

Brazilian education in the Pombaline period: a historical analysis of the Pombaline teaching reforms

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Abstract

The authors center on a historical period to present a study of bibliographical character, on which basis they analyze education in Brazil by focusing specifically on the proposal for educational reform made by the Marquis of Pombal. Along the analysis they point to the consequences of the Pombaline reform to Brazilian and Portuguese education, whose social context included, on the one hand, Absolutist ideas, and on the other, the Enlightenment ideas that inspired Pombal. The studies concentrate on Pombal's period in government, namely when he, as Ministry of the Treasure of King José I, tried to carry out reforms in all areas of the Portuguese society, affecting Brazil as a colony, in an attempt to give it unity. The critical analysis converges to the conclusion that the Pombaline reform was disastrous for Brazilian education and, to a certain extent, also to the Portuguese education system. This assertion is based on the following issue: the destruction of the time-honored, consolidated – albeit questionable from social, historical, and scientific viewpoints – educational organization of the Jesuit priests, without the implementation of a new educational proposal capable of coping with societal needs. Therefore, the criticism that can be formulated here, and that is valid for the current moment of our own society, relates to the frequent discontinuities of the educational policies. However, it must be emphasized that the substitution of the ecclesiastical methodology of the Jesuits by the pedagogical thinking of the public, lay school signals the arrival, in that society, of the spirit of Modernity.

Keywords

Marquis of Pombal – Educational reform – Enlightenment – Public school.

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Preliminaries

Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo, Count of Oeiras, better known as the Marquis of Pombal, was born on 13th May 1699. He belonged to a family of the lower nobility, little known and unrelated to the Portuguese royalty. During a brief period of time, he was with the Army, and was member of the Portuguese Academy of History. He initiated in public life only after 1738, when he was assigned business delegate in London.

According to Avellar (1983), his time in London produced in him an aversion for the English and “[...] their methods of economic domination” (p. 9). Such dislike can be seen in his anti-British measures that unrelentingly aimed at freeing the Portuguese trade from the English yoke. The English envoy in Lisbon actually remarked that “this man has been doing us great harm” (p. 9). During his long stay in the English capital, the Marquis of Pombal did not even learn the English language, for since the 1648 Westphalia Treaty French was regarded as the diplomatic language.

The life of the Marquis of Pombal can be divided into four main stages. The first refers to his personal interests, that is, is the phase of the citizen Sebastião José de Carvalho, and goes from 1699 to 1738. During this time, the citizen is dedicated exclusively to the pursuits of the small nobleman. This period ends with his frustrated attempt to join the Treasury Council of King João V. The second phase is the diplomatic one, going from 1738 to 1749, during which he holds diplomatic posts in London and Vienna. The third phase corresponds to his period in government, and becomes the most important stage of his life, for during the reign of D. José I¹, which went from 1750 to 1777, he ended up running the businesses of the country. His last stage refers to his period in exile, ranging from the death of D. José I in 1777 to his own death in 1782.

The Marquis of Pombal, following Rêgo (1984) and Serrão (1982), was strongly influenced

in his political formation by his diplomatic stay in Vienna (1745-1749), since it can be

[...] said that it was in this capital city of the human spirit that the Portuguese minister, in contact with the world of politics and diplomacy, drank from the great principles of the Despotic Enlightenment that he would apply upon his return to his country. It was equally from that period that, according to Maria Alcina Ribeiro Correia, he brought the economic and cultural ideas that constituted the mainstay of his government. (SERRÃO, 1982, p. 22)

Pombal's formation was also influenced by the English political economics, for he searched for a solution to the Portuguese crisis in the English model. However, one of the reasons that he could not succeed was the existence of a fundamental disagreement: the differences in the political systems of the two countries. In Portugal there was Absolutism, whereas in England the constituted system was parliamentary.

Upon assuming the post of Minister of the Treasury of D. José I on 2nd August 1750, taking over from Azevedo Coutinho, Pombal initiated reforms in every area of Portuguese society: political, administrative, economic, cultural and educational. These reforms demanded a strong state control and an efficient working of the administrative machine, and were carried out mainly against the interests of the nobles and of the Company of Jesus, who represented threats to the absolute power of the king.

The Company of Jesus, a religious order formed by priests (known as Jesuits), was founded by Ignatius of Loyola in 1534. The Jesuits became a powerful and efficient religious congregation mainly due to their fun-

1. D. José I (1714-1777), son and heir to D. João V, married D. Mariana Vitória, who gave him four daughters (D. Maria I, D. Maria Ana, D. Maria Francisca Dorotéia and D. Maria Francisca Benedita). He was greatly helped, and influenced, by the Marquis of Pombal during his reign.

damental principles: search for human perfection through the word of God and the will on men; absolute and unrestricted obedience to superiors; strict and severe discipline; military-style hierarchy; recognition of the personal aptitudes of its members. It experienced a large expansion during the first decades following its creation, as observed in the growth of the number of its members. In 1556 it had a thousand members; in 1606 that number had grown to thirteen thousand. But the Jesuit order was not created only for educational purposes, and it seems indeed likely that in the beginning those were not even among its ends, since confession, preaching and catechization were its priorities. The 'spiritual exercises' became the main resource, having enormous animist and religious influence upon adults. However, education gradually took on a more important role, perhaps even center stage, among its activities. The Company of Jesus was founded right in the middle of the reaction movement of the Catholic Church against the Protestant Reformation, and can be rightfully considered as one of the main instruments of the Counter-Reformation. It had as objective to arrest the huge Protestant surge of the time, and to that end it made use of two strategies: the education of men and indigenous peoples, and the missionary action, through which it tried to bring to the Catholic faith the peoples of the regions that were being colonized.

Teixeira Soares (1961) presents as the principal problems of the administration of D. João I², who preceded D. José I, that came to be tackled by the Marquis of Pombal: the attachment to routine, avoiding the reforms that were needed and useful to the working of the administrative structure of the State, especially with respect to the functioning of the Treasury and the overseas administration; the lack of interest for public instruction, which for the Portuguese Crown was a privilege of nobles and bourgeoisie; the obscurantism that plagued all levels of the government, making difficult

the reforms needed.

Analyzing the reforms carried out by the Marquis of Pombal, Avellar reckons that Pombal displayed a profound knowledge of the Portuguese reality, the reason why he intended to implement a cultural, political and economic reformulation of the Portuguese society. Thus,

[...] it is the recognition that the failure of aspects of his administration was due to a factor upon which the Minister could not exert safe control. Even so, it cannot be said that he neglected the national conscience, for he freed the administration from religious presence, and made as pillars of his economic plan the ideas of ridding the commerce from British regulation, and the need to protect and develop the national industry; and of his educational program the indispensability of returning to lower and higher studies, and encouraging the professional education (classes in commerce and artillery), as well as, of his social agenda, to free the Blacks in the realm and the Indians overseas, saving with the eradication of the Jesuit communal administration in the State of Maranhão the linguistic unity of Brazil, as several authors have already proclaimed. (1983, p. 12)

In order to fulfill one of his objectives, that of transforming the Portuguese nation, the Marquis of Pombal would first need to strengthen the State and the king's power. This would be possible with the weakening of the power and prestige of the aristocracy and of the clergy, which traditionally limited the royal power. So, as Ribeiro (1998, p. 30) puts it, the then minister "guided himself towards recovering the economy through the

2. D. João I (1357-1433) was an illegitimate son to D. Pedro and Teresa Lourenço. He ruled over Portugal from 1385 until his death in 1433. To Serrão (1982), D. João I was the greatest Portuguese king of the 15th century, and one of the greatest of all history of Portugal. He became famous for his 'firmness in government and political vision', which revealed signs of the modern State in formation.

concentration of power in the king's hands, and modernizing the Portuguese culture”.

Upon assuming the post of Minister, the Marquis of Pombal formulated and implemented administrative reforms with the aim of making the administrative machine of the State more agile and efficient, and also of increasing State revenue. Still in the field of administrative and economic reforms, he intended with those measures to give a boost to national economy and to encourage the development of industries and trade companies – there appeared silk and wool textile industries; of hats, rugs, foundries, earthenware, dairy products, glass, soap, and many others. However, his attempts at consolidating a strong industrial base, fit to compete internally and externally, did not go very far, because many industries were short-lived as a result of weak internal demand, which was directed towards English-made products of better quality than the Portuguese. It should still be mentioned that Pombal neglected agriculture policy, paying little attention to its problems.

The reforms of the Marquis of Pombal also affected the Brazilian colony by targeting the reformulation of public services, chiefly through the fight against tax evasion. He was concerned with giving some unity, some sense of whole to the Brazilian colony. It was during his period in government that the city of Rio de Janeiro experienced an enormous development, with emphasis to its port and to the increase in population. The focus of the present study is, however, on the educational acts of his administration.

The Marquis of Pombal and the educational reforms

In the 15th century the command of the Portuguese public teaching shifts from the University of Coimbra to the Company of Jesus, which takes control over public schooling in Portugal and, later on, in Brazil. Almost two

centuries of dominion of the Jesuit educational method ended in the 18th century with the Pombal Reforms, when schooling becomes a responsibility of the Portuguese Crown.

According to Falcon (1993), the analysis of historians and researchers of the life and work of the Marquis of Pombal can be divided into six distinct moments: in the first, we find his contemporaries; in the second, there appear the admirers and immediate critics of his work; in the third we find the liberals and the myth of Pombaline liberalism; in the fourth are the conservatives and the myth of Pombaline tyranny; in the fifth are the studies and investigations presented by researchers and historians during the first half of the 20th century; in the sixth and last moment, started in 1945, we find the more recent analyses.

[...] still today, the Pombaline decrees and provisions are examined as if there was no other way but the alternative that was then presented: Jesuitism or Anti-Jesuitism. In this alternative the Jesuits represent for the historians all that is anti-modern, and Pombal and his men, the authentic anticipation of the modern aspirations. Now, one must recognize that the terms of such alternative constitute one of the most serious impediments to a fair understanding of one of the most lucid moments in Portuguese history. (CARVALHO, 1978, p. 29)

During Pombal's administration there is an attempt to blame the Company of Jesus for every trouble of the education in the metropolis and in the colony, thereby making the Jesuits responsible for the cultural and educational decadence of the Portuguese society.

Carvalho (1978) draws attention to the fact that this process, denominated Anti-Jesuitism, was not exclusive to Portugal, representing an attitude observed in several European countries. In this sense, the Jesuits represented an obstacle and a source of resistance to the efforts of implementing the

new philosophy of the Enlightenment that was rapidly spreading throughout Europe.

Serrão (1982) and Almeida (2000) explain that Pombal's hatred of the Jesuits was recorded in official documents of the time. In this respect, Carvalho says that

[...] the widely acknowledged hatred of the Marquis of Pombal towards the Company of Jesus was not due to the opinioned prejudices of a systematic stance previously defined. Various and complex factors of social, political and ideological nature influenced decisively in the evolution of an issue that still today elicits the passion and clouds the vision of the most enlightened of spirits. In the brevity of this form of national political ideal – the preservation of the Christian union and of the civil society – is subsumed a whole philosophy with clearly defined objectives, in a certain way responsible, incidentally, both by the virtues and by the vices of the dominating despotism. (1978, p. 32)

Such anti-Jesuitic spirit is ultimately expressed in the attribution to the Company of Jesus of all ailments of the education in the metropolis and in the Brazilian colony, as well as of the cultural and educational decadence of the Portuguese society.

The most important measures implemented by the Marquis, through the Decree of 28th June 1759 were: total dissolution of the organization of Jesuit education and of its teaching methodology, both in Brazil and in Portugal; institution of classes of Latin grammar, of Greek and rhetoric; creation of the post of 'director of studies' – it was intended for this post to represent a body of administrative guidance and teaching overseeing; introduction of the *Aulas Régias* – isolated classes that replaced the secondary course in humanities created by the Jesuits; institution of an exam for the selection of teachers for the *Aulas Régias*; approval and institution of commerce classes.

Inspired by the ideals of the Enlightenment, Pombal carries out a profound educational reform, at least formally. The ecclesiastical methodology of the Jesuits is replaced by the pedagogical thinking of the public and lay school. It is the appearance of the modern spirit that

[...] representing the watershed between the Jesuit pedagogy and the new orientation of the modelers of the Pombaline statutes of 1772, already gives clear indication of the epoch that will start in the 19th century, in which these two tendencies will vie each other. Instead of a single teaching system, the duality of schools, some lay, others confessional, all guided, however, by the same principles; instead of a teaching purely literary, classical, the development of the scientific teaching that slowly begins its development alongside the literary education, still predominating in every school; instead of the exclusive teaching of Latin and Portuguese, the progressive advance of the living languages and modern literatures (French and English); and, finally, the ramification of tendencies that, if not constituting a rupture of the unity of thought, open the way to the first clashes between the old ideas, embodied in the Jesuit teaching, and the new current of pedagogical thinking influenced by the ideas of the French Encyclopedists, victorious after 1789, on the school work of the Revolution (AZEVEDO, 1976, p. 56-57)

The introduction of the ideals of the Enlightenment³ in the sciences, and in particular in education, follows the social conditions of the time. Boto analyzes that since the 18th century there is

3. According to Carvalho (1978), the Portuguese Enlightenment differs from the pattern found in other European nations (France, England, Germany), having its own peculiarities. Nevertheless, and even recognizing the peculiarities in each nation, it was always a pedagogical program; a critical attitude concerned with social problems and with intentions of reformulating the institutions and the culture of the social sphere.

[...] an intensification of the pedagogical thinking and of the preoccupation with an educative attitude. To some philosophers and thinkers of the French movement, Man is an integral result of the educative process to which he submitted. Education thereby acquires a totalizing and prophetic perspective, since through it the necessary social reforms could take place via the sign of the pedagogically reformed Man. (1996, p. 21)

To the Enlightenment ideal, the new society requires a new Man, which can only be formed through education. Thus, despite the usefulness of the Jesuit teaching during the initial period of the colonization process of Brazil, it can no longer answer to the interests of the emerging Modern States. There appears, consequently, the idea of a public education under the control of the Modern States. And so, from this historic moment on, the Jesuit teaching becomes ineffective as a response to the demands of a society in transformation.

For the discourse of the Enlightenment and, more specifically, to that of the Marquis of Pombal, education and the right are extremely important because both are at the center of this thinking.

It is important to consider that the pedagogical renovation intended by the Marquis of Pombal is not exclusive to his government, for since the reign of D. João V up to that of D. Maria I, elements of the Enlightenment movement can be found, as observed by Serrão (1982), Carvalho (1978), Holanda (1993) and Ribeiro (1998).

[...] the Pombaline reforms of public teaching constitute a highly significant expression of the Portuguese Enlightenment. In them one finds materialized a pedagogical program that, on the one hand, represents the reflection of the ideas that stirred the European mind and, on the other hand, translates in the conditions of the peninsular life motivations, preoccupations and problems typically Portuguese. (CARVALHO, 1978, p. 25)

To Ribeiro it is clear that

[...] The 'Pombaline reforms' aimed at transforming Portugal into a capitalist metropolis, in the image of what England had been for more than a century. They aimed also at provoking changes in Brazil, with the purpose of adapting it, as a colony, to the new order intended in Portugal. (1998, p. 35)

One sees, then, a new social order, a new model of man, a new society based on the values of the pre-capitalist production system.

When proposing the educational reforms – through the approval of decrees creating several schools and reforming several existing ones – the Marquis of Pombal was concerned mainly with making use of public teaching as an ideological instrument and, therefore, with the intent of dominating and diminishing the ignorance that permeated society, a condition incompatible and irreconcilable with the ideas of the Enlightenment (SANTOS, 1982).

Almeida (2000) and Ribeiro (1998) concur that the biggest obstacle to fulfilling these objectives was the lack of people prepared to teach at the elementary and primary levels, that is, there was a great shortage, both at the metropolis and in the colony, of teachers apt to the function of teaching.

In view of this context, it can be said that Pombal, by pushing the Jesuits away and officially taking over the public instruction, did not just intend to reform the system and educational methods, but wanted to put them at the service of the political interests of the State. According to Haidar, there was an attempt

[...] to create a school useful to the ends of the State and, in this sense, instead of proposing a policy of intense and extensive diffusion of the school work, Pombal's men intended to organize a school that, prior to serving the interests of faith, served the imperatives of the Crown. (1973, p. 38)

By the Decree of April 5th 1771, Pombal transfers the administration and direction of teaching to the Royal Censor Office (*Real Mesa Censória*), a body created in April 1768, with which he intended to attain the emancipation from the absolute control of the Jesuits over the teaching, thereby handing it to the State. Following this act, seventeen literacy classes were created in Brazil; and a monetary fund – denominated literary subvention – was established for the maintenance of the reformed studies. One of the implications of the dismantling of the Jesuitic educational organization and of the failure to implement a formal and effective educational project was the delay to institute in the Brazilian colony the schools with graduated and systematized courses (1776).

Almeida (2000) highlights an important issue for the understanding of public instruction in the Brazilian colony: the attempt of the Portuguese Crown and of the colonial government to curb the development of public instruction for the Brazilian population. Such attitude was motivated by the intention to inhibit the expansion of the nationalist spirit that was beginning to emerge amongst the population.

It is therefore possible to observe, from the start, the presence of a distinguishing feature of Brazilian education – ‘the destruction and substitution of old educational proposals in favor of newer proposals’. It can thus be seen that, generally speaking, there is no continuity of the educational proposals implemented in Brazil. The expulsion of the Jesuits and the total destruction of their educational project can be regarded as the birth of this trait so deeply rooted in Brazilian education.

According to Holanda, with the expulsion of the Jesuits,

[...] public instruction in Portugal and in the colonies was severely hit. The schools maintained by the Company of Jesus,

which were the main centers of teaching, disappeared. There was great urgency, therefore, to adopt measures to at least reduce the inconvenient of the situation brought about by the drastic administrative steps taken by Sebastião de Carvalho e Melo. The field had, however, already been prepared for the implementation of new pedagogical ideas by the fortuitous and isolated efforts of a few men of knowledge and thinking, amongst which were the unique Luís Antônio Verney and the priests of the Congregation of the Oratory of São Felipe Néri. (1989, p. 80-81)

It can be seen that the intention and efforts to exempt the Government from its responsibility through the use of ploys, projects and taxes to finance education is not new, and not exclusive to contemporary governments. Also, it can be observed already at that time two types of schools (one for the children of nobles and bourgeoisie, and another for less well-off social groups), and of educational policies that privileged private education with the support of the State.

To Teixeira Soares, more important that

[...] than the reform and modernization of the University of Coimbra was the 6th November 1772 Decree instituting the popular teaching to be given at public schools. Pombal was not satisfied with just approving the law. He immediately moved on to setup the schools, which should total 479 units. The law had decreed that the popular teaching could also be carried out by private institutions which, to such purpose, would be supported by the State in pre-selecting the following subjects: orthography, grammar, arithmetic, Christian doctrine, and social and civic education (‘civility’). The secondary teaching would emphasize Latin, Greek, and French. At the same time that popular teaching was being taken care of, he founded the ‘College of

Nobles', a seminar dedicated to the education of the children of aristocracy; and to keep the social and educational balance, he also founded the College of Mafra, dedicated to the education of common people, with a syllabus identical to the one reserved for the sons of nobles. [...] The prime minister created a special tax to maintain and expand the schools founded (Law of 10th November 1772). (1961, p. 218)

Minister Pombal intended to promote the replacement of the traditional pedagogical methods instituted by the Company of Jesus for a new educational methodology, fitting to the reality and historical moment. He, therefore, wished that Portuguese schools were able to follow the transformations occurring at the time.

With this decree, the Marquis of Pombal aimed to promote the substitution of the traditional pedagogical methods instituted by the Company of Jesus with a new pedagogical methodology, considered as modern, and therefore aligned with the ideals of the Enlightenment.

Although recognizing the merits of Pombal's work with respect to public instruction, Almeida (2000) points out that after the expulsion of the Company of Jesus from Brazil, and the destruction of their educational work, other religious orders tried to continue with the work initiated by the Jesuit priests, without, however, much success. Besides, Almeida reckons that the success of the Jesuit educational project was partly due to the skills of the priests as teachers, because the order 'kept numerous schools run by truly talented teachers'.

Carvalho (1978), Avellar (1983) and Ribeiro (1998) all agree that the content of the Pombaline reform, under the ideas of its mentors Luís Antonio Verney⁴, Ribeiro Sanches⁵ and Antônio Genovessi, considered to be modern thinkers, displays features of

traditional, that is, ecclesiastical teaching. Thus, there was not a complete rupture with the Jesuit teaching, for the change that took place was more of the content than of the educational method.

Falcon says that

[...] after Verney, the Enlightened reformism, supported by the juridical optimism that characterizes it, is the order of the day. Secularization constitutes its dominating feature. The faith in progress, the emphasis given to reason, and the belief in the almost magical power of the 'Lights' complete the ideals. (1993, p. 364)

'*O verdadeiro método de estudar*' [The true method of studying] by Luís Antonio Verney set out to oppose the pedagogical method of the Jesuits. The work, which in fact was composed of sixteen letters written in Rome between 1746 and 1747, presents an analysis of the problems of the Portuguese teaching so far given according to the Jesuit methodology; also, it gives guidance as to how to proceed to adapt it and conform it to the new reality.

Each letter deals with a certain theme and, in the whole, they cover the disciplines of Verney's pedagogical proposals: first letter – Portuguese language; second letter – Latin; third letter – Greek and Hebraic; fourth letter – the modern languages; fifth letter – Rhetoric; sixth letter – continues the analysis of the teaching of Rhetoric; seventh letter – the Portuguese poetry; eighth letter – Philosophy; ninth letter – Metaphysics; tenth letter – Logic/Physics; eleventh letter – Ethics; twelfth letter

4. Luís Antonio Verney (1713-1792) was born in Lisbon into a French family which, despite its good financial situation, lacked social status because of its foreign origin. He is regarded as the most important propagator of Enlightenment ideals in Portuguese culture.

5. António Nunes Ribeiro Sanches (1699-1782) was born in the city of Pernamacor, and belonged to a family of New Christians. He studied at the Guard in Coimbra and in Salamanca, graduating in Medicine. He was also a writer; his most famous piece was the '*Cartas sobre a educação da mocidade*' [Letters on the education of the youth].

– Medicine; thirteenth letter – Jurisprudence as a natural extension of Moral; fourteenth letter – Theology; fifteenth letter – Economic Law; sixteenth letter – presents a series of study plans: the elementary studies, Grammar, Latin, Rhetoric, Philosophy, Medicine, Law, Theology, and concludes with an appendix on ‘the study of Women’.

His pedagogical project is based on some of these proposals, such as: the secularization of teaching; valuing the Portuguese language; the role and importance of studying Latin through the Portuguese language (one of the reasons for studying Latin was the possibility of simplifying and shortening the duration of studies); the reduction in the number of years devoted to elementary studies, aiming particularly at increasing the number of students in higher education; presentation of a plan of studies for all levels of education, from the fundamental (starting at the age of seven) up to the higher education levels; disciplines contained in his pedagogical proposal are, in their majority, literary, such as: Portuguese, Latin, Rhetoric, Poetry and Philosophy (Logic, Moral, Ethics, Metaphysics and Theology), Law (Civil Law and Canonical Law), Medicine (Anatomy), Greek, Hebrew, French, Italian, Anatomy, Physics (Arithmetic and Geometry); the proposal of free and public schooling to all Portuguese population as a way of reducing illiteracy in the Portuguese society.

Thus, he claims that public schools should be opened in every neighborhood, so that no one would be out of them; recommends a change of behavior of the teachers with respect to their pupils, aiming at improving the teacher/pupil relationship; recommends that the university should be open to the community, so that even those outside the academic sphere could attend to classes; suggests the creation of colleges for the poor with the objective of enabling them in the customs of the bourgeoisie and nobility; he also makes considerations about the education

of women. He regards as important that women should go to school in order to acquire knowledge relevant to take care of the home.

The importance of Verney’s work, according to the thinking of the time, can be seen in the analysis of Falcon:

[...] it resides not so much in its “contents” as in the spirit that accompanies it, and in the rupture it represents. [...] The spirit we refer to is that of the ironic, often satirical, criticism to the existing teaching in Portugal, in all levels, both in its contents and in its methods, a criticism that extends to the Portuguese culture as a whole. It was, in short, an attempt to demonstrate that in any direction one looked, Portugal was backward, lagging behind what was going on in the civilized centers. (1993, p. 331)

According to Ribeiro (1998), this new organization of the Portuguese teaching is considered as a step backward under the pedagogical viewpoint, and as progress insofar as it demanded new methods and the adoption of new books. It was during the reign of D. José I that a sharp development of books as agents of culture could be observed.

It is important to recall that, formal proposals notwithstanding, the Pombaline reforms never managed to be implemented, bringing about a long period (from 1759 to 1808) of near disorganization and decadence to the education in the colony. Thus, between

[...] the Jesuit’s expulsion in 1759 and the transfer of the Portuguese Court to Brazil in 1808 a gap of almost half a century was opened, a wide hiatus characterized by the disorganization and decadence of the colonial teaching. No institutional organization came, in fact, to replace the powerful homogeneity of the Jesuit system, established all along the large landowners’ coast, with ramifications across the forests and highlands, and whose schools and

seminaries represented, in the Colony, the large centers of diffusion of culture. (AZEVEDO, 1976, p. 61)

Carvalho thus characterizes Luís Antonio Verney:

[...] none, however, as illustrious as Verney, for the universality of the plan he conceived, and for the ambition with which he sought, through his works, to realize the program envisaged practically in his green years. It is in this sense that Luís Antonio Verney is a pedagogue and, as a pedagogue, 'an Enlightened' insofar as the Enlightenment is a way of thinking common to men who, in various attitudes of thought, seek to turn culture into an instrument of progress and perfection of the societies and of men. In Verney there is not just the program of a reform of the studies; there is also the awareness of the need to unfold a pedagogical task, realizing in the practical order the guidelines that the knowledge of Portuguese reality and of the recent achievements of culture impose as preliminary goals of a policy destined to truly 'illuminate' the Portuguese nation (1978, p. 61-62).

Final considerations

During the administration of the Marquis of Pombal as Minister, all the malaises of education, in the metropolis and in the colony, were attributed to the Company of Jesus. It is a prime example of the struggle between the old the new models within a historical analysis.

The new, present in society, is inspired by the ideals of the Enlightenment, and it is within

this context that Pombal, as a minister, sought to implement a profound educational reform, at least formally. Among his objectives of transformation, some changes were anticipated. The ecclesiastical methodology of the Jesuits was replaced by the pedagogical thinking of the public and lay school; creation of positions such as that of director of studies, with the tasks of guidance and supervision of teaching; introduction of *aulas régias*, that is, isolated classes with the intent of replacing the humanities course created by the Jesuits. All these proposals were a result of the social conditions of the time, and with them Pombal intended to offer to Portuguese schools the means to keep up with the changes of the epoch. In this sense, his new educational proposals reflected and expressed the ideals of the Enlightenment.

To Brazil, however, the consequences of the dismantling of the educational organization of the Jesuits, and of the failure to implement a new educational project were serious; only in 1776, seventeen years after the expulsion of the Jesuits, schools with graduated and systematized courses were set up.

The Pombaline teaching reform can be said to have been disastrous to Brazilian education, and also, to a certain extent, to education in Portugal, for it destroyed a consolidated educational organization which had shown results, albeit arguable and liable to criticism, but did not implement a reform that could guarantee a new educational system. Therefore, the criticism that can be formulated along these lines is that of the destruction of an educational proposal in favor of another, without the latter possessing the actual conditions for its consolidation.

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