

## EDUCATION IN EUROPE IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY AND ITS INFLUENCE ON FEMALE EDUCATION IN BRAZIL

### A EDUCAÇÃO NA EUROPA NO SÉCULO XVIII E A SUA INFLUENCIA NA EDUCAÇÃO FEMININA NO BRASIL

### LA EDUCACIÓN EN EUROPA EN EL SIGLO XVIII Y SU INFLUENCIA EN LA EDUCACIÓN FEMENINA EN BRASIL



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#### ABSTRACT

The chapter analyzes the introduction of education, from the eighteenth century onward, as a right and a social necessity aimed at the formation of citizens, examining its development in Europe — especially in Germany, England, and France — and the thought of authors such as Rousseau, Mary Wollstonecraft, and Olympe de Gouges. Initially, it highlights the role of the Protestant Reformation, particularly Lutheranism and Calvinism, in expanding female literacy. Women's education was mainly intended to enable the reading of the Scriptures and to strengthen religious and family life, while still maintaining notions of female inferiority and domestic roles. With the Enlightenment, the French and Industrial Revolutions, and the advance of secularization, education came to be understood as an instrument for forming the modern citizen, linked to the State and grounded in scientific principles. Public school systems, teacher training, and the idea of universal instruction were consolidated. Rousseau occupies a central place in this debate, especially through *Emile*. Although considered the father of modern pedagogy, he proposed distinct educational models: *Emile* is prepared for citizenship, autonomy, and public life, whereas *Sophie* is educated for domesticity, submission, and service to her husband, reinforcing the division between male and female spheres. Feminist thinkers criticized this conception, denouncing women's exclusion from citizenship and the social contract. The text concludes that, despite Enlightenment ideals of equality and freedom, education also served to legitimize gender inequality and sustain patriarchal domination for centuries.

**Keywords:** Female Education. Citizenship. Rousseau. Feminism. Enlightenment.

#### RESUMO

O capítulo analisa a introdução da educação, a partir do século XVIII, como um direito e uma necessidade social voltada à formação dos cidadãos, observando seu desenvolvimento na Europa — especialmente na Alemanha, Inglaterra e França — e o pensamento de autores como Rousseau, Mary Wollstonecraft e Olympe de Gouges. Inicialmente, destaca-se o papel da Reforma Protestante, sobretudo do luteranismo e do calvinismo, na ampliação da alfabetização feminina. A instrução das mulheres visava principalmente à leitura das

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Escrituras e ao fortalecimento da vida religiosa e familiar, ainda que mantivesse a ideia de inferioridade feminina e sua função doméstica. Com o Iluminismo, as Revoluções Francesa e Industrial e o avanço da laicização, a educação passou a ser entendida como instrumento de formação do cidadão moderno, vinculada ao Estado e fundamentada em princípios científicos. Consolidaram-se sistemas escolares públicos, formação docente e a noção de instrução universal. Rousseau ocupa posição central nesse debate, sobretudo com a obra *Emílio*. Embora considerado pai da pedagogia moderna, propôs modelos educacionais distintos: *Emílio* é preparado para a cidadania, a autonomia e a vida pública, enquanto *Sofia* é educada para a domesticidade, a submissão e o serviço ao marido, reforçando a separação entre os espaços masculino e feminino. Pensadoras feministas criticaram essa concepção, denunciando a exclusão das mulheres da cidadania e do contrato social. O texto conclui que, apesar do discurso iluminista de igualdade e liberdade, a educação também serviu para legitimar a desigualdade de gênero e sustentar a dominação patriarcal por séculos.

**Palavras-chave:** Educação Feminina. Cidadania. Rousseau. Feminismo. Iluminismo.

### RESUMEN

El capítulo analiza la introducción de la educación, a partir del siglo XVIII, como un derecho y una necesidad social orientada a la formación de ciudadanos, examinando su desarrollo en Europa — especialmente en Alemania, Inglaterra y Francia — y el pensamiento de autores como Rousseau, Mary Wollstonecraft y Olympe de Gouges. Inicialmente, destaca el papel de la Reforma Protestante, en particular del luteranismo y del calvinismo, en la expansión de la alfabetización femenina. La educación de las mujeres estaba dirigida principalmente a posibilitar la lectura de las Escrituras y a fortalecer la vida religiosa y familiar, manteniendo, sin embargo, nociones de inferioridad femenina y de roles domésticos. Con la Ilustración, las Revoluciones Francesa e Industrial y el avance de la secularización, la educación pasó a ser comprendida como un instrumento para la formación del ciudadano moderno, vinculada al Estado y fundamentada en principios científicos. Se consolidaron los sistemas públicos de enseñanza, la formación docente y la idea de instrucción universal. Rousseau ocupa un lugar central en este debate, especialmente a través de *Emilio*. Aunque es considerado el padre de la pedagogía moderna, propuso modelos educativos distintos: *Emilio* es preparado para la ciudadanía, la autonomía y la vida pública, mientras que *Sofía* es educada para la domesticidad, la sumisión y el servicio al marido, reforzando la división entre las esferas masculina y femenina. Las pensadoras feministas criticaron esta concepción, denunciando la exclusión de las mujeres de la ciudadanía y del contrato social. El texto concluye que, pese a los ideales ilustrados de igualdad y libertad, la educación también sirvió para legitimar la desigualdad de género y sostener la dominación patriarcal durante siglos.

**Palabras clave:** Educación Femenina. Ciudadanía. Rousseau. Feminismo. Ilustración.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

The objective of this chapter is to discuss the introduction of education in the eighteenth century as a right and a necessity of society, for the formation of citizens. To this end, I analyze how the theme of education spread in Europe, especially in Germany, England and France, through some authors such as: Mary Wollstonecraft, Olympe de Gouges, Madame Gacon-Dufon, Madame Clément-Hémery and Jean-Jacques Rousseau. In the case of Germany, I intend to verify how the Calvinist movement identified, in women's literacy, the possibility of disseminating the Holy Scriptures.

I will also highlight how the idea of using education to form new citizens for city life and the adaptation of these people to the new social order that was being born after the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution was introduced.

It is worth mentioning that in Germany Martin Luther defended, in the sixteenth century, education for boys and girls. Cambi (1999) informs us that Luther's pedagogical conception was based on the idea of universal education for all, in order to form good rulers and women who knew how to lead their homes. Through the Lutheran church and the public authorities, the first school organization under the responsibility of the state was born. So for Cambi:

Lutheranism in Germany relaunches the social function of instruction through the establishment of schools and the valorization of the national language as a means of personal approximation to the texts of Sacred Scripture; Also with the other Reformed Churches the educational problem is seen in close relation to religious renewal. (CAMBI, 1999, p. 251)

It should be noted that, in sixteenth-century Germany, there was already thought of using literate women to disseminate religious principles in the family. In this way, Holy Scripture would be a means of guiding and instructing them religiously and socially, starting from the icon of Mary.

For Silva (1998), Calvinist thought would have a distinction in relation to Luther's thought, by advocating that men and women are the image and likeness of God. Despite this consideration, Calvin believed in female inferiority, because it was through her that the balance of humanity would remain.

The important thing in this new point of view, for Silva (1998), is the list of possibilities that open up for women, among them access to reading and writing and a more affective participation in religious life, the opposite of what the Catholic tradition preached. The author evaluates that the Reform will reach the female public that was prone to the search for spaces of sociability. For women, tired of domestic life, the Protestant church appears as a space capable of satisfying such desires. Thus,

Reading and Bible study, in the vernacular, as a necessity of the Protestant faithful, allowed many women access to reading and a strong motivation for them to become literate, often having their own husbands as teachers. Congregational singing, where male and female voices mixed in praise of God in public services, was in fact a great novelty for lay women who began to participate in the liturgy of Protestant religious communities, despite the jocular criticism of Catholic priests, who, in addition to being strange, minimized the feminine capacity for understanding biblical mysteries and liturgical practice. (SILVA, 1998, p.263)

As can be seen, in relation to female education, it is within the Protestant church that the first experience of female literacy will be born with the objectives of social control and so that women could seek, in the Holy Scriptures, the answers to their doubts and the best way to lead the home.

## 2 FEMALE EDUCATION IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

In the eighteenth century, education will have in Rousseau its main representative. For this reason, it will be of fundamental importance, in this article, to analyze his works *Emile* and *Social Contract*, in order to understand how the dominant conception of education was elaborated in the following century and, in this context, what conception was elaborated about female citizenship.

In this sense, from the analysis of chapter V, *Sofia*, of the book *Emile* (1995), from the perspective of gender studies, we found that Rousseau had a perception of female education that was different from the education that should be offered to men.

The counterpoint to her conceptions will come with the advent of the struggles for women's emancipation in the French Revolution, around 1789, through the mobilizations of French women, in addition to the writings of Olimpes de Gouges and the publication, in England, of the book "Vindicación de los derechos de la Mujer" by Mary Wollstonecraft published in 1792. Certainly, from the nineteenth century onwards, other authors opposed Rousseau's view of women's education. The eighteenth century, in Europe, can be considered as the one that put an end to only religious education, giving way to a secular education. The new winds that swept Europe, transforming not only political society, but also its values, brought with them the demand for an education disconnected from religious principles, linked to public affairs and based on scientific foundations.

Cambi states that the eighteenth century can be defined as the century of emancipations: political, economic, religious and geographical. For him,

The effect of all these processes – also accompanied by an increasingly incisive and broader role assumed by the birth and diffusion of the book, by the expansion of literacy (at first for religious, then civil and economic reasons), by the maturation of a

new profile of intellectual (the modern intellectual), no longer an emissary of religious and political power, but characterized by autonomy and a more incisive and dynamic social role – it was a process of secularization, of greater freedom on the part of social classes and individuals (freedom of action and judgment) who became independent of univocal and binding models and now valued precisely for their independence. (CAMBI, 1999, p. 324)

This century will definitively detach itself from the *Ancien Régime*, creating new agents, or rather, independent, free, conscious social actors, in short, citizens of modern society. It is worth asking, from now on: What is the role of education in this new society? What importance would the intellectual have in the new order that was being established? What is the place of women? Would the modern citizen have sex? When thinkers spoke of citizens, were they referring to both sexes?

According to Cambi (1999), education, in addition to homogenizing society and socializing individuals, will build the figure of the active, emancipated, responsible citizen, resident of the city. His task would be to forge this new being. For the author, from the eighteenth century onwards, a school system was implemented with a teaching program and with methods and techniques supported by scientific principles. *Comenius' Didactics*<sup>2</sup> reveals the new status that education has gained since the seventeenth century.

Surrounded by the belief that, if there is a way of learning, there must also be a specific way of teaching, teacher training schools began to appear in Europe. Cambi (1999) says that, from 1760 onwards, in Austria, education was organized as a responsibility and instrument of the state, with the purpose of training citizens and employees. Thus, not only the provincial normal schools – the Normalshulen, lasting four years – but also the national and state education system were created (Cambi, 1999, p. 333). Thus, the author concludes:

The contemporary school, with its public, state and civil characteristics, with its systematic structure, with its dialogue with the sciences and knowledge in transformation, was born in the eighteenth century, already involving confidence in literacy and in the dissemination of culture as a process of collective democratic growth that remained for a long time, until yesterday (or, perhaps, to this day) as a belief without uncertainties of contemporary society, (CAMBI, 1999, p. 328)

It is these new airs that will create a new dynamic in European society, from the diffusion of books, printed materials, the circulation of theatrical plays and, consequently, the formation of readers. It is through the book that ideas are disseminated and it is in this context that Rousseau publishes, in 1762, *Emile*, with a proposal for education for the free man.

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<sup>2</sup> Publication of the seventeenth century, which advocated the need for methods for teaching and the construction of an adequate space for education to take place, in this case, the school.

The central point of the book is the way in which society begins to gestate the model of education for the free citizen and what place women occupy in this formulation. What does it mean for Rousseau, for example, who also wrote the *Social Contract*, *to be a citizen*? Why, in his proposal, does he differentiate the education that should be adopted for *Emile* and the education of Sofia? How could an author, who is considered the father of contemporary pedagogy, conceive of two types of education? Was your goal to train for the differentiated exercise of citizenship?

Cambi (1999) states that Rousseau is the father of modern pedagogy, as it was he who "operated a copernican revolution in pedagogy, placing the child at the center of his theorizing" (p. 343). His theory is built on the basis of educational models of man and citizen, complementary and alternative models, according to Cambi.

In chapter V of the book *Émile*, according to Cambi (1999), Rousseau will deal not only with the love between man and woman, but also with the construction of a hierarchically subordinate model of female education. Rousseau only highlights, in women, traits such as virtue, wisdom and submission, leaving aside the feminist claims that are already on the agenda in this century of emancipations. In this sense, I think that the role of education should be questioned. For Rousseau, if Sofia was reserved for the function of preparing the modern citizen, how to conceive different models of education? Would the objective be the formation of second-class citizens?

It is no coincidence that the great debate of this period revolved around the conceptions of citizenship and universality. Who was considered a citizen, in the formulation of theorists? French feminists, including Olympe de Gouges, were already demanding the elimination of the political exclusion to which women were subjected.

Mary Wollstonecraft (1994) rebels against the proposition of Rousseau and other authors regarding the type of education that should be offered to women. In this same period, Madame Staël speaks of the need to educate women, because, according to her, education would make them citizens and change the state of fragility and dependence, considered as a feminine characteristic.

To answer these questions, I analyzed the view of these authors who thought about what type of education would be used for the training of new generations of teachers, to verify how they think about models of men and women, based on the historical configurations of behavior considered as feminine and masculine.

### 3 EMILIO AND SOFIA OR THE WOMAN IN ROUSSEAU

In an attempt to understand how philosophers and scientists, considered classics, discussed the issue of women, feminist scholars have proposed to reread their texts. Some focused on the philosopher Rousseau, to study his proposal for female education.

Authors such as Célia Amarós<sup>3</sup>, Carole Pateman, Andréa Nye and Rosa Cobo dedicated themselves to the study of some texts of philosophy to understand, for example, how the Enlightenment thought, elaborated and systematized a democratic and liberal society and, in it, what is the role assigned to women.

Andréa Nye (1995), for example, in her book *Feminist Theory and the Philosophies of Man*, states that "Locke, Rousseau, and the utilitarians had modeled a world in which men could be free and equal, a civil society in which men would determine their own destinies." (p.15). For Nye, such ideas were not thought of and applied to women. These are elaborations that constituted the basis of the modern world, such as, for example, Rousseau's thought. For him, women would be accustomed to male command and their nature directed only to the reproduction of the species. According to Nye,

... Women should be educated to please men and be mothers. They must be educated in the sexual seclusion and chastity that legitimize fatherhood. They must learn to stimulate male desire and at the same time prevent men's lust. Seduction is proper to their nature, they are desirous of pleasing, modest, tolerant of injustice, cunning, vain, and artists to a lesser degree. In the family, men are to rule over these frivolous creatures. (NYE, 1995, p.20)

Carole Pateman<sup>4</sup> (1993) also observes that women were not included in the theory of the Social Contract, since the main assumption was civil liberty, based on patriarchal law. For her, the woman was excluded from the Social Contract through marriage, which she calls the sexual contract.

According to Pateman, the classical theorists did not discuss the issue of women or their relationship with civil society. The new civil society, which emerged more systematically in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, was explained through the Social Contract, based on a patriarchal system, presupposing the previous existence of a pact, which she calls the "original contract".

For the aforementioned author (1993), the "original contract creates two differentiated situations, freedom and domination. The freedom of man and the subjection of woman" (p.17 and 18). The original contract, therefore, cannot be understood without involving the woman.

<sup>3</sup> A group of feminist scholars articulated in the "feminism and enlightenment seminars", given by the philosopher Célia Amaros, from the Complutense University of Madrid, in the late 80s and early 90s

<sup>4</sup> Later I will develop Pateman's theory of woman and the sexual contract.

The sense of civil liberty reveals how man, through patriarchal law, can dominate the other half of society. For the same author, the original contract generates a situation of freedom and subjection, as it has, at its base, two types of contract: the social contract for men, on the one hand, and the sexual contract for women on the other. Exactly the parameters of this "social contract" guided Western political thought, both from a democratic and liberal perspective, demarcated by a patriarchal perspective.

Rousseau will be revered as the great democratic thinker. His elaboration regarding the State, according to Bobbio (1992), is original and consequential, since when, for this Enlightenment theorist, the solution would reside in the fact that the social contract, as it is presented, is also a collective act of renunciation of natural rights, but – and here is the fundamental difference that leaves Rousseau as the most consequent theorist of the democratic state – the renunciation is not made in favor of a third party, *but by each one in favor of all*, that is, by each individual (considered individually) for himself (as a member of a totality) (BOBBIO, 1992, p.46)

In the natural state, men are born free and are equal to each other, that is, they are human beings. They give up their freedom, through an agreement or contract, to live in security, which would be expressed in the will to live in freedom, on behalf of everyone in the community. Thus, Bobbio (1992) concludes, in Rousseau's theoretical construction, man, by renouncing his natural freedom, would actually be opting for a broader freedom, freedom in the State.

Perhaps this fact was the theoretical trap into which women fell. In this agreement, women were not included, since they were already outside the "pact", because they had previously contracted another contract, which, according to Pateman (1993), is (sexual) marriage. In this formulation, the idea of individuality is embedded, an issue addressed by Joan Scott (2002).

When reflecting on the position of the theoreticians of the revolution regarding citizenship and what constituted the natural right of men – which made them equal, similar and universal – the aforementioned author concluded that it would be linked to the idea of individualism. For this conception, individuality would be the common trait of all human beings, that is, what makes them human is exactly the possibility of being completely different from the other. So, how to build a theory of equality, if the basis is difference? The strategy, according to Scott (2002), was the creation of an abstract identity, based on the elimination of differentiating categories, such as class origin, status and beliefs.

If the strategy was to eliminate difference and create an abstract equality, how then to conceive the formulation of educational models that take difference as a principle? How can

we also accept the idea of the existence of political equality among beings, if what we saw, during the two centuries that followed, after the French Revolution, was the emphasis on social inequality? Gender, race, ethnicity, themes that emerged at the end of the twentieth century, were suffocated by the ideas of the revolution that preached equality, liberty, fraternity, because the following reading was made: we are equal, brothers and free, at least in the political arena.

It is worth asking: how are the concepts of freedom and individuality presented? In this society, is freedom universal? Who is freedom for? Does everyone enjoy the same civil status?

For Rousseau, according to Pateman (1993), social life begins with the patriarchal family. Women could not be present in this agreement, because they certainly would not be able to control their impulses, their desires, their excesses. How to make a contract with beings so imperfect that, depending on their mood, they can go back on a decision?

In this context, Rousseau elaborates a treatise on the adequate education of these incomplete beings, through Sofia, the fiancée of Émile. According to Cobo (1995), *Emile* is a treatise on education for men and a set of rules of conduct for women. The goal is to describe the ideal woman, the right companion for the character Emílio.

Cobo's (1995) study aims to articulate the pre-social state, the sexual contract and marriage as Rousseauian places, *symbolic* and *real* at the same time. Thus, the work *Emile*, according to the same author, can be observed as much more than a treatise on education, but, above all, an exposition of models of behavior that should be followed by men and women. Thus, *Emilio* should also be analyzed as a text that has a political, philosophical and ideological nature.

According to the author (1995), "Rousseauian man can only exercise his public functions in such an intense way, if he has someone to assume the tasks of reproduction proper to the private space." (p. 210). If we think about the models we have for the division of family tasks, we see how these ideas are still present.

So, what would Sofia's education be like? What education would be able to meet all these needs? I will highlight some points considered by Cobo (1995):

- Sofia's education has a teleological objective, which is the search for her subjection, that is, the construction of the new model of the woman of the bourgeois family that emerged at that time.
- Feminine nature is defined by its sexual and procreative function; thus, she can only be a wife and mother.
- Each gender will have its space to reign. The woman will be responsible for the space

of the house, physical and private space, the home, which involves love and affection. Man will have the space of the street, the public, the realm of violence, indifference, selfishness. In this division, do we get the best part?

- The role of reason – via preceptor – is to guarantee freedom and autonomy for Emile, it is to bring out his qualities. In Sofia, reason will be used for its subjection.
- According to Rousseau, women are endowed with pleasant and delicate intelligence. In this way, she must learn enough to create an environment of love and virtue, accepting these notions of family, not by force, but by consent.
- All women's education must be guided by men. The children and the husband should be the objects that will guide their learning.
- Every difference between man and woman lies in only one aspect: procreation. From there, Rousseau states that there are different types of reasons for men and women. Thus, man is defined by his humanity, and woman is defined by her sexuality. The masculine terrain is the social construction; that of women is marriage, motherhood, family life.

Thus, for Cobo (1995), Sofia's education is based on three axes: chastity, domesticity and subjection to opinion. It can be seen that, from the proposition of this philosopher regarding the education of Emile and Sophie, one can derive the idea that Emile – the man – would be formed for society, and Sophie – the woman – would be formed to serve him, being identified and determined by her nature as a woman and mother.

The man would be formed to live in society, and the woman would be bound to her nature as a reproducer. This type of thinking is often based on biological differences between the sexes. The woman would have an education for the family and the husband, and the man would be raised to live free in society. This type of construction reflects exactly the way Western society bases its foundations of thought: on dichotomy and asymmetry.

From *Emile* and many other philosophical texts, principles, values and models of behavior were built, followed and disseminated. We can then think about how, in Western society, biological differences were constituted into social and cultural differences and how women were imprisoned in the imaginary limits of the home, that is, in the private world.

It took women at least two centuries to break away from such models. Reflecting, analyzing, and theorizing on issues of this nature can shed new light on the origin of female oppression and thus offer new ways to understand the situation and condition of women in contemporary society.

#### 4 ROUSSEAU'S FORMULATION REGARDING THE EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP OF MEN AND WOMEN

Rousseau's *Emile* (1995) has been considered, over the years, as an important treatise on education. Studied in teaching schools, without the slightest critical concern, it is presented as an important reference for the education of teachers. Most of the time, the teacher of teaching, and even of pedagogy and licentiate courses, forgets to warn that the philosopher has an exclusive chapter on the education of women. It is exactly chapter V, entitled *Sophie*, that will be detailed throughout the article. Because, from it, Rousseau described how the education of Emile's companion should be.

The book consists of five chapters, which describe the trajectory of the young man – from his childhood to adulthood. At the moment when Emilio matures, the philosopher decides to talk about the young woman who would be his companion, under the initial argument that "it is not good for man to be alone." (ROUSSEAU, 1995, p.423). Throughout the text, he begins to develop the reasons for this recommendation, because, for him, the woman is the central figure that allows men to exercise or experience public life, that is, their citizenship.

Understanding Rousseau's formulation regarding the education of women necessarily involves his understanding of what woman is. In this sense, he states:

Sophia must be a woman as Emilio is a man, that is, have everything that befits the constitution of her species and her sex to take her place in the physical and moral order. [...] in everything that is not linked to sex, women are men: they have the same organs, the same needs, the same faculties; the machine is built in the same way, the parts are the same, the play of both is the same, the aspect is similar; and from whatever angle we consider them, they differ only by more or less. (ROUSSEAU, 1995, p. 423)

The first assumption to be drawn from such a statement is that, for Rousseau, there would be no distinction between men and women, because physically and biologically they are almost similar, they differ only in small details. For him, each and every organ found in one has a correspondent in the other. So, why are there so many differences? We could affirm that these oppositions do not reside in the field of anatomy, they would be in the social. Then for Rousseau (1995):

In everything that concerns sex, woman and man have relations and differences in everything: the difficulty of comparing them comes from determining, in their constitution, what is of sex and what is not. By comparative anatomy, and even by simple inspection, we find between them general differences which do not seem to arise from sex; they belong to sex, however, but through connections that we cannot

perceive: we do not know how far such connections can extend. (ROUSSEAU, 1995, p.424)

However, although there are so many similarities between men and women, there are many differences that come from sex, which, according to him, cannot be perceived. He concludes by stating that everything in common comes from the species, and everything that is difference comes from sex.

The only thing we know for sure is that everything that is common is of the species and what is different comes from sex. From this double point of view, we find between them so many relations and so many oppositions that it is perhaps one of the wonders of nature to have made two beings so similar and constituted themselves so differently. (ROUSSEAU, 1995, p.424)

This is the secret of life: so similar and, at the same time, extremely different. Thus, even with so many similarities, it is the difference that, for the philosopher, will interfere with morals. In your logic, since sex has established the differences, why spend so much time discussing equality between the sexes, if sex, is the differentiating element and promoter of all the existing distinctions between men and women?

From this understanding, the author will develop his *logic of difference*. For him, the first of them would be related to strength, "one must be active and strong, the other passive and weak: *"it is necessary that one wants and can; it is enough for the other to resist little."* (emphasis added) (ROUSSEAU, 1995, p. 424)

Thus, Rousseau (1995) believes that women were made to please men and, within this dichotomy, one attacks and the other defends himself, one is bold and the other is shy. In this politics of opposition, women and men build their gender identities, understood as the characteristics that are established by society, historically and culturally, based on biological sex, which end up defining women and men.

European society in the eighteenth century, for example, limited public spaces for women. Algranti (1993), in his studies on convents and retreats in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, states that the first female congregations had the purpose of inviting women to propagate the Catholic faith. That is, in the absence of a possible marriage and the consequent raising of children, the alternative that remained would be to follow the Catholic faith. For the women of those centuries, the reserved places were the home, next to their husband and children, or, in the impossibility of marriage, the convent or retreat, a possible alternative to regulate their sexuality and their actions. Her subjection to the masculine would be via the church, through the image of Jesus: husband, provider and protector.

From this logic is born the second Rousseauian assumption: the woman was made to be subject to the man, but not everything is submission, because, for him, the "weaker sex" would have in its favor modesty and modesty, weapons necessary to dominate the strong. This opposition policy would be expressed in the following formulation:

The supreme being wished to give primacy to the human species in everything: by giving man immeasurable inclinations, he has at the same time given him the law that regulates them, so that he may be free and master of himself; giving him over to immoderate passions, with them the reason to govern them; surrendering the woman to unlimited desires, along with these desires the modesty to contain them. (ROUSSEAU, 1995, p. 426)

It can be inferred from this statement that opposition is the necessary tool for the individual to situate himself and build his identity; the man has passion and reason, and the woman desire and modesty; nature and culture, man forges, woman contains. And it is from this situation that the third and final assumption of the formation of the sexes arises: the man depends on the woman: it is not known, according to the author, whether it is the force that surrenders to fragility, or the reverse. The fact is that, for Rousseau, the man only becomes male at certain moments of life, and the woman remains in the condition of female for her entire life. The opposition between nature and culture is all the time present in the philosopher's formulation. Regarding women's complaints about the type of education offered to them, which produces dependent women, he says:

Women do not cease to shout that we have brought them up to be vain and coquettish, that we often amuse them with puerilities in order to remain more easily masters; they accuse us of being guilty of the defects we have reproached them with. What madness! And then, since when are men taking care of the education of young women? What prevents mothers from educating them as they please? They have no schools: great disgrace! I wish there weren't any for the boys! They would be more sensible and honestly educated. Do you force your daughters to waste their time in foolishness? Do you make them, against their will, spend half their lives adorning themselves, following your example? Do they prevent you from instructing them or having them instructed according to your will? Are we guilty of being pleased when they are beautiful, of their mannerisms seducing us, of the art they learn from you attracting and making us proud, of liking to see them dressed with gusto, *of allowing them to quietly sharpen the weapons with which they subjugate us?* Take the side of educating them as men; they will gladly consent. The more you want to resemble them, the less you will govern them, and then they will really be masters. (ROUSSEAU, 1995, p. 431)

As an initial argument, education can develop attitudes, behaviors, values and, ultimately, build gender identities. Thus, offering a similar education to men and women would be the same as making them equal. For him, would the difference be linked to sex or

education? And, in this sense, the author states that, from the feminine fragility, the man is dominated by futility and frivolity, because it seduces him. Educating her in any other way would be the same as losing such power.

As for other cultures, in which women are strong and do not need so much protection to conceive and bear their children, Rousseau counter-argues that, in them, beings are in a human condition close to the natural world. In this sense, there is a certain *civil promiscuity*, defined as a confusion between the two sexes. From this understanding, the "civilized" man and woman do not have the same constitution and, therefore, cannot have the same education and the same behavior. The interesting thing is that Rousseau considers the good savage a pure being, not corrupted by society. So why is the model, when it refers to women, not valid?

Rousseau also recommends that women should not be educated, should not have a job and should not be, ultimately, a man, because in this way, they would be going against the designs of nature and, as a consequence, would be devaluing themselves as women. He proposes, therefore, that she should know only what is appropriate for her sex. So, what would be, in Rousseau's formulation, a suitable education for women?

According to him, the woman is responsible for the education of the family and, especially, for the education of the children. How can one hand over such responsibility to someone without the slightest notion of what it is to instruct? How would this education be offered to women? What would be its purpose? Through Cobo (1995), one can perceive the objective of female education in Rousseau: chastity, domesticity and subjection to opinion. Thus, they would be educated to serve men exclusively, whether they were their husbands or their sons. The following thought reveals exactly this opinion:

Wherever this first lesson reaches the girls, it is good. If the body is born, so to speak, before the soul, the first culture must be that of the body: this order is common to both sexes. *But the object of this education is different*; in one the aim is the development of *the forces*, in the other it is that of *seduction*. [...] By the extreme softness of women begins that of men. *Women should not be robust like them, but for them*, so that the men who are born of them will be as well. (ROUSSEAU, 1995, p.434)

As was highlighted earlier, sex makes all the difference. From it must come the kind of education offered to men and women. While men are oriented to exercise their citizenship, as a resident of the city, women would have to receive an education for home, and, according to the teaching of Rousseau (1995), the objective of this education is the man, that is, to free him for public life. For him, "woman is made to please and be subjugated, *she should make herself pleasing* to man instead of provoking him." (p.424). In other words, female education

is presented by Rousseau as one that will develop, in women, the idea that they must subjugate themselves to men, in order to serve him. Thus, she proposes, in the chapter on Sofia, how the education of women should be carried out. Let us see, then, some of his lessons, which were systematized from chapter V of *Émile*:

*1st lesson* – Teach domestic gifts, such as sewing, embroidery and lace. For him, these first tasks would be extremely pleasant – because the girl learns to read and write with great sacrifice – since they will send her to the possibility of adorning herself in the future.

*Lesson 2* : The girl should learn to draw, but the landscape should be avoided; the goal is to make her decorate a card or something else she likes.

*Lesson 3* – Exercise girls to master their fantasies and submit to the will of others.

*Lesson 4* – Accustom the young woman to be interrupted in her leisure and guided to do other activities; this will make her more docile and accustomed to living subject to the will of others.

*Lesson 5* – Teach him to resign himself so that he becomes accustomed "from an early age to suffer even injustice and to bear the mistakes of his husbands without complaining." (ROUSSEAU, 1995, p. 440)

*Lesson 6* – The girl should learn to dance and sing, so that, in the future, her home will be happy and pleasant.

*Lesson 7* – Teach him a religion. Initially, she must follow her mother's instructions; when married, she must embrace her husband's religion.

*Lesson 8* – Educate women to provide with reason. In this regard, Rousseau states that there is a distinction between male and female reason. The latter is understood as a practical reason, applicable to the demands of everyday life.

*Lesson 9* – Teach her to be faithful and to honor her husband. She must be grateful to have been chosen by him and, in return, she must know how to organize herself socially and intellectually to serve him.

*Lesson 10* – Your studies should be focused on practice. The exercise of abstraction is more suitable for men; it will only be up to them to organize the lives of others.

In the face of so many lessons, it is clear that, for Rousseau, women must be molded to dominate their instincts and that their formation must be surrounded by duties and obligations. It suggests that, because it is close to the realm of nature, it should be castrated and removed from this infantilized and (or) almost animal state. Thus, the feminine reason is useful for her to have discernment to accept her husband's orders and to lead the house in

his absence, because her condition is established by nature and the man detaches himself from such a relationship.

It is interesting to note that, among the points highlighted by the philosopher, are those related to the behavior associated with women. Currently, it is considered that these behaviors are stereotypes linked to the female figure, which aim to impose a fixed idea around women: dissimulation, lies and falsehood. Such views contribute to making people believe that women are, in fact, frivolous and futile and, therefore, should be watched and discredited. The example offered by the philosopher regarding these capacities is very eloquent:

You want to see a character on hot coals, place a man between two women with whom he has secret connections, then observe the sad figure he will make. Place in the same case a woman between two men, and that will certainly be no less common: you will be amazed at the skill with which she will deceive both, and make each of them laugh at the other. (ROUSSEAU, 1995, p.460)

In a single example, Rousseau shows how much women are inclined to hide their feelings, demonstrating that, even in a delicate situation, they can disguise it well. Would such behavior be the result of an education that stimulates the development of these skills, or is this behavior innate to women? The author's proposal goes towards the existence of a certain essentialism, especially with regard to women, that is, "the essential thing is to be what nature made us". (ROUSSEAU, 1995, p. 463). In this sense, he says:

The search for abstract and speculative truths, principles, axioms in the sciences, everything that tends to generalize ideas, is not the province of women, their studies must be turned to practice; it is up to them to apply the principles that man has found, and it is up to them to make the observations that lead man to the establishment of such principles. [...] they do not have enough precision and attention to shine in the exact sciences and, as for physical knowledge, it is up to those who of the two are more active, more active and see more objects; it is up to those who have more power and exercise it more in judging the relations of sensible beings and the laws of nature. (ROUSSEAU, 1995, p. 463)<sup>4</sup>

From all these considerations, the philosopher goes on to introduce Sofia, Emilio's companion, who, according to him, is a girl of little beauty, modest, simple and well-behaved. His education is similar to what the author proposes: he knows how to sew, embroider, sing, dance, play the piano, knows the work of pantry and kitchen. In addition to these skills developed within her own home, the girl is virtuous and religious. Her parents raised her so that she could choose her future husband on her own.

Of these notions proposed by Rousseau, still in the eighteenth century, regarding female education, what was in the public domain and what was elaborated as a

presupposition of his remain as questions. It is known, however, that such teachings are present in the education of many women, at least until the twentieth century.

The author of the Social Contract, in fact, considers women to be second-class citizens, in a typical view of nineteenth-century European society and of the first steps in the formulation of modern society. Many of these teachings were followed for many generations in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

In Rousseau's elaboration, in the book *Emilio* (1995), there is a distinction between the state of nature and the social. The first is the kingdom where everyone is equal and lives in a stage similar to savagery, in which there would be no room for an education differentiated by sex. In the second, the institutions would be developed, there would be class distinctions, and the order of this society would be based on patriarchal power, that is, the "family is only attached to society by its head, it is the condition of this head that regulates that of the whole family." (ROUSSEAU, 1995, p. 489)

Based on a patriarchal assumption, Rousseau will affirm that the woman owes obedience to her husband. This would be the most appropriate organization for society, as she would reign in the home, and the husband in public life. According to him, the happiest families are those in which women have authority but do not take power from their husbands. Therefore, a tailor-made education for women must pay attention to some issues. Is it possible for a woman to educate without knowing how to reflect? Without mastering this skill, how will she discern what is best for her and her children? And how will you guide them without discernment? Considering these aspects, Rousseau advises:

It is not becoming, therefore, for a man who has education to take a woman who does not have one, nor, consequently, in a class in which he does not have her. But I would still prefer a hundred times more a simple and coarsely educated young woman to a *cultured and infatuated young woman, who would come to establish in the home a court of literature of which she would be president. A woman like this is a scourge of her husband, her children, her friends, her servants, everyone. From the height of her genius, she disdains all her duties as a woman, and always begins by becoming a man in the manner of Mlle. de l'Enclos. Outside the home it is always ridiculous and very justly criticized, because it cannot be otherwise. When you get out of your condition and are not made for the one you want to have. All these women of great talents impress only fools.* (ROUSSEAU, 1995, p. 491)

The woman who ventures into the domain of reading and writing moves away from her condition. She must be subject to the desires of her husband and to the designs of nature: wife and mother, prey to the species, without dreams, with castrated desires and with the will submitted to the will of the other. To be a woman, until the advent of the feminist movement,

was exactly to be like that. As for Emil's wife, Rousseau introduces us to Sophie, who complied with these recommendations. He tells us

an education is neither brilliant nor negligent; He has taste without study, talent without art, common sense without knowledge. Your spirit does not know, but it is cultivated to learn; It is a well-prepared land that only waits for the seed to produce. [...] she will not be her husband's teacher, but his disciple; Far from wanting to enslave him to her own tastes, she will adopt his. (ROUSSEAU, 1995, p. 492)

Thus, Rousseau introduces the figure of Sofia in the novel, and, throughout the text, Emile will give her lessons in philosophy, physics, mathematics, history, among other subjects. The author adds that "the art of thinking is not foreign to women, but they should be only slightly interested in the sciences of reasoning. Sofia conceives everything, but retains little" (ROUSSEAU, 1995, p. 512). It should be noted that a woman needs to have a little idea about all things, but she should not delve into any of them. Despite the "capacity" she has to think, certainly elaborating and discerning distances herself from her condition as a woman. She should not venture into areas other than taking care of the house, her husband and the children.

In the eighteenth century, therefore, in the same period in which Rousseau spoke about female education, Algranti (1993) identifies, in his studies, a concern with the way of educating a woman. For her, education appeared as an alternative for those women who did not marry. According to the author, during this period, the spaces for the enclosure of women were expanded, as well as lay women's institutions. Both the retreats and the convents will have as their central proposal "to guard women" and educate them to conduct a straight, chaste and subjective posture, and instruction appears as an instrument for this education. It is no wonder that the texts used for female education are religious texts such as the Bible.

As far as Emile is concerned, after introducing him to Sofia and perceiving him in love, Rousseau suggests that he go on his journey, because as a husband and head of the family, he becomes a member of the State and, as such, he must know what government, laws and homeland are, he must know, in short, what it is to be a citizen. From the realization that he does not know civilian life, Emilio and his preceptor set off on a journey that aims to teach him what politics is.

Rousseau states that the purpose of the trip is to find a good government, not to publish books, but to have references to establish human rights and not "to court the powerful" (ROUSSEAU, 1995 p. 553). Emilio sets out to learn what civil life is, and Sofia awaits his return to exercise her domestic life. Emilio's tutor pledges his word and says to Sofia: "I answer for her beloved, or rather, for her husband: let her keep the same fidelity that

he will have for her and in two years he will be her husband, I swear to it." (ROUSSEAU, 1995, p.542). That is, for Sophia, everything that had to be known had already happened: now she had to wait for Emilio to become more illustrious, so that he could marry her, and thus each one could occupy their kingdoms.

So how can we think of the rights of humanity, if, throughout Rousseau's treaty, we have seen the suggestion of subjecting half the world's population? How can an Enlightenment author, who believed in reason, equality and human freedom, suggest that half of humanity is outside the exercise of citizenship?

From a question elaborated for Emile regarding the government, his preceptor begins to elaborate a series of questions around the principles of politics: "whether men are born slaves or free, associated or independent; whether they meet voluntarily or by force; if one day the force that brings them together can form a permanent right..." (ROUSSEAU, 1995, p. 553) and continues with the following consideration:

Passing next to the right of slavery, we shall examine whether a man can legitimately alienate himself from another, without restriction, without reservation, without any kind of condition; whether he can in short renounce his person, his life, his reason, *his ego*, any morality in his actions, and finally cease to exist before death, notwithstanding the nature which immediately burdens him with his own preservation. and in spite of his conscience and his reason that prescribe to him what he should do and what he should abstain from (ROUSSEAU, 1995, p. 555)

The above statement leads us to the following question: what does Rousseau suggest to women, if not the acceptance of a regime of slavery? In the text, the author highlights *his self*. However, its lessons – as we have seen earlier – suggest exactly that the woman abandons this self, and that she leaves her fate to another. Who is the citizen, for the philosopher? Who will have the right to the laws established in modern society? The reference to man, in the passage quoted above, assumes the literal content of the word. It refers exclusively to the male of the human species. Considering the aspect related to slavery, certainly male, Rousseau argues that this type of institution is only possible through an agreement, a contract, even if tacit.

## 5 CONCLUSION

Therefore, the basis of all civil society, for Rousseau, is based on the social contract. What about women? Were they included in this contract? Carole Patemam (1993) warns that the female contract is marriage; therefore, prior to the articles of association. In this way, this fact justifies, for women, according to him, the situation of subjection to the other, which

means that the woman can "renounce her person, her life, her reason, *her self*, any morality in her actions, and finally cease to exist before death." (p. 555)

At the end of her text, Sophia "is delivered" to Emilio in marriage, and her preceptor advises her: "By becoming your husband, Emilio became your boss; it is up to you to obey, as nature wanted" (p. 579). Through this advice, he concludes:

You who have so well made the charms of domestic life reign in the paternal house, make them also reign in yours. Every man who delights in his house loves his wife. Remember that if your husband lives happily at home, you will be a happy woman. (p. 580)

Thus, female happiness depends on male happiness, and women have been led to believe in this maxim. Elucidating such formulations, considerations and advice helps us to propose a critical education, based on equity and fairer social values for all.

It is evident that, although he argues that, in sex, all the differences between men and women reside, Rousseau uses education as the element that promotes such distinctions. In other words: even if he builds his argument based on sexual differences, his proposal will present education as the instrument that will form men and women different from each other.

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