Tempo & Argumento

Representation of the Past and Public History: Women's History on the Internet

Abstract

This article aims to approach the relations between the internet, representation of the past, and public history. To do this, it resorts to analyzing the website and the *Facebook* page "As Mina na História" ["Chicks in History"], created in June 2015. In this examination, it explores issues such as the type of representation of the past provided in this virtual space, the profile of its audience, and the language used. In order to move forward in these issues, brief comments are made about the teaching of women's history in Brazil. Finally, we seek, through this approach, to propose some reflections about the public history that has been practiced in the country, beyond the issue of enlargement of the audience 'consuming' history.

Keywords: Representation; Public History; Internet; Women.

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Representação do Passado e História Pública: A História das Mulheres na Internet

Resumo

Este artigo tem por objetivo abordar as relações entre internet, representação do passado e história pública. Para tanto, vale-se da análise do *website* e da página no *Facebook* "As Mina na História", criada em junho de 2015. Nesse exame, explora questões tais como o tipo de representação do passado oferecido nesse espaço virtual, o perfil da sua audiência e a linguagem utilizada. A fim de avançar em tais problemáticas, são tecidos alguns breves comentários sobre o ensino de história das mulheres no Brasil. Por fim, busca-se, a partir dessa abordagem, propor algumas reflexões sobre a história pública que tem sido praticada no país, para além da questão da ampliação do público "consumidor" de história.

Palavras-chave: Representação; História Pública; Internet; Mulheres.

Initial remarks

The debate about what is public history is quite broad and it varies according to the national context. This emerged in the United States, in the 1970s, mainly due to the high number of unemployed scholars, it has since been practiced in several countries, with different emphases and conceptions (LIDDINGTON, 2011). This text assumes that public history consists in the production of historical knowledge, not only carried out by a professional historian, with wide circulation in society (FERREIRA, 2011). In the second half of this article, detailed considerations and propositions about this definition are shown.

There is, in the texts devoted to reflection on this issue, a certain consensus regarding the fact that, currently, there is an explosion of the public demand for history in

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Brazil. The finding is made by an increasing number of authors. According to Jurandir Malerba (2014), for instance, the existence and success of several scientific journals, TV programs (soap operas and miniseries), websites, and social media pages that have the past as their theme can be seen as symptoms of the phenomenon.

In the wake of this movement, it is possible to observe the growing popularity of women's past representation[1], something which has opened space for websites and profiles on social media that seek to give visibility to women's history and memory. This is the case of the website and also the *Facebook* page that this article aims to analyze, whose name is "As Mina na História" ["Chicks in History"][2].

Idealized by a High School student from the public network in Rio de Janeiro in June 2015, the page currently has around 315,000 likes on the *Facebook*[3]. According to na interview[4] with the creator of the page, Sigrid Beatriz Varanis Ortega, to the news web portal *Mídia Max*, the idea of creating the website and the *Facebook* page emerged

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[1] I cite, as an example of publications aimed at the dissemination of historical knowledge that have taken advantage of this moment, being at the same time cause and symptom of it, the excellent dossier of the *Revista de História da Biblioteca Nacional* "Feminismos: modos de pensar, modos de fazer", ano 10, n. 113, published on February 2015. Regarding the theme, it is also worth noting an observation: although it deals with the representation of women's past, this text will not analyze the history of women or feminism in Brazil. On these themes, see the interesting book organized by Carla B. Pinsky and Joana Maria Pedro, entitled "Nova História das Mulheres no Brasil," published in 2012 by the publishing house Contexto.

[2] I would like to register here my acknowledgment to those who contributed to the development of the reflections proposed in this article. To do this, there were enriching discussions provided by the study group (SG) on theory of history and historiography of the Brazilian National Association of History of Rio Grande do Sul (ANPUH-RS), coordinated by Professor Renata Dal Sasso (Universidade Federal do Pampa – UNIPAMPA) and Juliano Antoniolli (Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul – UFRGS), as well as the debates of the Thematic Symposium "História Pública, Tecnologia e Representação do Passado," coordinated by Pedro Telles da Silveira and Iuri Bauler, at the 9th Brazilian Seminar on History of Historiography, held in Vitória, Espírito Santo, Brazil. This text began to be written in order to be presented at the aforementioned symposium. In particular, I would like to thank Juliano, for his always attentive reading, and Pedro for the reading suggestions and the comments, especially regarding the possible machinations between history and infamy.

[3] For the sake of comparison, I cite the *Facebook* page of "Café História," for instance, created by the journalist and historian Bruno Leal, who currently has about 470 thousand likes. Another example is the page of the historian Leandro Karnal, who has had significant popularity in the social media, having also 470 thousand likes. Both pages can be accessed on these links: <https://www.facebook.com/prof.leandrokarnal/?fref=ts> and <https://www.facebook.com/CafeHistoria/?fref=ts>. Accessed on: 05/15/2016. The page "As Mina na História" can be accessed on this link: <https://www.facebook.com/asminasnahistoria/?fref=ts>; the website is available at: <http://asminanahistoria.com.br/category/geral/>. Accessed on: 08/10/2016.

[4] The interview, published on 02/19/2016, is available at the web portal Mídia Max: <http://www.midiamax.com.br/midiamais/criado-campo-grandense-projeto-mostra-quem-sao-minas-fizeram-historia-290580>. Accessed on: 05/15/2016.

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through her participation in the 7th Brazilian National History Olympiad, in 2015, as a student from the Integrated Center Of Public Education (CIEP) "Brizolão 362 Roberto Burle Marx."

Then, at the age of 17, Sigrid saw, during her participation in the Olympiad, with a photo of the first *cangaceira* in the history of Brazil, Maria Gomes de Oliveira – Maria Bonita –, whom he did not know. From this point on, she began to ask how little she had learned about women's history in the teaching she received at school. This experience motivated her to create the project "Chicks in History," whose aim is to "rescue the memory and work of women who have changed the world, but they have been erased from history" ("As Mina na História," *Facebook*, 2015)[5]. In an interview to the newspaper *Correio do Estado*[6], Sigrid claims that resuming this is relevant so that women get inspired and feel represented and encouraged, since, in her diagnosis, women's deeds were erased or ignored.

This initiative is very exciting for us, professional historians. Among so many questions raised, we can formulate some herein: Which kind of representation of the past is provided in this virtual space? Which past is asked by the page's followers? What is the audience of the project "Chicks in History?" What language is used?

The analysis of this specific case seeks to broaden the discussion around what is public history and how it has been practiced in Brazil. To do so, in the first and second sections of this text the first two questions above are explored. Subsequently, the last two questions are answered. Finally, some issues that are dear to public history, as well as to digital history, are addressed.

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[5] This quotation makes us think about the problem of the relations between history and memory, which will not be addressed in detail in this text. However, a brief comment is needed. It is suggested, herein, that "As Mina na História" may be understood as a modality of Public History, due to the reasons indicated below, and not only as an online exercise of reinforcement/construction of a group's memory and identity. Nevertheless, there is no strict divide between history and memory and we do not intend to advocate this. As it is well known, according to Paul Ricoeur (2007), memory is the matrix of history, in the sense that everything begins in the testimony of the person who remembers and that both share this testimony. Then, there is no divorce between them. Once this relation becomes clear, we will not go deeper in this analysis of the specific case focused herein due to space purposes and thematic selection.

[6] The interview, published on 03/08/2016, is available on the web portal of the newspaper *Correio do Estado*: <http://www.correiodoestado.com.br/arte-e-cultura/juventude-feminina-se-insere-cada-vez-mais-na-busca-por-igualdade-de/272551/>. Accessed on: 11/22/2016.

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Do women have history?

> *Most of women's history has sought to somehow include women as study objects, subjects of history.*
> (SCOTT, 2011, p. 79)

In the text "História das mulheres," originally published in the early 1990s, Joan Scott (2011), a professor at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, mentions the long obliteration period of female presence in history. In this study, the author resorts to the writings by Virginia Woolf, in the well-known book that gathers some of her conferences delivered in the 1920s, titled "A Room of One's Own." Woolf, when making a comparison between the presence of women in fiction and their absence in history, puts into question the lack of research, in the late 1920s, to address women's lives:

> All these facts are somewhere, presumably in parochial accounting records and books; the life of the average Elizabethan woman must be scattered somewhere, available to someone who is willing to pick it up and turn it into a book. An ambition that might exceed my audacity, I thought, looking in the shelves for the books that were not there, would suggest to women studying in these famous universities to rewrite history, although I must admit that it often seems a bit strange as it is — unreal, biased; — but why could not they add a supplement to history, giving it, of course, some non-conspicuous name so that women could appear there without impropriety? Because we often see them at a glance in the life of the great men, who are soon relegated to the background, sometimes concealing a blink of an eye, a laugh, perhaps a tear. (WOOLF, 1987, p. 57-58)

It is not without reason that the opening sentence of the page "As Mina na História," mentioned with the proper reference, belongs to Woolf's book quoted now: "for most of History, 'anonymous' was a woman" (*Facebook*, "As Mina na História," 2016). For the purposes of this article, however, this question arises: between the time that Virginia Woolf wrote and the present time of Scott's writing, was there any change in the writing of women's history?

According to Scott, the study of women's history is no longer new in professional historiography. By exposing the state of art in the area at that time, the author regarded it as a definable field already in the last two decades, that is, since the late 1960s. Despite

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this, there seems to be, just as in many themes addressed on an academic basis, a mismatch between knowledge production and circulation. Between the academy and the school, to focus on one of many possible examples, there is a long journey. The Brazilian case serves as an illustration of the problem.

The article "O ensino de história e os estudos de gênero na historiografia brasileira," written by Ana Maria Colling and Losandro Tedeschi (2015), addresses, among other issues, several cases of silencing in the teaching of history. The authors, starting from the concept of gender, as a difference of sexes based on culture and produced by history, point at the school and the teaching of history as constituting, historically, places of sexual demarcation with concealment of differences. Thus, they argue that addressing gender relations in the teaching of history is an urgent task.

The school, yet, as the first space where the curriculum is practiced, is intimately linked and submerged in the patriarchal culture. Hence, some of the difficulties of addressing and facing the issue of women's history, as well as that of other historically excluded groups, in this space. Thus, the authors ask: which history book, commonly used in classrooms in Brazil, addresses women's histories?

> Accompanying the Western histories, the history of Brazil was made only by men. Women's invisibility to build the Brazilian society is a fact detected in any manual that tries to tell our story about the early times. Due to a biological issue, not to mention others, no one can deny the existence of the female sex, responsible for the reproduction of men and women. But where was it, indeed? The history of Brazil, like that of the Western peoples, is a masculine history in which there is no room left for women. (COLLING; TEDESCHI, 2015, p. 300)

It might be appropriate, therefore, to constantly inquire about which knowledge and social groups are included and excluded from the historical account.[7] What divisions

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[7] Despite the historical tendency described by the authors mentioned above, it is worth noticing that, recently, women's history has been incorporated into textbooks that are used throughout the country. It is possible to observe this progressive change when analyzing the guide of didatic books – PNLD 2015/High School – published by the Department of Elementary Education, linked to the Ministry of Education. This guide provides an overview of the works made available by the MEC. In the reviews of the 18 collections offered for the selection by teachers within the public network, it is possible to notice a concern with the theme of women's history in more than half of the books. The way this presence takes place, however, still seems to be shy. According to the reviews, many books address the issue into boxes separated from the main text. I thank Carmem Gil (UFRGS) for her careful reading of this article and for her suggestion to analyze the PNLD.

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of the subject – gender, race, class, are produced or reinforced by historiography, mainly expressed in the didactic books of History? Resuming some of the central reflections by Michel Foucault in several moments of his work, Ana Maria Colling and Losandro Tedeschi conclude their text in a provocative way:

> We are accustomed to view history as something connected to cognition, information, facts, devoid of power and knowledge relations. We fail to see it in aspects of discipline, of silence. Analyzing who history calls or silences in its discursive texts should be a permanent historian's task. (COLLING; TEDESCHI, 2015, p. 310)

In order to advance in the understanding of the case analyzed herein, we could ask: when the aforementioned cases of silencing are perceived and generate discomfort among the students, what can happen to the history taught and divulged, either at school or in other environments? It seems to us that, in situations such as this, consecrated representations become challenged in the most varied ways, in the most varied spaces, by multiple subjects[8]. With the increasing use of the internet, these disputes gain great visibility. This may be the case in the initiative "As Mina na História."

When explaining the awakening of her interest in women's history, the idealizer of the page is critical as for the history teaching she received at school[9]: "I got interested and I researched about her [Maria Bonita]. This search brought the reflection that, throughout my school life, I had seldom learned about women and their deeds"[10].

In this way, there is an obvious relation between this perception with that of the U.S. citizens interviewed by Roy Rosenzweig and David Thelen (1998). Asked about their

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[8] The case discussed in this article is one among many. There are also countless webpages and Facebook pages that seek to vocalize rather reactionary representations of the past. In this way, this article seeks to invite historians to think of this new reality that gains space with the advances of technology and our role in these new environments.

[9] We know that the national reality is very diverse and that there may be variations according to the region, the network (public or private, with the balance not necessarily hanging for the second), or even in the different schools within the same network. With this quote, we do not seek to analyze herein the situation of women's history teaching in the country as a whole. What is important is moving forward in the perception of the page's creator, which in the end was the reason that drove her to start the project studied now.

[10] The interview, published on 03/08/2016, is available on the web portal of the newspaper *Correio do Estado*: <http://www.correiodoestado.com.br/arte-e-cultura/juventude-feminina-se-insere-cada-vez-mais-na-busca-por-igualdade-de/272551/>. Accessed on: 11/22/2016.

relations with representations of the past, many respondents stated that, when they studied history at school, they did not feel connected to the great narratives and did not see, due to this reason, any sense in studying history. In general, however, they have shown great interest in the study of the past, but in a way that they could use it in their daily lives, according to their needs.

This seems to be one of the issues that arouses public interest in the project "As Mina na História." In the posts, there is a search for connecting women's history to narratives about the history of Brazil, for instance. The case of the text published on the website on April 25, 2016, is eye opening. Entitled "3 mulheres excluídas de sua aula de história do Brasil" ["3 women excluded from your class in history of Brazil"][11], the post, which has 813 words (4,147 characters) and 3 images, addresses the presence of 3 women's profiles, who participated in the fight against the rebels that did not accept Independence. The text begins like this:

> Dom Pedro I proclaimed Independence on September 7, 1822. But not everyone accepted the fact. Many settled Portuguese were indignant, especially in Maranhão and Bahia. From the coast to the countryside of Bahia, there was much revolt. These three Bahian women are symbols of resistance, but they are almost never in school textbooks. ("As Minas na História," website, 2016)

Then, we know the history of Maria Felipa de Oliveira, black and poor women, almost never remembered for her deeds, born as a slave, became free and learned to fight *capoeira* to defend herself. Throughout the text, there is information that she fought against the Portuguese men, in Bahia, during their revolt with the Brazilian declaration of Independence. After winning the fight where she had a decisive participation, Maria Felipa kept living her life as a capoeira practitioner and seafood seller, being admired by the people. She died on January 4, 1873.

Joana Angélica, in her turn, was abbess at the Convent of Our Lady of the Conception of Lapa, in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil. She was director of the convent when, in February 1822, she was attacked by soldiers of the Portuguese troops. In resisting the

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[11] Text available at: <http://asminanahistoria.com.br/3-mulheres-excluidas-da-sua-aula-de-historia>. Accessed on: 05/16/2016.

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invasion of the convent, she received bayonet blows and died the next day: "At the time, her murder served as one of the fuses for the beginning of the Brazilian revolt. Joana became the first martyr of the great struggle that continued until July 2" ("As Minas na História," website, 2016).

Finally, we know the brief biography of Maria Quitéria, who ran away from home to fight, pretending to be a man. After being caught by her father, she was defended by the commander of the battalion, because she showed great ability with weapons. In this way,

> […] On July 2, 1823, when the 'Liberating Army' came into triumph in the city of Salvador, Maria Quitéria was greeted and honored by the people in celebration. Maria was the first woman to settle in a military unit of the Brazilian Armed Forces and the first woman to fight for Brazil. On July 28, 1996, she was recognized as Patroness of the Supplementary Board of Officers of the Brazilian Army. By ministerial determination, her image must be in all the country's quarters. ("As Minas na História," website, 2016)

What is common in the presentation of the three characters? Initially, and this is clear, we can emphasize that the narrative seeks to affirm the existence of women who fought. They took part in the episodes regarded as neuralgic in the history of Brazil, although they are not usually remembered. There is a strong mark and highlight of heroism in these actions. The narrative of this past seems to have two key meanings: 1) through the examples brought, stimulate the continuity of struggle; 2) provide this presence with visibility, not allowing it to remain forgotten.

It is possible, therefore, to affirm that the type of representation of the past offered on the website and the Facebook page of "As Mina na História" is an invitation to denaturalize the invisibility of women's history diagnosed by the creator of the project. The diagnosis, in its turn, seems to have an impact on the followers of the page. It is not uncommon to observe comments, either on the website or on the *Facebook*, to congratulate the post for resuming women's history. An example is a user's comment, posted on 05/16/16: "Guys, this page is so wonderful! With every post I feel more proud of our history, more willing to make a difference" ("As Mina na História," *Facebook*, 2016).

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So, the project analyzed herein seems to be a way of giving voice to some of the subaltern subjects of history: either creating a space for it or also occupying a place of speech[12]. In this way, the considerations by Gayatri Spivak (2010) are relevant. The thinker is linked to the group of authors who name themselves as postcolonial. Such scholars make clear the need to think of history writing beyond the models offered by the settlers and associated with the Western world. The Indian intelectual woman, on the other hand, emphasizes a central problem: that of challenging the unquestionable dumbness of a subaltern woman. In the words of the author: "If, in the context of colonial production, the subaltern subject has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern woman is even more deeply shrouded in obscurity" (SPIVAK, 2010, p. 67, 2010). Thus, Spivak joins efforts to give the subaltern subject a voice in history.

Considering what has been explained so far, it is possible to affirm that the initiative addressed herein helps attributing credit to women in history, helping to put them back in time. Then, would it be pertinent to regard it as a way of doing the 'History of Infamous Women,' to mention something close to Michel Foucault's project? Or also a manifestation of Jorge Luis Borges' critique of universal history, in the style of the 'Universal History of Infamy?'

History and Infamy

It is well known that, among Michel Foucault's many contributions to reflection on history, we can cite his strong warning about the production of silence in the

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[12] Incidentally, the study by Bonnie Smith (2003) entitled "Gênero e história: homens, mulheres e a prática histórica" ["Gender and history: men, women and historical practice"] is interesting to broaden the understanding of the project "Chicks in History." The argument is that, even though the project focused herein is not made by professional historians, the initiative brings many important elements to think of the writing and practice of public history in Brazil today. It is in this way that Smith's reflection is valuable to us: studying the amateur historians of the late 18th and early 19th century, the scholar emphasizes the conformation of history as a field based on the distinction of gender. The amateurs produced for a wide audience, while the seminars were predominantly masculine, "scientific" spaces and circumscribed to those "initiated." In the words of the author: "However, a more symptomatic reading of amateurism reveals that amateur history consists of something truly extraordinary: the narrative of multiple traumas, not just those related to wars and revolutions. When we examine amateurism under these lines, it is possible to better understand how this modern historiography of the Western world was marked by gender" (SMITH, 2003, p. 90). I thank Mara Rodrigues for the bibliographical suggestion and the constant dialogue.

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historiographical narrative. This is the case of the text by him entitled "The Life of Infamous Men." Originally published in the 1970s, with these writings, Foucault once again draws readers' attention to the singular, obscure, and unhappy lives: lives that are as if they had not been.

When explaining his ideas, the author differentiates these infamous people from the individuals whose behavior, permeated by misdemeanors, causes astonishment or scandal. These would be glorious legend types. This infamy, of hateful behavior, is nothing but a universal modality of fame. Thus, the characters chosen by Foucault (2003) are infamous in the strict sense: they do not have any kind of glory, not even the despicable one; they have no fame. Their pathways can only be known through their intersection with power, whose purpose was none other than to annihilate them[13].

In this way, Foucault focuses on men and women who, in his words, were nothing in history, they did not play any appreciable role in the events and they were not among important people. One of their concerns is pointing out the effects of power in individuals' lives, as well as establishing various types of wisdom through the exercise of this power.

Jorge Luis Borges (2012), in his fictional "Universal History of Infamy," originally published in 1935, before Foucault, deals with men and women who, from their despicable behavior, played some role in history – Borges' characters would be, according to Foucault, famous due to the horror that their actions arouse and, therefore, they are not infamous in the sense he pursues. A possible interpretation of this book might be that it criticizes, through fine irony, the aspirations of universal history, which does not cover this kind of individuals, but it still maintains the totalizing intent.

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[13] The sources used by Michel Foucault date back to the period between 1660 and 1760 and come from archives of the hospital, the police, petitions to the king, and the royal letters with *lettres de cachet*. In one of the documents used, for instance, it was alleged that Mathurin Milan, an inhabitant of 18th century France, suffered from madness because he lived a life away from his family and lent money recklessly. Because of this, he should be removed from social life. Regarding the note, I thank Professor Temístocles Cezar for his indication of this reading of Foucault. I register here that he has done, before me, the association of Borges and Foucault in the context of mentioning the issue of infamy. The text I refer to is entitled "Bartleby and Nulisseu: the art of telling life stories without biography" and it was discussed in the SG on history and historiography/ANPUH-RS. Written to be a book chapter, this text has a version available on the SG's page at Academia.edu.

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In this way, Isabella Santucci (2015), when establishing a parallel between the reflections of Borges and Walter Benjamin, points out that, in several texts, Borges criticizes the notion of progressive and total time[14]. According to the author, Borges sees that history could not be defined as universal because several events of the past are long forgotten. Thus, "the Universal History presented by the victors, proposing to define a universe, either national, regional, or cosmic, is based on the exclusion of things and facts that wish to have a voice, but as they relate to the loser discourse, remain silent" (SANTUCCI, 2015, p. 7).

In spite of the specificities of propositions by Michel Foucault and Jorge Luis Borges, both were mentioned herein in order to deepen the reflection on the implications of the initiative "Chicks in History." The page does not deal with women who have been nothing in history, nor those who have stood out for odious behavior. There is, however, a link between the three cases: all deal with subjects who are not inscribed in the great historiographical narratives about the past.

Most women who have their history posted on the virtual page are not yet in the textbooks. This makes them largely excluded from history classes in Brazil. Their existence remains alien to most of the population, in one of the spaces where a large part of Brazilians have access to narratives about the past: the school. Accepting this line of reasoning, women, in fact, are not participants in the history of Brazil, yet. They still have neither credit or fame: they remain infamous.

Is the internet a tool for, through the dissemination of historical knowledge and the potential recognition of the presence of multiple subjects in history, subverting ostracism?

The project analyzed herein does not subvert the oblivion of ordinary women, who have already been the research object of professional historians for a long time. Most of the texts published on the page point out the action of "great women," those who were

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[14] Examples of these texts, according to the author, might be: "Nova refutação do tempo" (1944); "A penúltima versão da realidade" (1928); "O pudor da história (1952)."

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pioneers in some situation. As we know, this perspective could be close to the history of "great men," very much in vogue in the 19th century. This is a major issue for us, professional historians. It is not solved in the initiative discussed herein. Nevertheless, the analysis of the project "Chicks in History" provides us with a dimension of the potential of the internet, despite the huge difficulties the virtual space entails in relation to an in-depth debate, regarding most subjects. These considerations, however, may serve to stimulate the corporation to pay attention not only to the limits, but perhaps to the potentiality of this space. What if there was a little more reflection on what comes after the production of knowledge, that is, about circulation and diffusion? Do anonymous women, either 'heroines' or ordinary people, still remain at the margins of history? This question, of course, can and should be extended to a number of historically marginalized groups, not restricted to women.

Audience and language

The profile of the followers of "As Mina na História" mostly consist of women – usually young. It is observable, in the comments and posts on the page, a close dialogue between the page administrator and its readers, and there are also several suggestions on the themes by them. There is, therefore, a constant exchange between the person who publishes and those who consumes the historical knowledge made available by the project.

Such a dialogue seems to be a significant element to explain the popularity of the initiative. Another element may be the language used. The texts posted on the site are, generally, longer than those published on the *Facebook*, having more than 800 words. In turn, the posts on the social media have 2 or 3 short paragraphs, with about 400 words. The publications are usually accompanied by a meme[15], whose function is drawing the user's attention to the text.

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[15] Form of information presentation through the internet that can be quickly copied and distributed. Definition from the article "It's all in the memes?" Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/science/2000/aug/10/technology>. Accessed on: 05/16/2016.

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A major issue that emerges from the analysis of the page "As Minas na História" is the use and quote (or not) of sources from the texts made available by the page. According to information on the website, the posts are written after bibliographic and image search. Despite this, the reference read is not always quoted. In the text "3 mulheres excluídas de sua aula de história do Brasil," for instance, there is a reference only to the character Maria Felipa de Oliveira[16].

When browsing the page, we can find posts with and without sources and, in the comments, some questions about the bibliography used. There is, therefore, a demand for verifiability that comes from the audience. The most influential campaigns, in general, provide their sources. Most texts are, therefore, written after reading specialized works, although this is not always clear.

An example of this is the campaign "#emmemóriadelas," created to oppose the infamous homage paid by federal representative Jair Bolsonaro (PSC-RJ) to the torturer Carlos Brilhante Ustra, in April 2016. The campaign had 54,000 likes and consisted in an invitation to change a page's photo, which would give space to the image of a political militant woman who disappeared during the Brazilian dictatorship on the adherents' page.

The texts that accompanied the images were prepared by accessing websites about people who disappeared due to political reasons that make available a collection with documents concerning the victims of the regime, texts about the period, and biographies of missing people (<http://www.desaparecidospoliticos.org.br>; <http://memoriasdaditadura.org.br>). We also used as sources testimonies by tortured women, which are available on the *YouTube* (this is the case of Criméia Alice Schmidt de Almeida, whose testimony can be accessed on the link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rz0ekhjmvRc>.

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[16] According to the post, the sources are the novel "O Sargento Pedro," by Xavier Marques, the book "A Ilha de Itaparica," by the historian Ubaldo Osório, and the study "Maria Felipa de Oliveira: heroína da independência da Bahia," by Professor Eny Kleyde Vasconcelos de Farias.

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Virtually all the sources used are available on the internet. This leads us, on the one hand, to think through some issues central to public history and digital history, such as the thin line of plagiarism, shared authority, and digital archives. On the other hand, we are instigated to rethink the practice of public history as restricted only to broadening the audience to professional historians. Would it be pertinent, for instance, to consider the experience of the page "As Mina na História" as a case of public history idealized by someone without professional training in the field of History[17]? Is it also possible to think of it as an inspiration for what could be a public history with shared authority, such as defined by Michael Frisch in the 1990s?[18] The next section aims to advance with these questions.

Public History in Brazil: history *for* the public, *from* the public, or *with* the public?

In the Brazilian context, the debate about the notion of Public History gained visibility since 2011, when the course "Introduction to Public History" was offered by the University of São Paulo (USP). According to Ricardo Santhiago (2016), from this event came the publication of the first Brazilian book on the theme, entitled "Introdução à História Pública," organized by Juniele Rabêlo de Almeida and Marta Rovai. In 2012, the 1st

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[17]   See, in this regard, the article by Jurandir Malerba (2014), which takes stock of the public history that has been practiced in Brazil, where, unlike the U.S. case, authors unrelated to the field of qualified historians stand out.

[18]   *Inspiration* because this seems to be a project to disseminate historical knowledge that, despite theoretical and methodological constraints, has reached its goals. We do not seek to affirm herein that "As Mina na História" is an example of shared public history, but rather, through the presentation and analysis of the page, to invite professional historians to think through the potential pointed out, if we see as appropriate being attentive to what Frisch names as 'shared authority.' The notion coined by the author calls attention to the fact that the process of production and construction of meanings is shared, since it does not belong only to historians. This is not new, having the studies on the history of reading in mind. A public history characterized by the practice of shared history could, therefore, be history produced in the dialogue between professionals and 'users,' hence the potential of digital environments. Through the experience with oral history and the defense of a rather dialogical understanding of the interview, Frisch stresses that dialogue should not be seen as something homogenized, where no one can claim an advantage. One of the proposals is broadening the relationship of dialogue between historian and audience. There are many barriers to this approach, and this article does not seek to disregard or reduce them, but to stimulate the debate.

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International Symposium on Public History took place, as well as the foundation of the Brazilian Network of Public History (RBHP).

For the purposes of this analysis, it is appropriate to ask which are the definitions of public history that have been adopted in Brazil. Until very recently, the prevailing definition is that one of its central objectives is the dissemination of historical knowledge to broad audiences. In this text, however, we seek to think of it in a broader way. To do so, the brief synthesis of the typology of public history by Ricardo Santhiago through the study of Brazilian and international literature may be useful:

> I think of public history as an area of study and action with four fundamental commitments, which can be intertwined: history made *for* the public (which prioritizes the expansion of audiences); history made *with* the public (collaborative history, where the idea of 'shared authority' is central); history made *by* the public (incorporating non-institutional forms of history and memory); and history *and* public (which might cover reflexivity and self-reflexivity in the field). (SANTHIAGO, 2016, p. 28)

Starting from this typology, this article sees the project "Chicks in History" as a form of public history made *by* the public – and, to some extent, *with* the public. Moreover, this text seeks, at the same time, to investigate whether there is space, in this type of initiatives, for deliberate collaboration of historians, especially with regard to the moment of archiving. Hence the relevance of thinking of public history beyond an attempt to reach wider audiences, but also of perceiving what/how our public potential has been doing with history. Thus, it might be interesting to think of forms of shared production of historical knowledge. To do this, it is crucial, in the case proposed herein, to discuss about history and the internet or what has been named as digital history.

In a significant text on the relations between history and the internet, the U.S. historians Daniel Cohen and Roy Rosenzweig (2005) explore the possibilities of the web 2.0 for historical knowledge. One of these potentialities might be interactivity, which enhances multiple forms of historical dialogue, either between professionals and non-professionals, professors, and students, between students or also between people interested in the past. According to the authors:

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Many history websites offer opportunities for dialogue and feedback. The response level has varied widely, but the experience to date suggests how we can transform historical practice – the web becomes a place for new forms of collaboration, new modes of debate, and new ways of collecting evidence about the past. At least potentially, digital media transforms the traditional and unilateral relation reader/writer, producer/consumer. Public historians, particularly, have long sought ways to 'share authority' with their audiences; the web provides an optimal medium for such sharing and collaboration. (COHEN, ROSENZWEIG, 2005, s/p, translated by the author)

As observed, according to these authors, the web provides an optimal medium for sharing and collaboration. This approach refers us to the considerations by Michael Frisch, a professor at the University of New York and author of *A Shared Authority: Essays on the Craft And Meaning of Oral and Public History* (1990). In a recent text published in Brazil, Frisch (2016) synthesizes some of the ideas and leads us to think of them in our context. The author criticizes what he names as the sterility of the debate on public history, which might reside in an academic/public dichotomy. Hence the persistence of terms such as audience, in the sense that 'we' generate a 'product' of public history and communicate it to 'them.' This could be a limited and limiting idea of public history, in which the flow of intelligence, information, and ideas is seen as unidirectional.

In this way, one of the formulations by Michael Frisch investigates whether public history in Brazil is a two-way street, or, on the contrary, a one-way street that goes from a historian's 'we' to an audience's 'them.' In his response, the author advocates for the practice of an inclusive public history, done along with the audience. This would imply breaking with the directional flow from 'we' to 'them.'

One way to break with this is, in the author's view, exploring the digital universe. To illustrate this, he argues about the difference between 'raw' and 'cooked.' The first might be, for instance, the audio of an oral history interview. The second, in its turn, a documentary or a podcast produced through this interview. It is usually the second type of material that reaches the communities and the audience as a whole. When working with digital content management, Frisch draws attention to the fact that digital access modes turn the raw collection into a readable and exploitable web portal and, "with this, make the framing and manufacturing of usable cooked products more open, fluid, and

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continuous procedures – and more inclusive and sharable as processes" (FRISCH, 2016, p. 64).

Thus, the defense is that digital modes can overcome the dichotomy between knowledge creation and knowledge consumption. Using the 'digital kitchen' metaphor, Frisch argues that in this environment it might be possible to produce together, professionals and 'users,' public history[19].

Recently, there has been a growing interest in the issue of digital history in Brazil. In this way, it is worth stressing that the country is the fifth most connected in the world, surpassing the mark of 100 million internet users (LUCCHESI, 2014). Authors such as Anita Lucchesi (2014) and Bruno Leal de Carvalho (2014), for instance, relying on their research and web practice experiences, have emphasized the importance of making historical collections available on the internet and they seem to agree with the statement by Cohen and Roy Rosenzweig (2005) that the internet is a medium with great potential for the sharing of authority between historian and public, as well as information.

Marcella Costa (2015), in turn, resuming a reflection by Lise Sedrez, a professor at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ), extracted from the online debate "História digital: ensino, pesquisa e divulgação" (2013), reminds us that digitizing the past is a significant part of digital history, but that is not enough; there is still a need to learn to show this information in new, attractive, ways to people who are thinking digitally.

With this in mind, the question is: does the web bring us only easiness? It does not seem so. A large part of the authors devoted to investigate digital history have at least a mention of the issue of quality and authenticity. According to Roy Rosenzwieg and Daniel Cohen, these should be issues that stimulate the thinking of digital history[20].

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[19] The alternative with which the author concludes his argument is the example of a project he participated in, developed in 2009, by the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library, named as "Re-Collecting the Depression and New Deal as a Civic Resource in Hard Times." This project integrates digitized collections of primary sources, artifacts, manuscripts, oral histories, photographs, music, art, and local documentation on the Great Depression in this region of the USA and it has been consolidating this material into a community, multimedia, and digital database.

[20] The bibliography on digital history is not very rich. In Brazil, it is still a field on which few scholars have studied: examples could be the studies by the already mentioned Anita Lucchesi, Ph.D. student in Luxembourg; by Pedro Telles da Silveira, Ph.D. student in the UFRGS, who develops a thesis on digital history; and some texts by Bruno Leal, currently a post-Ph.D. student in the UFRJ. Regarding the relation

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Keila Grinberg (2011), in her turn, asks whether the increased access to primary sources, made possible in recent years by the internet – through websites that offer historical documents – would have brought us closer to a Public History, in the sense of making its methodological procedures and its references more accessible to the general public. She does not think so. One of the effects of this, also, could be a marked increase in the amount of plagiarism in academic works. Thus, how could we deal with it? Instead of just fighting plagiarism, it might be the case to highlight, through the internet, the knowledge production process, starting with the very notion of authorship, so much discussed in the domain of artistic creation. In the author's words:

> How to do this? A possible way is creating mechanisms that allow the user – reader, student, whatever their login is – to know the stages of the knowledge production process in History. Thus, knowing how to read documents from a particular time, contextualizing them, criticizing them, comparing information obtained with other documents and other texts, checking the source of information obtained in these texts are some of the procedures that help people observing, analyzing, and classifying Information of any nature. In the case of information of a historical nature, this is crucial, both for History students and for those interested in the subject.
>
> Thinking through the process of producing historical knowledge may not be the initial goal of people interested in History – potential audience of scientific dissemination actions – who seek the internet as a way to improve their knowledge. But perhaps this is a surprise that historians can reserve to their readers: in addition to disseminating the knowledge produced in universities, also disclose their production process. And the internet, for this purpose, is an extraordinary way. Who knows if, acting in this way, we will be able to begin to overcome the paradox of dealing with a History that is both discouraging at school and so interesting in the media. (GRINBERG, Keila, 2011, s/p)

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between public history and digital history, there is an interview with Pedro Telles da Silveira on the blog course in History of the Federal University of Latin American Integration (UNILA), where he mentions some references on the theme: "There is an interesting bibliography being produced in Brazil about digital history in its interfaces with contemporary history and public history, out of which I highlight the works by Anita Lucchesi (2014), currently a Ph.D. student in Luxembourg, which at the same time are pioneers and represent the state of the art of the reflection in the Brazilian academic environment. In addition to this bibliography, there are the works of the unfortunately late Roy Rosenzweig, a top name in the field in the USA, and the historians linked to the Center for History and New Media, which produce an interesting reflection on the theme. There is also the Italian work on the subject, quite extensive and easily accessed in journals like *Diacronie e Memoria* and *Ricerca*. In France, finally, a name to be highlighted is that of Serge Noiret (2015), one of those responsible for this link between digital history and public history" (SILVEIRA, 2016, Blog UNILA). Available at: <http://unilahistoria.blogspot.com.br/p/entrevista-pedro-telles-da-silveira.html>. Accessed on: 11/18/2016.

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Through the intersection of the interpretations indicated so far, perhaps this question is pertinent: How could we advance in a project of public history prepared jointly in Brazil without falling into the difficulties pondered by Grinberg? Creating digital platforms with access to the sources, with texts produced by historians and with the problematization of the research route? Would it be an alternative to invest in texts that could be built collectively, through readers' comments, on the same platforms?

The archiving step is, of course, different for professional historians and for those who practice public history on the web, without the academic background in history. Therefore, an alternative could be better explore the timing of the archive and not only make collections available. Perhaps this is a clue to the practice of shared history mentioned above.

Final remarks

When presenting the case of the website and the Facebook page that aims to affirm the presence of women in history, this text has chosen to indicate the potential of the initiative, as well as its gap. A weak point of the project, from the perspective of the author of this article, lies on the timing of the archive, something which even generates demands on the part of users. This finding has not been made to discredit the work developed on the page, but rather as an attempt to plot and, perhaps, seek to build bridges between this modality of public history and a potential shared public history, which would require the initiative of professional historians. The audience seems eager for it.

To conclude, from the foregoing, this reflection comes to an end with one of the main questions raised by the case study: What, after all, can be the role of professional historians in the context of expanding the use of digital environments and, at the same time, public demand for history?

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