

FARIAS JR., JOSÉ PETRÚCIO. HISTÓRIA ANTIGA: TRAJETÓRIAS, ABORDAGENS E METODOLOGIAS DE ENSINO. UBERLÂNDIA: NAVEGANDO PUBLICAÇÕES, 2020.

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The publication of the first draft of the Brazilian Common Core at the end of 2015 considerably impacted Brazilian historians studying Ancient History. As this first proposal excluded most of its topics from the curriculum, these scholars rose to defend the relevance of ancient history in primary and secondary education and demanded changes in the Common Core. A rich discussion about the relevance of Ancient History to Brazilian schools emerged from a series of publications and academic events between 2016 and 2019.

Discussions about teaching were not entirely new to Brazilian Ancient History (Funari, 2012), but the number and urgency of these interventions were unprecedented. The bulk of this production came from specialists in different topics of the ancient world, who sought to contribute with prescriptive discussions about how the themes of Ancient History could be helpful for the teaching of History in Brazilian schools. Some researchers, however, dedicated their research specifically to the relationship between Ancient History and History teaching.

We can divide such researches into two main topics. On the one hand, some research aims to discover the trajectories of Ancient History in Brazilian education, dialoguing with studies on the History of the Teaching of History in Brazil (Barnabé, 2019a, 2019b). On the other hand, other researchers seek to unravel proposals for approaches and methodologies for teaching Ancient History in primary and secondary education, dialoguing with studies on the Didactics of History and History Education (Moerbeck, 2018, 2021). The book by José Petrúcio Farias Jr., as the subtitle reveals, is the result of a research of the both types, bringing together expanded and revised versions of articles previously published by the author.

The first chapter, "Trajectories of History Taught in Basic Education", does not deal specifically with teaching Ancient History. Instead, he synthesizes the History of the teaching of History in Brazil, from the Jesuit *pedagogia*

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brasílica of the colonial period to the curricular reformulations related to the 1996's *Lei de Diretrizes e Bases da Educação Nacional*. Consequently, the chapter does not bring new questions and approaches to the topic. However, it serves well as a book's first chapter, considering that most of its public tends to be Ancient History scholars who do not know this topic very well.

The second chapter, "Classic Antiquity and nineteenth-century Brazil", is the book's longest and most important chapter. It brings exciting results from a research on the teaching of Ancient History at Imperial Colégio Pedro II and its impact from the educational reforms implemented by the Imperial government. The central point of Farias Jr.'s analysis concerns how the teaching of "classical tradition" as part of a "civilizing" and "Westernizing" process, and the History of Christianity, as part of a moralizing teaching, were committed to the "grounding of power projects or political-cultural ideologies of the Brazilian Empire" (p.36). Together with Luís Ernesto Barnabé's research on the same topic, this is an important study about how the teaching of Ancient History evolved in our country.

After two chapters dedicated to the History of the Teaching of History, the work changes its course. The following chapters discuss approaches and methods of teaching Ancient History. Thus, the reader may miss a continuation in Brazil's History of the Teaching of Ancient History. Indeed, after a practical general synthesis that goes until the end of the 20th century and an excellent analysis of the teaching of Ancient History in the 19th century, it is somewhat frustrating to realize that there is no chapter in the work dedicated to the trajectory of the teaching of Ancient History in the 20th century. However, the quality of the following chapters makes up for this absence.

The third chapter, "The quadripartite division of History and the Teaching of Ancient History", discusses the impact of this traditional chronology on the teaching of Ancient History themes in Brazilian schools. It is an exciting reflection on the problems raised by Guarinello's (2003) classic article on the "forms of Ancient History" applied specifically to teaching. Farias Jr. identifies the internal problems of the field, such as undue generalizations, and the problems of framing this history in a universal history line, stained by Eurocentrism. At the end of the chapter, he dialogues with Global History and proposes connectivity as a key to escaping these traditional forms.

The fourth chapter, "Ancient History, historical time and teaching methodologies: propositions", discusses the role of Ancient History themes in teaching temporal notions in primary and secondary education. It is a

very fruitful dialogue with more general studies on the problem of the temporal location of students. He brings specific proposals on how the teaching of Ancient History can help build teaching methods that fulfil this objective. Its central point is that historical time must be treated transversally in the teaching of history. Different themes should promote the students' ability to locate themselves temporally in its various dimensions. The themes of Ancient History can specifically contribute to this.

The fifth chapter, "Written historical sources in the teaching of Ancient History: methodological paths", proposes ways to overcome the merely illustrative use of historical sources in the classroom. First, Farias Jr. points out that these ancient sources are "fragments of human experiences from 'other' times" (p.125). So, they are instruments for achieving the objectives of history knowledge in schools (such as contact with the alterity), which are different from academic historical knowledge. He then proposes a methodology for working with students divided into five stages (initial survey; presentation of a problem; interaction with sources; historical contextualization; and recording and synthesizing interpretations) to make this approach feasible.

The sixth chapter, "The use of audiovisual sources in teaching Ancient History", discusses one of the most ubiquitous and complicated tools for teaching history: the historical content film. Farias Jr. emphasizes that films portraying the ancient world are already part of student's prior knowledge about Antiquity. So, a critical approach in the classroom is unavoidable. He then proposes a methodology divided into three stages (identification of credits and other information; internal analysis; and external analysis). Thus, he aims to promote critical reflection on film production, enabling students to think about how these representations of Antiquity are modern forms of appropriation of the ancient world, not its description.

The short seventh chapter, "Challenges for teaching Ancient History in Brazil" and the book's conclusion make a quick reflection on the central issues for teaching Ancient History in Brazilian primary and secondary education today. First, Farias Jr. emphasizes how "the study of the past allows us to problematize our daily experiences, expands the understanding of the cultural experiences to which we are submitted and, mainly, contributes to denaturalize ways of acting and thinking" (p.151). He then proceeds to point out how the study of Ancient History can contribute to this.

As a book produced mainly from the reformulation of previously published articles, Farias Jr.'s book lacks a clear main argument. The

absence of the continuation of the historical trajectory of the teaching of Ancient History in Brazilian formal education throughout the 20th century is the prominent absence. However, the work finds coherence in its two subdivisions. The first two chapters provide a history of this trajectory, which is highly informative and explanatory, although interrupted in the 19th century. The following four chapters explore central themes regarding approaches and methodologies for teaching Ancient History in Brazilian schools, putting into dialogue the specific bibliography of Ancient History and studies on History teaching and even proposing concrete, practical techniques.

Unquestionably, Farias Jr.'s work is one of the most exciting and necessary results of that growth in interest in teaching History generated in the field of Ancient History by the impact of the first version of the BNCC. The permanence of themes from this field in the final version of the document cannot weaken this interest – on the contrary, it makes continuous reflection even more necessary, especially considering how much the final document maintains Ancient History in very traditional ways. Within this effort of critical reflection on the teaching of Ancient History in primary and secondary education, Farias Jr.'s book becomes unavoidable.

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