

A missão dos Franciscanos da Província de Santo António do Brasil no Maranhão e Grão-Pará em meados do século XVII

César de Alencar Arnaut de Toledo
Marcos Ayres Barboza

Resumo: Discutem-se no texto resultados de pesquisa a respeito dos aspectos pedagógicos da atuação dos frades franciscanos da Província de Santo António do Brasil no Maranhão e Grão-Pará em meados do século XVII. Destaca-se que a atuação desses religiosos na catequização e na formação cultural de seus habitantes é abordada da perspectiva da História da Educação no Brasil. As pesquisas existentes mostram que, na discussão sobre a atuação dos religiosos na região Norte do Brasil no período colonial, a ênfase recai sobre o campo da História. São escassos os trabalhos que discutem o tema da educação e da atuação dos religiosos franciscanos propriamente e suas relações com o contexto geral do desenvolvimento e da colonização da região. As discussões acadêmicas sobre essa atuação educacional são realizadas de uma perspectiva geral, além de, muitas vezes, haver certa confusão quanto às diferentes congregações religiosas franciscanas, as quais são consideradas como se fossem uma só. Os religiosos franciscanos que atuaram no Brasil Colonial podem ser caracterizados como um dos principais grupos religiosos do projeto colonizador português. Considera-se, enfim, que sua atuação nas escolinhas das missões e nos seminários de formação de religiosos é uma importante referência para a História da Educação.

Palavras-chave: educação, História da Educação, Brasil Colônia, Franciscanos.

The mission of Franciscans in the Province of Santo António do Brasil in Maranhão and Grão-Pará in the mid XVII century

César de Alencar Arnaut de Toledo*
Marcos Ayres Barboza**

Abstract: This research discusses pedagogical performance aspects of Franciscan Friars of Santo Antonio do Brasil province in Maranhão and Grão-Pará region in the mid-seventeenth century, highlighting the role of these religious men in catechization and cultural qualification of inhabitants in the perspective of History of Education in Brazil. Usually, the researches show that there is an emphasis in the discussion of the role of religious men in northern Brazil during the colonial period, in the field of History. There are few studies properly addressing this theme of education and the Franciscan religious performance and their relationship with general development and colonization context of that region. The academic papers that discuss the role of the Franciscans in the education area do it generally; moreover, there is frequently confusion among the different Franciscan religious congregations, regarding them as if they were only one. The Franciscan religious can be characterized, in the period that they worked in colonial Brazil, as an important religious group in the Portuguese colonization project. Their performance, carried out in small schools and training seminars to religious missionaries, is a great reference for the History of Education.

Keywords: education, History of Education, Brazil Colony, Franciscan.

* Doutor em Educação pela UNICAMP (1996). Professor do Departamento de Fundamentos da Educação e do Programa de Pós-Graduação em Educação, da Universidade Estadual de Maringá/UEM-PR, Líder do Grupo de Pesquisa sobre Política, Religião e Educação na Modernidade. *E-mail:* caatoledo@uem.br

** Mestre em Educação (2007) pelo Programa de Pós-Graduação em Educação, da Universidade Estadual de Maringá/UEM-PR. Estudante do Grupo de Pesquisa sobre Política, Religião e Educação na Modernidade. *E-mail:* ayresbarbosa@hotmail.com

La misión de los Franciscanos de la Provincia de Santo Antonio de Brasil en Maranhão y Grão-Pará a mediados del siglo XVII

César de Alencar Arnaut de Toledo
Marcos Ayres Barboza

Resumen: La investigación discute los aspectos pedagógicos en la actuación de los frailes franciscanos de la Provincia de Santo Antonio de Brasil en Maranhão y Grão-Pará a mediados del siglo XVII, destacando la actuación de esos religiosos en la catequización y en la formación cultural de sus habitantes, bajo la perspectiva de la Historia de la Educación en Brasil. Las investigaciones existentes demuestran que hay un énfasis en la discusión respecto la actuación de los religiosos en la Región Norte de Brasil en el período colonial, representadas en los dominios de la Historia. Son escasos los trabajos que discuten el tema de la educación y de la actuación de los religiosos franciscanos y sus relaciones con el contexto general del desarrollo y de la colonización de la región. Los trabajos académicos que discuten la actuación de los franciscanos en la educación lo hacen de manera general; además, muchas veces, hay confusión sobre las diferencias entre las congregaciones religiosas franciscanas, considerándolas como si fueran una sola. Los religiosos franciscanos pueden ser caracterizados, en el período que actuaron en Brasil Colonial, como uno de los principales grupos religiosos en el proyecto colonizador portugués. La actuación de ellos, ejercida en las escuelas de las misiones y en los seminarios de formación de religiosos, es una importante referencia para la Historia de la Educación.

Palabras clave: educación, Historia de la Educación, Brasil Colonia, Franciscanos

Introduction

In this text, we discuss the pedagogical aspects of the Franciscan mission of the Province of Santo Antônio in the State of Maranhão and Grão-Pará in the mid-17th century. This mission took place in the period known as Iberian Union (1580-1640), whose origin was the crisis of succession in the Portuguese kingdom when King Dom Sebastian (1554-1578) died in Morocco at the battle of Alcácer-Quibir against the Moors, without leaving direct successor. Cardinal D. Henrique (1512-1580), his great-uncle, ascended to the throne as regent, but died in 1580. As the last direct descendant of the Aviz dynasty, Philip II (1527-1598) of Spain took the Throne, since he was grandson of D. Manuel I (1469-1521), the fortunate, and uncle of D. Sebastian. Thus, he united Portugal and Spain (Boxer, 1981).

The historical research aims at the knowledge of the present based on the study of its roots in the past and the projection for the future. Our assumption is that we cannot know the present in its totality without understanding the relationship between history and culture.

One of the first researchers to begin in Brazil the discussion between history and culture was Capistrano de Abreu (1853-1927) in *Capítulos de história colonial*. In this work, published in 1907, the author analyzed the colonial context based on the material culture. This element, according to him, configured and determined the identity of the subjects of the period; however, this was not the only one: such identity was also influenced by the ethnic plurality of the inhabitants.

In this same analytical perspective, we mention *Retrato do Brasil*, written by Paulo Prado (1869-1943), who, through the cultural focus, analyzed the national character as expression of a set of feelings, such as: lust, greed, sadness and romanticism.

With the same approach, we have *Vida e morte do bandeirante*, written by José de Alcântara Machado de Oliveira (1875-1941), who emphasized material life in the process of establishment of the daily life of the poor. What approaches the work of Paulo Prado and José de Alcântara Machado de Oliveira are the methodological aspects, since both developed their research based on documentary sources. This methodological perspective demystified the opulence of material life characterized by some scholars, among whom was Frei Gaspar da Madre de Deus (1715-1800).

Gilberto Freyre (1900-1987), in *Casa-grande & senzala*, published in 1933, also under the focus of culture, was based on historical and documentary sources. He analyzed newspaper advertisements, diaries and family letters, among other documents that allowed him to characterize the *modus vivendi* of that time and to show how culture is determinant in the process of constitution of identities. According to Mello and Souza (2000), the valuation of culture in the work of Freyre leads us to discuss the role of indigenous and black culture. They “[...] found themselves responsible for the stimulation of the dominant culture, in the same way that miscegenation softened social and interracial relationships” (Mello e Souza, 2000, p. 21).

The work of Gilberto Freyre, regarded as the gateway for the American cultural anthropology in the Brazilian research, was the basis for the analyses of miscegenation in Brazil. However, it was with *Raízes do Brasil*, written by Sérgio Buarque de Holanda (1902-1982) and published in 1936, that the cultural methodological approach in the Brazilian research was consolidated. In this case, by adopting the comparative method developed by Max Weber (1864-1920), the author emphasized German sociology. With his interpretation of social action, Max Weber’s sociological theory made possible the understanding of cultural production by science.

Based on this approach, we can analyze the work of catechization and education developed by Franciscan monks in Maranhão, including in the creation of settlement centers, which were essential in the process of control and exploration of the territory, when it came to ensuring “[...] the military, economic and political domination of the metropolis over the conquered lands [...]” (Holanda, 1988, p. 95). That is, based on the cultural approach, we seek to analyze the actions of the Franciscan monk by the dynamics of social action.

In the work *História geral da civilização brasileira*, directed by Sérgio Buarque de Holanda, the first units of missionary penetration are presented, in which the Jesuit action was highlighted, being regarded as those who created and maintained public education in Colonial Brazil. However, no reference is made to the other religious orders and to the role that they have played. It may be said that the action of the religious orders, not only that of the Jesuits, “[...] constituted the weapon with which Philip II intended to articulate the various parts of his heterogeneous and immense political colossus” (Holanda, 1968, p. 179).

The process of education in Colonial Brazil was made through practices of acculturation and inculcation of traditions and customs of the Portuguese. In this context, religious missions should be understood as a set of mediations that linked present experience with tradition.

There is a difference between the Mendicant Orders and the Society of Jesus. The latter, since its foundation, had the concern of safeguarding its deeds. “The Society of Jesus was born, thus, impregnated with its own historical consciousness, attentive to the need of constructing its memory as an effective instrument of political intervention” (Oliveira, 2008, p. 36). Among the Franciscans, even though this systematization had occurred in a more organized way, after 1579, “[...] it lacked the rigid hierarchical structure similar to that of the Jesuits” (Oliveira, 2008, p. 36).

In our work, the documentary research was supported by books, articles, dissertations and theses on the subject.

The work developed by Maria Adelina Amorim was an important reference. We first highlight her dissertation, transformed into the book *Os franciscanos no Maranhão e Grão-Pará: missão e cultura na primeira metade de seiscentos*, published in 2005 in the city of Lisbon. The second work is her doctoral thesis *Missionação Franciscana no Estado do Grão-Pará e Maranhão (1622-1750): agentes, estruturas e dinâmica*, defended in 2011, at the Department of History of the University of Lisbon. These works by Maria Adelina Amorim are documents based on handwritten sources on the presence of the Franciscans in the North of Brazil, with emphasis on the cultural historical research.

Another document that we consider important is the *História da missão dos padres capuchinhos na Ilha do Maranhão e suas circunvizinhanças*, published in 1614 in Paris by the Franciscan monk Cláudio d’Abbeville of the Order of the Capuchins of France. The relevance of the work of this monk is in his participation in the mission of establishment of French in Maranhão and Grão-Pará in the middle of the 17th century. In this work, D’Abbeville narrates the actions developed in those lands for the evangelization of the natives. The French Capuchin Franciscans were the first missionaries to operate in the regions of Maranhão and Grão-Pará in the early 17th century.

Regarding the actions of Franciscan monks in education, the following theses were found: a) *A experiência educativa da Ordem Franciscana: aplicação na América e sua influência no Brasil Colonial*, by Tania Conceição Iglesias, defended in 2010 at the Faculty of Education

of the State University of Campinas (UNICAMP); b) *Gênese do Pensamento Único em Educação: franciscanismo e jesuitismo na educação brasileira*, by Luiz Fernando Conde Sangenis, defended in 2004 at the Fluminense Federal University in Niterói; c) *Capuchinhos Bretões no Estado do Brasil: estratégias políticas e missionárias (1642-1702)*, by Cassiana Maria Mingotti Gabrielli, defended in 2009 at the University of São Paulo.

In her thesis, Tânia Conceição Iglesias discusses the educational experience of the Franciscans in America. She presents a series of primary sources, references essential to the study of the Franciscans, located in archives of Spain and Brazil. The emphasis of the work falls on the pedagogical aspects of Franciscan evangelization in America. Luiz Fernando Conde Sangenis reconstitutes the steps of the Franciscans in Brazil, aiming to value the importance of the actions of these monks in the field of catechesis and education and to deconstruct the hegemony of the so-called Jesuitism in the history of Brazilian education. In her dissertation, Cassiana Maria Mingotti Gabrielli analyzes the missionary experience of the French Capuchin Franciscan religious of the province of Brittany among the Tapuias in the Northeast of Brazil between the years 1642 and 1702,

Another important document is the *Anais da Biblioteca Nacional*. In Volume 66, Livro Grosso do Maranhão, part 1 (1948). It groups many documents (decrees, permits, letters) from the time of the process of occupation, establishment and work developed by the monks.

We also have *Novo Orbe Serafico Brasilico, ou Chronica dos frades menores da provincia do Brasil*, by Friar Antonio de Santana Maria Jaboatão, published in 1761, in which the stories of the Franciscans on the Northeastern coast are told.

The history of the missions of the Franciscans of the Province of Santo Antônio do Brasil is part of the historical movement to institute modern subjectivity. In this context, the explanations of the world transited from a theocentric view to an anthropocentric view, with an emphasis on civilization, manners, institutionalization of society, secularization and the development of a secular culture (Cambi, 1999). The religious orders, in their evangelizing action, went through this process of internalization of faith and religiosity. In fact, according to Weber, “[...] the whole history of the rules of the monastic orders is in some sense a perpetually renewed

struggle with the problem of the secularizing effect of the possessions/belongings” (Weber, 2004, 159).

The activities of the Church ceased to be merely contemplative and began to value a more ascetic way of life. The rise of these ideas “[...] made the bed for the modern *homo oeconomicus*” (Weber, 2004, p. 158). The Council of Trent (1545-1563) expressed that need: the actions resulting from it made possible a profound renewal of the Church, which began to develop teaching activities in a more planned way, according to its doctrinal objectives.

One of the sciences that was consolidated during this period in order to support Tridentine evangelization plans was pedagogy, hitherto restricted to the interests of the formation of princes and nobles (Jedin, 2009). This Council, in part, made education and pedagogy essential grounds to the purposes of the Church and to the formation of this new subjectivity. “He is the new subject of the new times, the basis on which his worldviews, God and man, are based” (Toledo, 1996, p. 16). They were even termed ‘the foundations of modern pedagogy’.

The configuration of the bases of this pedagogy can be observed in the work of evangelization, catechesis and elementary education developed by the Franciscan monks in Colonial Brazil in the early 17th century. According to Saviani: “The colonization of Brazil had the indispensable contribution of religious orders. It may be considered that the first evangelizers of Brazil were the Franciscans” (Saviani, 2010, p. 39).

The first evangelizers in Maranhão and Pará were the French Capuchin Franciscans, who acted in these regions from 1612 to 1615. In a letter to the provincial of the Order of the Capuchins of Paris, Friar Leonardo of Paris, the regent of France, Maria de’ Medici (1575 -1642), called for more monks to establish the Catholic faith in the region. In the letter, contained in the work *História da missão dos padres capuchinhos na Ilha do Maranhão e suas circunvizinhanças*, published in Paris in 1614, she requests the granting of four monks: “[...] who are worthy and capable of accomplishing such an end, whom you will order to go to those regions in the company of those who can guide them” (D’Abbeville, 2002, p. 38).

These Franciscans were the first religious to settle in the region of Maranhão and Pará in Colonial Brazil, developing the project of evangelization, catechization and elementary education of the natives, but they were not the only ones. Years later, with the expulsion of the French

and with the arrival of the Friars Minor of Santo Antônio de Portugal/ of St. Anthony of Portugal, the missionary action of these monks continued the work developed by the French monks (Leite, 2000).

The Order of the Friars Minor (OFM)

The Order of the Friars Minor was founded by Francis of Assisi (1182-1226), son of Pedro Bernardone, rich merchant of cloths. Francis renounced civil life to follow the vocation of the service of Christ. Reformer Popes, such as Gregory VII (1020/1025-1085), whose pontificate lasted from 1073 until his death, and Urban II (1042-1099), who occupied the papal throne from 1088 to 1099, spread within the Church the need to a new way of life based on equality and fraternity.

Saint Francis was part of this internal movement of renunciation of the world. He and 11 other young people, connected with the same ideal, stayed reclusive in a chapel dedicated to Our Lady of the Angels, in Portiuncula, near Assisi. After the diocesan authorization granted by Bishop Guido II, the first preaching began in these surroundings.

For a year, in their mission of preaching the gospel, the members of this group presented themselves as *Viri paenitentiales de Assisio*. It was in this context that St. Francis wrote the *Fórmula Vitae*, or the so-called *Regra Primitiva*, assuming with the other brothers the name of Friars Minor. This document contained a set of quotations from the gospel and norms of community life, although there was still no internal organization or legal framework (Franco, 2010).

The *Formula Vitae* was approved orally in 1209 by Innocent III (1160/1161-1216) and in it the Friars Minor declared obedience to the Pope. Such approval marked the canonical foundation of the Order. With its expansion outside Italy, the need to formulate a more organized and structured rule for the process of evangelization in Europe was presented at the General Chapter of 1217.

The growth of the Order was accompanied by divergences and internal conflicts, and, because of this, with the collaboration of Cardinal Hugolino, at that time, then protector of the Franciscans granted by the Holy See, St. Francis rewrote the *Formula Vitae*, which was presented at the General Chapter in 1221. After a series of reformulations, on 29 November 1223, in the *Bula Solet annuere*, Pope Honorius III (1148-1227) approved the new version, which contained 12 chapters.

St. Francis of Assisi died in 1226 and his canonization occurred in 1228. After further reformulation, the document was approved at the General Chapter of 1239. Later, in 1260, such *Constitutions* were reordered and complemented by St. Bonaventure (1221-1274).

The Franciscan spirituality of Imitation of Christ attracted a large number of followers. With such growth and in view of the demands of the ministry of apostleship in the service of the Holy See, although this was never St. Francis' intention, it was necessary to establish a religious order, which encouraged the process of clericalization. The Friars Minor followed the compliance of absolute destitution; however, considering the difficulties experienced by the monks, the pope freed them from the vows of poverty and granted them the freedom to exercise the priesthood (Franco, 2010).

The Franciscans settled in Portugal between 1216 and 1217, when the movement of expansion of the Order out of Italy took place. At that time, they created small hermitages and then entered the urban centers to develop their pastoral activities. In this growth phase, the Order was divided into three main branches: the Order of the Friars Minor (OFM); the Order of the Friars Minor Conventual (OFMConv) and the Order of Friars Minor Capuchin (OFMCap). A Second Franciscan Order, also known as the Order of St. Clare, was created with the aim of constituting the Franciscan ideal for the feminine branch, and the Third Order was organized by lay faithful (Pasquini, 2017).

The expansion of the Franciscans in Portugal encompassed missionary activity in the occupations of Portuguese settlements. In Brazil, it occurred with the founding of the Custody of St. Anthony in 1585, in the city of Olinda. In the 17th century, two provinces were constituted: in 1657, the Province of St. Anthony in Olinda and then in Recife; years later, in 1675, the Province of the Immaculate Conception of Rio de Janeiro was created. In 1614, the Franciscan missionaries were sent to the state of Maranhão and Grão-Pará (Franco, 2010).

The state of Maranhão was created by royal charter on 13 June 1621, but its establishment only occurred in 1626, with the inauguration of the first governor and captain-general Francisco Coelho de Carvalho. The state of Maranhão and Grão-Pará existed until 1772. Its formation corresponded to the purpose of the expulsion of French, Dutch and English that had commercial interests in the occupation of the region.

Religious Franciscans have an important role not only in the process of catechization but also in the territorial domination (Sousa, 2007). They were one of the main groups that contributed to the policy of expansion and occupation of the Portuguese Crown. Their missionary work had an educational and political character: on the one hand, it constituted itself as the organizational base of the European model of society; on the other hand, contributed to the consolidation of this model. The history of the Franciscan missions is an important reference for the History of Education, both for the formation promoted by the missions' schools and for the formation promoted in the seminaries of the convents. The educational methodology of the Franciscans can only be apprehended based on the analysis of the process of evangelization, which includes the task of education of the body and habits of civility and also a more specific action of mediation in teaching.

In the first letters to the Crown, we noticed that the presence of missionaries was highly requested. In 1618, Captain Manoel de Sousa de Eça wrote a letter to the King of Portugal requesting priests and Fathers with the justification that there were a large number of natives to be converted. A year later, the captain sent a new letter requesting not only more priests and Fathers, but also soldiers, shoemakers, stonemasons, carpenters, among others (Cardoso, 2002).

The Franciscans in the process of occupation, establishment and expansion of the portuguese domains in the State of Maranhão and Grão-Pará

The occupation and the consolidation of the colonization of the North region occurred during the period of the so-called Iberian Union (1580-1640), during the reign of Philip II (king of Spain from 1556 and Portugal from 1580). In 1581, in the Assembly of the Courts, Philip I (so-called in Portugal) established that the two colonial empires would remain with relative autonomy, separated administratively. Spain and Portugal “[...] remained separated not only by considerable distances but, mainly, because they kept the cultural and administrative identities particularly distinct from each other” (Rezende, 2006, p. 69). However, for the Spanish Crown, the occupation of the North of Brazil was fundamental, necessary to protect the Vice Kingdom of Peru from the invasions by the Dutch and English, as well as to guarantee the stay of the Spaniards on the Venezuelan coast.

The concern with the colonization of the North region of Brazil in the colonial period arose with the necessity of Portugal to maintain its possessions. The economic and political interests were also present. The configuration of these interests was grounded on ideological principles, based on Christian doctrine. Despite the rise of the bourgeois ideas, the theological view of society was still in force, notably in Portugal and Spain, the main allies of Roman Catholicism.

The English, French and Dutch interest in exploring the territory of Colonial Brazil was motivated by the letter of the chronicler Gonzalo Hernández de Oviedo y Valdés on the expedition of the Spanish explorer Francisco de Orellana to the ‘River of the Amazons’ between 1541 and 1542. In his letter, sent on 20 January 1543 to Cardinal Pietro Bembo in Italy, the chronicler extolled the natural riches of the Amazon. Published in Venice in 1556 and drawing the attention of European governments to that region, “The letter said, among many other imaginary things, that women fought in war, they lived without partners under the directions of another woman, they did not have both breasts and did not take care of their children, but they gave them to their fathers” (Rezende, 2006, p. 43).

In 1596, the Dutch and English established small trading posts and military bases in the region where the Amazon River meets the Atlantic Ocean. They had commercial interests: extraction of urucum and wood, besides salted fish, especially the manatee. The French, led by Daniel de La Touche, after an alliance with the Tupinambás, established a colony on the island of Maranhão, called ‘Saint Louis’, in honor of the French king Louis XIII.

The city of Sao Luis is the only capital in Brazil founded by the French, on 8 September 1612. In 1613, the news of the establishment of the French in Brazilian lands came to the knowledge of Philip III of Spain, called Philip II in Portugal. In that same year, he ordered the governor of Brazil, Gaspar de Sousa, to take measures to expel the invaders and to continue the discovery and conquest.

The expulsion of the French from São Luís occurred in 1615, culminating on 12 January 1616 with the foundation of Fort Presépio/Forte do Presépio/Fort of Nativity/Fort of Bethlehem/Fort of the Crib, later, city of Belém. In the beginning of 1620, Philip II (1598-1621) created the state of Maranhão and Grão-Pará, separated from Brazil. This state encompassed the entire Amazon valley. Among the reasons for this decision are: “[...] the ease of sailing between Europe and the north coast

and the almost impossibility of doing so, with the technical conditions of that time, from Bahia; the lack of regular and safe land routes” (Wehling & Wehling, 2012, p. 171).

The state of Maranhão and Grão-Pará comprised the current states of Ceará, Piauí, Maranhão, Pará, part of Amazonas and Amapá (Rezende, 2006). There were many obstacles to the conquest of the region, particularly the natural ones. The Portuguese did not know the region. Going through the vast expanses of rivers and dense forests demanded many men. In 1615, the first explorers of the region, among them Captain Alexandre de Moura, stated that the men who came were not aware of any of those regions, nor did they know how to navigate their rivers (Cardoso, 2002).

The occupation of the northern region was not an easy task: besides the need to expel the French, English and Dutch from that region, the Portuguese had other challenges, such as the acculturation of the natives, who were not few. Each part of the immense northern region was inhabited by different tribes. The occupation movement did not occur without conflicts. The Portuguese saw the indigenous ‘labor’ as the most viable for the interests of the Crown at that time.

The various indigenous tribes of the Amazon have developed into large settlements. “Several ethnic groups, both on the edge of the rivers and inside the forest, built their houses (ocas) with leaves of trees adapted to the environment” (Hütter, 2007, p. 15). Among the indigenous peoples, there were conflicts, constant wars in defense of the maintenance of their own domains and the need for expansion for survival. Among the tribes, there was one rule: the vanquished tribes became slaves to the victors, being forced to live under the slave labor regime. This was one of the pre-colonial conditions of social organization observed by the settlers.

The conquest of the territory made the natives, considered domestic slaves by other tribes, to serve as exchange value, serving the mercantile and economic interests of Portugal. The acts of war by the Crown modified the internal structures of the indigenous tribes as they began to meet the mercantile needs of the colonial system, particularly in the case of the extraction and trade of natural resources of economic value in substitution to those imported from Asia.

In Maranhão and Grão-Pará, like the other regions of Brazil, hereditary captaincies were created. Between 1633 and 1637, four captaincies: Tapuitapera, Gurupi, Cametá and Cabo Norte (now Amapá)

were donated as benefits to former settlers. Years later, two others were donated: those of Ilha Grande de Joanes (Marajó) in 1665, and that of Xingu in 1685.

The Letter *Sobre o Maranhão e Pará e cativero dos índios e forma de os haver cõ augmento do Estado*, written by Father Domingos Antunes Tomás, Vicar General of the State, and cited by Chambouleyron (1990), reports the idea that Maranhão and Grão-Pará were full of riches.

In this context, there was a need for workers. The transport of African slaves to the region was impracticable. The settlers, in addition to subsistence farming, sugar and cattle, explored cloves, cacao, nuts, cinnamon, and other highly valued products in the metropolis. The settlers justified the slave labor of natives to meet the demands for workers: “[...] the capture and enslavement of the natives, which in turn led to the conflict with the missionaries [...]” (Wehling & Wehling, 2012, p. 177). According to Willeke: “When missionaries rebuked the public scandal, they were slandered and persecuted by the bad elements” (Willike, 1974, p. 52), as well as being challenged and criticized by local authorities.

The first years of occupation of the Maranhão and Grão-Pará regions were marked by internal conflicts, particularly by personal rivalries between settlers, and wars against indigenous peoples. “The Tupinambás who lived on the outskirts of Belém had news of warrior tribes, massacred by the Portuguese and forced to slave labor in the fields [...]” (Rezende, 2006, p. 63).

The Portuguese Crown, in a writ issued on 10 November 1647, in the face of the abuses committed against the natives, determined that they should be free: “[...] that these people are free and that there are no administrators or administration, being null and void everything imposed on them so that there is no memory of it” (Livre grosso, 1948, p. 17). In this document, we clearly perceived that the indigenous people were free to serve and work for those who paid better for their services. In another writ, dated 12 November 1647, the Crown declared that the natives, as free men, would receive for work done. In this way, “[...] they will be content and willing to serve” (Livre grosso, 1948, p. 18).

In the more distant regions, they were able to retain part of their cultural traditions. In the regions closest to the centers of evangelization, the contact with the colonizers compromised their identity and exposed them to communicable diseases. “Between 1604 and 1647, the chroniclers recorded at least five great martyrdoms in the Amazon: the Timbira, the

Tupinambá of the coast, the Aruan or Nheengaíba, the Tapajó and the Goiás Araé” (Azevedo, 2008, p. 76).

Pedagogical aspects of the Franciscan Mission of the Friars Minor of the Province of Santo António do Brasil

In the middle of 1614, after the Battle of Guaxenduba against the French, the first Franciscans arrived in the state of Maranhão and Grão-Pará: the Friars Minor Cosme de São Damião and Manuel da Piedade, belonging to the Custody of Santo António do Brasil (Amorim, 2005).

The Commissariat of the Province of Santo António de Portugal in Maranhão was in force from 1617 to 1622, with the following religious leaders: Friar António da Merceana, as commissioner; Friar Cristóvão de São José, deputy commissioner; Friar Sebastião do Rosário and Friar Filipe de São Bonaventura. “They stayed provisionally in the Fort Presépio until the constitution of their residence, [...]” (Amorim, 2005, p. 81).

The first Custody of Maranhão and Grão-Pará was created in 1624, with the head of Friar Cristóvão de Lisboa (Marques, 1996). He arrived in São Luís in August 1624, when the construction of the Convent and the Church of Santa Margarida/Saint Margaret began. This convent began to receive novices and to send friars through the villages for mission.

In May 1625, in Belém, Friar Cristovao de Lisboa founded the Convent of Santo António/ Saint Anthony, which became the seat of missionary activity. With him, the first missionary work began, passing through Tocantins and Araguaia: “[...] reaching Goiás, where he visited villages and evangelized the natives, inaugurating the process of systematic mission of the Capuchins in the territory” (Amorim, 2005, p. 82).

The Franciscan mission in the Province of St. Anthony had a planning and an organization, that is, an educational methodology. It is necessary to understand the planning of the missionary action of the Franciscans to discuss their pedagogy. At the beginning of the process of evangelization, they sought to instill Christian doctrine; and then they worked with the conversion through an educative work of convincing that Christianity was the true religion; later, catechetical activities of adherence to the Catholic faith were developed and, lastly, the teaching practices necessary to the process of accommodation to Catholicism (Iglesias, 2010).

The Franciscans who settled in the northern region of Brazil came from Portugal. They were descendants of the Province of St. Anthony, founded in Lisbon in 1568 on the occasion of the movement of religious reform occurred in that period among the religious of that order (Amorim, 2005; Almeida, 2012).

From the Lisbon Convent, headquarters of the Province of Santo António de Portugal, the first expeditions were started with the purpose of creating new convents in Brazilian lands. The Custody of Saint Anthony of Portugal/of Santo António de Portugal in Olinda is from 1584, becoming independent in 1657 and Province of Santo Antônio do Brasil in 1675. This Franciscan province contributed to the expansion of the Franciscans to other regions, as for example the State Of Maranhão and Grão-Pará (Almeida, 2012).

In a Royal Charter, dated 20 June 1618, Philip II ordered that the Government of Maranhão to be separated from Brazil, as well as appointed the religious of St. Francis of the Province of Santo António/Province of St. Anthony to answer for the process of catechization to ‘increase our saint Faith’ and the acculturation of the natives, “[...] especially in the new villages, acting as interpreter for the confreres who had not yet mastered the language of the villagers and, over the years, being superior to one or other mission” (Willeke, 1974, p. 53-54).

On 19 November 1614, the Battle of Guaxenduba occurred, in which Portuguese and Tabajaras fought against the French and Tupinambás. With the Portuguese victory, the Portuguese village began in the state of Maranhão and Grão-Pará. The defeat of the French made possible the conquest of much of the territory for Portuguese rule.

In order to guarantee the minimum conditions for the new residents of Belém, a support structure had to be established. The establishment and progress of the Franciscans, among other religious orders, in Maranhão contributed to these purposes. The mission of these first religious Franciscans in Belém was to lay the foundations of the local administration and also to take responsibility for the indigenous villages.

The process of indigenous catechesis did not occur without conflicts between some religious institutes. Years later, on 21 December 1686, with the promulgation of the *Regimento e leis sobre as missões do Estado do Maranhão e Pará e sobre a liberdade dos índios*, the conflict was ended. According to this regiment, the administration of the villages of the

natives, concerning spiritual, temporal and political government, came under the tutelage of the monks. Literacy schools/elementary schools were maintained for teaching to the natives and for studies inside the convent: “[...] for the candidates for the priesthood two lines of thought from the moment of establishment were present” (Amorim, 1999, p. 364).

In the Province of Santo António, the Franciscan missions were established in the villages of Juaré, São José, Bom Jesus, Parú and Urubuquara. In the Province of Conceição, occurred in Caiá, Conceição, Carajó, Marajó and Tuaré. The Franciscans of the Commissariat of Piedade established missions in Nossa Senhora da Piedade de Gurupá, São José de Arapijó, Santa Cruz, São Brás de Maturu, São Francisco de Gurupatuba, Santo António de Surubiu between Apama and Manaus, Santo António de Curuamanema, Santa Ana de Pauxis and São João Baptista.

In a letter of appointment of the monks of Santo António de Portugal to Maranhão and Grão-Pará, dated 14 September 1622, Philip III made it known that the presence of the monks was necessary to bring “[...] the good customs and Christian doctrine among the natural people of the land with their good example, to lead the new settlers of the said State in the veneration of divine culture [...]” (Amorim, 2005, p. 234-235).

In *Carta de Frei Cristóvão de Lisboa a um superior, narrando trabalhos de missões no Brasil*, dated October 2, 1626, published as an annex by Amorim (2005, doc. 14), situations that expressed the need for religious attention on different aspects of everyday life were reported. The situations involved affronts against the Church. There was little or no reverence for the Church. In the mills, the captains-major abused the natives, who had no time to pray, much less to rest, among other impediments.

The theme of education for all, widely debated at the Council of Trent, became a mark of the *Roman Catechism*, published by that Council in 1566. “Por eso les manda que, prediquen al pueblo en los domingos y fiestas más solemnes, por lo menos, y durante el Adviento y la Cuaresma, lo hagan diariamente o, al menos, tres veces por semana” (Igreja Católica, 1926, p. 17). This document of the Catholic Church was characterized as a pedagogical manual of catechization and education of non-Christian populations.

Subsequently, based on this legislation, changes were made, which resulted in a renewed pastoral dynamics. Among these changes, the

compulsory reading of the *Roman Catechism*, for example, implied the need for instruction. The action of catechesis and preaching developed by the Franciscans showed the same need. Participation in sacraments, Sunday masses, devotions and works of charity, likewise, fulfilled the doctrinal purposes defended at Trent. In addition, the worship to the Eucharist, the intensification of the work of the monks in the assistance to the confessional, the festivities and liturgical seasons of Advent and Lent, as well as Marian devotion were changes that reaffirmed the purposes of the Council of Trent.

The concern of the religious was no longer focused on theological issues, but mainly on the development of pedagogical practices necessary for the process of evangelization and catechization, especially with regard to teaching and learning methods. Such concerns were already noted in the main Catholic documents of devotion and penance.

The practices of devotion and penance to God contributed to the process of religious acculturation. To repress the affronts against the Church, it was necessary to instill in people of all segments a concern for the spiritual state and the formation of the Christian. The foundations of this religious action were in the *Roman Catechism*. This document covered all pedagogical aspects of the catechetical action of monks for the formation of Christians. This was the emphasis of the work of religious Franciscans, according to report of Friar Jaboatão:

It is with the same zeal, and fervor of spirit, with which our primitive Fathers will take care of founding Convents in the main Villages and places in the conquest of Brazil, they will also engage to order Missions or Doctrines in some villages of the Gentiles, raising in them Churches, and Recollections, where assisting some, they will catechize them, baptizing them, and imbuing them into the Mysteries of the Faith, the Law of God, his Commandments, and the Church, this being the most conducive means of reducing them to the obedience of the Kings, peace, and friendship between peoples and dwellers, which with the erection of these Doctrines, its effect, achieved everything better in those principles (Jaboatão, 1859, p. 362).

Around 1707, educational practices of monks were defined in the document entitled *As constituições primeiras do arcebispado da Bahia*, whose configuration was based on the *Roman Catechism*. The educational

principle of the Constitutions consisted of the defense of formation as an important step in the civilizing process. Educational practices became an essential instrument in the process of evangelization, since, in order to attain divine grace, it was necessary to practice good works and the remission of sins (Monteiro da Vide, 2010).

The concern with education was also due to the need to consolidate the bases of the Portuguese power in the region. Religious Franciscans played a prominent role in teaching and disseminating the Portuguese language. The inhabitants of the region, while learning the catechesis, became literate. “While they were taught, ‘to be Christian’, they were taught to be ‘citizens’ of the same empire, and thus language served to the interests of both spheres of power” (Amorim, 2011, p. 60, author’s emphasis).

The religious had a strategy: they learned the language of the natives and, in this way, began their educational practices of catechizing and teaching the Portuguese language to the children. Literacy in the villages had a purpose: evangelization. The teaching practices developed by religious have contributed to the renewal of learning methods and techniques, as well as to establish the bases of the political power.

The concern with formation was not restricted to the monks, who were eager to lay the foundations of Roman Catholicism. It also included the rulers, who thereby disseminated and consolidated their political power among the bases. “Education was used [...] as a political [...] way, whose objective was the implantation of the model of a peninsular Christian society for which it had to create adequate pedagogical methods” (Iglesias, 2010, p. 207).

The bases of this thinking are related to the discussions about politics and pedagogy. In Europe, in part, the debate began with the concerns of Desiderius Erasmus Roterodamus with the formation of the Christian prince. In his work, entitled *Institutio Principis Christiani*, he spoke about the importance of education, that is, of pedagogy, for politics, discussing the best way to govern a State (ARNAUT DE TOLEDO, 2007). In another text, *Civilidade pueril*, Erasmus exalted the education of children in favor of civility and good manners. The study of Erasmus meant “[...] a return to the most stripped and primitive Christianity, the valorization of a more personal and charismatic faith, less clothed with the dogmatic and institutional weight that the Catholic hierarchy tried to impose” (Karnal, 1991, p. 218).

The work of evangelization developed by the religious Franciscans in the mid-17th century in Maranhão and Grão-Pará had a strong political appeal. It was based on the defense of the pedagogical practices of formation of the people. The education of the people began to have a public role of great importance: “Teaching to love God in Portuguese was to teach to love the country that was intended to build and expand” (Amorim, 2011, p. 61). Prayers, for example, not only helped to memorize words, but also contributed to the education of the body and spirituality, since they involved fear, threats, admonitions and punishments. Catholic rituals, in general, had a didactic character: they were intended to awaken Christian faith and Catholic piety.

There was a concern among the religious Franciscans in teaching the Portuguese language through catechesis, based on oral and writing practices. The teaching of Christian doctrine was based on literacy. Learning to read was essential to the practice of prayer. “It has become necessary, therefore, to create literacy schools, to produce linguistic instruments, such as vocabularies and grammars, and other catechetical ones, such as catechisms and doctrines” (Amorim, 2011, p. 60).

The Franciscan pedagogical practices were characterized by catechesis, penance, religious festivals, prayers, processions and pilgrimages. The schools of Franciscan formation benefited the villages, and the secular priests “[...] instructed only the children of the so-called ‘Big House’, but the villages were dependent on the charity of the sons of St. Francis” (Willeke, 1961, p. 87, author’s emphasis).

In the *Roman Catechism*, we see the need for the education of the Christian people both for the purpose of following the example of Jesus Christ, of charity and love of neighbor, and as a means of moving away the ‘false’ prophets and evangelizers. One of the main instruments of evangelization was the sermons: “It was the privileged weapon [...], the best asset they had in order to achieve certain standards of moral, social and political conduct” (Amorim, 2005, p. 172).

The books of sermons functioned as manuals of manners, discipline of the body and spirituality according to Christian precepts. One of the main books of sermons edited at that time was a posthumous work, called *Jardim da Sagrada Escritura disposto em modo alfabético*, published in 1653. Its author, Friar Cristóvão de Lisboa, “[...] was a preacher who knew how to use all the resources of the Sacred Oratory technique, to assert his

attempts to denounce and condemn certain practices detrimental to the interests of the indigenous people” (Amorim, 2005, p. 173).

The defense of the natives was one of the strategies of the monks to approach them and to develop their work of evangelization. From the beginning, the friars used the strategy “[...] to show, through words and gestures, a loving attitude towards them, with the aim of achieving the same sentiment in return” (Iglesias, 2010, p. 219). Friar Cristóvão de Lisboa was one of the main defenders of the natives in his sermons.

It is important to emphasize that the Portuguese saw the indigenous people as instruments of their political action in the defense of the territory. “Indigenous people are fundamental in the struggle for space, they know the routes, they extract products with commercial value in Europe, build the Forts and present themselves as the best soldiers [...]” (Cardoso, 2002, p. 106). The assistance of the ‘Christianized’ natives was essential to the interests of Portugal in combating the foreign invaders, even though there were practices detrimental to the interests of the indigenous people. Friar Cristóvão de Lisboa likened “[...] the captivity of the indigenous people to a robbery, a usurpation that outrages the natives in such a way that they could react against the Christians and would refuse to follow their doctrine” (Amorim, 2005, p. 174).

Religious had difficulty in developing the work of evangelization among adults, but this same resistance did not exist with children. The work of catechizing children gave the Franciscans a greater understanding of the language and, together with that, the possibility of learning the language of the natives. However, the Franciscans were not the only ones who used this strategy. “Children were used both as a method of evangelization and accommodation between the indigenous people, and as a resource for the friars to learn the indigenous language” (Iglesias, 2010, p. 263).

An important aspect of the process of Franciscan catechization was its itinerant religiosity. This model of apostolate allowed the creation of community spaces in cities, towns and villages, particularly for preaching purposes. They went to meet people and, with the natives, it was no different. This was a fundamental Franciscan characteristic since the Middle Ages. The foundation of Franciscan convents in the regions in which they were established became, over the centuries, an essential condition of the mendicant apostolic life in a culture whose foundation was the circulation and accumulation of wealth (Barboza, 2010).

Within the settlements, the concerns of the Franciscans were: to communicate through sermons; to influence the faithful through confession and the handling of the issue of death: by presenting the paradise in a more didactic way, they attracted the faithful concerned about it (Barboza, 2010).

The teaching and learning practices of Christian doctrine through catechesis and preaching were intensified in the early 17th century, as well as those of confession and devotion. The importance of the *Roman Catechism* in this context is evident as such educational practices have gained a more orderly exposure.

The educational practice followed a scheme: first, the dogmas with emphasis in the exposition of the creed were worked; then the attention was focused on teaching morals, addressing the commandments, virtues, and sins; third, the means to achieve salvation were presented, based on the sacraments and prayers (Mártires, 1962). The work of religious preaching was also done through a series of homilies on liturgical feasts. According to Friar Antonio de Santa Maria Jaboatão, in order to administer the sacrament of baptism, penance and marriage, and especially to offer the teachings of the Church, the monks were based on the book called *Novo Orbe Seráfico Brasílico ou Chronica dos frades menores da província do Brasil*, first published in 1761. (Jaboatão, 1859).

The education received in the schools devoted to the children of natives and of settlers was conducted by religious with high level of formation. In the convents, according to the *Estatutos da Província de Santo António do Brasil*, published in 1708, but in force long before, it was determined that the beginners in the studies of Philosophy and Arts received a great formation in grammar, since this was understood as the foundation of all sciences. “In order that the Students, who walk towards Philosophy, are good Grammarians, we order that [...] there be study of grammar, because it is the foundation of all the sciences [...]” (Estatutos..., 1708, p. 51).

Since the foundation of the first Franciscan convent in Olinda, Convent of Nossa Senhora das Neves/Our Lady of the Snows/Saint Mary of the Snow, the friars were concerned with formation. Therefore, they thought it was necessary to create courses for choristers and priests. Friar António de Santa Maria Jaboatão, in *Crônicas da Província de Santo António do Brasil*, defended the need for the Franciscan Order to receive novices to meet the demands of evangelization. Friar Bernardino das

Neves, a native of Olinda, was the first teacher of the Convent of Nossa Senhora das Neves, in 1588.

According to the *Estatutos*, in order to teach Philosophy, that is, to exercise the occupation of teacher, the monk should be tested in defending the doctrine so that the level of his knowledge was proven. For the teaching of Theology, it was no different: the monk was obliged to have at least three years of training in Philosophy. “The Teacher of Philosophy must have sufficient knowledge to defend the doctrine that he will teach, and thus no one should ascend to the chair without first being evaluated whether or not he is able to exercise the occupation” (*Estatutos...*, 1708, p. 53).

In order to receive the training in Arts, besides having an excellent basis in grammar, the religious had to master the Latin. At the end of three years, such as the students of Philosophy, Art students were evaluated by their superiors as to their progress. It was required that the student was “[...] able to ascend to the pulpit by age, virtue, cleanliness, and sufficiency of Latinity [...]” (*Estatutos [...]*, 1708, p. 54). The graduates of Philosophy and of Arts would only advance in their studies of Theology if they were approved, with praise, in the examinations.

Conclusion

The Franciscans played an important role with the State, since the political issues and the religious convictions walked together. Catechization and elementary education offered were essential in the process of social integration, which, of course, did not happen without conflict.

They acted in the catechization, and as they taught to read, write, and calculate, they instructed in the principles of faith. In addition, they also acted in the teaching of musical language in order to attract adults to masses. There are reports that some natives sang a rosary and a litany; others developed skills for various trades.

In the villages where the monks settled, for the valuation of a more active life and less contemplative, necessary to the new times, the formation of large population groups was stimulated. For each convent that was founded, the need arose for the organization of a specific space, of a school that, besides catechesis, could offer elementary education, such as reading, writing and calculus, arts and crafts/professions to children and young people.

Liturgical life, which included the celebration of the Eucharist, the administration of the sacraments and the Marian devotions, was not the only means that linked monks to the people. This bond was also established through religious education, catechism and preaching, as well as through literacy, which included reading, writing and calculation.

To this end, the monks received training appropriate to the demands of evangelization and education. The concern with religious formation in the grammatical aspects showed the importance of good education for teaching and learning, even because the evangelizing action was one of the pillars of the conquest and administrative organization of the Captaincies.

The practices of internalization of faith and religiosity, characteristic of the institution of the subjectivity of modern times, contributed to a more rigorous control of the individuals by public authorities, as elementary schools, as is the example of the missionary action of St. Anthony's Franciscans, began to educate children, youths and adults.

The evangelizing action of these monks expresses one of the great concerns presented at the Council of Trent: the need to create a system of popular education. Thus, this, which was a responsibility of the monks, gradually came to be understood as a governmental responsibility.

The Franciscans lived among the people, integrated into villages, towns and cities, as they carried out their pastoral activities through preaching. With the process of indigenous acculturation, colonial policy aimed at its use as a slave labor force for the development of life at that time. There was a set of interests at issue. The monks were against the Lusitanian policy of summary slavery and the brutal exploitation of human beings, but they understood as essential the work of the natives in the development of settlements.

Thus, what was intended with the formation of the natives was to educate them and prepare them to live in society; however, the interests of the settlers overlapped, so that servile labor was imposed on indigenous and black people. It was largely an excellent business for its entrepreneurs.

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