

Religion and Feminisms in Brazilian Lutheranism: Culture and Resistance

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Abstract

When approaching the Lutheran experience in the Evangelical Church of Lutheran Confession in Brazil (IECLB), which may go unnoticed due to its numerical expression, in the last statistical analysis carried out in 2021, base year 2020, 628,557 thousand was the estimated total number of members, with 51% located in the South of Brazil (IECLB, 2021). The research highlighted the sample of a significant production, incorporation, and use of feminist theologies in ecclesiastical work expressed in the community experience and in the theological reflection reported by the pastors and observed in the empirical research, in the ethnography carried out, and in the bibliographical review on the topic. Even though Lutheranism (implanted in Brazil with the arrival of German immigrants in 1824) also has local elements reinforced by the Gaúcho Traditionalist Movement and German traditions, Lutheran theologians, students, and pastors efforts to conquer more representative spaces could be highlighted in a movement of women who rely on the subjectivation of freedom and autonomy and the "Gender Justice Policy" adopted in 2023 by the IECLB, associated with the Lutheran World Federation. The diverse performances of the feminine constitute "women" in this religious context, establishing in the Brazilian cultural mosaic a process of cultural differentiation and women's leading roles. Lutherans appropriated feminist discourses, adapting them to overcome a patriarchal religious system that still maintains its effects in churches. The process of a Church "always in Reformation" is ongoing, and we understand it as a political-religious action by women as ecclesiastical authorities with public impact effects in Brazil.

Keywords: Lutheranism, Evangelical Church of Lutheran Confession in Brazil, Women, Feminism