

Between romanizers and liberals: the modern education in the province of Pará during the XIX Century

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Abstract: The present article analyses the educational scenario in Pará during the late nineteenth century, emphasizing the disputes between Liberals and Romanizers for the hegemony in the educational area. It presents the ideological belief of the Brazilian educational privileged as a means for social transformation that arrives in Pará and is articulated to the issue of race. Liberals, defenders of the Republic, make use of this discourse and start an open debate through the newspapers of the province's capital on conditions of the public education in the region. Romanizers, threatened of losing their political power that the clerical elite had in the region, specifically in the educational matter, defend the point that only the Catholic Church would be able to manage the publishes teaching towards progress and civilization, against barbarism and degradation.

Keywords: Liberals, Romanizers, modern education.

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Entre romanizadores e liberais: A Educação moderna na Província do Pará no século XIX

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Resumo: Neste artigo, analisa-se o cenário educacional do Pará no final do século XIX, enfatizando-se as disputas entre liberais e romanizadores pela hegemonia no campo da educação. Apresenta-se a crença ideológica da elite brasileira na educação como meio de transformação social que chega ao Pará, crença essa articulada à questão da raça. Os liberais, defensores da República, apropriaram-se desse discurso e começaram um franco debate nos jornais da capital da Província sobre as condições da instrução pública da região. Os romanizadores, ameaçados de perder o poder político que a elite clerical mantinha na região, especialmente no campo da educação, utilizaram o argumento de que só a Igreja Católica seria capaz de gerenciar a instrução pública em direção ao progresso e à civilização, contra a barbárie e a degradação.

Palavras-chave: liberais, romanizadores, educação moderna.

Entre romanizadores y liberales: la Educación Moderna en la provincia de Pará en el siglo XIX

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Resumen: Este artículo examina el escenario educativo de Pará, en fines del siglo XIX, con énfasis en los conflictos entre liberales y romanizadores por la hegemonía en el campo de la educación. Presenta la creencia ideológica de la élite brasileña en la educación como un medio de transformación social, que llega al Pará y es articulada a la cuestión de la raza. Los liberales, defensores de la República, se apropiaron de este discurso y comenzaron un debate abierto en los periódicos de la capital de la Provincia acerca de las condiciones de la instrucción pública de la región. Romanizadores, amenazados de perder el poder político que la élite clerical tenía en la región, especialmente en el campo de la educación, comienzan a producir el argumento de que sólo la Iglesia Católica sería capaz de gestionar la instrucción pública hacia el progreso y la civilización, contra la barbarie y la degradación en las necesidades de cualificación para el desarrollo industrial.

Palabras clave: liberales, romanizadores, educación moderna.

Introduction

In this article, we analyze the educational scene of Pará in the late 19th century, focusing on the debate between liberals and romanizers, who competed for hegemony in the field of education. This is a historical approach, whose documentary sources are newspapers, provincial reports and four bibliographical works.

The newspapers consulted were: *O Liberal do Pará* (1877-1878), owned by the liberal party; *Jornal do Pará* (1868), of the conservative party; *A Estrela do Norte* (1863) and *A Boa Nova* (1877), both created by Bishop D. Antônio de Macedo Costa. As for the reports of the Province, the following were used: the Report of Dr. Abel Graça, 1871; the Report of Dr. José da Gama Malcher, 1878; the report of Mr. Dr. José Coelho da Gama e Abreu, 1880; the Report of Mr. President Dr. Manuel Pinto de Souza DantasFilho, 1882. The four bibliographical works are written by Bishop D. Antônio de Macedo Costa: *Discurso pronunciado por D. Macedo Costa na inauguração da Bibliotheca Publica* (1871), *Compêndio de civilidade cristã* (1879), *Amazônia meio de desenvolver sua civilização* (1883), and a book by Bishop D. Antônio de Almeida Lustosa published in 1939 entitled *D. Macedo Costa (bispo do Pará)* (Lustosa, 1992). It is important to point out that the bishop of Pará, with great political power, had as objective to conquer hegemony in the field of education in the region under the administration of the Catholic Church, in the expectation of becoming the great responsible for the discursive production of the relationship between church, education and modernization (Costa, 2014).

The article is organized into three topics. In the first, we talk about the belief of the elite (conservative and liberal) of Pará in education as a means of social transformation. The racial issue was considered as a social problem because of the belief in the inferiority of black and Indians. In the second, we describe how the Catholic Church, represented by one of its greatest exponents in the context of the 19th century, the bishop of Pará D. Antônio de Macedo Costa, defended a policy of modern education under the governance of the Church. We emphasize that the Bishop appropriated key points of modernity in his project, whose idea was that only the church would be able to promote education for civility and progress. In the third and last topic, we present the debate on secular education and the modern education program under the management of the State, mainly defended by liberal politicians based in the capital of Pará Province, Belém. Finally,

we make brief considerations about the implications of this political debate in the field of education in the Amazon in the late 19th century and the first decades of the 20th century.

The belief in education as a means of social transformation

The strong belief in science and education as the possibility of achieving civilization and progress was decisive for some important transformations in the country. According to Lília Moritz Schwarcz (1993), in the field of science, new ideas were to circulate in Brazil, from the 1970s of the 19th century onwards, due to the restructuring and creation of important institutions such as the museums (National, São Paulo and Para Museum of Natural History), the Historical and Geographical Institutes, the Faculties of Medicine and Law. In addition to these institutions, it is also worth noting the creation of the Brazilian Academy of Letters (ABL), in 1896.

Still for Schwarcz (1993), the history of these institutions and their illuminist intellectuals from the late 19th century to the first three decades of the 20th century can not be analyzed without considering the racial issue or the problem of miscegenation, since it was argued, among others things, that the ‘mixture’ of races in Brazil would be a negative factor because black people and Indians would be inferior.

In the field of education, José Gondra and Alessandra Schueler (2008) show that, throughout the 19th century, in the country, sociability networks were created through the work of various institutions, such as confraternities, religious and lay brotherhoods, Masonic lodges, associations, corporate or professional societies, scientific, literary, philanthropic and pedagogical societies. These institutions contributed to the dissemination and circulation of ideas and projects of civilization and education in the 19th-century society.

At that time, in the view of the liberals of the Pará Province, school institutions were obliged to ‘bring the lights of instruction to the people’ to correct the errors that the mixture of races had promoted. It was necessary to make the country a true nation, that is, made up of ‘clean men’, such as whites, because they would be white and ‘pure’. In a region of predominantly indigenous populations, the speeches of politicians and intellectuals expressed a strong belief in education as an instrument capable of transforming darker-skinned men, therefore ‘dirty’ men,

because they had bad habits and vices in their origin and colonization, into white men, 'clean', that is, 'virtuous'.

José Veríssimo himself (1857-1916), native of Pará, still in Belém, defended the theory that the evils of our origin were located in the race (Araújo, 2007). For Veríssimo, the deplorable conditions in which the country was in were due the crossing of degraded races (the Indian, the Black and the Portuguese), which had given rise to a people without culture. He proposed further crossings to overcome the evils of origin. Defender of the idea of bleaching, Veríssimo saw, as Maia Neto asserts (2002, p. 54), that miscegenation would subtract "[...] the physical and moral characters of those considered inferior".

In order to overcome the problems arising from this racial origin, José Veríssimo defended a profound reform in the Brazilian educational system, because he considered that this was the only possible way of forming the character and develop a true national feeling, which meant progress. Education would be the only effective instrument to combat our 'backwardness', conditioned by the degraded races of our origin. This theory is expressed in the work *A educação nacional* (Veríssimo, 1890), but especially in *As raças cruzadas no Pará* (1878) and in *As Populações indígenas e mestiças da Amazônia: sua linguagem, suas crenças e seus costumes* (Veríssimo, 1887).

For the elite of Pará, not only the issue of race was a problem, but also, and to the same extent of importance, the monarchist regime, which, for the liberals, had not been able to make public education a state policy aimed at overcoming of economic, social and cultural backwardness. The speech of the President of the Province, Abel da Graça, to the politicians of the Legislative Assembly of Pará gives us the true dimension of this ideology of belief in education already ensured by the elites:

Gentlemen, no country will ever attain a real appropriateness without taking as its guide the development of intelligence. The public education that I consider as a synonym of popular education is so necessary to a people, as a light that makes us distinguish one from another: It is the beacon that illuminates the spirit of the citizens and teach them to be good parents, friends and good patriots. If the need for instruction is so imperative, the first duty of those who are charged with promoting the general good is to seek to satisfy it (Pará, 1871, p. 13).

For the provincial representative João Capistrano Bandeira de Melo Filho (1877), the development of public education was a matter that should hold the attention of the politicians of Pará as it would exert a “[...] prodigious influence on the civilization and progress of any country”. In his view, public education needed to be a priority program of all governments. Only the education of the people would enable a true transformation in Brazilian society: “[...] only education can give citizens the consciousness of their duties, impress upon their acts the seal of their dignity, make it incompatible with the crime and make it fit for the various occupations of public life” (Pará, 1877, p. 77).

For President José da Gama Malcher (1878), public education was also a ‘very important branch of public service’, and although it had not yet reached an entirely satisfactory condition in the Province of Pará, it was progressing every year. Therefore, knowing that the public authorities had recognized popular education as “[...] one of the main elements of progress and civilization [...]” (Pará, 1878, p. 66), he sought, in his government, to do everything in his power to develop it, in order to “[...] support the generous and patriotic views of the imperial government and the Provincial Legislative Assembly” (Pará, 1878, p. 67).

President José Coelho da Gama e Abreu (1880), in a report presented to the Provincial Assembly of Pará in 1880, affirmed that “[...] it is not to live an almost brutal life that we are born endowed with intelligence”. On the contrary, the role of people, as intelligent beings, would be to fulfil “[...] a certain ideal through the predominance of free will over instinct”. He also warned that this “[...] freedom in the will must necessarily have as principal helpers everything that can clarify consciousness, enlighten the spirit, or other words; education is an illustration of the individuals” (Pará, 1880, p. 7).

For President Manuel Pinto de Souza Dantas Filho, “[...] the ease of individuals and the greatness and prosperity of nations depend to a large extent on the development of education” (Pará, 1882, p. 59). For this president, it was necessary to “[...] bring education to all places through regular schools”. Because of this belief in the power of education, the authorities, according to Dr. Manuel Pinto, bet on the expansion of public education; this was among the main concerns of public authorities, which used all the means at their disposal for public education to be spread throughout the country (Pará, 1882).

All this supposed investment was perceived by Bishop D. Macedo Costa, who tried to associate this ideology with the Church, arguing that this would be the institution capable of promoting progress and leverage the civilizing process in the Region.

The belief in the Catholic Church as a promoter of civilization and progress.

Since the 18th century, there had already been a discourse in defense of education among the romanizer branch of the Catholic clergy of Pará, as can be seen in the passage by Frei Caetano Brandão (1740-1805), bishop of Pará, reproduced in the newspaper *A Estrela do Norte*: “[...] the education of the boys is the most advisable cause: at least no one can deny that it enters into the order of the first causes that influence the good of one and another Republic, Christian and political” (*A Estrela do Norte*, 1863 p. 245). Therefore, for him, every government, in order to succeed and achieve happiness, needed to invest in the education of the ‘tender hearts of youth’, to sow and cultivate on good soil to reach the glory and the solid good of humanity:

Sow good grain in this land still fresh and soft, cultivate it with zeal and industry; do not re-burn the air polluted with bad examples; then soon the Republic will be as a pleasant garden populated with showy and fruitful trees, I mean, with persons who by their beautiful actions can contribute to the glory and the solid good of mankind (*A Estrela do Norte*, 1863 p. 245).

For Bishop D. Antônio de Macedo Costa, however, the possibility of raising the country to the height of its destiny was small by “[...] the lack of a legitimate religious and political education, and, consequently, the lack of proper appreciation of the facts”. This lack of proper education was “[...] one of the greatest evils that the thinking man has to regret among us” (*A Estrela do Norte*, 1863, p. 81). He asserted that by taking over the archdiocese of Pará, he would endeavor to take the people out of the ‘darkness’ and offer them light, that is, the means to civilization. For this purpose, he would undertake a true crusade against the public power and the conservative elites so that the “[...] law of development and the law of progress [...]” would be under the responsibility of the Catholic Church (Costa, 1871).

On May 25, 1871, in a speech at the inauguration of the Public Library of Pará, Belém, the ‘belief in the law of progress’ led the bishop to affirm that the inauguration of that institution would be regarded as little for some, but, in fact, it was a transcendental good that would result in immense events because, through it, a ‘better cause’ would come, instruction and, with it, civilization.

Because, as you see, I am not here to ask for the blessings of Religion precisely on a Library; what I bless, what you all bless with me, in the name of Religion, in the name of humanity, is another better cause: _ it is education to be poured out: - it is civilization to be expanded; It is an entire future opening the way before our eyes all enlightened and full of hope (Costa, 1871, p. 3-4).

With these convictions, D. Antônio de Macedo Costa took over the Diocese of Belém and immediately tried to reform the Seminary of Pará, arguing that his initiative should be extended to all the seminaries in the country. For the bishop, such reforms would help in the formation of an enlightened clergy, able to develop the moral regeneration of the country. This means that for him religious formation and secular education were inseparable. In his view, only an enlightened clergy would be able to maintain “[...] the building of public morality on solid ground [...]”; the religious formation should be at the “[...] forefront of all the works of human intelligence and industry, in the words of a modern economist, similar to the Ark of the Covenant, which marched before the people” (A Estrela do Norte, 1863, p. 90). Therefore, for the sustenance of religion, it was essential an educated and dedicated clergy, full of the spirit of its sublime pedagogical vocation. An educated clergy would not only be important to religion and to the revival of Christian and clerical customs; it would also contribute to the “[...] restoration of public and social customs, the principle of all true progress and civilization” (A Estrela do Norte, 1863, p. 90).

In order for this education of the clergy to be possible, the Bishop sought financial support from the State, but, at the same time, repudiated its constant interference with the administration of the seminaries and the affairs of the Church. There were several moments in which D. Antônio de Macedo Costa entered into a debate with the representatives of the civil power, both in the provincial and in the imperial sphere. In the book of D. Lustosa (1992), which deals with the life and work of the Bishop, several

of the documents that he wrote were reproduced, among them the text *Memória*, which stands out for exposing to the Emperor D. Pedro II issues relating to the Seminaries and how the government were dealing the ecclesiastical work. In this text, the author affirmed that the Imperial Decree nº 3.043 of April 22, 1863, which standardized the studies of the disciplines of episcopal seminaries, although with good intentions, was detrimental to the Church, since it removed the autonomy of the bishops to hire teachers and choose the books that should be used in the seminaries. This is evident in the following statement:

Your Imperial Majesty, allow me to say with painful frankness that I have on this occasion: My Lord, the Bishops of Brazil are grieved by notices and decrees restricting the freedom and independence of our sacred ministry; we have long noted with dismay the baleful tendency of the government to interfere in the economy of the Church as if it were trying to reduce it little by little the condition of a human establishment, to a mere branch of civil administration. They seem to be no longer the bishops of Brazil, but civil servants, subject to a Council of State (Costa, 1863 apud Lustosa, 1992, p. 51-52).

Later in the text, he stated that the Decree offended the dignity and rights of the Brazilian episcopate because it deprived the seminaries of their benefits. Moreover, unfairly, the teachers of those educational establishments harmed and humiliated the clergy. The author continued with the defense of the autonomy of the Church before the State:

The Church does not have to deal with the temporary government of the State; the State reciprocally has nothing to do with the spiritual government of the Church. [...] The civilian government, once more, fulfil in providing over and above the temporary government of the States; It is left to the Church the administration of spiritual causes. [...] The government cannot reform the Seminaries, but only provide the bishops with the material means for these reforms. [...] The Government has no right to order that the compendia through which subjects are taught in the Seminaries, be sent to them, since the Bishops have the divine mission to teach the Religion, and teach it with sovereign

independence from the powers of the world (Costa, 1863 apud Lustosa, 1992, p. 54-55, 62).

With these words, addressed to the Emperor of Brazil, he defended the end of the regime of the royal patronage, but not the separation between State and Church. He wanted to end the interference of the State in the management of the ecclesiastical affairs, but he remained defending the Catholic Church as an official religion. In this way, this would prevent it from losing privileges and continue to receive resources from the government for the reforms of the seminaries.

To further support his arguments that the Church was responsible for administering the seminaries and the ecclesiastical educational institutions, D. Antônio de Macedo Costa cited the Decree of the Council of Trent, section XXIII, chapter 18, which ordered that the seminaries be entrusted to the bishops, who would have to choose and approve competent teachers and stipulate what to teach. He also cited the Council of Aquileia, 1856, which had reaffirmed the autonomy of bishops in the administration of seminaries and youth education. In this document, he said, it was stipulated that it was the mission of the Church to “[...] spread education everywhere, creating free of charge schools for the benefit of youth, and inspiring the greatest geniuses with the heroic thought of devoting themselves to the painful teaching of the poor and miserable people” (Costa, 1863 apud Lustosa, 1992, p. 58).

Seeking to fulfill the Romanizing precepts, he sent several young seminarians to other countries to study and, at the same time, helped others to continue their studies in secular institutions in Brazil. This is what is expressed in the following texts, published in a periodical of the Province of Pará:

The undersigned cordially thanks all the people who had the generosity to accompany the embarkation of their son Emiliano Pereira da SilveiraFrade, especially to Mr. D. Antônio de Macedo Costa, who took under his valuable protection, recommending him to the Jesuit College of Bahia where he will continue his studies (Jornal do Pará, 1868, p. 2).

Desiring my dear son Joao Gonçalves Nogueira to follow the studies of medical sciences, I felt insurmountable difficulties of his and my desires, until I could find in our virtuous bishop, his Excellency. Mr. D. Antônio de Macedo

Costa, the only resource I needed to take the first steps [...] It was not possible for me to have my son studying in a court, such as the court of Rio de Janeiro, without the great annual contribution, without the resources of protection that I describe, it is due to my very wise and dear friend and virtuous diocesan bishop, his Excellency. Mr. D. Antônio (Jornal do Pará, 1868, p. 2).

These statements show that D. Antônio de Macedo Costa saw science as a strong ally of the faith in overcoming the social and spiritual problems of the Province of Pará. On his return, the young seminarians would contribute to the formation of a clergy educated and in tune with the romanizing principles and, consequently, would influence the religious behavior of the people against the popular Catholicism, considered by the Bishop as negative, because it was linked to barbarism and incivility. For Heraldo Maués (1995, p. 17), popular Catholicism is a “[...] set of beliefs and practices socially recognized as Catholic, shared mainly by non-specialists of the sacred, whether they belong to the subordinate classes or to the ruling classes”. These beliefs and practices were for the most part forged within the hearts of the religious brotherhoods of lay people, such as the request for alms by means of images of saints and religious revelries and feasts of Patron Saints. According to Heraldo Maués (1995, p. 169), although these practices are still condemned by many as non-Catholic practices, “[...] they are also expected as parts of the feasts of saints, as well as the prayers, the litanies, the masses, the processions, the festive square (arraial), the dancing party, the fights, the flirtations, and everything else that makes up a true feast of saint”. It was this popular Catholicism that D. Antônio de Macedo Costa tried to fight, forming a clergy educated and based on the diocesan Catholicism. To the young people trained in medical, law or other courses, and even those who studied in the seminaries, but did not follow the ecclesiastical career, it was their responsibility to provide relevant services to the Amazon region because of their status as educated citizens:

Some of the youths he (D. Macedo Costa) sent to Europe did not follow the ecclesiastical career, but came to provide services to Pará, such as Felipe and Bernardino Pinto Marques, Antônio Rabelo, Francisco Pinheiro de Queirós, and even Frederico Neri, who remained in France and there he honored Brazil and Pará (Lustosa, 1992, p. 27)

This quote shows that not everything ended up as the Bishop wanted, that is, he was unable to obtain a significant number of priests trained in the European seminaries, since several of the young people sent there did not become priests, and it is possible that some have become adherents of the liberal doctrine and the modern ideals of education that, among other things, the secular state was advocating.

He sought to expand the Church's presence in the field of education by advocating an educational policy for the Amazon that would raise the level of its public education so that the region would be headed for true progress, which for him meant the elevation of the country by the intellectual and religious formation. For this, it was necessary to instill in the people the Christian values according to the directives of the Holy See. The following note, published in the newspaper of the diocese, by one of the auxiliary canons of D. Antônio de Macedo Costa, is a demonstration of the Bishop's effort in the achievement of this field:

No one is unaware of the constant efforts of the wise diocesan Mr. diocesan bishop to raise the level of public education among us. True progress will not be accomplished without a good and solid education. Youth is the future, educating it properly is preparing a better future (A Boa Nova, 1877, p. 1)

When reforming the Seminary, sending young people to study in the Court and in Europe, creating the Asilo de N. S. do Carmo (which later became the Asilo e Escola de Santo Antônio) and the Instituto da Providência, bringing the Sisters of the Instituto de Santa Dorotéia from Europe to teach the girls from Pará, D. Antonio de Macedo Costa entered into a dispute with the liberals for the hegemony of an educational program for the Amazon and for the country. The Catholic educational program against the incivility and barbarism of the people of Amazonia defended by him was constituted, among other things, by “[...] a set of attentions and delicacies appropriate to make kindly, decorous and pleasant our dealings with the other men [...]” that he Called “[...] Christian civility [...]” (Costa, 1879, p. 9). This model of civilized citizen was expressed in works such as *Deveres da família* (1877), *Compêndio de civilidade crista* (1879) and *Amazônia meio de desenvolver sua civilização* (1883).

In these and other works, the Bishop of Pará pointed the way to the development and progress of the Amazon. His principles were centered on

Christian education, which meant giving the people school instruction and moral education through the teaching of the Catholic religion. In addition to encouraging the creation of more schools and creating his own educational institutions, as we already pointed out, in 1883, he presented the work *A Amazônia: meio de desenvolver sua civilização*, in which he defended a project that would help ‘bring’ the light of the gospel and of civilization to the most remote places in the Amazon. In this work, he described the Amazon and its people: the socioeconomic, intellectual and moral state, the potentialities of the region and the prospects for reaching the long-awaited civilization. The heart of his discussion in this book was to show the local elite the advantages of building the ‘Modern Ship’ (the Church Steam ship), “[...] a floating temple destined for the evangelization of the great valley” (Costa, 1883, p. 5), to assist in the civilizing process of the region:

This idea consists in the construction of a steamship adapted exclusively to the service of a permanent mission in the Amazon valley. It will be a ‘Church Ship’, a ‘Floating Temple’, which will carry on board a group of excellent Priests, to continually travel, in all directions, the immense river network of the river-sea, bringing the Christian and pagan populations to the lights and help of the spirit, those who now live and die completely in helplessness (Costa, 1883, p. 13, author’s emphasis).

His initial arguments to persuade the rich population of the Amazon to invest in the Church Ship project referred to the great economic potential of the region. This would not only achieve civilization but also a high intellectual and moral level if educated in the Christian religion. He emphasized that the Amazon was increasingly attracting the attention of the world, not only for the incomparable beauty and spectacle of nature, but also for its great economic potential: “Science, industry and commerce are beginning to discover the hidden and opulent treasure of natural wealth, enclosed in this Amazon basin, which could feed one hundred thousand human creatures one day” (Costa, 1883, p. 3).

To develop the Amazon, he was betting on an educational program that combined school education and moral education, teaching of the Catholic religion and technical-scientific education. This Catholic program, as Manoel (2008) shows, was based on a conservative

educational theory, which he termed ‘theory of the concentric circles’. Such an education would begin with the education of the girl, who should become “[...] a Christian mother of Christian children; and then switching from Christian children to Christian families; and then from Christian families to Christian society [...]”, and this education would soon reach the re-Christianization of modern society (Manoel, 2008, p. 58). Through this program, faith and reason ‘would go hand-in-hand’, being education by faith, therefore, the most important

Secular education in debate: the modern education program under state management.

In their program, unlike Catholics, liberals defended a modern education, whose principles were based on positivist and liberal ideals, founded on the separation between State and Church, and therefore on free and secular education under state management.

In the Province of Pará, in the context of the 70s and 80s of the 19th century, the liberal party was headed by Mr. João de Medeiros, Dr. José da Gama Malcher, Mr. José de Araújo Roso Danin and Mr. José Coelho da Gama e Abreu (Neves, 2009). The last three came to occupy the highest position in the management of the Province of Pará (Costa, 2014) and became combatants of the Romanizers, as in the famous *questão nazarena* (Monnerat, 2009). In the newspaper *O Liberal do Pará*, created in January 1869, there are several examples of how the liberals of Pará thought and wanted an education for the Amazon and for Brazil, even with all the power that the Catholic Church exercised in the region.

In *O Liberal do Pará*, criticisms of the educational system of the Brazilian Empire and demonstrations in defense of a modern proposal of education were exhaustively published. In the text *Instrução popular: a primeira educação* of February 12, 1878, S. de C. argues that the political reform would not be enough for the country to become civilized and prosperous and, therefore, it was also needed a reform in the educational system. His explanations were that, in order to achieve progress, moral education, customs, and habits could not be neglected, because this would be corroborating barbarism and criminality. Ignorance and misery were pointed out as the main perpetrators of violence in the country and not the lack of religious belief (*O Liberal do Pará*, 1878).

The proposal of liberals to solve the problem of ‘juvenile delinquency’ was more investment in the construction of ‘kindergarten

buildings and schools', rather than hospitals, hospices and prisons as had been done by the imperial government. For the liberals, "[...] if there were kindergartens for boys and schools in greater numbers, there would be no need for so many prisons and hospitals" (O Liberal do Pará, 1878, p. 1). They advocated a reform that would affect not only the physical structure of schools, but also the pedagogical practice. The liberals wanted more schools, but not any school: they wanted schools "[...] a little less imperfect than those we have". They wanted more teachers (preferably female teachers) to care for the youngest children, but not any teacher: they demanded teachers who were more pedagogically prepared: "[...] a little more initiated into the secret of pedagogy [...]", because that was what depended "[...] the regeneration of our society" (O Liberal do Pará, 1878, p. 1).

Faced with this, the Liberals proposed to build and multiply kindergartens throughout the country. This would be a way to offer Brazilian children the first education, considered by them as the basis for a decisive change in the future of the country. However, they did not believe much in the possibility that their claims were met, because they manifested great disbelief in relation to 'our statesmen', with their ways of governing. Skeptics, collaborators of O Liberal of Pará denounced that the politicians "[...] deeply defrauded the education budget, under the pretext of the economy": they reduced the number of schools, they decreased the salary of the teachers and they extended the collection of taxes and the waste of the public money (O Liberal do Pará, 1878, p. 1).

In the text *A instrução publica nos Estados Unidos*, published in the same newspaper on January 10, 1877, it is found, at the same time, the criticism of the Brazilian educational system and the glorification of the American and Prussian models of public education, regarded as a reference of modern education to the world.

In the United States, according to the liberals, the implementation of the modern education system enabled the following improvements: valorization of teachers, who became better paid; increased public spending on public schools; creation of the Law of the Education for all. This law, which, in 1846, made possible the creation of the 'free school system', provided free education for all children, and also didactic material such as books, paper, pens, inks, pencils, etc. Liberals also point out that the Public Education Act in the United States expanded school service and resulted in the increase in the number of students enrolled between the

ages of 4 and 21, who were distributed in 13,000 primary municipal schools, secondary schools and universities, as well as in the increase in the number of women in the teaching profession whose purpose was to care for younger children. The insertion of the woman into the teaching profession was understood by them as an advance of the modern state, as well as the extinction of the religious education. In this regard, the Americans, who were still politically pressured by the Protestant church, decided to read a chapter of the Bible only at the beginning of the classes, without comments or explanation of the text read, and they did not admit that biblical texts to serve as content of classes (O Liberal do Pará, 1877, p. 1).

In the United States, regarding pedagogical and administrative issues, a type of 'school board' was created, the so-called 'local boards of education', elected annually by the residents of the districts or cities. These boards were responsible for receiving and distributing subsidies, supervising and inspecting "[...] all that is concerned with this very important social function [...]", including inspecting the aptitude of masters and teachers in regard to teaching (O Liberal do Pará, 1877, p. 1).

Prussia was presented by the liberals as another example of a State that adopted a modern system of education and achieved excellent results. They pointed out in the newspapers of the capital of the Province, of ParáBelém, the high intellectual culture of the Prussians and the number of literate people in their territory. Out of every 100 inhabitants, only five or six were illiterate. As to the old Pontifical States, they denounced their conservatism and presented them as a model of backwardness in the field of public education, with high rates of illiteracy (O Liberal do Pará, 1877, p. 1).

For D. Antonio de Macedo Costa and for the romanizing clergy of the Amazon, what the liberals pointed to as progress was a hoax. In the text *A instrução liberal é sinônimo de imoralidade*, published in the newspaper *A Boa Nova* on September 1, 1877, it was discredited the much-publicized modern education of the liberals. According to the romanizers, the liberal maxim that "[...] Instruction is the only source of morality [...]" was no more than a big farce (A Boa Nova, 1877, p. 1).

The editors and contributors to the newspaper said that it was a big mistake the defense of the liberals in saying that investing in school construction and the promotion of public education would be sufficient to reduce the costs of building prisons. For Catholics and the conservative

elite of the city of Belém, only the reading of newspapers and good books that favored freethinking was not enough to lead to true progress: public morality was lacking. They refuted, mainly the Romanizing Fathers, the idea that Prussia was a good model to be followed and argued that in the field of morality, Prussian territory was a shame (A Boa Nova, 1877).

In order to strengthen their positions, the priests who published in the newspaper A Boa Nova cited a French writer named Mr. Sarcey, who presented information of a German author on the amoral state of that country. According to Mr. Sarcey, in the report of 1872 by the Government of Germany, it was found that, despite the progress of public education, no improvement was known in its moral state; on the contrary, there was constant progress in crimes, suicides, and corruption. In Prussia, the rates of crime among women (especially the practice of infanticide), of deaths and of violence in general had increased; the latter was associated with alcohol use and decreased longevity (A Boa Nova, 1877).

The religious also mentioned other problems identified by Mr. Sarcey as causing immorality in Prussian society: increased prostitution, worsening of diseases, increased divorce, mad and greedy race for large fortunes and valuation of the acquisition of material goods to the detriment of spiritual elevation. Faced with this, the Romanizing Fathers concluded:

This is how far the 'schoolmaster' of Germany has come. This is the true picture of the Protestant virtues. This is how much the level of morality rises with the level of primary education. These are the results of *cultur-kampf* (struggle for civilization). The Jesuits were expelled from Germany, the vices rushed there in droves. We had anticipated it in advance. Sodo not tell us about independent morality any more. We have Mr. Sarcey for us (A Boa Nova, 1877, p. 1, author's emphasis).

While attempting to demoralize the liberal discourse and its modern education program, the Catholic Church, in the person of Bishop D. Antônio de Macedo Costa and his auxiliary priests, called solely to itself the responsibility for the education of the people. To say that, in a Protestant country such as Prussia, the modern education system did not work, meant to say (in other words) to the people of the Amazon and Brazil: do not send your children to the schools of Protestants! Do not

accept public education without the Catholic religious education! There is no modern education without the contribution of the Catholic Church!

In the conception of the romanizers, true civilization would only be achieved if the Roman Church were the supreme educator of the people. For this reason, D. Antônio de Macedo Costa, during his pastorate in the Amazon, tried to convince everyone that, in order to tread the path of progress and civilization, it was necessary for education to be under the responsibility of the Catholic Church because only the Church would be able to raise both the intellectual and moral level necessary for economic well-being.

Considerations

As we can see, in the second half of the 19th century in the Amazon of Pará there was a consensus among Liberals and Romanisers that education was, if not the only, the best way to 'save' the country from the 'backwardness' which it was in. However, there were disagreements over who should manage public education and how education should occur.

For the Romanizing priests, under the leadership of Bishop D. Antônio de Macedo Costa, school instruction should follow the same logic of the patronage regime: the State financed and the Church executed, as historically had been happening in the Colony and the Empire, when the Catholic religious orders administered the few schools that existed.

For the liberals, however, education in the Province of Pará needed to be under the management of the State. From its perspective, the State should promote school education by adopting the following measures: increase the supply of places, build new schools, hire more teachers (mainly female teachers) to educate 'infants', better reward teachers and appropriately train education professionals to make education more effective.

Moreover, they advocated a secular education that would break away from the project of colonial education under the power of the Church, which the Empire had failed to do. However, in taking power, liberals needed to negotiate with various sectors of society and even change some speeches to gain popular support. The reports of the presidents of the Province of Pará, José da Gama Malcher, José de Araújo Roso Danin and José Coelho da Gama e Abreu point to this change: these politicians, who were liberal, began to praise and give financial support to

the educational work developed by Bishop D. Antônio de Macedo Costa, with emphasis on the work of the Dorothean nuns in the management of the Asilo de Santo Antônio.

In the republican regime begun in the late 19th century, even though one of the flags that this movement stood up for was secular education and under the management of the State, a relative partnership between the State and the Church in the management of this field remained in the Republican regime of Pará, maintaining the support to the educational institutions maintained by the Church. In addition, new female religious orders from Europe, such as Filhas de Santana, were allowed to take over institutions owned or administered by the State, such as the ColégioGentilBitencourt, former Colégio do Amparo dedicated to female education.

Although the Liberals were in constant quarrels with theRomanizers, as in the cases of the famous questão dos bispos and questão nazarena, a relative alliance between State and Church prevailed in the field of the education of Pará. This alliance extended to the first decades of the republican regime.

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