
Women of the Nossa Senhora do Amparo Domestic School: the first class of 1871

Micheli da Cruz Cardoso Tavares
Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro (Brasil)
Sistema de Ensino Bernoulli (Brasil)
Maria Celi Chaves Vasconcelos
Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro (Brasil)

Abstract

This first class of women who entered the Nossa Senhora do Amparo Domestic School in its inauguration year, 1871, focusing on the professions they pursued after completing their studies. Specifically, it highlights the students' arrival and departure, their origins, ages, guardians, illnesses, acquired abilities, and other notes from their individual records. This is historical documentary research, whose methodological procedures involve two main sources: the first Enrollment Book of the Nossa Senhora do Amparo Domestic School from 1871 to 1893; and the Student Exit Record Book. The analysis of the sources allowed us to infer results based on theoretical aspects of micro-history (Ginzburg, 1976), offering details closer to the events. The school, built in Petrópolis, was expected to train women capable of working and earning their own living, at a time when the concept of female education was focused solely on the condition of wife and mother.

Keywords: Nossa Senhora do Amparo Domes article analyzes the trajectory of thtic School. Father Siqueira. Women's Education. 19th-Century Female Education.

Mulheres da Escola Doméstica Nossa Senhora do Amparo: a primeira turma de 1871

Resumo

O artigo tem como objetivo analisar o percurso da primeira turma de mulheres que ingressaram na Escola Doméstica de Nossa Senhora do Amparo, no ano

de sua inauguração, 1871, enfocando as profissões que exerceram a partir da conclusão dos seus estudos. Em um plano mais específico, evidenciam-se a entrada e a saída das alunas, suas procedências, idades, protetores, as doenças que as atingiram, as capacidades apreendidas e outras anotações constantes dos registros individuais de cada uma. Trata-se de uma pesquisa histórico-documental, cujos procedimentos metodológicos remetem a duas fontes principais: o primeiro Livro de Matrículas da Escola Doméstica de Nossa Senhora do Amparo de 1871 a 1893; e o Livro de Registro de Saída das alunas. As análises das fontes permitiram inferir resultados com base em aspectos teóricos da micro-história (Ginzburg, 1976), oferecendo detalhes mais próximos dos acontecimentos. A escola, construída em Petrópolis, tinha como expectativa formar mulheres aptas para trabalhar e obter o seu próprio sustento, em uma época que a concepção de educação feminina era voltada apenas para a condição de esposa e mãe.

Palavras-chave: Escola Doméstica de Nossa Senhora do Amparo. Padre Siqueira. Formação de mulheres. Educação feminina oitocentista.

2 **Mujeres inscritas en las páginas de la Escuela Doméstica de Nossa Senhora do Amparo: la primera clase de 1871**

Resumen

Este artículo analiza la trayectoria de la primera clase de mujeres que ingresaron a la Escuela Doméstica Nossa Senhora do Amparo en su año inaugural, 1871, centrándose en las profesiones que ejercieron tras finalizar sus estudios. Específicamente, destaca la llegada y salida de las alumnas, sus orígenes, edades, tutores, enfermedades, habilidades adquiridas y otras anotaciones de sus expedientes individuales. Se trata de una investigación documental histórica, cuyos procedimientos metodológicos implican dos fuentes principales: el primer Libro de Matrícula de la Escuela Doméstica Nossa Senhora do Amparo, de 1871 a 1893; y el Libro de Registro de Egreso de Alumnas. El análisis de las fuentes permitió inferir resultados basados en aspectos teóricos de la microhistoria (Ginzburg, 1976), ofreciendo detalles más cercanos a los acontecimientos. La escuela, construida en Petrópolis, debía formar mujeres capaces de trabajar y ganarse la vida, en una época en que el concepto de

educación femenina estaba centrado únicamente en la condición de esposa y madre.

Palabras clave: Escuela Doméstica Nossa Senhora do Amparo. Padre Siqueira. Educación de la Mujer. Educación Femenina del Siglo XIX.

Introduction

In the second half of the 19th century, in Petrópolis, a city located in the state of Rio de Janeiro, a priest named João Francisco de Siqueira Andrade, better known as father Siqueira, idealized and built an institution dedicated to women, where they acquired knowledge and skills for work, in order to remove the disadvantaged female childhood from poverty.

The construction of the Nossa Senhora do Amparo Domestic School began in 1869, when the father acquired the land on the corner of one of the main avenues of the city of Petrópolis. Then, relying on donations and the work of benefactors of that society, he built a monumental work of neoclassical architecture, very much in vogue during this period. Currently, the School still exists with its original structure, witnessing the greatness of the task undertaken by the father (Tavares and Vasconcelos, 2023).

The Nossa Senhora do Amparo Domestic School, inaugurated in 1871, intended that the welcomed girls, upon completing their studies, would be able to provide their own support and lead a "dignified" life, employing themselves as teachers, maids, caregivers, companions, among other nomenclatures found in the sources.

The priest believed that aligning education and work would lift women out of poverty and prostitution – in which many found themselves at that time. He publicly expressed his beliefs in articles sent to contemporary periodicals with the construction of the school, in which he justified his project by stating: "[...] there is only one means for true emancipation, there is only one way to obtain the name of good and free citizens: instruction gathered to work" (Correio Paulistano Newspaper, 1870). These ideas were quite unusual for the time, being dissonant to what society prescribed and accepted, as the consolidated discourse was that women should be educated only to the role of mother, responsible for the maintenance of the home and the teachings of

sons and daughters, with limited or no opportunity to participate in public life.

Given the demonstration of a unique idea in its time, this article aims to analyze the course of the first class of women who entered the Nossa Senhora do Amparo Domestic School in the year of its inauguration, 1871, focusing on the professions they practiced from the conclusion of their studies. These data were accessed in the school enrollment books preserved in the School Museum Room, filed from 1871 to 1889, when some former students already appear as teachers of the institution. In a more specific plan, the entry and exit of the students, their origins, their ages, their guardians, the illnesses that affected them, the acquired abilities and other personal descriptions in detail, contained in the individual records examined, are evidenced.

This is a historical-documentary research, whose methodological procedures refer to the collection of data from the main sources investigated: the first Enrollment Book of the Nossa Senhora do Amparo Domestic School (Part 1), from 1871 to 1893, and the Exit Record Book of the female students. The Enrollment Book contains 379 pages, with predetermined information listed in handwritten form about each student, and the opening term is signed by father Siqueira. The Exit Record Book contains 100 pages, all filled in handwritten with no predetermined information, that is, there are no preconceived questions, as in a form, but only textual paragraphs.

In the Exit Record Book, the female students received the same numbering as in the Enrollment Book, which facilitates the location of information about each of the graduates. The handwriting employed presents well-designed strokes, and the annotations extend from page 1 to page 99, assuming that the same person wrote the book from start to finish. However, two blank pages inside the brochure draw attention, which may suggest the hypothesis that someone left them reserved to fill them later – if more information was needed or for careful elaboration in the face of some required situation. On page 1, there is the exit record of the first student enrolled at the Nossa Senhora do Amparo Domestic School: Eulalia Maria Francisca de Mello, born in Portugal, daughter of Francisco João de Mello and Maria Borges de Mello. After Eulalia, the circumstances surrounding the departure and whereabouts of each student leaving the school are successively noted.

Both documents used as sources are severely damaged by time, with

yellowish pages, and the Exit Record Book has no cover, its pages are loose and many completely erased.

The notes found in the Enrollment Book and in the Exit Record Book of the Nossa Senhora do Amparo Domestic School help to understand how each student – girl/woman – who survived all types of submission to fathers, mothers, tutors, nuns, priests and employers, began to live their own history. These documents reveal the lives of women who had been ignored, silenced and invisible, as well as attempts to hide situations and occurrences that, now, through other lenses, can be uncovered through the archived writings about the early years of the school.

Educated for formation and work: the first class of women

Through the Enrollment Book, it was possible to identify the arrival of the first class of girls at the Nossa Senhora do Amparo Domestic School. The initial information that the annotations offer refers to the variety of locations from which each one came. Of the 24 students enrolled in 1871, one was from Portugal, and the others came from different locations in Brazil. Some came from the city of Petrópolis itself, and others from the city of Jacareí, in the state of São Paulo – the priest's hometown. There are also native students from the city of Juiz de Fora, in Minas Gerais, as well as girls registered only with the information of the baptismal church, or even without any mention of origin. It is important to emphasize that, at the time, proof of baptism was considered the official document for birth registration¹.

When comparing the Enrollment Book with the Exit Book, the different age groups of the entering students are perceived: one student entered at the age of 4; one at the age of 6; two at the age of 7; six at the age of 8; three at the age of 9; six at the age of 10; one at the age of 11; one at the age of 15; and the others without age registration.

Another important data located in the Enrollment Book refers to the records of the female "protectors" of each student – that is, the woman who had requested the vacancy from the priest and, possibly, helped with the expenses. It is worth mentioning that, considering the high demand for the reception to be enrolled in the Nossa Senhora do Amparo Domestic School, in addition

to the certificate of poverty, sometimes it was necessary that the girls were "protected" by some lady of society, by some friend of the priest or even by the priest himself.

The Enrollment Book is organized by names, according to the order of arrival of the students, successively, to the classes. The first 27 names refer to the enrollments in the first class of 1871, followed by the subsequent classes, as shown in figure 1 below:

Figure 1 – First page of the index of the Enrollment Book of the students of the Nossa Senhora do Amparo Domestic School (1871 to 1884)



Source: Museum Room of the Nossa Senhora do Amparo Domestic School.

The index of the Enrollment Book initially contains the names of 27 students belonging to the first class, admitted in 1871. However, three of them only joined the group after this initial date, occupying vacancies of students who died or left the school. This fact demonstrates that the index presented in figure 1 was prepared later, since it already includes students who joined the first class after 1871. In addition, it is also verified that the original class had only 24 vacancies, which were maintained even with the replacements.

Based on the notes in the two sources consulted and confronted, the Enrollment Book and the Exit Record Book of the students of the Nossa Senhora do Amparo Domestic School, chart 1 was prepared. In it, the information is organized by name, following the same order placed in the Enrollment Book, the date of departure and the destination noted in the records about the whereabouts and the situation of the student when leaving the Nossa Senhora do Amparo Domestic School.

Table 1 – First students of the Nossa Senhora do Amparo Domestic School, belonging to the class of 1871

Name	Exit Date	Where they went: Professions and Occupations
1 – Eulalia Maria Francisca de Mello	06/07/1887	1 – She left to be an assistant teacher at the Santa Cândida school and returned in the same year to work at the Nossa Senhora do Amparo Domestic School, in which she was the director.
2 – Anna Mathilda Lacher	12/18/1873	2 – She left the school sick.
3 – Jesuína Filomena	07/21/1887	3 – Entered the vacancy of Anna Mathilda Lacher, after the opening of the vacancy due to death. She left as a maid in Mrs. Eliza's house.
4 – Leopoldina Maria Maia	04/17/1883	4 – Deceased at school.
5 – Florisbella da Cunha Feijo	04/23/1883	5 – She left to be a maid in the house of Mrs. Firmina and her husband, Mr. Augusto Bumim.
6 – Rosa Antônia Machado	08/21/1885 return 01/31/1889	6 – She left to act as an assistant or preceptor teacher and then returned to take over the direction of the Nossa Senhora do Amparo Domestic School.
7 – Antonia Mathilda Van Ervan	04/14/1882	7 – Rented in the house of Mr. Barboza and his wife Marianinha Ferraz de Abreu Barboza.
8 – Libania Mathildes Caldeira	01/01/1873	8 – She left at the request of his family.
9 – Evangelina de Oliveira	01/06/1874	9 – Entered the vacancy of Libania Mathilde Caldeira. She left in the company of his mother to take care of his health and died on 07/21/1887.

Source: prepared by the authors.

Table 1 – First students of the Nossa Senhora do Amparo Domestic School, belonging to the class of 1871

Name	Exit Date	Where they went: Professions and Occupations
10 – Amélia Siqueira Carvalho	N.A./ N.A./1873	10 – Father Siqueira's niece, stayed only a few months.
11 – Ignez da Silveira Daughter	06/05/1883	11 – Entered the vacancy of Amélia Siqueira Carvalho. She left at the request of his godfather to occupy a teacher's position.
12 – Albina Maria da Conceição	05/22/1883	12 – She left at the request of Countess Fargine da Cruz to be a maid in the family home of Mr. Francisco Roiz Marçõs.
13 – Anna Candida de Siqueira Lima	05/07/1876	13 – Deceased at school on 05/07/1876.
14 – Claudina Maria de Siqueira	02/09/1882	14 – She left for his mother's company in Jacareí, São Paulo.
15 – Balbina Maria de Siqueira Lima	02/09/1882	15 – She left for his mother's company in Jacareí, São Paulo.
16 – Maria Emília da Rocha	05/14/1883	16 – She left to occupy a teacher's position and to apply for public exams in São Paulo.
17 – Izabel Pinto Nogueira	08/07/1884	17 – She was hired to be preceptor at Mr. Cruz's farm, near the Court, in the municipality of Rio de Janeiro.
18 – Amélia de Jesus Medeiros	03/09/1884	18 – She left at the request of Mr. Vieira to take care of two children of the widow Paula Fonseca.
19 – Luíza Fortunata de Moura	10/30/1881	19 – She left at the request of her aunt to be a lady's companion.
20 – Maria Antônia da Silva Ultra	09/13/1882 Returns 12/20/1889	20 – She left at the request of her mother and returned to be an "assistant" teacher at the Nossa Senhora do Amparo Domestic School.
21 – Francisca Henriquetta Lopes	04/26/1882	21 – She left to be lady's companion of Mrs. J. J. Nogueira Gama.
22 – Geraldina Maria de Souza	04/02/1881	22 – She left to be maid in the house of Mr. João Joaquim Pizarro.
23 – Ludmisa Borges of Espírito Santo	04/12/1882	23 – She left at the request of her "protector" to be a maid in Madame Flores' house.

Source: prepared by the authors.

Table 1 – First students of the Nossa Senhora do Amparo Domestic School, belonging to the class of 1871

Name	Exit Date	Where they went: Professions and Occupations
24 – Josephina de Souza Werneck	07/21/1878	24 – She left at the request of her relatives to marry Mr. Manuel Carlos Machado and went to live at São João da Pedra Negra Farm, in Sapucaia.
25 – Maria Angela do Rosario	07/14/1882	25 – She left to teach at a school in Porto Alegre, in Rio Grande do Sul.
26 – Rosalina Knabel Krumser	12/04/1882	26 – She left to be admitted to the Convent of Santa Teresa, in São Paulo, at her own request.
27 – Francisca Chagas Filha	06/27/1883	27 – She left at the request of her godmother for confirmation, Mrs. Anna Ramming and Colonel Vianna, residents of Pinheiros, Rio de Janeiro, probably to be maid.

Source: prepared by the authors.

On the first page of the Exit Record Book of the Nossa Senhora do Amparo Domestic School, there is the note of the first student enrolled, Eulalia Maria Francisca de Mello, born in Portugal, baptized on September 10, 1864, aged 1 year and two months, at the Santa Rita Church. Eulalia left on June 7, 1887, to be an assistant teacher at Santa Cândida School. It appears in the Exit Book that Eulalia returned as an assistant teacher at the Nossa Senhora do Amparo Domestic School and later joined the Congregation of the Franciscan Sisters of Nossa Senhora do Amparo, becoming the School's director.

The preparation to exercise a profession already appears in the trajectory of the first student of the school, who left with a profession in which she worked, and then returned, joining the congregation, where she played an expressive role, achieved, above all, by investing in the instruction and education received there.

Although Eulalia returns and then assumes a place of power over the sisters and the other students, acting as the manager of the institution and the one that would determine the next directions of the school, all her actions remained under the control of the priest, a man, and a cleric. In this way, she remained submissive to male power and the doctrines of the Church. Still, her

trajectory is highlighted for the context and the time in which she lived, corroborating the ideal proposed by Father Siqueira in relation to female education. It is worth remembering that these ideas of forming women for work, even if it was a job suited to the female condition, encountered some opposition in society and in the Catholic Church, which assumed that divine and natural laws would have established only domestic tasks as the proper domain of women and social and civic activities as male domain (Manoel, 1996).

Before Eulália, another student also left school to act as a teacher: Rosa Antônia Machado. She was the daughter of Margarida Machado and Antônio Machado, born on October 10, 1863, and baptized on April 22, 1865. It appears in the Exit Book that, on August 21, 1885, Rosa went to be an "assistant", that is, a teacher or preceptor at the house of Mrs. Zelia de Abrico Magalhães. Like her predecessor, she returned more than three years later, on January 31, 1889, to be an assistant teacher at Nossa Senhora do Amparo Domestic School.

The first function for which Rosa left the School, in order to be employed as an "assistant" – at the request of Mrs. Zelia de Abrico Magalhães – was probably the function of teacher in the residence of this lady, since no educational institution with this name was found in the period, either in Petrópolis or Rio de Janeiro. In addition, the practice of home education was very common among the families of the elites of the 19th century – not only for elementary education, but also for the teaching of reading, writing, accounts, and knowledge that were considered fundamental at the time (Vasconcelos, 2007).

Rosa Antônia took a slightly different path from Eulália: a woman of poor origin, she initially acted as a preceptor in an elite house, thanks to the education she received. Later – possibly by invitation – she returned to the Nossa Senhora do Amparo Domestic School to be a teacher, where she also took over the direction.

Also formed as a teacher, the student Maria Antônia da Silva Ultra, when enrolled, fulfilled one of the precepts described in the statute of the Nossa Senhora do Amparo Domestic School: admit only orphan girls or daughters of poor families (Statute, 1868). She was the daughter of Maria de Jesus Moraes and J. Ultra, already deceased at the time of registration. She was born on December 14, 1867 and entered school at the age of 4 on April 14, 1871.

Possibly, she sought school after the death of his father; and left on September 13, 1882, at the request of his mother, already 15 years old. However, she returned on December 20 of the same year, to be an "assistant" teacher at the Nossa Senhora do Amparo Domestic School. When she joined the School, at the age of 4, Maria Antônia broke with the institution's regulations, which established the admission of girls only from 7 to 12 years old (Statute, 1868).

Observing the trajectory of these three students, it appears that the first class of Nossa Senhora do Amparo Domestic School was, first of all, to form its own cadres of working women, who would support it in the following years. Probably, over the years as interns, the students were observed and selected, so that the most suitable ones were chosen to carry out the work of Father Siqueira. Thus, those who left and returned to exercise teaching roles corroborate the evidence that, since its foundation, Nossa Senhora do Amparo Domestic School formed women, primarily, to assume tasks within the institution, ensuring the continuity of the work of its founder.

However, some students also went to practice the teaching profession in other cities and even states. Maria Emília da Rocha left to occupy a teacher's position and to take public exams in São Paulo. She was the daughter of José Miranda da Rocha and Maria Benedita da Rocha. She entered the school knowing how to read and left at the request of her uncle Claudenir. Unfortunately, there is no record of the place where she taught, in addition to much information of this student being blank and incomplete in the Exit Record Book of the Nossa Senhora do Amparo Domestic School, which may denote some conflict or problem in the process of her departure. The same situation occurs in relation to Ignez da Silveira Filha who later entered the class and left to take a teacher's position, with no records of the location where she went to teach.

In the 19th century an important legacy was the conversion of teaching into a profession exercised, mostly, by women, who sought a dignified profession in the teaching chair. During this century, the teaching profession could be carried out as described by Vasconcelos (2007), in public education, in private education and in home education – carried out in the apprentice's house, in the private sphere, where parents hired, through their free choice, the teachers, to teach their sons and daughters.

Among the students who left the Nossa Senhora do Amparo Domestic School to assume the profession of teacher or preceptor, the student Izabel Pinto Nogueira, daughter of Adelaide de Jesus Nogueira and Miguel Pinto Nogueira, also stands out. She was born on June 6, 1863 and was baptized on November 15 of the same year, in the parish of Santana, at the Court. She left school on August 7, 1884, at the request of his mother, to teach at Santa Cruz Farm. Izabel arrived at the school in 1871, illiterate, 8 years old and left after 13 years, already 21 years old, hired to be preceptor at a farm near the Court, in the municipality of Rio de Janeiro. From illiterate to teacher/preceptor of elite families.

The place of preceptors in the farms around the Court was notably occupied by foreign women, as already signaled by Vasconcelos (2018). The Nossa Senhora do Amparo Domestic School made it possible for Brazilian women to achieve sufficient preparation to compete and occupy these places desired by foreigners.

At this time, many teachers placed advertisements in newspapers offering their services to educate children in schools or homes, and several families also published advertisements requesting the services of teachers/preceptors. For Vasconcelos (2018, p. 294), "[...] the places in the houses 'most capable' of bearing the high costs of this modality were disputed by daily offers of services". Father Siqueira's students did not need to publish advertisements or follow requests in the newspapers to seek employment. When analyzing some letters sent and received, it appears that the priest himself aligned the departure of the students with some families or places of work. His influence in the city of Petrópolis and other regions of Brazil allowed him to be asked when a school or family home needed teachers, since his school prepared professionals with a good reputation throughout the country.

Another student who also followed the path of teaching was Maria Ângela do Rosário, daughter of Antônio de Umbelina. She entered the School on September 21, 1871, still illiterate, and left on July 14, 1882 to teach at a school in Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul. It is important to remember that Father Siqueira was ordained a priest in Porto Alegre, in the same state. It is plausible, therefore, that in this city he has known numerous educational establishments and formed a network of contacts in the region, with which he

aligned the trip of students to teach.

It is worth noting that the work as teachers, although subject to pressure and control by social bodies, was still one of the few accepted for women who needed to provide their own support with greater dignity, according to the parameters of 19th century society. In addition, the teaching work was also linked to a model of domesticity and motherhood related to the female condition, which included expectations regarding the behavior of women. This maternal vision of the teacher reinforced stereotypes and gender segregation, feeding the idea that caring for and educating children was a female mission, making teaching an ideal field for women (Almeida, 2014).

Father Siqueira (1877), in turn, believed that girls should be educated for work, making use of those he considered "the most intelligent and gifted with abilities," who would receive a higher level of education; these would be destined for teaching, while the others would be directed to domestic service.

Between illnesses and deaths: women who did not leave school

The student Anna Mathilda Lacher was the daughter of José Lacher and Anna Catharina Lacher, baptized on October 6, 1861, in the chapel of Nossa Senhora da Glória, in Juiz de Fora Station, province of Minas Gerais. When analyzing the Exit Record Book of the students, it appears that she left the school on December 18, 1873, in the company of her mother, for medical treatment. Anna Mathilda stayed only two years at the institution. According to the records, she had "a kind of tumor in one of her body parts". The fact that the location of the tumor is not explained may indicate some intimate part, which, in itself, was already taboo even for the treatment. Although she was treated and medicated, Anna Mathilda died, probably because of the "tumor."

Although mortality was high in the last decades of the 19th century – when life expectancy did not exceed 30 years – the number of students who died inside the school itself is noteworthy, as occurred with the student Leopoldina Maria Maia. Daughter of Leopoldina Maria Antônia, "free brown," born on July 6, 1863 and baptized on August 20 of the same year in the city of Petrópolis, she was the goddaughter of Antônio Muniz da Silva and died on April 17, 1883. A similar fact will occur with the student Anna Candida

de Siqueira, daughter of Antônio Ignácio de Lima and Maria da Penha de Siqueira Lima, born on December 25, 1860, without information from the baptism record. Both, still young, died inside the Nossa Senhora do Amparo Domestic School: Leopoldina at 19 years old; Anna Candida at 15. The two entered the school in 1871, Leopoldina at 8 years old and Anna Candida at 11 years old.

Anna Candida de Siqueira's exit notes indicate that she dies of tuberculosis, a lung disease with high mortality rates at the time (Silveira, 2023). Because there is only one prescription (Prescription of Anna Candida, 1873), there is a hypothesis that the student contracted the disease and quickly died. It is also noted that she died and was buried on the same day. However, for Rodrigues, Barreto, Kramer, Barata,

[...] until the mid-19th century, the infectious character of tuberculosis was not recognized; the disease was attributed to several causes such as heredity, miasmas, and other environmental and social determinants. (Rodrigues; Barreto; Kramer; Barata, 2007, p. 1).

14

Given the precise lack of knowledge about the virulence of tuberculosis in the 19th century, the illness became a threat that could kill quickly, which presupposes the acceleration of the funerals. In the case of Anna Cândida de Siqueira, who died on May 7, 1876, it is noteworthy that she was the niece of Father Siqueira, which presumably led to all attempts to cure her in that context.

To better understand the death of Anna Candida and Leopoldina Maria Maia, it was necessary to deepen the research in the Historical Archive of the Diocese of Petrópolis², in order to search for the death settlements and cross-reference the information. "Since it is a nominative source, these records can be cross-referenced with each other and with other sources" (Bassanezi, 2009, p. 143). Thus, the research in the Historical Archive of the Diocese of Petrópolis was important, because it allowed an analysis of aspects of micro-history (Ginzburg, 1976), offering details closer to the events. It is important to note that until 1889 all documents were only registered by the Catholic Church and only after civil registration became mandatory.

The reading of the death certificate of Leopoldina Maria Maia (1883),

found in the Historical Archive of the Diocese of Petrópolis, confirmed that the cause of her death was the same as that of Anna Candida, noted in the Exit Record Book of the Domestic School of Nossa Senhora do Amparo, that is, she also died of tuberculosis. However, these notes are scarcer than those regarding Anna Candida, supposedly because the latter was Father Siqueira's niece. Thus, the reading of the death certificate of Anna Candida (1876) brings more information, which analyzed may partially suggest reports of her last days until her death. In the death certificate of Anna Candida, the word "consumption" appears, that is, she died consumed, wasted away. A sign of her agony in the terminal state is noted on the death certificate, where it is written that she received the extreme unction, possibly in the minutes before her death, as she passed away shortly after receiving the sacraments.

Another piece of data collected from reading these documents relates to the numbering of the students' graves. Leopoldina was buried in grave No. 2684, whose number was in the Exit Record Book. Anna Candida was buried in grave No. 1409, but this information was not in the student's Exit Record Book. When a search was conducted at the Municipal Cemetery of Petrópolis, the place where they were buried, it was found that the two girls were in shallow graves, that is, temporary burials, and over the years, since no one purchased the right to a perpetual grave, their bodies were exhumed and placed in the common ossuary. Thus, there is no longer any trace of the remains of Leopoldina and Anna Candida, students who died in the early years of the Nossa Senhora do Amparo Domestic School.

Initially, looking at the deaths that occurred within the school, which have taken place over the years, could suggest the existence of a hostile environment or some mystery surrounding these deaths in a secluded location completely closed off to the outside. However, the fact that Anna Candida is one of the four nieces of Father Siqueira, who belonged to the first class of the Nossa Senhora do Amparo Domestic School, partially dispels this suspicion, considering that two other nieces, Claudina Maria de Siqueira and Balbina Maria de Siqueira Lima only leave the school several years after the death of their cousin, already in 1882. The fourth niece, Amélia Siqueira Carvalho, in turn, spent only a few months in school, leaving in 1873, that is, three years before the death of Anna Cândida de Siqueira.

"Educated for dignity": maids, recommended, rented, domestic...

The analysis of the Exit Record Book of the students of the class of 1871 shows that most of the women educated at the Nossa Senhora do Amparo Domestic School left the school to work in family homes, as described: "she left as a servant, as recommended, as a rented, as a caregiver, as a maid, as a companion" (Exit Record Book, 1871, p. 5).

Perrot (2019, p. 109) reiterates that "[...] women have always worked". Even if, at times, this work was not recognized or paid, they never stopped working – even if invisible – as when the work was domestic service or informal support for their husbands.

Among so many varieties of jobs – such as cooks, washerwomen, servants, caregivers, teachers, among others – the former students, women educated at the Nossa Senhora do Amparo Domestic School, probably did not choose their professions, but they were determined what they could do according to their social level, their protection networks, and their skills. According to Father Siqueira's notes, his mission was:

[...] educate these girls at work, taking advantage, however, of the most intelligent and gifted with abilities, which would provide a greater culture; some would be destined for domestic service and others for teaching and, in general, for good mothers of families (Siqueira, 1877, s/p.).

It can be inferred that, in the conception of Father Siqueira, the students with less "intelligence" and the poorest would be destined to serve in family homes as rented (Statute, 1868). These women worked in the homes of the families who rented them, by day or by period (Rezende, 2019). By providing basic instruction so that girls could work taking care of a household and domestic chores, Father Siqueira believed he was contributing to a "possible" change in these women's lives, even if they remained submissive to the rules and demands of the families that hired them and to the decisions of the priest himself.

Among the students who followed this path is Florisbella da Cunha

Feijo, daughter of Sebastiana, baptized at the Court, who entered the school on February 12, 1871, with an assumed age of 8 years. She left as a servant for the service of Mrs. Firmina, her daughter and her husband, Mr. Augusto Bumim, on April 23, 1883. This student remained in school for 12 years and when she was sent to work in Mrs. Firmina's house she was already 20 years old.

The student Antonia Maria da Conceição or Antonia Mathilda Van Ervan, entered as a protégé of Mr. Van Ervan, as stated in the Entry Book, in which she is still registered with the name of Antonia Maria da Conceição. However, in the Exit Record Book it already has the surname of the protector, Antônia Mathilda Van Ervan. Some hypotheses can be applied to this case: that she was the illegitimate daughter of Mr. Van Ervan and, over time, was recognized by her father; or the possibility that her mother was an enslaved person owned by Mr. Van Ervan, as it was common at the time for enslaved people to use their masters' names, or even that children born to enslaved individuals would take their masters' names when baptized by them. However, both hypotheses can be combined, as the word "slave" appears in the Enrollment Book, after the name of his mother, Eva. Even so, as a recognized daughter or goddaughter of Mr. Van Ervan, Antônia's assignment as a servant in a family's home is intriguing. In addition, in the Exit Record Book, the data of this student are incomplete, lacking references about the baptism, the godparents and the father's name – information that appears in the notes of the other students. For Perrot (2019, p. 21) when "[...] writing history, sources, documents, traces are necessary. And that is a difficulty when it comes to women's history." Their presence is often erased, their traces undone, their files destroyed. Antônia Mathilde Van Ervan entered the school on January 22, 1871, at the age of 9, and left on April 14, 1882 to be rented in the house of Mr. Barboza and his wife Marianinha Ferraz de Abreu Barboza. In principle, Antônia fits the condition of being enslaved, since it was only with the Law of the Free Womb, on September 28, 1871, that the freedom of the children of enslaved women born after that date would take effect. It should be noted that Nossa Senhora do Amparo Domestic School was created to serve disadvantaged, poor and "free" girls, therefore, Antônia could not have been enrolled in the institution if she had not already obtained her freedom, as she was the daughter of an enslaved woman. So, it seems, your father could be Mr. Van Ervan

himself. However, this hypothesis is somewhat compromised by highlighting, on Antônia's departure, the fact that she was rented. Still, she was already 20 years old and knew that, at 21, she could not remain in the institution anymore. Unfortunately, it is not possible, without in-depth research, to know whether this rent was for living in the family's house or if she went back and forth to school daily, as well as what was offered to the priest in exchange for renting the girl/woman.

The student Albina Maria da Conceição, daughter of Leopoldina Maria da Conceição, was born on November 1, 1864 and was baptized at the São Nicolau de Suruhy Church, having only one godfather, Mr. Manoel José do Nascimento. There is no record of the father's name, eventually, because he was also the godfather himself. She entered the School on March 18, 1871, completely illiterate, at the age of 9 and left on May 22, 1883, at the request of Countess Fargine da Cruz, her "protector", to be delivered to the house of Mr. Francisco Roiz Marços, as the family's maid and to live on the salary that the family paid her.

18 Rezende (2019) observes that poor women who had a paid job had not acquired a right, but rather a condition of survival, given the state of misery in which the poor layers of the population lived. In addition, being a maid was not considered as a job, but an inferior service, performed mostly by women.

The other students of the class of 1871 had a similar outcome as servants. Francisca Henriquetta Lopes, daughter of João Batista de Souza Lopes and Antonia Candida, already had her parents dead when she was enrolled. The girl was baptized in the parish of Nossa Senhora da Piedade, in Rio Claro, and her godparents were Antonio Lopes and Henriquetta Rosa de Almeida. Orphaned of father and mother, she had her destiny decided at the Nossa Senhora do Amparo Domestic School. She entered in 1871 and left on April 26, 1882 to also be a maid in the house of Mr. Nogueira Gama.

Likewise destined as a maid, Geraldina Maria de Souza, daughter of Candida, a brown woman, enslaved by Julio Ernesto da Costa Souza, had as godfather of baptism, Diogo, another enslaved person of the same Costa Souza. In this case, again there is a woman still in an enslaved situation who enters the institution. However, confronting the sources, it appears that she left the school and did not return to the house where she was enslaved. Upon

leaving on April 2, 1881, she went to work as a maid in the house of Mr. João Joaquim Pizarro. It is not possible to know how her condition was changed or why she changed residence after 10 years at the Nossa Senhora do Amparo Domestic School. One hypothesis is that Father Siqueira could demand the guardianship or freedom of the girls at the time of registration.

Also, student Ludmisa Borges of Espírito Santo left to be a maid in Mrs. Flores' house. Daughter of Francisco Antônio Borges da Silva and Joanna Julia do Espírito Santo, she entered the school in 1871 and left on April 12, 1882. Like Ludmisa, the student Amélia de Jesus Medeiros was assigned as a servant. She was the daughter of Manoel de Medeiros and Jacintha de Medeiros, baptized in Petrópolis, having as godparents Julio de Mello e Silva and Francisca de Assis de Mello. She entered the school in 1871, at the request of her godmother and left on March 9, 1884, requested by the widow Paula Fonseca, to take care of her two daughters. As this was a work carried out by the enslaved, it is inferred that the widow Paula Fonseca sought at Father Siqueira's School a woman more prepared to take care of/educate her daughters.

Student Luíza Fortunata de Moura, daughter of Miguel Dias de Moura and Elizarda Joaquina do Espírito Santo, was baptized in Iguaçu by her godparents Luiz Antônio de Jesus and Maria João do Nascimento. She entered the school in 1871 and left on October 30, 1881 to be a lady's companion to her aunt.

A single student of the class of 1871 appears in the Exit Record Book "to get married": Josephina de Souza Werneck. Daughter of Ignácio de Souza Werneck and Marianna de Souza Werneck, she does not have a birth or baptismal document registered in the Enrollment Book. She was at the institution for 7 years and left in 1879 to marry Mr. Manuel Carlos Machado, at São João da Pedra Negra Farm, in Sapucaia, on June 26, 1879. At the time, "[...] the man with whom the girl, just over thirteen years old, married, was rarely of her own choice. The choice was his parents' or simply his father's" (Freyre, 2008, p. 97). In Josephina's case, it was no different, as her father, Mr. Werneck, possibly arranged the marriage and requested the girl's withdrawal from school, which indicates that she was married at a very young age. It is worth noting that the girls dreamed of marriage and motherhood, as this was

often the only way to the adult world. The woman's situation consisted of being submissive to her father and then to her husband, being a virgin until marriage and remaining faithful to him throughout her life. Chastity and beauty were attributes that made a woman suitable for marriage. And for marriage to be a successful business, the married woman needed to know how to take care of the house, children, and husband. Although Josephina married, this condition did not last for long, as it appears in the Exit Record Book the information, very erased, that she died two years after the marriage, on November 21, 1881. As much as Josephina went to live with her husband at the Pedra Negra farm, in Sapucaia, she did not lose the link with the Nossa Senhora do Amparo Domestic School, since, when she died, this fact was recorded.

Final considerations

20 Researching the lives of women in the 19th century – who lived largely completely cloistered, silenced, confined, "domesticated" and submissive – is to seek narratives practically lost among papers that crumble with the passage of time, fading more with each passing day.

Among so many silences, forgetfulness, and absences, it was necessary to weave viable hypotheses about the fate of the women of the first class of the Nossa Senhora do Amparo Domestic School in a mosaic of many gaps.

Regarding the incomplete narratives, it can be inferred that many were purposely omitted and even deleted – such as, for example, regarding the lack of information about Libania Mathildes Caldeira, Jesuína Filomena and Francisca Chagas. They are silenced stories, forgotten women, pages without records, lives erased. Would someone have prevented this information from being recorded, or did the priest himself omit it to protect his contemporaries? Even three of his four nieces – Amélia de Siqueira, Claudia Maria de Siqueira and Balbina Maria de Siqueira – have incomplete records.

After all, the story of these women resonates with many others who, confined in educational institutions like Nossa Senhora do Amparo School Domestic School, had their destinies transformed in pursuit of a "dignified life" – although it is impossible to assess or have recorded the price they paid to achieve this promise.

Certainly, many had no other choice, and submitting to an institution such as the Nossa Senhora do Amparo Domestic School was the best that could happen to them, to survive in the tangle of life (Perrot, 2019).

The fate of the female students of the early years of the Nossa Senhora do Amparo Domestic School is loaded with subjectivities inserted in the social context of their time. These are lives and trajectories marked by common elements: poor, young, single, and subject to current conventions. In Father Siqueira's writings, it is possible to find narratives that demonstrate what he understood as educating for a dignified life: "given education and convenient instruction, in order to prepare her (the girl) according to the aptitude of each one to, in the future, live honestly from their work".

It is worth remembering that one cannot analyze a narrative outside the social context in which it is inserted, marked by impositions, prescriptions, norms and rules that could hardly be modified.

Researching the history of women of the 19th century is, first of all, to bring to light anonymous lives that can tell, through their destinies, the directions and expectations of female education in Brazil.

Notes

1. The baptism record of some girls was described in the Exit Record Book. Due to the diversity of locations, it was not possible to obtain physical access to the baptismal record book of each of the first welcomes.
2. In the Historical Archive of the Diocese of Petrópolis, there are certificates of marriages, births, deaths, among others, "[...] called vital events – birth/baptism, marriage and death – prepared and preserved by the Church or by the Civil Registry of Natural Persons" (Bassanezi, 2009, p. 142).

References

ALMEIDA, Jane Soares de. Vestígios para uma reinterpretação do magistério feminino em Portugal e no Brasil a partir do século XIX. In: SAVIANI, Dermeval; ALMEIDA, Jane Soares de; SOUZA, Rosa Fátima de; VALDEMARIN, Vera Teresa. **O Legado educacional do século XIX**. 3. ed. Campinas: Autores Associados, 2014.

BASSANEZI, Maria Sílvia. Os eventos vitais na reconstituição da história. In: PINSKY, Carla Bassanezi; LUCA, Tania Regina de. **O historiador e suas fontes**. São Paulo: Contexto, 2009.

ESTATUTO Escola Doméstica de Nossa Senhora do Amparo. **Estatuto**. Petrópolis, 1868/1876. (Documento Manuscrito).

FREYRE, Gilberto. **Vida social no Brasil nos meados do século XIX**. 4. ed. São Paulo: Global, 2008.

GINZBURG, Carlo. **Mitos, emblemas, sinais: morfologia e história**. Tradução Frederico Carotti. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1989.

JORNAL Correio Paulistano. **Jornal Correio Paulistano**, São Paulo, v. 17, p. 1-2, 1870 (edição 4.172).

LIVRO de Matrículas. **Escola Doméstica de Nossa Senhora do Amparo**. Petrópolis, 1871-1884. (Documento manuscrito).

LIVRO de registro de saída das alunas. **Escola Doméstica de Nossa Senhora do Amparo**. Petrópolis, 1871-1884. (Documento manuscrito).

22 MAIA, Leopoldina Maria. **Assentamento de Óbito**. Petrópolis, 1883. (Documento manuscrito do Arquivo Histórico da Diocese de Petrópolis).

MANOEL, Ivan Aparecido. **Igreja e educação feminina (1859-1910): uma face do conservadorismo**. São Paulo: Unesp, 1996.

PERROT, Michelle. **Minha história das mulheres**. Tradução Ângela M. S. Correa. São Paulo: Contexto, 2019.

RECEITA Médica de Anna Candida. **Escola Doméstica de Nossa Senhora do Amparo**. Petrópolis, 1873. (Documento manuscrito).

REZENDE, Bibiana Conceição. De escravas a vagabundas: as trabalhadoras domésticas e o não-trabalho na transição do século XIX para o século XX. **PEGADA – A Revista da Geografia do Trabalho**, Presidente Prudente, v. 20, n. 1, p. 237-249, 2019.

REGISTRO do Cemitério Municipal de Petrópolis. **Livro de Registro do local de sepultamentos**. Petrópolis, 1881. (Documento manuscrito).

RODRIGUES, Laura; BARRETO, Mauricio; KRAMER, Monica; BARATA, Rita de Cássia Barradas. Resposta brasileira à tuberculose: contexto, desafios e perspectivas. **Revista de Saúde Pública**, São Paulo, v. 41, p. 1-2, set. 2007.

SIQUEIRA, Anna Candida de. **Assentamento de Óbito**. Petrópolis, 1876. (Documento manuscrito do Arquivo Histórico da Diocese de Petrópolis).

SILVEIRA, Eduarda Coelho; LIMA, Rita de Cássia Gabrielli Souza; ALMEIDA FILHO, Ivo Fogaça de; FERREIRA, Júlia Melchiorretto; e outros. Tuberculose no Brasil: aspectos históricos, culturais e clínicos. In: SILVA NETO, Benedito Rodrigues da. (org.). **Medicina: avanços recentes e necessidades sociais**. Ponta Grossa: Atena, 2023.

SIQUEIRA, Padre. **Opúsculo sobre a educação**. Escola Doméstica de Nossa Senhora do Amparo. Petrópolis, 1877. (Documento manuscrito)

TAVARES, Micheli da Cruz Cardoso; VASCONCELOS, Maria Celi Chaves. A criação da Escola Doméstica de Nossa Senhora do Amparo para a formação de mulheres. **Revista Educação & Formação**, Fortaleza, v. 8, p. 1-20, 2023.

VASCONCELOS, Maria Celi Chaves. A educação doméstica no Brasil de oitocentos. **Revista Educação em Questão**, Natal, v. 28, n. 14, p. 24-41, jan./jun. 2007.

VASCONCELOS, Maria Celi Chaves. Preceptoras estrangeiras para educar meninas nas casas brasileiras do século XIX. **Cadernos de História da Educação**, Uberlândia, v. 17, n. 2, p. 285-308, maio/ago. 2018.

Prof. Dr. Micheli da Cruz Cardoso Tavares
Bernoulli Education System (Brazil)

Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro (Brazil)

History and Memory of Educational Policies in the Fluminense Territory Research
Group

Orcid id: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1972-5381>

Email: micheli.cardoso@hotmail.com

Prof. Dr. Maria Celi Chaves Vasconcelos

Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro (Brazil)

Graduate Program in Education

Leader of the History and memory of educational policies in the territory of Rio de
Janeiro (UERJ)

Vice Leader of the Interinstitutional Research Group on Women's Education in the 19th
and 20th centuries (UFRN)

Orcid id: <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-3624-4854>

Email: maria2.celi@gmail.com

CNPQ 1D Productivity Scholarship Holder

24

Translator's name and email

Affonso Henriques Nunes

affonsohnunes@gmail.com

Received on August 17, 2025

Accepted on October 17, 2025



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.