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Gender and school texts: the case of women in Classical Antiquity

Género y textos escolares: el caso de las mujeres de la Antigüedad Clásica

Género e livros didáticos: o caso das mulheres na antiguidade clássica

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Received: August 11th, 2020. **Approved:** Noveber 19th, 2020.

ABSTRACT

The Ancient History units present in Chilean manuals are characterized by expose androcentric historical narrative that marginalizes the participation of women, since they have traditionally focused on describing the contributions made by elite men in Greco- Roman culture. To problem, highlight this article analyzes the treatment that History, Geography and Social Science texts give to women of the Classical Antiquity. For this purpose, a critical analysis was made of the discourse of school textbooks that were delivered by the Ministry of Education during the year 2020 to municipal and subsidized particular schools in Chile. The results show that the textual passages analyzed focus exclusively on the category of androcentric, since there is evidence of a high degree of invisibility of the role of women in classical culture, a clear dichotomy between the public male and private female roles, and a rooted adult-centric historical perspective.

Keywords: critical discourse analysis; classical antiquity; school history; women; textbooks.

RESUMEN

Las unidades de Historia Antiqua presentes en los manuales chilenos se caracterizan por exponer una narrativa histórica androcéntrica que margina la participación de las mujeres, puesto que tradicionalmente se han centrado en describir los aportes realizados por los hombres de la élite en la cultura grecorromana. Para evidenciar esta problemática, en este artículo se analiza el tratamiento que los textos de Historia, Geografía y Ciencias Sociales asignan a las mujeres de la Antigüedad Clásica. Con este propósito, se desarrolló un análisis crítico del discurso de dos manuales escolares, que fueron entregados por el Ministerio Educación durante el año 2020 a los colegios municipales y particulares subvencionados de Chile. Los resultados demuestran que los pasajes textuales analizados se enfocan exclusivamente en la categoría del androcentrismo, ya que se evidencia un alto grado de invisibilidad del papel de la mujer en la cultura clásica, una clara dicotomía entre los roles público masculino y privado femenino, y una arraigada perspectiva histórica adulto céntrica.

Palabras clave: análisis crítico del discurso; Antigüedad Clásica; historia escolar; mujeres; texto escolar.

RESUMO

As unidades de História Antiga presentes nos manuais chilenos caracterizam-se pela apresentação de uma narrativa histórica androcêntrica que marginaliza a participação das mulheres, uma vez que tradicionalmente se concentram em descrever as contribuições feitas pelos homens de elite na cultura grecoromana. A fim de destacar este problema, este artigo analisa tratamento que a história, a geografia e os textos das ciências sociais dão às mulheres na antiquidade clássica. Com este propósito, foi desenvolvida uma análise crítica do discurso de dois manuais escolares, que foram entregues pelo Ministério da Educação durante o ano de 2020 a escolas municipais e privadas subsidiadas no Chile. resultados mostram que as passagens textuais analisadas incidem exclusivamente sobre a categoria de androcentrismo, uma vez que há provas de um elevado grau de invisibilidade do papel da mulher na cultura clássica, uma clara dicotomia entre os papéis público masculino e privado feminino, e uma perspectiva histórica profundamente enraizada e centrada no adulto.

Palavras-chave: análise crítica do discurso; antiguidade clássica; história da escola; mulheres; texto escolar.

INTRODUCTION

Since the end of the nineteenth century, especially after the coup of 1973, the school in Chile has established itself as the social predilection instance to deploy and materialize the traditional historical discourse in the collective memory because it offers the possibility of intervening in the formation of the citizens of the country.

In this regard, the manuals of History, Geography and Social Sciences distributed by the Ministry of Translated from the original in Spanish Education (MINEDUC, Chile) have played a key role because they have become the main transmission of traditional history, which seeks, for a part, homologate the history of humanity with that of Europe, based on the assessment of the Greco-Roman cultural legacy in the West; and secondly, to teach and convince students that the androcentric discourse, derived from Euro centrism, is the axiomatic focus more effective or to learn a simple, rote and synthetic way, the great "universal feats" of the European man and respective cultural, social, economic and political implications in the rest of the world.

example of this is An seen in thematic units dedicated to Greco - Roman Period (VIII century BC. To the century V b.c), Which has been treated textbooks from mainly by andocentric perspective to invisible the historical role women in Classic antiquity and promote the study of Greco - Roman culture in the adult centric point of view at the time. For this reason, it is not surprising that school history highlights figures such as Solon, Pericles, Aristotle and Cicero and ignores important women such as the astronomer Aglaonice, the philosopher Lastenia de Mantinea, and the Hypatia mathematician of Alexandria.

The predominance of this discourse in Chilean manuals responds to the provisions of the MINEDUC and the positivist guidelines that still govern them. Following Rodríguez Solé (2018), the latter is verified in the programming of its thematic units, which is carried out based on a traditional periodization of history starring by the (Ancient, Medieval, European man Modern and Contemporary History); in turn, it is also observed in the the suppression of most of historiography advances that vindicate the historical role of women.

In view of the above, it is essential that the teacher frequently question the textbook to detect the andocentric biases present in the discourse, since only in this way can historical thinking be promoted and prevent students from passive developing learning rote. This always involves a process of decoding, which can allow rework official propose alternative messages and readings that facilitate the mainstreaming of gender in the analysis of historical processes.

In order to rethink the educational goals of school history and to challenge invisibility of the female the performance in Greece and Ancient Rome, it is analyzed in in this article representations of gender present in the textbooks that address the Greco-Roman period. To develop this goal, critical analyses of the discourse of manuals two published by the SM Editorial were carried out.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study is based on a qualitative methodology, with an exploratory, descriptive and transactional character, whose purpose to obtain a first approach to the treatment those textbooks οf History, Geography and Social Sciences assigns women from the classical world.

The sample used is intentional. The corpus selection criteria are based on the importance of school manuals as transmission devices for ministerial provisions and on the sequencing of curricular content.

In relation to the first criterion, and that basically responds to the transactional character of the study, textbooks of history, Geography and Social Sciences of the SM Editorial,

because they were all delivered by the Ministry of Education for the year 2020 to the municipal schools and particularly subsidized in the country were chosen.

The second criterion responds to the location of the contents associated with Greco-Roman culture in the curricular plans and programs of the History, Geography and Social Sciences subjects. In the regard, it is noteworthy that these contents are in Basic third and seventh or, and that is the reason why the books chosen correspond to these educational levels.

The Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) technique is used to assess inequalities present discourse and criticize traditional narratives in school texts, through the investigation of the silences exclusions that contribute to the marginalization of within women historical In this processes. way, following Dijk (2007), the research to analyze the resources and discursive strategies used by the of producers school textbooks to interpret history according to the perspectives of the hegemonic groups. T o develop this ACD, the data is evidenced interpreted according to the category and subcategories identified in the matrix in table 1.

Table 1- Analysis matrix

Category	Subcategory	Conceptualiz ation
Androcentr ism	Sub 1: gender differentiation in chilhood	It seeks to highlight the social value of the boy over that of the girl in the discourse, in order to preserve the andocentric perspective in the treatment of childhood within history.

Subcategory 2: Dichotomy between the male public and female private roles	It aims to restrict female participation to the private sphere, marked by the domestic world, and the male role to public life, where political decisions that guide the destiny of societies are made.
Subcategory 3: Generalized and anonymous representation	Women appear collectively and anonymously to suppress their identities and leaderships within historical processes.
Subcategory 4: Partial exclusion	The female figures are in the background, because, although they appear mentioned in the speech, their importance or participation in the events is not specified.
Subcategory 5: Suppression	Women do not appear anywhere in the text, since it is only intended to reveal the male role in the story.
Subcategory 6: Predominance of the adult- centered perspe ctive	It seeks to highlight the role of adult men in political life, where the figure of the male-citizen is presented as the civilized and rational figure.

This analysis matrix was designed based on the labeling - disaggregation- re-aggregation process proposed by Sayago (2014). Through a cross

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- search, and following the sampling unit, register and open coding of thematic units dedicated to Classic Antiquity, states that these are treated from the category of the androcentric, which manifests itself the implicit and explicit way in the eight textual passages that are analyzed in the next section. Subsequently, from a vertical search and using the theoretical saturation technique, the six subcategories obtained from the main category consigned were identified. Such matrix become a fundamental key to analvze the representations gender present in manuals school, reflect on the silences present and evaluate possible social effects of dominant speeches .

RESULTS

In order to socialize the findings, it is presented, then the category referred to androcentrism with their respective subcategories and evidences.

Category: Androcentrism; Subcategor y 1: Sexist differentiation in childhood

Evidence N ° 1

In traditional Greek society, *having a son* was valued more than a daughter; the male was better considered because it was thought that he could help the family economy. In Athens, up to six years of age, boys and girls spent most of their time in the company of the women of the house. A Greek intellectual named Plato devoted attention to writing about children's games, as he believed that they were of great importance in shaping personality and developing individual talent. He recommended, for example, that a child who in the future had to be a peasant or a bricklayer should practice with toys related to his activity as an adult (History, Geography and Social

Sciences, Student Text, 3rd grade, Editorial SM, p. 76).

In this fragment an attempt is observed with break to the prospect adult centric that focus narrating the action of the adult man in history (Punch, 2020), as it recognizes and the role of the infant in ancient Greece; However, the discourse focuses, based on a clear sexist differentiation in the childhood stage, on highlighting the value of the boy over that of the girl as if they were elements attached to the adult world, competing to help the family economy or for being the future sustenance of this. This is confirmed in the reference made to Plato's studies on the alleged conditioning generated by the practice of certain games in the future or work performance of infants. In this regard, it is important to note that there is no mention of any Plato writing that supports such a position, discarding the importance of works such as Platonic Dialogues and Plato's Letters in the educational field.

Category: Androcentrism; **Subcategor y 2:** Dichotomy between the public male roles and private female

Evidence N ° 2

Like today, the people of the past had various trades that allowed them to subsist and support their families. In addition

to <u>doctors</u>, <u>blacksmiths</u>, <u>politicians</u>, <u>soldi</u> <u>ers</u> and <u>peasants</u>, in Greece and Rome there

were architects, artisans, musicians and sailors, among other occupations. These trades were performed, most of the time, by men; In addition to fulfilling the function of managing the home and educating their sons and daughters, women participated in certain agricultural tasks and commerce wove and made clothes (History, Geography and Social Sciences, Student Text, 3rd grade, Editorial SM, p. 102).

In this quote, a clear dichotomy is evident the male public and female private roles . In the first part, it is intended emphasize , through the use of masculine plural, the idea that men important played the most functions of society; whereas, in the second part of the extract is argued that female essential work is developed to the inside of the domestic sphere . In this line, following Diaz & Puig (2020), paragraph is based on a sexist approach that is responsible for restricting the male action to public sphere and the female to private, obviating other criteria beyond gender, ethnicity or age social class, group, allowing enriching the expected explanation. Therefore, noted Cid (2015), it should be noted that the analysis should not be limited to the discourse of domesticity, as it is essential to visualize other issues women affecting ancient, in companies such as everyday life girls religious relationship opposed to goddesses and `virtuous' women mortals, and for who served as ethical moral references during the Greco - Roman period.

Evidence N ° 3

Roman society was patriarchal. Only patrician men, and later commoners, were considered *citizens with political rights*. Both women, children and slaves were under the tutelage of their respective pater families (male head of the family). However, women played prominent role in the private The richest women could sphere. influence, from that space, in politics. For their part, the women of the town worked in the fields, carried out some manual trades and assumed housework (History, Geography and Social Sciences, Student Text, 7th grade, Editorial SM, p. 92).

The purpose of this extract is, on the one hand, to present a patriarchal and andocentric vision of history, which aims

to highlight the role of men in public life and restrict female performance to the domestic sphere; and secondly, seeks the otherness ignore the "other" and "other", by that historical discourse is not presented from the perspective of women, of children or of slaves. This reading, clearly linked to a traditional historical approach, has reduced the study of Ancient Rome to a simple descriptive account of great landmarks that were carried out by *pater* families, rulers and prominent Roman emperors. Following Fontana (2011), this interpretation relegates the oppressed and their problems to the margins of history studies, as if they were a marginal part of society.

Category: Androcentrism; **Subcategor y 3:** Generalized and anonymous representation

Evidence N ° 4

The Greek and Roman Women depended on her father or her husband. Their life was mainly centered on the home, where they were highly valued, as they were in charge of the care and education of their sons and daughters. The Roman woman, with the passage of time, acquired greater degrees of freedom and had an intense social life, since she participated banquets and *practiced trades* associated associated traditionally with *men* (History, Geography and Social Sciences, Student Text, 3rd grade, Editorial SM, p. 135).

In the first part of the fragment, the plural "women" is used to represent this group in a generalized , anonymous way and conditioned by the discourse of domesticity , since , as Cid (2015) , it restricts female maintains performance to housework. In the second part which puts special emphasis on the Roman woman, and presents a sexist narrative because it points out that its field of action was expanded since they began to participate in banquets and develop Translated from the original in Spanish

jobs 'reserved' for the men. The latter, in addition to favoring discrimination against women in the teaching of history, can generate in students the promotion of behaviors and stereotypes of social roles associated with gender differences. This situation, which affects women, is not comparable to class or caste oppression, since it is present in a transversal way throughout society.

Evidence N ° 5

The Spartan <u>women</u> had a very active role in society, they were part of calisthenics and were integrated into the military organization, but had no political rights (History, Geography and Social Sciences, Text Student, grade 7, Editorial SM, p. 83).

The plural "women" is used to suppress identities and leaderships of important Spartan women such as Gorgo (queen of Sparta in the 5th century BC) and Cinisca (the first woman to win Olympic Games in times). Additionally, it should be noted that the paragraph only seeks to recognize the civic virtues of Spartan women; however, it ignores the importance they had in the preservation of the patriarchal society of Sparta, since, following Myszkowska (2014), they had the responsibility of having healthy and strong children to maintain the powerful army of that city. Because of this, as Feu & Abril (2020) maintains, the need to rethink the role of women as configurative hasal and element of Spartan hyperactive masculi nity does not arise. Finally, it is important to add that the fragment seeks expose narrative historical "universal", which merely reiterate the exclusion argue female and systems of political participation of Ancient Greece.

Category: Androcentrism; Subcategor y 4: Partial exclusion

Evidence N ° 6

Traditionally male thinkers have been featured; However, there were many women who developed in different fields thought, the of such as astronomer Aglaonice, the philosophers <u>Axiothea</u>, <u>Diotima</u>, <u>Lastenia</u> <u>de Mantinea</u> and the mathematician <u>Hipatia</u> de <u>Alexandria</u> (History, Geography and Social Sciences, Student Text, 3rd grade, Editorial SM, p. 154).

In this excerpt, it is lookina to recognize the role of women in ancient science however, they are partially excluded in the discourse it is to say, some female figures cited, are his social but without specifying without discussing on contribution historicity, because the fragment assumes certain existence, ignoring, as claimed Mateo & Shepherd (2020), there are very few sources and studies that prove such a condition. However, there are great historians Sarah Pomeroy (2004)and Nicole Loraux (2004), who have made enormous efforts to constantly highlight the participation of women in the Greek S society is and Roman; these however, contributions have been completely discarded by the Chilean school curriculum.

Category: Androcentrism; Subcategor y 5: Suppression

Evidence N ° 7

Dracon first wrote a code of written laws, which were characterized by their great severity. Before, the laws were oral and were subject the exclusive to interpretation the eupatrids. <u>Solon</u> drew up a new code that abolished the debts of small farmers and prohibited debt slavery. In addition, it created the Council of Citizens (Bulé) and the People's Court (Heleia). With these changes, participation in public affairs, generally of the wealthiest citizens, was expanded, creating a Translated from the original in Spanish

plutocracy. A set of social and economic transformations led to the emergence of illegitimate tyrannies or governments. One of them was led by *Pisistrato*, who distributed land among the peasants and undertook numerous public works. His government set out to lead important political reforms. However, he died before being able to specify them (History, Geography and Social Sciences, Student Text, 7th grade, Editorial SM, p. 76).

This paragraph stands out, in an individually nominated way, the role of the great reformers of Athens and their contributions respective in democratic formation of this city; however, it suppressed the action of the female figures, such as the poetess Sappho Mytilini, the philosopher Theano of Crotona and intellectual Aspasia of Miletus, who contributed intellectual to political boom of the Athenian society. In this regard, it should be noted that, although these mentions do not solve the to problem, they contribute configuration of complete historical memory about the female identities that participated in Ancient Greece however, this recognition is Rome; the hampered by androcentrism present in the evidence, since, according to Trujillo (2019), it reveals to Greece as the cradle of patriarchy imposed in and reinforces West the marginalization of the women in Discourse on History, Geography and Social Sciences textbooks.

Category: Androcentrism; Subcategor y 6: Predomination of the Adult- Centric Perspective

Evidence N ° 8

Under the Athenian democratic system, only free men over 20 years of age were considered citizens and could enjoy the rights that this condition granted, excluding most of the

population, practically three-quarters of the total: all women, the Metics (foreigners) and slaves (History, Geography and Social Sciences, Student Text, 7th grade, Editorial SM, p. 80).

In this quote, an adultcentric historical perspective is observed that seeks to highlight the role of free adult men in Athenian democracy. Likewise, it should be noted that the vision presented responds to a traditional civic approach that restricts the concept of citizenship to a simple political relationship between the male-citizen and the polis, discarding other more complex explanations that allow rethinking the role of women, as pointed out Feu & Abril (2020), from alterity or as a configurator element of masculinity. In this sense, school history, based on this approach, seeks to preserve the myth that bases citizenship, always male, and legitimizes the invisibility of women within Greco-Roman culture.

DISCUSSION

The analysis carried out shows that the History, Geography and Social Sciences textbooks distributed by MINEDUC are cultural artifacts (Rodríguez & Solé, 2018) and transmitters of information that account for the androcentric vision of the world (Díaz & Puig, 2020), Classical since the units on Antiquity examined show little female presence, because they emphasize, fundamentally, the legacy carried out by various male leaders in the construction of current democracy. For this reason, woman, no such as Gorgo, Cinisca, Sappho of Crotona Mytilene, Teano de and Aspasia de Mileto, and their respective contribution to intellectual, political and economic development, is part of the planned narrative.

This situation, as noted in this study, shown in partial or total exclusion of

women the Greek and in Roman societies, in the dichotomy between the public male and private female roles, and the adultcentric historical perspective, which enhance the figure seeks to the free adult man as a prototype of the ideal citizen. It is also evident in the absence of a critical reflection that raises the need to rethink history from a gender perspective, since most of the discourse tends to shift the role of women to the background.

This positioning responds to the traditional curriculum guidelines of the Editorial SM, which is based on an euro androcentric vision to, why in the manuals produced is excluded or attenuates the female role in classic ancient. For this reason, the editorial only highlights the plots or aforementioned features of the theme that allow the interests of the dominant power to be preserved. This provision leads to consider the school manual as а generator vector of social conflict, since it promotes the confluence of symbolic violence against women in various spaces communication, such as school and family, which produces constant tensions between normatively curricular and school practice, and the growing dispute between the dominant historical vision historiographer and emerging contributions that seek to position the historical role of female figures.

Although there are no studies that demonstrate the invisibility of women in the Ancient History units present in Chilean school textbooks, there are various investigations that demonstrate this trait in thematic axes related to national history. In this context, this work, like the studies by Fernández (2010) and Minte & González (2015), is conclusive in maintaining that the representations of women in the texts of History, Geography and Social Sciences are still characterized by exclusion, generalization and passivity.

Hence the importance of signifying the andocentric historical narrative that annuls the capacity of action of women in history, since several of deliberately and with their own criteria, contributed to the intellectual and historical development of past and societies. present To achieve this needed resignification, teachers must question, from a historical perspective, the school texts when teaching the subject to their students, which will undoubtedly reduce the potential risk of transmitting gender stereotypes, which contribute to denying the importance of the of women today. For this, it is essential that the teacher promotes historical thinking students, constantly renews their didactic strategies and stays updated latest historiographer the contributions of the content to be taught.

Finally, it gets highlighted the need to continue with the implementation of new Investigations deepen in in the subject and to encourage the rethinking of the official provisions of the M INEDUC in the manuals of History, Geography and Social Sciences, to become porters of updated and innovative historiographer knowledge and in inputs that are at the service of active and critical learning of the students.

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Conflict of interest:

Author declares not to have any conflicts of interest.

Author's Contribution:

As the sole author of the article, he carried out all the necessary actions for its preparation.



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