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ANTIQUITY AND SEXUALITY IN BASIC EDUCATION: A PEDAGOGICAL PROPOSAL BASED ON FOUCAULDIAN THEORY

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Abstract

This paper is a report of a classroom experience that portrays the importance of Ancient History in the school curriculum, highlighting its potential to promote citizenship and respect for cultural diversity. By focusing specifically on the study of homoeroticism in Ancient Greece, the text explores how this approach can enrich History teaching, offering students a broader and more critical understanding of different cultural manifestations over time. Using Michel Foucault's reflections as a theoretical basis, the report explores notions of sexuality in the ancient and contemporary world, encouraging students to reflect on their own conceptions and prejudices. Forms were used during classes, aiming to evaluate the impact of the content presented on students' perception of sexuality.

Keywords

Ancient History Teaching; Sexuality; Ancient Greece.

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Resumo

Este artigo, um relato de experiência em sala de aula, retrata a importância da História Antiga no currículo escolar, destacando seu potencial para promover a cidadania e o respeito à diversidade cultural. Ao focar especificamente no estudo do homoerotismo na Grécia Clássica, o texto explora como essa abordagem pode enriquecer o ensino de História, oferecendo aos estudantes uma compreensão mais ampla e crítica das diferentes manifestações culturais ao longo do tempo. Utilizando as reflexões de Michel Foucault como base teórica, o relato explora as noções de sexualidade no mundo antigo e contemporâneo, incentivando os discentes a refletirem sobre suas próprias concepções e preconceitos. Foram utilizados formulários durante as aulas, visando avaliar o impacto do conteúdo apresentado, na percepção dos estudantes sobre a sexualidade.

Palavras chave

Ensino de História Antiga; Sexualidade; Grécia Clássica.

Introduction

Ancient History, as a school discipline, can contribute to the valorization of the subject as responsible for the construction of History and, consequently, of a society that respects ethnic, religious, and political differences. In this sense, the study of this discipline is extremely satisfactory for the consolidation of citizenship in our country through its multiculturalist approach and diversity present in its content. Thus, Ancient History is an essential curricular component for the education and formation of the critical subject, developing the ideas of alterity and diversity, highlighting the differences with our context.

This article presents the results of a pedagogical proposal, whose main objective was to outline a dialogue between Ancient History and the Teaching of History in basic education. More specifically, it is intended to address sexuality in Classical Greece, especially the period from the fifth to the fourth century BCE, based on the book *History of Sexuality 2: The Use of Pleasure* by Michel Foucault, as a proposal to reflect on sexuality in the ancient and contemporary world.

Foucault historicizes sexual practices, because sexuality for him is understood as a device, a set of discourses, techniques and conceptions that produce and name sexual practices in a certain way. In Classical Greece, the relationship between two free men is truer than between men and women, because two men are equal and between man and woman, the relationship is unequal. In this sense, true love can only be achieved between equals, but love between two men is not homosexuality, as this concept is foreign to the Greek world, since it was built in the nineteenth century, in the division between homosexuality and heterosexuality (Rago, 2018).

In the book *History of Sexuality 2: The Use of Pleasure,* Michel Foucault approaches sexuality in Classical Greece from the perspective of pleasures. Seeking to draw a counterpoint between the ancient and the modern, Foucault argues that *enkrateia*, self-mastery, guarantees the domination of desires and pleasures, interfering in the functioning of the polis, as it allows not only the government of oneself, but also the government of the other. The citizen should control his desires to be a good administrator and citizen. Therefore, the philosopher does not treat freedom in the ancient world from the same perspective as in the modern world, where the forms of control are different.

In Classical Greece, the distinction between a man considered effeminate and a virile man was not based on the opposition between homosexuality

and heterosexuality, but rather on the difference in attitude towards pleasures (Castro, 2009). According to Costa (1992), the term homosexual, derived from the words "homosexuality" or "heterosexuality", is linked to prejudiced moral customs that qualify certain subjects as morally inferior because they have erotic inclinations for others of the same biological sex. Following this author, we prefer to use the term homoeroticism, because this term better describes the practices or desires of men for the same gender, not falling into the duality of homosexuality and heterosexuality. Thus, the term homoeroticism serves as a theoretical strategy to refer to a different society, but maintaining a familiarity with the notion of "homosexuality". Therefore, this concept refers to a subjectivity in which certain individuals may have different types of erotic attraction or have a physical relationship in different ways with others of the same biological sex (Costa, 1992).

According to Foucault, in Classical Greece a sexual practice is considered a deviation of conduct when it is carried out without control, to the point of harming the actions of the free man in society, in the same way as food, for example. Unlike the modern perspective of homosexuality, tainted by cultural layers from different historical periods of Western culture, such as Christianity, in Classical Greece individuals were not classified as homosexuals and heterosexuals. What defined the morality of these practices was not the gender of those involved, but the way in which pleasure was exercised.

We took these premises to explore the idea of alterity, as one of the objectives of DCRB[4] for high school is to dispel prejudices. To achieve this goal, we contextualize the current and Antiquity cultural construction of homoeroticism.

In this sense, the pedagogical proposal was carried out from the application of a survey questionnaire on the idea of sexuality of students in two classes of the first year of high school at the Colégio Estadual Polivalente de Caravelas, located in Caravelas - BA. Then, iconographies and excerpts from the book History of sexuality 2, the use of pleasures were used as didactic tools. After these classes, a second questionnaire was applied to assess whether there were changes in the students' conception of sexuality.

The use of this methodology, through questionnaires and expository classes, allowed, in the first place, to listen to the general perceptions of

[4] BAHIA. Secretaria de Estado da Educação. *Documento Curricular Referencial da Bahia para o ensino médio*. v. 2. Rio de Janeiro: FGV Editora, 2022.

students in the first year of high school classes on the subject, without yet having contact with the content of the pedagogical proposal. After the presentation and debates of the content, the second questionnaire was used to have a parameter on how the content was absorbed by the students. This instrument seemed relevant to us to the extent that it maintained the anonymity of the students, since in the debates some are more intimidated to expose their opinions.

Diversity, DCRB and foucauldian theory

The concept of diversity, thinking in a pedagogical proposal, based on the curriculum proposed by the BNCC and DCRB, requires reflection on its definition, because there is no agreement in relation to the term, having in some cases the meaning of tolerance, acceptance or perhaps attitude, but in other cases it can mean inclusion, numbers or racial and gender differences. However, diversity can imply affirmative action or laws designed to ensure the representation of minority groups (Buch, 2008: 1).

The term "diversity" refers to equality, inherent to our humanity, and to difference, which characterizes us as historical, social beings determined by the culture in which we are inserted. People or social groups considered "different" from what the ruling class defines as "standard" carry during their lives a striking characteristic, perpetuated in a derogatory way. Diversity is subject to power relations between individuals and social groups, as it is related to those who are in a situation of vulnerability, as a result of socioeconomic and cultural conditions (OXFAM, 1999). In this way, the social and political struggle is at the base of the concept of diversity (Hall, 1997). Thus, the concept of human diversity is closely linked to inclusion in its various forms – social, economic, educational and others – as they are committed to the defense of human rights (Ferreira, 2015: 307-308).

According to the DCRB (2022), the school environment is permeated by enormous social and cultural diversity, affective-sexual orientations, gender identities, sexualities, etc. Based on this assumption, the production of historical knowledge must advance in the incessant attempt to understand and insert these multiplicities in a plural approach to teaching - learning.

That said, it is important to emphasize how the Federal Constitution and the DCRB agree to ensure that there is an education based on plural debates, bringing it closer to issues related to diversity. Thus, the

pedagogical proposals that guide discussions on sexuality, within the scope of this debate on diversity, in the school environment, should not promote stigmatization and suffering, on the contrary, they should legally ensure the individuals who make up these minorities of society, as stated by the DCRB:

> In the field of gender diversity and sexualities, another recent regulation that reinforces the performance of educators on the issue is the publication of Resolution CEE-BA Nº. 45/2020, which provides for Education of Gender and Sexual Relations, to be observed by public and private institutions that are part of the State Education System of Bahia. According to 2nd article of the aforementioned resolution, which has the following principles:
>
> I. Human dignity;
> II. Secularity of education;
> III. Democratic education;
> IV. Gender equity;
> V. Recognition and appreciation of gender and sexuality differences and diversity;
> VI. Pluralism of ideas and pedagogical conceptions;
> VII. Transversality and contextualization of knowledge. (DCRB, 2022: 60).

Thinking about an education based on the objective of breaking stereotypes and prejudices in the field of Gender and Sexuality relations is a basic premise that sustains the Referential Curriculum Document of Bahia. Item 6.2.1. Education for Gender and Sexuality Relations advocates, in general terms, an education crossed by the understanding that gender and sexuality refer to two important closely related human dimensions. In this sense, all human beings identify themselves in the sociocultural construction of gender and sexuality at a given moment, since "identities are always constructed, they are not given and finished" (DCRB, 2022: 77).

Based on this legal basis, the pedagogical proposal reported here seeks to advance in the discussion of sexual diversities present in the representations and social relations existing in the school, in line with the DCRB:

> (...) when the curricula do not dialogue with the themes of Education for Gender and Sexuality relations, with and among the subjects, the practices of denial of the "different" are enhanced, since they fail to prepare/empower them for situations inside and outside the school environment, such as abuses and violations of rights expressed in the most diverse forms of psychological, patrimonial, physical, and/or sexual, moral violence against girls and women, especially black women and LGBTQIA+ groups (DCRB, 2022: 78).

The theme of sexuality in school, since 1994, addressed in the National Curriculum Parameters as a cross-cutting theme, supported by the Guidelines for an Educational Policy on Sexuality, emphasizes that the

> Sexual Orientation at school should be understood as a process of pedagogical intervention that aims to transmit information and problematize issues related to sexuality, including postures, beliefs, taboos and values associated with it. Such intervention occurs at the collective level, differentiating itself from an individual work, of a psychotherapeutic nature and focusing on the sociological, psychological and physiological dimensions of sexuality. It is also different from the education provided by the family, because it enables the discussion of different points of view associated with sexuality, without imposing certain values on others (Brazil, 1997: 78).

Finally, Resolution Nº. 4, of the National Council of Education, of July 13, 2010, has as its main task to establish among the National Guidelines for Basic Education, in 3rd paragraph, article 43, chapter 1, the definition of gender issues as an integral component of the school Pedagogical Political Projects (PPPs):

> The mission of the school unit, the socio-educational, artistic, cultural, environmental role, the issues of gender, ethnicity and cultural diversity that make up the educational actions, the organization and the curricular management are integral components of the political-pedagogical project, and the institutional priorities that identify it must be foreseen, defining the set of educational actions proper to the stages of Basic Education assumed, according to the specificities that correspond to them, preserving their systemic articulation (Brazil, 2022: 75).

These documents, which manage Brazilian education, insert the issue of sexuality as an essential thematic proposal, allowing us to think about it not only in the current reality, but also in past social realities, because, when we think of gender and sexuality as a social construction, we understand that each society, in a specific way, in its time and historical reality, forges, produces and culturally appropriates these historical categories, including sexual and gender experiences based on singular values. Thus, thinking about gender and sexuality issues in the teaching of history leads us to identify a cultural legacy of alterity of past societies, helping us to resize these issues in the context of education and teaching in the present.

The classes taught by Foucault at the Sorbonne in the first half of the 1970s are dedicated to the issue of disciplinary practices that act in institutions to maintain power, including the field of sexuality as an object of knowledge. The discourse on sex, from the seventeenth century onwards, provided the production of an economically useful sexuality, aiming to strengthen and increase the power of the State, in addition to expanding the forms of gender violence.

To help in the understanding of the pedagogical proposal about sexuality, present in these documents, we use Foucault's reflections on *aphrodisia,*

chresis aphrodision, enkrateia, government of the self and government of others as a theoretical basis to advance in the perspective of alterity, being clear that the central objective of the proposal is not Foucault's theory, which presents a difficult complexity to be reached by students of the first year of high school, but to introduce elements of this theory as a strategic support to achieve our objectives.

Thus, the first element that interests us is the relationship between pleasure, desire, and moderation. Greek ethics does not dissociate the sexual act, desire and pleasure because, to the Greeks, ethics related to sexuality is more a matter of self-control and moderation, different from Christian ethics, which is more focused on the prohibition and repression of sexuality. According to Foucault:

> (...) What in the order of sexual conduct thus seems to constitute for the Greeks the object of moral reflection is not, therefore, exactly the act itself (...), nor desire (...), nor even pleasure (...); it is above all the dynamics that unite the three in a circular way (...). The ethical question posed is not: what desires? What acts? What pleasures? But: with what force is one carried away "by pleasures and desires? (Foucault, 1984: 53-54).

Following, we are interested in the relationship between *chresis aphrodision* and *enkrateia,* because *chresis aphrodision* is not only sexual activity, but also how the individual manages his sexual activities. It is not a question of what is permitted or forbidden among the desires experienced or the acts that are committed, but of prudence and calculation in the manner in which their acts are distributed and controlled. If these activities are carried out without control of desires, the citizen will demonstrate a lack of self-control (*enkrateia),* which allows him to resist and guarantee his domination in the field of desires and pleasures (Foucault, 1984: 64-77). The lack of *enkrateia* is socially condemned, and not the sexual act, which is perceived by the Greeks as an evil when it is not measured and distributed as it should, unleashing involuntary forces, weakening energy, leading to a death without honorable offspring (Foucault, 1984: 153-166).

Foucault is not interested in understanding the Greek acceptance of homoerotic relations between men, but rather how these relations were culturally structured within a specific social and moral system. Thus, these practices had rules of conduct that indicate how the practices should occur in order to be accepted in society, as they were culturally constructed.

> Schematically speaking, what we must apprehend here is not why the Greeks had a taste for boys, but rather why they had a "pederasty": that is, why, around this taste, they elaborated a practice of courtship, a moral reflection (...) (Foucault, 1984: 263).

These elements of Foucauldian theory helped us to develop the general objectives of the pedagogical proposal: the investigation of sexuality and homoeroticism in Classical Greece and in the present day, based on the assumption that sexuality is a social construction that changes over time. One cannot lose sight of the strangeness that the pedagogical proposal caused on the students, since the theme is a reason for taboos, riddled with prejudice. However, as the theme of diversity underlies the pedagogical proposal, the great challenge to be faced was to awaken an awareness of which the perception of sexuality of students is not natural, as it is inserted within a historical context, just like the perception of sexuality in Classical Greece.

Report of the experience in the classroom

To achieve our objectives, we structured the empirical work in a few phases. First, introductory classes were given on Classical Greece, contextualizing students on the relevant historical and cultural aspects. Then, a survey form was applied to assess the students' previous knowledge and perceptions. Based on these data, the discussion of the theme was resumed, with the help of iconographic materials and selected excerpts from the book *History of Sexuality II: use of pleasures*, by Michel Foucault. Finally, the process was concluded with the application of a feedback form, followed by a final discussion, in which the students were able to critically reflect on the contents covered.

The classes were taught at the Colégio Polivalente de Caravelas - Bahia for students in the 1st year of high school, specifically, two classes (1st A and 1st B) in the afternoon shift. The 1st A class has 28 students enrolled and the 1st B, 27 students. Classes were initially taught on the themes of Classical Greece: its location, system of government, division by city-states, etc., to contextualize the students on the topic to be studied.

The classes took place during the months of August and September 2023. After the introductory classes, the students answered a questionnaire with the objective of understanding their notion of sexuality and their previous knowledge on the subject. The survey took place in the classroom, from a form produced on Google Forms, which obtained 39 responses. The application of the questionnaire was an essential step to identify how students conceive sexuality, as well as to perceive possible stereotypes, conceptual gaps and cultural influences in their answers. A digital form was chosen on Google Forms to facilitate the collection and organization

of data, ensuring anonymity and, consequently, greater freedom and honesty in the answers.

In the next class, after the application of the questionnaire, the concepts that would be relevant to the theme were presented on the board: sexuality, homosexuality, homoaffectivity and homoeroticism. Then, the survey turned to the first impressions about each concept, trying to find out if: a) the words have the same meaning; b) the words are already known; c) they had already heard about the terms homoaffectivity and homoeroticism. In this first survey, it was noticed that many: a) understood the word sexuality by sex and; b) the words homoeroticism and homoaffectivity were largely unknown.

Initially, the students were shy, despite their interest in the topic. During the class, from the current perspective, the various understandings of sexuality, homosexuality and the concept of homoeroticism were presented, exploring the interests of relationships, which aroused the attention of the students. In this sense, new impressions of the students' daily lives emerged: asexuality, demisexuality, pansexuality, etc. This debate paved the way for addressing the cultural and social differences between the current and ancient worlds. The relationship between younger (*ephebe*) and more mature (*erastes) men*, in general, present in the daily life of Greek society in the classical period, was presented. This example was used to explore the theme of alterity and anachronism, as the students interpreted these practices as pedophilia, something morally criminal. In the third class, **Figure 01** (Icon B833) was presented, in which Zeus grabs Ganymede, who tries to free himself**.**



Figure 01: Dover, 1994.

Asked about the first impressions of the image, at first the students' attention was drawn to the private parts, in particular, the size of the male sexual organs in the figures and in the ancient sculptures. Then, in order to explain the standard of beauty of Antiquity, we return to the concept of anachronism and alterity, demonstrating that phallocentrism did not occupy the same role as it does in today's world. After the description of the image made by the students, the context and information of the image were presented, in which Zeus kidnaps Ganymede, and according to Greek mythology, based on the book by Pierre Grimal, *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Mythology,* the god falls in love with the mortal, a Trojan prince, configuring a homoerotic relationship. The students already knew who Zeus was and his importance in the pantheon of Greek gods, but they did not know who Ganymede was. The students recalled that Zeus also descended to earth to have relations with non-consensual women, as was the case with Helen of Troy's mother, Queen Leda, emphasizing Zeus' bisexuality.

Next, **Figure 02** (Icon R520) was presented:



Figure 02: Dover, 1994.

In the figure, a man and a boy (*ephebe*) put themselves in position for an interfemoral relationship. Here, they reported that the image depicted different ages and sizes among men and, in this way, the debate on the topic of pederasty and the relationship between older men and younger men in Athens began. Again, the issue of anachronism was highlighted, with the aim of removing moral judgments on the issue and, seeking to interpret and contextualize this type of situation within the values of Athenian society.

Thus, a debate arose on these relations accepted in Athens. The students were interested in asking about how women thought about these relationships. We take the opportunity to return to Foucault's perspective of love between equals (men and free) in Classical Greece, different from the relationship between men and women unequal, because women had an inferior social position. In the end, the difficulty of the class to distance itself from the concepts and moral values of current society was latent, not advancing, at this moment, in other connections that would help to contextualize the relationship between men in Greek society.

In the fourth class, based on excerpts from the book *History of Sexuality II: Use of Pleasures*, we approached *aphrodysia* with the aim of encouraging students to understand the relationship between pleasure, desire and moderation. The text and its vocabulary caused strangeness, prompting an etymological explanation, as well as the existence of a connection between the act itself and the pleasure in relation to the act and desire. It was sought to highlight that the issue was not so much the sexual act itself, but the conditions in which the pleasures were aroused. The reception with the students was once again focused on the values experienced in their context, leading them to compare the topic of debate to the leak of acts of private life on the internet, as in the case of the soccer player Neymar, whose "betrayal" to his girlfriend, a subject much commented on social networks, was brought up in the classroom. The students understood, in this way, that the ethical judgment would not be the act itself practiced by Neymar, but in the moral values of conceiving conjugal practices in the current society, demonstrating that students make permanent associations with their world.

In the fifth class, also using excerpts from Foucault's book, we addressed the *chresis aphrodision* and the management of pleasures by the individual, as well as its relationship with *enkrateia* and the need to have this government of oneself to govern others. During the explanation of this excerpt, a student remembered the figure of Zeus and Ganymede, because to her it seemed that Zeus never had control of his desires, seeming to want to "stay" with everyone he thought was beautiful. The class began to debate about this issue of control of desires and, in this way, we took the opportunity to make a connection with the concept of self-government to govern others, necessary to exercise democracy in Athens.

At a certain point, a student said that it was difficult to date in Classical Greece, because he had to think about many issues, to justify what he would be doing, his desires and his preferences. Such a comment raised several statements about the value judgments of different societies at the time, leading them to reflect on which society was better to live in, such as

the singer Anitta, who presents herself with a more open sexuality, in contrast to some influencers, who are more preserved, such as some evangelicals, despite sometimes having their privacy exposed due to sexual scandals. They concluded that the idea of self-care, in Classical Greece, is opposed to what they understand as freedom, comparing the ancient with the current.

In the sixth class, we showed excerpts from the text of Foucault about the various rules that existed in Classical Greece, because there was a whole culture to manage sexual acts. From these texts, a balance of all the issues raised by Foucault began: pederasty, virility, passivity. The students asked whether these characteristics of sexuality were genetic or culturally acquired; if passivity was a negative attribute of women. Part of these questions is exemplified in the dialogues described below:

> Student 1: Why do older men give gifts to younger men to win them over?
> Student 2: Just like you, who gave bullets to student 3.
> Student 3: "There he is."
> Student 4: Are people born gay or is it cultural? Because in Greece there were only gays.
> Student 5: Why don't you try it?
> Student 4: "There he is."

In general, the girls were more open and more interested in discussing the topic than the boys who withdrew and commented little during class. After the presentations, the students, anonymously, filled out a new form to find out if anything changed after the sequence of classes, this time we obtained 45 responses.

Return of students after school

Starting from the analysis of the forms used to survey previous knowledge of the theme and, as a way of evaluating the learning of the content, the same and/or similar questions were arranged to draw a parallel between the learning developed before and after the classes through two forms.

The first question, in the first form, was directed to the understanding of sexuality. For the most part, the feedback obtained for this question was limited to answers with the term "nothing". Those who developed the answer, in general, reported that people are born with their "sexual indication", demonstrating understanding of the ways of relating, with the opposite sex, with people of the same sex or gender. In view of the lack of consistency of the answers, it was decided not to reask this question in the post-class form.

In the second question of the forms, "at any point in school life, has this topic been addressed?", the percentage obtained was 41% for yes and 59% for no. These first two questions presented, in the knowledge prior to the classes, the need to address the theme of gender and sexuality, and, to a certain extent, the lack of interest in discussing the knowledge possessed on the subject in a family environment and in the early years of basic education.

The third question was of conceptual approach: "Have you ever heard about homoeroticism?" The majority, 76.9%, answered no, and 23.1% said yes. This percentage changed at the end of the classes, because when we redid the form, 66.7% answered that they had already heard of Homoeroticism, that is, this time, most students accumulated considerable knowledge about the concept.

In the fourth question, "In your conception, are homoeroticism and homosexuality the same concept or are they different concepts?", the majority, 64.1%, answered in the first form that it was the same concept; there was no difference from them, and 35.9% marked that there was a difference between the concepts. In the second form, the majority of answers was reversed: 66.7% said yes, there was a difference between the concepts, and 33.3% said there was no difference.

The fifth question referred to the fourth question of the form: If you answered different concepts, what would these differences be? Although 35.9% said that homosexuality and homoeroticism are different concepts, the students were unable to explain what was different between these terms. The answers varied:

1. The conception of which the words, because they are different, would consequently be different concepts; 2. The understanding that homosexuality "perhaps" was related to people's gender; 3. The idea that homoeroticism is related to artistic representation; 4. Homoeroticism as the way of speaking homosexuality in Antiquity.

When they redid the form, after the discussions in the classroom, the justifications changed. This time, the answers alternated between: 1. Homosexuality as sexual relations and homoeroticism as love relationships, not needing to be sexualized; 2. Homosexuality as natural, and homoeroticism as something "created"; 3. Homoeroticism would be sex between older men with younger men; 4. Homosexuality would be the attraction between men of the same gender, but "gay", and homoeroticism would be the attraction between men, but without being "gay". These responses demonstrate that one of the objectives of the proposal was

achieved, that is, to draw the distinctions of terms that are historically dated, in the case of homosexuality as an anachronistic term for Classical Greece.

In the sixth question: “How do you imagine sexuality in the ancient world?”, in the first form, the students emphasized male chauvinism in relationships, such as waiting for marriage to have sexual relations. In addition, they pointed out that in the ancient world people got married without even knowing how sex was "done". Some students highlighted that sexuality was a sin, a taboo and it was not discussed, because the "ancients" were prejudiced, since they did not accept their sexuality, marriages were arranged, women were forced to have sexual relations, relations between the same genders were unacceptable and persecuted. The answers demonstrate the influence of the values of the world in which the students live, which is why answers such as: 1. Greece was "bitching" and the rest of the ancient world was very conservative; 2. homosexuals already existed, but they were "closeted"; 3. Homosexual relationships were "normal" and it changed with the rise of other religions.

In the form after classes, the opinions changed: 1. Homosexuality was seen as normal and acceptable; 2. In the ancient world, there was no homosexuality, but homoeroticism; 3. Only relations between men were normalized; 4. Homosexual relations in Antiquity were more respected; 5. Homosexuality was neither strange nor forbidden; 6. There could be dating between men, but not marriage. Here too, we believe that there has been an understanding, even if with limits, of differences between the perception of sexuality in the ancient world and the reality of students.

The seventh question: “Do you know any image, icon, drawing or object related to sexuality in Antiquity?” The majority of the students, 84.6%, answered that they had never seen it. In the return form, 77.8% said they had never seen it and 22.2% said they had already seen some art related to sexuality. The eighth question complemented the seventh: “If so, which representation?” The few students who had seen, in the first form, 15.4%, reported: 1. The image of the Betty Boop doll; 2. Michelangelo's God and Adam; 3. Images from the history book; 4. A sculpture of two men; 5. An image of Narcissus. In the post-class form, the students mentioned the engravings of the vases, painting and statuettes with two men together.

The students were asked in the classroom about their answers, because, during the classes, the classes had access to images of Greek vases that represented homoeroticism, however, such images were not perceived as representations related to sexuality, but rather something suggestive.

Thus, the students demonstrated that they still do not understand well the semantics related to sexuality.

The ninth question: "How does our society interpret same-sex relationships?" 33.3% thought sinful; 30.8%, intolerant; 23.1%, acceptable; 7.7%, violent; and 5.1%, well regarded. In the return form, the answers were as follows: 53.3% thought intolerant; 22.2%, acceptable; 17.8%, sinful; 4.4%, violent; and 2.2% well regarded.

The tenth question, one of the most relevant questions of the proposal: "Was there a difference in treatment in the way these questions were interpreted in the past and in today's society?" 76.9% answered yes and 23.1% answered no. Among the justifications for this question, present in the answers to the eleventh question, we have the following table: 1. In Antiquity people did not approach this topic; 2. There would be no same-sex relationships; 3. With technology, same-sex relationships became easier to accept. Thus, most students, before classes on the subject, believed that in Antiquity society's relationship with sexuality was worse, more sinful and intolerant.

After classes, in response to the new form, 57.8% said that "yes", there was a difference in treatment. In the justifications, we have the following reports: 1. It would be more acceptable in Antiquity; 2. Dating between men was common; 3. Dating between older and younger people was also acceptable; 4. Religion changed how sexuality was seen over time; 5. In current society, LGBTs receive more support and are more accepted. Here, it drew our attention that despite the decrease in the percentage of those who think there is a difference, the content of the justifications has changed qualitatively, demonstrating that the students have overcome the lack of knowledge about the old one, present in the justifications of the first questionnaire.

The following questions changed the direction, turning to more individualized perceptions about the theme. In the form made after classes, we asked if the understanding of sexuality has changed. The majority, 60%, said no and 40%, yes. The justifications were: 1. They had an opinion about homosexuality and with the class they only discovered more details; 2. The view of homosexuality in Antiquity changed radically; 3. They learned about sexuality, but they didn't change their opinions.

When asked if they would like to have more classes like these, 75.6% answered "yes" and 24.4% answered "no".

Also on the return form, it was asked if the conception of homosexuality remained the same before classes: 68.9% said “no” and 31.1% said “yes”. Among those who said “no”, the justifications were quite diverse, for example: 1. They did not change their understanding, but discovered new "details"; 2. They said: "stay with whoever you want"; 3. They accept only heterosexual relationships; 4. They think homosexuality is wrong; 5. They already think homosexual practices are correct and, therefore, they have not changed their opinion. Those who changed their opinion, 31%, stressed that they understood what homosexuality is and what homoeroticism would be in Classical Greece. In addition, in the students' conception, the approach served to learn more about how other societies think about the subject.

The last question of the form was a diagnostic evaluation of the students' reception of the theme. Most liked it, found it fun and were interested in the subject. In view of the reactions, another intervention class was held with a conversation and debate circle to deepen the theme and new issues that might arise.

Final considerations

Starting from inquiries that are present in our daily lives, we sought to produce in this article a reflection on the phenomenon of sexuality in Classical Greece, in the light of Foucault's theory. We sought to identify the main differences and similarities between the Greeks and us and to advance in themes established in the curricular guidelines on the theme of otherness, using Classical Greece as a period to break with prejudices and intolerances.

In addition, the proposed pedagogical approach is in accordance with the guidelines established by the Federal Constitution, the National Common Curricular Base (BNCC) and the Referential Curriculum Document of Bahia (DCRB), insofar as we aim to promote through the social and cultural aspects of sexuality in Classical Greece, an education based on plural debates, overcoming stereotypes and prejudices. In addition, we tried to overcome with the classes the gaps in vocabulary and difficulties in the interpretation of texts, coming largely from an anachronistic perspective in the analysis of different historical contexts.

The classes on the subject showed that students confuse some concepts and present value judgments from their social spaces. In this sense, reflections on the field of sexuality as a device that produces knowledge and power,

from Foucault's perspective, are challenging to think about the relationship between past and present. Taking into account, particularly, the field of curriculum, Foucault's reflections are indispensable for those who dedicate themselves to the craft of thinking and making curricula, and who recognize how much the complex practices and relationships implied in these tasks still need to be problematized and understood, even among teachers.

The need to rethink the approach related to gender and sexuality issues, with a view to producing critical knowledge that fosters the overcoming of inequalities and violence present in our daily lives, is fundamental in combating the naturalization of historical processes.

The classes on sexuality and gender, based on Foucault's work and the iconography of the time, showed that the History of Classical Greece could contribute significantly to the development of a critical teaching, which values diversity and respect. Before classes, there was a certain resistance on the part of some students to openly discuss the theme of homosexuality. However, after the classes, a change in attitude was noticed, with the students demonstrating greater receptivity to understand the issue of sexuality in Greek society. The temporal distance provided by the analysis of sexuality in Classical Greece contributed to demystify the idea of naturalness of sexuality and gender, promoting a broader understanding of the historical construction of these concepts.

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