination of nationalist ideals through the education of children and young people through the inculcation of a “moral education focused on values Christian and civic, combating liberalism and Marxism”. The authors do not fail to highlight the occasional lack of resources to fulfill the aim, as well as the “direct interference of the Portuguese dictatorial government in the management of the two institutions”.