



The teaching of archives, Archival Science, and human rights in Brazil

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ABSTRACT

In recent decades, the relationship between archives, Archival Science, and human rights has been a frequent topic of technical works, publications, and events, both in Brazil and abroad. Despite the expansion of this theme in the field, its presence in the education of the area is still low. Considering this panorama, the present essay aims to analyze the presence/absence of content and curriculum components related to human rights in Archival Science courses in Brazil and their intersections. The essay is based on a set of thought-provoking questions about the topic: why teach human rights in Archival Science courses? How are Brazilian Archival Science courses dealing with the theme of human rights? What are the challenges for teaching archives, Archival Science, and human rights? And what are their perspectives? Based on these reflections, the essay seeks to contribute to the always necessary debates about the structuring and reform of pedagogical projects and curriculum frameworks in the country's Archival Science courses.

Keywords: archival science; human rights; education.

INTRODUCTION

In 1993, the International Council on Archives (ICA) decided to create a working group dedicated to investigating the whereabouts and conditions of conservation and access to archives produced by the security service of repressive regimes. The decision followed the context of the period itself, characterized by the overthrow of governments marked by the systematic use of violence in different parts of the world – and by the pressing need to guarantee legal and historical reparation for the rights violations committed by them. The experts gathered by the ICA worked for two years, between 1994 and 1995. At the end of the process, they presented a report based on three main objectives: exposing archival problems common to countries undergoing a democratization process; promoting the exchange of experiences between these nations; and proposing a set of archival recommendations based on the contexts analyzed (Quintana, 2008, p. 31).

Ten years after the formation of the first working group with an emphasis on the relationship between archives and human rights, the ICA adopted a specific resolution on the topic. According to the provision, both the ICA and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) should establish a work program aimed at preserving documentary funds related to human rights violations and disseminating the topic on account of its importance. The resolution was implemented in 2003, with the creation of the Working Group on Human Rights, converted into the Section on Archives and Human Rights (SAHR) in 2019. Shortly after its formation, the first publications created within the group appeared, among which report *Políticas archivísticas para la defensa de los Derechos Humanos* (2008) and document *Princípios básicos sobre o papel dos arquivistas na defesa dos direitos humanos* (2016), among others.

The development of actions and programs focused on topic archives and their link with human rights was fed (and, at the same time, boosted) by considerable academic production on the topic. As noted by Geraci and Caswell, “[...] na última década, estudos em Arquivologia também têm cada vez mais se debruçado sobre as questões de direitos humanos” (2019, p. 999)¹. In some countries, “[...]o interesse nos ‘documentos de direitos humanos’ tornou-se tão predominante nos estudos arquivísticos, tentando-se até classificá-lo como um ‘discurso dominante’ que, nas palavras de Verne Harris, pode ‘acabar com as perspectivas não ortodoxas’” (Geraci; Caswell, 2019, p. 999)². Archival documents produced by repressive apparatuses and resistance movements would, therefore, be increasingly present on the research and work agenda in the field.

Despite the undeniable approach between Archival Science and studies on human rights, there is still a certain degree of caution regarding teaching initiatives on the subject in

1 Translation: “[...] in the last decade, studies in Archival Science have also increasingly focused on human rights issues” (Geraci; Caswell, 2019, p. 999, editorial translation).

2 Translation: “[...] interest in ‘human rights documents’ has become so prevalent in archival studies that strong attempt has been made to classify it as a ‘dominant discourse’ which, according to Verne Harris, can ‘put an end to unorthodox perspectives’” (Geraci; Caswell, 2019, p. 999, editorial translation).

the field. Developed in Brazil from 1960 onwards – and with due legal basis since 1974 – the curricula of Archival Science courses have undergone profound changes in recent decades, marked both by advances in archival knowledge and by the demands of Brazilian society (Chagas; Negreiros; Silva, 2021). However, despite the notable changes and expansion of undergraduate courses in the field, topics focused on human rights still occupy a restricted space in the training of new professionals – an especially worrying reality when we are dealing with a context marked by institutional violence and widespread impunity, like the Brazilian one. Based on this premise, this essay analyzes the presence/absence of curricular components linked to human rights in Archival Studies courses in Brazil, as well as existing experiences, challenges and perspectives regarding the topic.

In order to give greater dynamism to the text, this essay is guided by questions regarding the central theme. To conduct this work, the bibliographical production on the subject and the current institutional documents relating to Archival Science teaching in Brazil were analyzed – legal provisions, pedagogical projects, syllabi, teaching plans, etc. This last group of sources was obtained, especially, from the institutional portals of the Ministry of Education (Federal Government) and universities that offer Archival Studies courses in the country – 16 federal higher education institutions and a private university center³. Furthermore, I emphasize that this essay, in addition to proposing a discussion on the topic, also intends to serve as a substrate for the constant, periodic and necessary discussions that support the reforms and curriculum adjustments provided for by law.

Why teach human rights in Archival Science courses?

Bearing in mind the perennial importance of protecting and promoting human rights, the ICA has highlighted, quite vehemently, the need to include this agenda in the training of new professionals in the area. In the “Universal Declaration on Archives”, adopted in 2010, the entity advocates that free access to archives “enriches **knowledge** about human society, promotes **democracy**, protects the **rights** of citizens and increases **quality** of life” (Conselho Internacional de Arquivos, 2010, p. 1, emphasis added). In order for access to be enhanced and expanded, there is a need for professionals who are duly qualified and capable of dealing with contexts in which opacity and the restriction of rights are addressed. In view of this panorama, the “Basic principles on the role of archivists in the defense of human rights” establish that

Governos, associações profissionais de arquivistas, instituições arquivísticas e educacionais e profissionais individuais envolvidos em educação arquivística devem garantir que os arquivistas tenham educação e formação adequadas e

3 The documents were consulted between March and May 2023, on the portal of the Higher Education Regulation System (e-MEC) of the Ministry of Education (<https://emec.mec.gov.br/emec/nova>) and on the websites of universities and university centers that offer Archival Science courses in Brazil. The mentioned syllabi are directly referenced throughout the text.

conhecimento dos deveres éticos dos arquivistas em relação a direitos humanos e liberdades fundamentais reconhecidos pelo direito nacional e internacional. (Conselho Internacional de Arquivos, 2016, p. 107)⁴

With the aim of implementing this guideline, the ICA Section on Archives and Human Rights established, between 2021 and 2024, the creation of a training program and a series of webinars as a priority action, in addition to the production of teaching materials on the topic⁵ (International Council on Archives, 2024). There is, therefore, an international effort aimed at the training of professionals in topics involving the link between archives and human rights, which shows the relevance of this topic for Archival Science.

In Brazil, this effort is in line with the basic guidelines that drive (or should drive) education in the country. In 2021, Federal Law No. 9.394/1996, known as the Brazilian Education Guidelines and Bases (LDB), began to consider that basic education curricula must contain, as cross-cutting themes, “[...] conteúdos relativos aos direitos humanos e à prevenção de todas as formas de violência contra a criança, o adolescente e a mulher [...]” (Brasil, 1996)⁶. The law is not explicit regarding the need for such content to also be taught in Higher Education, but it makes it clear that education at this level must aim to encourage “reflective thinking” and “[...] conhecimento dos problemas do mundo presente, em particular os nacionais e regionais [...]” (Brasil, 1996)⁷.

With regard to the Curricular Guidelines for Archival Science Courses, established by the National Education Council, by means of Opinion No. 492/2001, the Ministry of Education ensures that, among the skills and abilities to be developed by archivists, are the ability of “[...] traduzir as necessidades de indivíduos, grupos e comunidades nas respectivas áreas de atuação” and “[...] responder a demandas de informação produzidas pelas transformações que caracterizam o mundo contemporâneo” (Conselho Nacional de Educação, 2001, p. 35)⁸. Unlike other guidelines – which are explicit in relation to the teaching of human rights – the basic curricular parameters of Archival Science do not directly mention the topic, but allow us to anticipate it in the basic elements that characterize the training of archivists.

In this sense, I understand that the need to include such content and curricular components in Archival Science courses is directly or indirectly evident, both internationally and in the elements that constitute the basis of teaching this field in Brazil. The need for training *in* and *for* human rights has been expanded within the framework of pedagogical projects at several Brazilian universities, a movement that, at the same time that it maps the

4 Translation: “Governments, professional associations of archivists, archival and educational institutions and individual professionals involved in archival education shall ensure that archivists have adequate education and training and knowledge of the ethical duties of archivists in relation to human rights and fundamental freedoms recognized by national and international law.” (Conselho Internacional de Arquivos, 2016, p. 107, editorial translation).

5 Website: <https://www.ica.org/ica-network/professional-sections/sahr/>.

6 Translation: “[...] contents relating to human rights and the prevention of all forms of violence against children, adolescents and women [...]” (Brasil, 1996, editorial translation).

7 Translation: “[...] knowledge of the problems of the present world, in particular national and regional problems [...]” (Brasil, 1996, editorial translation).

8 Translation: “[...] translate the needs of individuals, groups and communities in their respective areas of activity” and “[...] respond to information demands produced by the transformations that characterize the contemporary world” (Conselho Nacional de Educação, 2001, p. 35, editorial translation).

needs of society, it also seeks alignment with guidelines and understandings consolidated abroad – such as the Sustainable Development Goals established by the United Nations (UN) from what is referred to as *Agenda 2030*.

Furthermore, it should be noted that the Brazilian context is marked by processes of profound, traumatic and continuous human rights violations that force us to reflect and act on them in all spheres of national life, with emphasis on education. As noted by Maria Victoria Benevides, “[...] quando falamos em formação de uma cultura de respeito aos direitos humanos, à dignidade humana, estamos enfatizando, sobretudo no caso brasileiro, uma necessidade radical de mudança” (2003, p. 310)⁹. A change, according to the author, “[...] que possa realmente mexer com o que está mais enraizado nas mentalidades, muitas vezes marcadas por preconceitos, por discriminação, pela não aceitação dos direitos de todos, pela não aceitação da diferença” (Benevides, 2003, p. 310)¹⁰. It is from this need for change that I understand the urgency of addressing human rights in the training of future archivists.

How are Archival Science courses in Brazil addressing topic human rights?

In Brazil, archive workers are trained mainly in undergraduate courses in Higher Education. According to the National Register of Higher Education Courses and Institutions, a database maintained by the Ministry of Education¹¹, the country currently has 17 Archival Science courses: 16 are offered by federal universities (on-site) and one is offered by a private university center (distance learning). The database also indicates the authorization for the operation of a new course in a private entity, training that has not yet started.

As noted by Chagas, Negreiros and Silva (2021), there is no curricular standardization in Archival Science courses underway in Brazil. This means that each course organizes its mandatory and complementary curricular components freely, based fundamentally on the Curricular Guidelines for the field, established by the National Education Council. However, despite the peculiarities concerning each course, it is possible to see that the majority of training courses offered in the country follows a more or less cohesive line regarding the training bases developed. The fundamental and theoretical aspects of Archival Science, archival functions, the bases of ethics, norms and legislation in the field and a set of auxiliary interdisciplinary knowledge summarily characterize this line – and give it identity.

When analyzing the curricular components of Archival Studies courses in Brazil in search of subjects and/or content that directly address the relationship between archives and human rights, it is observed that the topic is still timidly addressed. Of the 17 undergraduate courses underway in the country, only five offer subjects with programmatic content¹² that

9 Translation: “[...] when speaking of the formation of a culture of respect for human rights, human dignity, we are emphasizing, especially in the Brazilian case, a radical need for change” (Benevides, 2003, p. 310, editorial translation).

10 Translation: “[...] that can truly affect what is most deeply rooted in the mentalities, often” (Benevides, 2003, p. 310, editorial translation).

11 Website: <https://emec.mec.gov.br/emec/nova>.

12 Expression “programmatic content”, present in the syllabi analyzed in this essay, is used to designate the thematic elements constituting the curricular components (commonly called subjects) of the courses.

relates archives and human rights. And the most surprising fact: the course that offers the longest-running discipline on the subject has only been doing so for ten years. In other words: in addition to being little discussed, the topic is recent.

The table below shows a list of Archival courses underway in Brazil (in order of seniority), the curricular components directly linked to the teaching of archives and human rights and some basic details about them.

TABLE 1 – Presence/absence of curricular components linked to human rights in Archival Science courses

Components of archives and human rights in Archival Science courses				
Institution to which the course is linked	Componente curricular	Year of first offer	Property	Course load
UNIRIO	Does not include a specific component on the topic			
UFSM	Archives and Human Rights	2018	Mandatory	45h
UFF	Does not include a specific component on the topic			
UnB	Archives and Human Rights	2020	Optional	60h
UFBA	Cultural and Educational Action on Human Rights	2014	Optional	68h
UEL	Does not include a specific component on the topic			
UFES	Does not include a specific component on the topic			
UFRGS	Arquivos, Memória e Direitos Humanos	2013	Mandatory	30h
Unesp	Does not include a specific component on the topic			
UEPB	Does not include a specific component on the topic			
FURG	Social Movements and Human Rights in the Context of Archives	2016	Optional	30h
UFPB	Does not include a specific component on the topic			
UFMG	Does not include a specific component on the topic			
UFAM	Does not include a specific component on the topic			
UFSC	Does not include a specific component on the topic			
UNIASSELVI	Não contém componente específico sobre o tema			

Source: Prepared by the author (2023).

As one can deduct from the table above, the undergraduate course in Archival Science offered at Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS) is a pioneer in offering a mandatory curricular component focusing on human rights. Subject BIB03352 – Archives, Memory and Human Rights, with a 30-hour course load and mandatory, has been regularly offered since 2013. This subject emerged as a deployment of seminar *Memory of dictatorships*

– *instruments for the consolidation of Human Rights*, a parallel event to the third edition of the *World Social Forum*, held in Porto Alegre, in 2003. On that occasion, event participants formulated the “Carta de Porto Alegre” (Porto Alegre Charter), an important document that highlights the need to act and reflect on the relationship between archives and human rights in Latin America¹³. As a result of this context, the subject offered at UFRGS has a striking dialogue with topics transitional justice and historical reparation in the context of redemocratization in Latin American countries. Its basic syllabus focuses on “the conception of Access to Archival Information as a citizenship tool in Brazil” and the “role of Archival Science in rescuing Truth, Justice and Human Rights in the current social context” (Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul, 2023, *online*).

Subject ICIA25 – Cultural Action and Education in Human Rights, offered by the Department of Documentation and Information since 2014, is part of the optional curricular components of the Archival Science course at Universidade Federal da Bahia (UFBA). The course’s syllabus is “archives as a primary source of information for the cultural and educational management of citizens” and, among the topics listed in its content, are the “citizens’ right to information” and the “Universal Declaration of Human Rights ” (Universidade Federal da Bahia, 2023). It is important to highlight that this component is that with the most extensive course load among all those analyzed (68 hours).

The third subject to directly address the relationship between archives and human rights in Archival Science courses in Brazil is 10892 – Social Movements and Human Rights in the Context of Archives, an optional subject with a 30-hour course load, offered within the scope of the Institute of Human Sciences and the Information from Universidade Federal do Rio Grande (FURG). The subject is characterized by addressing the relationships between archives, memory, human rights and social movements. In its basic program, the component also addresses “[...] questões de meio ambiente, gênero, raça, etnia e classe relacionadas a arquivos [...]”, in addition to “[...] novos papéis dos arquivos frente à contemporaneidade [...]” (Universidade Federal do Rio Grande, 2022, p. 7)¹⁴.

ARQV0028 – Archives and Human Rights is the curricular component offered by the Archival Science course at the Universidade Federal de Santa Maria (UFSM), on a mandatory basis and with a 45-hour course load. This subject, originally titled Human Rights and Archives, was conceived and offered by the first time in 2018 and incorporated into the course curriculum in 2020. The course’s objectives are “[...] identificar os principais marcos jurídicos referentes aos Direitos Humanos; reconhecer a relação entre arquivos e Direitos Humanos; analisar os parâmetros teórico-metodológicos do tratamento de arquivos vinculados à violação ou proteção dos Direitos Humanos” (Universidade Federal de Santa Maria, 2019, p. 1)¹⁵. The

13 The “Carta de Porto Alegre” can be read in full in the 2004 Azul Report, published by the Legislative Assembly of Rio Grande do Sul and available at: http://www.dhnet.org.br/dados/relatorios/r_relatorio_azul/r_azul_2004.pdf. Access on: May 11, 2023.

14 Translation: “[...] issues of environment, gender, race, ethnicity and class related to archives [...]”, “[...] new roles of archives in the face of contemporary times [...]” (Universidade Federal do Rio Grande, 2022, p. 7, editorial translation).

15 Translation: “[...] identifying the main legal frameworks relating to Human Rights; recognizing the relationship between archives and Human Rights; analyzing the theoretical-methodological parameters of the treatment of archives linked to the violation or protection of Human Rights” (Universidade Federal de Santa Maria, 2019, p. 1, editorial translation)

component also has a final objective – “to reflect on the multiple nuances relating to Human Rights in archives” – which is detailed in its programmatic content, with a strong inclination to expanding the topics explored until then in similar subjects. The study topics included in the subject are: the world of work, the protection of archival heritage linked to ethnic-racial groups and indigenous peoples, gender issues, conflicts and their impact on human mobility and accessibility policies for people with disabilities.

At last, we come to subject FCI0110 – Archives and Human Rights, the newest of this type of component implemented in Brazil, offered by the Archival Science course at Universidade de Brasília (UnB) since its most recent curricular reform, which took place in 2020. With a 60-hour course load and optional property, the course has the following syllabus:

A Declaração Universal sobre os Direitos Humanos e suas implicações para os arquivos. O conceito de acesso aos arquivos como um dos direitos humanos fundamentais: gênese e evolução. Os arquivos e os direitos humanos na perspectiva da Unesco e do Conselho Internacional dos Arquivos. Políticas arquivísticas para a defesa dos direitos humanos. O Programa Nacional de Direitos Humanos no Brasil e os arquivos. O papel dos arquivistas (Universidade de Brasília, 2023, *online*)¹⁶.

It is important to mention that, in addition to the components listed and described, some Archival Science courses suggest the incorporation of subjects related to human rights, offered by other teaching units/subunits, which can be used in the training of archivists. These are the cases of the Archival Science course at Unirio, which suggests components Afro-Brazilian Cultures in the Classroom and Environmental Education and Citizenship; at UEL, which proposes Afro-Brazilian Culture; and at UFAM, which recommends Afro-Brazilian Cultures and Environmental Education and Citizenship. Courses at other universities also allow their students to take subjects dedicated to the discussion on human rights, although such components are not listed in their syllabi.

As one can observe from the analysis of Archival Science courses underway in Brazil, less than 30% of undergraduate courses offer subjects clearly aimed at the discussion on archives and human rights. Of the total, only 12% do so on a mandatory basis. These numbers do not necessarily mean that other courses do not discuss or address issues related to human rights in their dialogue with archival theories and practices. Only that, if this occurs, it does so in a transversal manner, diluted between the subjects offered and without evident records, either in the pedagogical projects or in the syllabi and programs of such training.

16 Translation: “The Universal Declaration on Human Rights and its implications for archives. The concept of access to archives as one of the fundamental human rights: genesis and evolution. Archives and human rights from the perspective of UNESCO and the International Council on Archives. Archival policies for the defense of human rights. The National Human Rights Program in Brazil and the archives. The role of archivists” (Universidade de Brasília, 2023, *online*, editorial translation)

What are the challenges for teaching archives, Archival Science and human rights?

Given the situation observed, it is important to reflect on the main challenges inherent to the necessary expansion and implementation of content and curricular components related to human rights in Archival Science courses. In this sense, the first objective – and challenging – matter involves the fundamental debate on transversal and concentrated options. This discussion, fundamental in the field of education *in* and *for* human rights, is based on two non-exclusive but essential options: the transversal option invites teachers and students to include (and delve into) human rights themes throughout the curriculum, addressing such topics in their direct relationship with other content; on the other hand, the concentrated option suggests that the relationship between archives and human rights be addressed in one or more subjects, fundamentally focused on this discussion.

Both options have advantages and disadvantages. The transversal option is, without a doubt, interesting, given the possibility of diluting concepts, experiences and case studies in the most distinct subareas of Archival Science. The problem with this option is that dilution does not always take place, especially when the “most important” content in a given subject is chosen – in most cases, content that is not always so evident in its relationship with human rights.

Due to the difficulties of implementing training that considers the study of human rights in a transversal manner, all courses that express concern about the subject have adopted the concentrated option – that is, the organization of one or more curricular components aimed exclusively at addressing the relationship between archives and human rights. The concentrated option gives visibility to the topic and allows it to be explored in nuances that are not always possible in the transversal option. However, there are risks to the model: concentration may convey the idea that the relationship between archives and human rights is just another subarea of the field; it may be difficult to “position” the subject concentrated in a specific cycle/period of training (since it requires extensive knowledge of Archival Science on the part of students); concentration can produce the idea that that subject is only important for the professor who teaches it (and not for the course as a whole); and, consequently, the concentration can induce other teachers to feel “not obliged” to address the topic.

Another complexity for the implementation and improvement of subjects that relate archives and human rights (especially in the concentrated option) is the establishment of a syllabus/program capable of covering the scope of the topic. When analyzing the subjects currently offered in Archival Studies courses in Brazil, one can observe a more or less heterogeneous variety of content, which is positive; but it also reveals the yet limited nature of the discussion about what to teach in curricular components of this type. Without any prescriptive intention, I understand that there are some fundamental bases for establishing the curricular components (especially, once again, the concentrated ones): introductory aspects on the construction of the notion of human rights, the composition of such rights in

the panorama of international law and the basic documents formulated by the ICA Section on Archives and Human Rights can be starting points for the establishment of a minimally solid program on the subject.

In addition to these contents, I also consider it necessary to list a more or less cohesive (and possible) set of themes capable of promoting direct dialogue between archives and human rights. As a proposition, without any aspiration to exhaust the topics, I consider some contents to be especially important in the Brazilian context: the situation of undocumentedness and under-registration and their interlocutions with archives and Archival Science; the use of archives in struggles for racial and gender equality; the importance of archival policies to guarantee rights linked to collective property, such as the recognition of quilombola and indigenous territories; the technical and political aspects linked to the process of documenting migrants in situations of human mobility caused by conflicts, repressive regimes and natural disasters; the accessibility of files and archival documents for people with disabilities; the use of archives to fight institutional violence and seek legal redress (both in repressive regimes and democratic governments); and the importance of the social role of archivists in fighting corruption and abuse, as well as consolidating social memory with a view to historical reparation.

Evidently, the list of contents suggests some challenging crossings, both in relation to the topics themselves and with regard to the ways of addressing them. The archival bibliography in Portuguese regarding almost all of these contents is still quite scarce, which makes their approach in the classroom extremely difficult – and even the prior preparation of these approaches by professors. Mastering such a diverse thematic arc is virtually impossible given such limitations, an obstacle that cannot always be resolved. I consider, in this sense, that the adoption of interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary bibliography and, mainly, the possibility of counting on the collaboration of external participants with technical and theoretical *expertise* in such topics (including using the resources made possible by information and communication technologies) may be interesting alternatives to enable the insertion of a broader agenda. The adoption of active methodologies, such as thematic seminars developed by students, can also be a satisfactory alternative to overcome the still incipient production around archives and human rights in Brazil.

Another interesting possibility from this perspective is linking subjects with research, teaching and, above all, extension projects aimed at sectors involved with human rights demands. The possibility of establishing projects for the diagnosis, treatment and/or promotion of access to archives of state agencies or non-governmental organizations aimed at promoting and protecting human rights can represent a valuable alternative for “applied” learning on the subject – in addition to an important contribution of the university to society. Along the same lines, bringing curricular components closer to projects developed by public archival institutions can also be of great value in improving learning about archives and human rights.

At last, it should be noted as a challenge inherent to the teaching *of* and *for* human rights, the need to reflect on such curricular components from their political dimensions, something not always evident in Archival Science. As Benevides notes:

Queremos uma formação que leve em conta algumas premissas. Em primeiro lugar, o aprendizado deve estar ligado à vivência do valor da igualdade em dignidade e direitos para todos e deve propiciar o desenvolvimento de sentimentos e atitudes de cooperação e solidariedade. Ao mesmo tempo, a educação para a tolerância se impõe como um valor ativo vinculado à solidariedade, e não apenas como tolerância passiva da mera aceitação do outro, com o qual se pode não estar solidário. Em seguida, o aprendizado deve levar ao desenvolvimento da capacidade de se perceber as consequências pessoais e sociais de cada escolha. Ou seja, deve levar ao senso de responsabilidade. Esse processo educativo deve, ainda, visar à formação do cidadão participante, crítico, responsável e comprometido com a mudança daquelas práticas e condições da sociedade que violam ou negam os direitos humanos (2003, p. 316)¹⁷.

The challenges, as one can observe, are multiple and of different shades. I understand, however, that they should not be seen as obstacles, but rather as powerful opportunities for collective learning, both in terms of formal teaching and in relation to the possibilities of establishing channels of communication with the outside world of the university.

What are the prospects for teaching archives and human rights in Brazil?

In recent years, demands such as the curricularization of extension and the internationalization of universities have led undergraduate courses to the need to adjust, reform and rethink their pedagogical projects and syllabi. In Archival Science, this need has also been heightened by changes in the field – the disruptions caused by advances in technology, the need to structure and enhance access to information and the understanding of the field as an important part of the process of reconfiguring democracies. Inside and outside the university, there is a growing demand to improve and perfect the content and curricular components taught and appropriated by Archival Science.

I understand that this context allows one to envision positive perspectives for teaching *of* and *about* archives and human rights. There is a more or less synchronous movement of curricular changes and reforms that have produced important discussions in this regard and it seems feasible to project that, in the coming years, there will be a significant expansion in the contents and curricular components dedicated to the topic. Especially because, among the target audience for these changes (students), the issue is on the agenda. Recently, two undergraduate course conclusion works focused on the presence of human rights in Archival Science, pointing to the need to reflect and discuss the topic institutionally. Santos (2017) showed how low the incidence of the topic of archives and human rights is in the final

17 Translation: "We want training that takes some assumptions into account. First, learning must be linked to experiencing the value of equality in dignity and rights for all and must encourage the development of feelings and attitudes of cooperation and solidarity. At the same time, education for tolerance imposes itself as an active value linked to solidarity, and not just as passive tolerance of the mere acceptance of others, with whom one may not be in solidarity. Next, learning must lead to the development of the ability to perceive the personal and social consequences of each choice. In other words, it must lead to a sense of responsibility. This educational process must also aim to form participating, critical, responsible citizens committed to changing those practices and conditions in society that violate or deny human rights" (Benevides, 2003, p. 316, editorial translation).

works presented in the Archival Science course at Universidade Federal Fluminense (UFF). Albuquerque (2021) conducted a broader analysis, focusing on locating and understanding the presence of topic in Archival Science journals – a growing presence, it must be said.

These and other works can be interpreted as an invitation to reflect on the place of human rights in archivist training courses. Reflections that have also been driven by the presence of the topic in events in the area (or with the active participation of Archival Science) such as the four editions of the *International Seminar The World of Workers and their Archives* (promoted by the Central Única dos Trabalhadores in 2008, 2011, 2013 and 2016), the two editions of the *International Seminar on Archives and Human Rights* (promoted by the organization Archivists without Borders of Brazil and the Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul, in 2015 and 2019, respectively) and the *Seminar on Archives and Human Rights* (organized by the Public Archives of the State of São Paulo, in 2018), in addition to *VII Brazilian Meeting of Teaching and Research in Archival Science* (REPARQ), which took place in 2022 and had as central theme *Archives, Democracy and Social Justice*.

It is important to note that both publications and events with an emphasis on archives and human rights have still reserved little space for reflection on the teaching of the topic in undergraduate Archival Science courses – a point to be explored and expanded in the perspectives of the topic. I believe that it is necessary to take advantage of such spaces to gather, organize and think critically about the need and paths for the teaching *of, about* and *for* human rights in Brazilian Archival Science. A coordinated effort that could be of great value in the inherent and constant processes of construction (and deconstruction) of pedagogical projects for courses in operation in the country.

Moreover, I believe that it is necessary to bring together current experiences, giving them space to reflect on the limits and possibilities of teaching archives and human rights in the current context. A set of important questions in this context can be useful both for professors who currently teach classes on the subject and for those who wish to do so: which bibliography has been used in existing subjects? How have professors dealt with the limitations of formal knowledge on certain content? Which teaching strategies have proven to be more or less successful? When is the best time to introduce human rights themes into Archival Studies courses? How to enhance the transversal option? How can we expand the limits and reduce the disadvantages of the concentrated option? Which projects can be better linked to such experiences? How to address the constant movements of retraction and expansion of the human rights “agenda” in Brazil?

Such questions – which are at the heart of Archival Science teaching in the country – can serve as starting points for the essential debate regarding the inclusion of human rights themes in the training of archivists in Brazil. Far from exhausting its possibilities, they serve to encourage such reflections, understanding the need – urgent and irreversible – to address the topic in undergraduate courses that already exist or that may be created. A need that will give Brazilian Archival Science a prominent place in the fundamental (and increasingly arduous) fight for justice, citizenship and democracy.

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