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PROCEDURAL SOURCES AND NON-SCHOOL EDUCATION IN PORTUGUESE AMERICA: Minas Gerais in the 18th century

Fontes processuais e educação não escolar na América Portuguesa:
Minas Gerais no século XVIII:

Fuentes procesales y educación no escolar en la América portuguesa:
Minas Gerais en el siglo XVIII

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Abstract: The article analyzes educational events that took place in eighteenth-century Portuguese America, in the Captaincy of Minas Gerais, inscribed in the pedagogical and civilizing practices of the State and the Church in two dimensions: the role of families in the construction of strategies for the education of children and young people, through its economic and cultural resources; pedagogical actions for the social conformity of the biracial population, focusing on civilizing and control agenda. The studies use sources that, although already well known in colonial historiography, are relatively recent in the documentary *corpus* of research on the history of education in Brazil in the 18th and 19th centuries: wills, *post mortem* inventories and ecclesiastical processes.

Keywords: history of education; historical sources; educational practices.

Resumo: O artigo analisa eventos educativos ocorridos na América portuguesa setecentista, na capitania de Minas Gerais, inscritos nas práticas pedagógicas e civilizadoras do estado e da igreja em duas dimensões: na atuação das famílias quanto à construção de estratégias para a educação das crianças e jovens, por meio de seus capitais econômicos e culturais; nas ações pedagógicas para a conformação social da população mestiça, foco nas pretensões civilizadoras e de controle. As análises valem-se de fontes que, embora já bem conhecidas da historiografia colonial, são relativamente recentes no *corpus* documental das pesquisas sobre a história da educação no Brasil nos séculos XVIII e XIX: os testamentos, os inventários *post mortem* e os processos eclesiásticos.

Palavras-chave: história da educação; fontes históricas; práticas educativas.

Resumen: El artículo analiza los hechos educativos ocurridos en la América portuguesa del siglo XVIII, en la Capitanía de Minas Gerais, inscritos en las prácticas pedagógicas y civilizadoras del Estado y de la Iglesia en dos dimensiones: el papel de las familias en la construcción de estrategias para la educación de niños y jóvenes, a través de sus capitales económicos y culturales; acciones pedagógicas para la conformación social de la población mestiza, con foco en reclamos civilizatorios y de control. Los análisis utilizan fuentes que, aunque ya conocidas en la historiografía colonial, son relativamente recientes en el *corpus* documental de investigación sobre la historia de la educación en Brasil en los siglos XVIII y XIX: testamentos, inventarios *post mortem* y procesos eclesiásticos.

Palabras clave: historia de la educación; fuentes históricas; prácticas educativas.

INTRODUCTION

What does the history of education refer to? What is its object of study? This is a classic question that we ask students at the beginning of a new semester of classes. And the most recurrent and predictable answer is: the history of school, or of school education. For beginners, this is a response that usually comes from their experiences, from their familiarity with the school “universe”, from a logical perception that relates education with school. It is not something to be surprised at in a society in which this institution is more than present and legitimized. The general understanding rarely considers removing the school and school education from its social importance. But it was not always so. Education and school were not always inseparable, and for many centuries, the first did not necessarily need the second.

Therefore, it is assumed that the study of the history of education should be more than the study of the history of the school or of school education. The historiography of education in general, and that of Brazil in particular, has consolidated itself attentive to the processes of schooling in the contemporary world. In Brazil, because it is especially concerned with understanding these processes after independence and the establishment of the sovereign national state, historiography relegated, for a long time, other possibilities for studying education outside of school. Even in relation to periods when this institution's presence was still minor, it remained being the analytical parameter, the starting point for understanding different contexts. This was the case of the colonial period in Brazil, between the 16th century and the first two decades of the 19th century, when the educational scenario was significantly different from the one that would begin to be outlined after independence and consolidated with the advent of the republic.

Back to the initial question - if this is asked with a focus on the context of the so-called colonial period - the answer should consider the study beyond the school and look closely at social and cultural processes in which educational experiences occurred on a daily basis, with objectives in line with the conceptions of education prevailing at the time. For studies from this perspective, the sources are abundant and fertile, although they are reluctant to open up completely. They require, more than usual, the indicative methods. This is because the occurrences of these educational experiences are not always explained as such, and many practices need to be analyzed more carefully in order to be identified and understood in this way.

Right there we have a challenge to overcome. See here that we use two “expressions” that demand reflection: educational and practical experiences. Since we started a research program focused on the colonial period in Brazil, in which one of the lines of study is dedicated to non-school education in that context, it has been necessary to discuss how to define this education, or better saying, its strategies, its intentions and its results. At first, our reflection received the contribution from the concept of cultural practices developed mainly by Roger Chartier, but also present in

the works of Michel de Certeau and Pierre Bourdieu, and led us to understand educational practices as being the daily “ways of making”, implying strategies for its execution.¹

We also understand that, in the development of this “social game” (Nogueira, 2002), it would be essential to take into the account cultural interferences along the construction of the strategies of historical subjects. These guidelines were important for identifying the potential of some sources that became the basis for researches interested in non-school education in Portuguese America, especially between the 18th century and the first decades of the 19th century: civil and ecclesiastical procedural documents, able to shed light on the daily actions of individuals and, in them, allow a glimpse of educational strategies and practices.

The results have been promising. Research shows that the small presence of school education, especially in the 18th century, did not imply the absence of instruction in the first letters and Latin grammar, and that school was not devalued or even disregarded. However, they also point to a reality in which learning to read and write - and the studies that could follow - would not be fundamental for the entire population, neither as a value nor as a practice. Mechanical crafts and other forms of manual making were often more necessary and pragmatically pursued, and general education linked to moral and religious training should be available to everyone.

From an institutional point of view, the Portuguese State and the Catholic Church had their social normatization mechanisms and included, in some way, education. The Código Filipino... (2004), valid throughout the Empire, in establishing legal norms on orphanhood, inheritances and tutoring processes, indicated the actions regarding education according to the origin of children and young people, and according to the structure of that estate-based society: children of peasants, mechanics, merchants, or gentlemen, each of whom should receive the appropriate instruction for their place and role, and all should be educated to be exemplary subjects and Christians. There was nothing specific about how or where they should receive literate or mechanical instruction; but moral and religious education would be in charge of families, the clergy and civil authorities through their good examples. For the Church, it was worth its long catechetical tradition, and the instructions turned to America, present in the First Constitutions of the Archbishopric of Bahia (1720)², aimed mainly at the actions of the civil and military authorities, the clergy and the slave masters, each responsible for ensuring a portion of the education of the Christian subject.

Outside the institutional scope, instruction depended on the disposition and possessions of families and individuals responsible for children and young people, and

¹ Especially Chartier (1990); Bourdieu (1980, 2004); Certeau (1980, 1996).

² In ecclesiastical matters, the First Constitutions of the Archbishopric of Bahia were the main decision to be observed in the dioceses of Portuguese America and Angola. There is an exception to the bishopric of Pará, which was submitted to the Archdiocese of Lisbon.

it could be freely organized or driven by the law, for example, in the case of inheritances and tutors, or creators of exposed individuals. Then, masters of crafts, first letters and Latin grammar were recruited for boys or girls, according to the case. The objectives and expectations of those who planned and carried out these different types of education can be seen in the procedural sources: inventories, wills, tutoring accounts. The problem is that there is almost never any indication of how the educational activities themselves took place, the “ways of making it”, as we intended to define in the first moment of the investigations. If this dimension is difficult to apprehend, the ways of doing strategies to promote instruction and education for children and young people, on the other hand, are reasonably visible in the documents and relate to the resources - human, material, legal - allocated for people to receive some of those different types of education, according to the wishes of their families and institutions and in accordance with legal requirements.

These considerations are important for the conceptual refinement pertinent to the discussion on the nature of educational experiences in Portuguese America. Investigations have shown that, whatever the educational modalities - intellectual, moral, manual -, aimed at different social groups, there were points in common that were connected to the general characteristics of the Portuguese-American culture of the Old Regime and that guided the final purposes of those experiences. The formation of the Christian subject, faithful to the monarchy and religion, permeated all educational levels and was at the basis of political, religious and philosophical formulations about education, even though efforts were made in the 17th and 18th centuries for conceptual differentiation between education and instruction (Fonseca, 2016).

This analytical line allows the study of different experiences of colonial society in Brazil in what concerns us, that is, the presence of educational events, school related or not, aiming at the adaptation of individuals to the current order and the search for a state of civilization in America, aligned with European standards. The not always straightforward paths trekked by the population enrich the research on the topic, helping to understand the complexity of that society marked by the presence of different cultures and strongly hierarchized in the shadow of slavery.

In this article, we present two dimensions of those educational events, seeking to value aspects that are not always clearly recognized as such, but certainly inscribed in the pedagogical and civilizing practices intended mainly by the State and the Catholic Church. The first dimension considers the importance of families in building strategies for the education of their children and young people, whether or not they have the school institution at their disposal, but using their economic and cultural capital. The second favors pedagogical actions for the social conformation of marginalized portions of colonial society, particularly the mestizo population, always focusing on the civilizing and control pretensions of the dominant institutions. It is important to highlight, in these analyzes, the use of sources that, although already well known in colonial historiography, are relatively recent in the documentary *corpus*

of research on the history of education in Brazil in the 18th and 19th centuries: we used here, mainly, wills, *post mortem* inventories and ecclesiastical processes.

FAMILIES AND EDUCATIONAL STRATEGIES

Wills have been around for a long time and were already present among the Hebrews, the Egyptians, the Greeks and the Romans, and it was from these last ones that the Iberians received the tradition and the legislation on willing. The wills and their sister source, the *post mortem* inventories, are tax documents of the Latin legislation related to the succession, and their analysis allows a renewal on issues related to education in the modern period. During antiquity, the document basically dealt with the will of the dying in relation to their goods. Around the end of the Roman Empire, this practice was put aside, being recovered from the creation of purgatory, around the 12th century, and also by the revival of the study of Roman Law. With this, the practice of making wills expanded, initially among the nobles and, later, among the commoners, mixing spiritual and secular elements. This way, the will came to have other functions other than just addressing earthly issues related to loved ones and the assets that were left; it also began to include issues related to the salvation of the soul, which led this type of document to its maximum complexity around the 18th century. Research that takes it as a privileged source must, therefore, consider these characteristics, which stand out as they are analyzed from the point of view of the Código Filipino... (2004), a code of Portuguese laws strongly inspired by Roman Law, or the First Constitutions of the Archbishopric of Bahia, ecclesiastical source influenced by the deliberations of the Council of Trent. In the first case, the religious aspects of the wills are only secondary, while in the second, the devotional / spiritual aspects are more valued.

This double nature, both spiritual and secular, means that the intentions recorded in the wills may indicate that the desire to contribute to someone's education or material well-being could also be related to the search for a more comfortable position in the *post mortem*, that is, closer to the salvation of the soul. Although considering the possibility that wills only mean a letter of good intentions - since it is not always possible to know whether the provisions have been fulfilled or not -, a more careful search with these documents reveals something that surpasses good intentions, as they signal effective actions that involved not only the testator but also the people with whom he related during his life.

With this in mind, it is also possible to discuss the role of the family in educational longevity for more than a generation, as well as to understand the role of education for the family and students and the relationships established between family generations. In this sense, the wills and *post mortem* inventories registered in Minas Gerais in the 18th century are important sources of research, and from them many situations of interest arise for the study of the history of education, such as, for

example, a family ensuring a good education for their heirs through a business of their own and loans between relatives ; or the case of a mulatto priest who was ordained because his father, Portuguese and lawyer, used all his resources until bankruptcy to guarantee his son's education. Based on these documents, it is possible, therefore, to analyze the meanings attributed to education for those families and the strategies used to achieve them.

The wills and *post mortem* inventories of the 18th century also make it possible to constitute another research problem, that is, the investigation of the degree of insertion of testators or their families in the literate world. Inventories give precious indications to material culture, involving what was related to the testators' occupations or professions, or referring to objects related to writing, such as papers, pens and inks. Eventually, books or a small library may appear, in addition to books for bookkeeping, such as ledgers or notebooks with notes on creditors and debtors. The relationships also arise from the indications of the wills with regard to their making, if written in their own hand by the testator, or at his request, and, in this case, the justifications for the use of such a file, which helps to indicate the insertions of different subjects in the written culture. Since it is rarer to have access to the original will, but to the transfer of the document, there is a recurring gap regarding the form of the signatures that were placed on it, which would help in the perception of the different levels of literacy through the analysis of these signatures. As a way of exploring the possibilities of studying these documents for the history of education in the colonial period in Brazil, we will now analyze the educational strategies of two families who lived in the Rio das Velhas District, Captaincy of Minas Gerais, and who carried out some type of investment to ensure the education of their descendants.

The recognition of natural children in a will was not uncommon, especially when there were no impediments to them inheriting their parents' assets, when there were no other legitimate heirs, or when the testator's social background or social strata would not be altered or tarnished for the recognition of a natural child. In his will made in 1752, Bartholomeu Gonçalves Bahia declared:

I am not, nor have I ever been married, but I have a natural son of Maria Gonçalves Bahia, single black woman, who was my Slave (...) which Son is Father Abbot Bernardo Gonçalves Bahia who assists in my company.

Bartholomeu Gonçalves Bahia revealed that he had made many sacrifices so that his natural son could be ordained, even though they were not people of many possessions, not having “[...] some real estate [...]”, but only the house in which they lived, which became “[...] patrimony for my son to be ordained”. The testator also tried not to leave his stepdaughters helpless by declaring that he left the black slave Roza to serve “the sisters of my son, Leonor, Madalena, and Francisca, and in the case of

selling or disposing of her, all three will receive the product of the sale equally”. He also left to “[...] Leonor Gonçalves Bahia wife of Domingos Dias Torres the Image of my Holy Crucifix for her Oratory”. Bartholomeu Gonçalves Bahia also willed clothes and a few gold octaves to his son's sisters (Testamento..., 1752). This will has some interesting characteristics. First of all, considering the information he presents us, it is difficult to establish a very clear border between the master family and the slave, which indicates the formation of a complex family nucleus. Second, it brings us to interesting questions about the personal relationships and affections involving those people - Bartholomeu, Maria, their son and their stepdaughters -, but makes clear the intentions of the testator in relation to his son, Bernardo.

Bartholomeu did not spare his most valuable assets to ensure his son had a good education and a good position as a religious man in that social context. Part of this strategy, in order to guarantee better positions for Bernardo, may have been the constitution of a wide network of sociability that involved the exchange of favors and loans of goods and even the exchange of gifts, pleasures and treats between members of a determined social strata who recognized themselves as equals and who could share a particular cultural capital. Evidence of these relationships is present in Bartholomeu's will, in which he declared that “[...] in the hands of Reverend Doctor Vigario Geral Mr. Lourenço Joze de Queiros Coimbra, there is a cutlery set consisting of a dozen silver spoons, another dozen forks, and a dozen knives with silver handles”. This exchange of pleasantries suggests self-recognition and the constitution of a group of ‘civilized’ people in the village, who needed silverware with silver handles to receive their most illustrious guests. These were investments in material assets and time, which was necessary for the establishment of networks of relationships and sociability that could bring future benefits.

Bartholomeu Gonçalves Bahia's will also brings other important information to the present study. In it, the testator claimed to have “one more library with a large number of law books and these are in the hands of Doctor Joze Telles da Sylva, the texts of canonical law, and one of the texts of civil law”. The loan of books was not uncommon and may indicate investment in social capital, recurrent among the literate of the time and, in many cases, involving people with the same type of education, as that was the case of Bartholomeu, a lawyer. It cannot be ignored, therefore, that living with such a library, with day-to-day writing and with the type of work done by his father would have left strong impressions on the boy Bernardo, the future abbot. The involvement of this family nucleus with writing went even further, as Bartholomeu was Treasurer of the Brotherhood of Nossa Senhora Santa Anna da Barra, an activity that implied some knowledge of reading and writing. The analysis of these aspects allows us to relate the educational strategies undertaken by Bartholomeu regarding daily practices related to writing and reading, and how this can be considered a process of construction and provision of cultural capital, necessary for the education of descendants.

This example may indicate the opportunities that free men or even mestizo freedmen, usually sons of slaves with their masters or with other white men, had to receive literate education, to eventually attend schools and reach social places of greater distinction. However, it is necessary to draw attention to the discussion on the understanding of the concept of family for the period, and given the specificities of that society that was formed in a context of strong migration and profound miscegenation.³ Part of these specificities is due to the constitution of a culturally mestizo universe in Minas⁴, resulting not only from biological mixtures, but also from cultural mixes in the most diverse spaces, including homes and, consequently, in the formation of the so called 'mineira' family (of Minas Gerais), in which attempts to regularize these families. In the Captaincy of Minas Gerais, throughout the 18th century, the manifestations of miscegenations were characterized by the multiplicity of forms and practices, since in that society there was an equal multiplicity of cultural values that were intertwined in constant movements. The establishment of these practices points to the permanence of traces not only of African culture, but also of ancient indigenous and European traditions. The permanence of these practices, in the proximity of everyday relationships, highlights a process of cultural mixtures. Therefore, it is necessary to verticalize the study on the way in which the affective relationships established within the family, often between people or groups from different cultural universes, contributed to the shaping of educational practices in Minas (Angelo, 2017).

Let us analyze the case of another family, which allows us to discuss the meanings of education, through the wills and inventories of Joana Fagundes de Souza and her daughter Antônia Maria Cardim, in which relationships and bonds outside the norms of the Church stand out, but that did not prevent the care with the raising and education of the children. In her will, Joana indicated her daughter Antonia Maria as her first executor, under the justification that she was of competent age and was not "[...] under a father's power [...]", that is, she was not subjected to a man, father, brother or husband (Testamento..., 1768). In fact, Antonia Maria never got married, as she declared in her will, but she had two children, Ignacio and Ignes, with Captain Brás Valentim de Oliveira. This family situation is made clearer by carefully reading excerpts from the will of Antônia Maria Cardim, daughter of Joana Fagundes de Souza: "I declare I'm single, never been married and that I don't have anyone that should receive my assets other than two children, one by male name Ignacio and another by female name Ignes" (Testamento..., 1769). The care for these two children was shared with the father, with whom the boy Ignácio lived, and "[...] who treated and educated

³ About families from the colonial period, see Angelo (2013), Cerceau Netto (2008), Figueiredo (1997) and Goldschmidt (2004).

⁴ There are many matrices and appropriations of the concept of mestizo, as well as miscegenation and cultural universe. As used in this article, they refer to the discussions of Gruzinski (2001), Paiva (2001), Paiva and Anastasia (2002).

him [...]” and sent him to study⁵; and with Ignês godparents, Colonel Luiz Jose Solto and his wife, in the house of whom she lived, and “[...] where she was treated and educated with all charity” (Inventário..., 1769). The establishment of strategies for the upbringing and education of children certainly obeyed legal requirements when it came to underage who were orphaned. However, additional actions indicated the nature and depth of personal relationships built throughout life, between family members - whatever their configuration was - and between them and their social circle, which could include sponsors, partners in economic activities, priests, as indicated by documents such as wills and inventories. These are sources that also allow us to perceive the differences between the education given to boys and girls, not only when it came to referral to school education - such as sending the boys to the seminary - but also when it came to decisions about who should be instructed, the boy or the girl. Antonia Maria's children did not stay together after her death. Ignácio remained with his father, and Ignês lived with his godparents, a couple legally united by marriage, which would give her advantages in her education process and, above all, in guaranteeing her future as a wife. In fact, reporting as executor of Antonia Maria, her brother-in-law and uncle of the orphans informed, some time later, that Colonel José Luis Sotto, godfather of Inês, was “in the diligence of giving him status” (Inventário..., 1769).

These analytical possibilities through wills and inventories lead the line of investigation that connects the history of education to family history and the need to understand the role of the latter in educational strategies and processes. That is why it is important to discuss the personal and affective relationships established between family generations and the meanings attributed to education, according to social places, gender relations and expectations regarding the search for social distinction, at its most varied levels.

If, on the one hand, the different family configurations produced different strategies for the education and instruction of children and young people, on the other hand, this same diversity was combated by the civil and ecclesiastical authorities, who saw it as obstacles to their civilizing intentions. The actions undertaken by the State and the Church, in this sense, themselves became educational strategies with the aim of forming ideal Christian subjects and opening the way for the construction of a ‘civilized’ society in America.

⁵ This generally meant that a private teacher, or paid by the Chamber was recruited to teach the first letters - reading, writing and counting - and, eventually, Latin grammar, mainly when there was an intention to send the boy to a seminar, or simply to equip him with skills that would allow him to access social places of greater distinction.

EDUCATION, MARRIAGE AND SOCIAL ORDER

The imposition of cultural models is made, among other means, by educational processes historically constituted within a given society. For example, Christian societies that determine the possibility that all professed believers can be saved, which brings them closer together - although the coexistence between these same believers does not even resembles equality, even if they participate, in more general terms, of the same spirituality. On the other hand, it is this same spirituality that endorses, in modern times, the idea that the monarch would be someone who received directly from God the task of governing, leaving to subjects only obedience without contestation, and, if they were reticent to his authority, it would be against God Himself that they rebelled (Hespanha and Xavier, 1998, p.135).

The education historian who turns to the study of the Old Regime societies needs to consider the educational processes associated with these conformations. Assessing the way in which they occurred and the resistance expressed by those to whom they addressed is of fundamental importance to understand the cultural complexity of colonial society in Brazil. In this sense, in the context of the institutional foundation of the Captaincy of Minas Gerais, the control mechanisms of the Crown began to manifest relative stability between the years 1719 and 1732. We say Relative, because the miscegenation produced by the strong presence of slavery put in question the model of 'good society' predominantly white. Most of the mestizos, the result of the approximation between whites, blacks and mulattos, produced political instability, when they tended to behave socially as if they were white, in a society in which skin color was an instrument of social distinction. In the horizon of expectations of the authorities of the Crown, in consortium with the principals of the land and with the Ultramarino Council, it was necessary to curtail the bonds that resulted in this 'undesirable offspring'. The great challenge posed to those who ruled in the Captaincy of Minas Gerais was to create impediments to the expansion of the mestizo population. As a result, the use of a spousal pedagogy based on legitimate bonds between whites took shape, as a way of correcting "[...] one of the biggest ruins that are threatening these Minas, which is the poor quality of people they are filling up with, because these people live immorally without the obligation of being married, there are so many mulattos in them [...]", as stated by Governor Dom Lourenço de Almeida, in 1722 (Sobre não..., 1980).

The bases for these actions were established in the First Constitutions of the Archbishopric of Bahia, especially in the execution of pastoral visits and ecclesiastical inquests, and the compliance with their demands was adjusted in line with the needs inherent to each region.⁶ In this sense, the bishops, when writing their pastorals, paid

⁶ Pastorals consisted of periodic visits to parishes under the jurisdiction of a particular Bishop. He could run them personally, or he could recruit some clergyman of his trust for that assignment. In

special attention to the peculiar problems in their diocese, through pedagogical instruments by which they should apply corrections against deviants. It is at this moment that the catechism associated with the condemnation and the fight against concubinage gains prominence. In 1722, once again, Governor D. Lourenço de Almeida informed the King of Portugal, Dom João V, that all the crimes

[...] that had happened in Minas Gerais would be avoided if the majority of the villagers were married, because they always live more peacefully, taking care of the maintenance of their families and the land where they want to perpetuate it, and not only set an example for the others, they somehow compel you to behave well (Sobre haver..., 1980).

It is necessary to highlight the way in which this pedagogy, concerned with the constitution of a white hegemony in the Captaincy, was processed. It was shaped by dialogical educational practices⁷, which main norm was the adaptation to local conditions (Ramos, 1995). In this sense, the ecclesiastical authorities who visited the different locations of the Rio das Velhas District, carrying the diocesan guide booklet, ended up transferring to the main residents, the whites, the task of denouncing those that the community knew as deviating from the official faith, those who they were not subject to the diocesan catechism, which often included the local clergy themselves. The last line of defense against a complaint was the prestige that the individual could have in the community, which explains why persistent concubinarians were never denounced (Oliveira, 2007).

The pedagogy of non-miscegenation was opposed to the instability produced by the proliferation of mulattos and browns, which put at risk the main feature of the white nobility of the land: the distinction. Mestizos subverted this model, because the main condition for being noble on earth was being white (which did not imply some exceptions); and many, when they reached the condition of freedmen - and because they had resources -, adopted the way of life of the whites, using all the instruments at their disposal to distinguish themselves, making use of the wealth eventually inherited from their white parents, or even obtained from their own businesses. As the captain-general of the village of Pitangui well noted: Whoever has money will do what he wants (Souza, 2006). With this, the so-called nobility of the land, by restricting the access of the mestizos to the distinction and by endorsing the

addition to the behavioral issues of the community (among which is included the practice of concubinage), the cleanliness conditions of the temples were also verified, as well as the local clerics' fulfilment of priestly tasks, among other matters.

⁷ These practices present a strong ethnographic feature, because they are preceded by a "dense description" of a given community, as a way of understanding it, and only then acting on it in an attempt to catechetically correct deviations from religious dogmas, which was the goals of pastoral care.

hegemony of the Crown in Minas, distinguished itself by taking part in the government, exercising positions in the local administration or obtaining honors, such as the titles of the Order of Christ or the Holy Office, military patents, among others. Even so, as Laura de Mello and Souza well noted, in the shifting terrain of a society in the making, all of this could sound false if titles and attributions were not supported by the social body (Souza, 2006). The movement described by this emerging elite was to try to differentiate themselves from possibly enriched mulattos - who were also looking for distinction - based on the condition that they were children of whites. The pedagogy to fight these practices was based on religion, in attention to the immense licentiousness with which whites behaved when they fell in love with black women and mulattos, and closed their eyes to other crimes against the faith, such as witchcraft, calundus, sodomy, blessing sessions, among others.

In 1727, king D. João V ordered the governor D. Lourenço de Almeida to compose a precise list in which the number of people who inhabited the villages and other towns in Minas was indicated, informing how many were whites and mulattos, as well as those married to white, mulatto or black women. This initiative by the Portuguese monarch makes clear the effort to contain the expansion of the mestizo population, for which the first step would be to know its quantity. In the same year, the councilors of Vila Nova da Rainha (now Caeté) indicated that this was the village that housed the second largest slave population in Minas Gerais and the one that, on the other hand, had the largest contingent of whites. With that, they implicitly said that they did not mix themselves in the same proportion as the other towns and that, as a result, they requested tax exemptions such as those that owned the cities of Porto and Rio de Janeiro. They also asked for the release of the dowry to their daughters when they were to marry, because they were: “[...] the best dowry for the husbands, mainly daughters of the Minas of parents who have served in their chambers” (Representação da Câmara..., 1727).

Running the model of social control related to the mestizo population, the Church played an evident role in operationalizing the legal mechanisms provided by the First Constitutions of the Archbishopric of Bahia. In this sense, the educational instruments of catechesis took on a double function: the first, as for the pastoral ones, which assumed a catechetical function, according to the Tridentine doctrine, in convincing by faith. The second function, on the other hand, concerned diocesan visits, which took a punitive role in its mildest form: the pecuniary penalty, or even, ultimately, a more severe one - the eternal damnation of the soul. As we have already said, even the local clergy were the target of these investigations and punishments, as was the case with Fr. Melchior Cardoso de Aguiar, resident in the parish of Curral Del Rei, admonished by the visitor Lourenço José de Queirós Coimbra and notified

[...] for the acknowledgement of the guilt indicated by the inquest of the visit, which the gentleman admonished to throw out of his house the women who are in it for the imminent danger that is

exposed living with them inside doors and he said that he accepted admonition and promised an amendment for the guilt that everything came to an end, I, Antônio da Cunha Rebello, all recorded by the notary officer (Devassas, 1734).

Each pastoral letter must be understood in a social environment that gave it meaning (Geertz, 1989), that is, as an important element in understanding the social formation of Minas Gerais, in which a pedagogy based on the containment of the mestizo population acquired a central role. This can be analyzed from the pastoral letter of D. Frei Antônio de Guadalupe, from 1726, a document composed of 19 very concise chapters. However, one of them, dedicated to the crime of concubinage, was more detailed with several items, among which stand out:

1. The confessor cannot absorb the penitent who has the concubine inside doors and can leave her and does not want to do it because he is on a close and voluntary occasion which must be avoided, we say, which must be totally avoided at all times.
2. And even if a long time has passed without sinning with her, yet as she is in the same house and on the same local occasion, people might continue to picture that the scandal still exists.
3. And although the concubine is very useful for his household and it is not easy to find another woman with the same willingness, he is obliged to throw her out of the house, because from the expulsion he does not lose his fame or it causes scandal, rather it causes great damage in being inside doors, nor does the material loss equals the spiritual that they lose (Rodrigues, 2005, p.37).⁸

Since free marriages characterized cohabitation without the sacrament of marriage having been celebrated, coercion of practitioners lay in the declaration that this type of crime would result in the irreparable loss of the soul, unless the couple got separated, or engaged in marriage, if they could. This is because many had concubines being married, or even in the condition of clergy, which, in the first case, constituted adultery and, in the second, sacrilege, aggravating the crime of concubinage. For this reason, the pastorals acquired a pedagogical aspect that sought to convince the faithful through religious education. This instrument was the

⁸ When the Easter release was approaching, when all the faithful had to confess, some used the means of leaving their concubines to return to this condition. What item 3 recommends is that concubinarians should dissolve this relationship at all times. The expression “inside doors”, in item 2, designates the coexistence between loved ones in a home.

centerpiece of a pedagogy centered on fear and which also used images in churches, the cult of souls in purgatory, the cult of saints who interceded in favor of sinners.

If the pastoral visits were part of a pedagogy of convincing by 'love', the ecclesiastical inquests acted in convincing by 'pain'. Used since the 1960s by colonial historiography, these sources are practically unknown in the history of education and have the potential to study educational processes directly directed by the Church and aimed at shaping individuals to the social order. The visits, intended to gather strategic information about the faithful's ways of life, were used to decide how the educational pieces for the correction of the faithful - the pastorals - were to be composed, which should be read during the masses and explained by the priests. Pastorals announced the time for conversion and correction, but if they failed, they took the pedagogical form of punishment.

To understand this process, we took one of the oldest books known in the Ecclesiastic Archives of the Archdiocese of Mariana and which records the visit, by the District of Rio das Velhas, in the year 1727, of a visiting delegation that aimed Arraial Velho in the parish of Raposos, the parish of Roças Grandes and the village of Sabará. In this document, 106 admonitions for the offense of concubinage are recorded in those locations (Devassas, 1727-1748). The inhibiting actions involved the imputation, to those convicted of concubinage, of sentences ranging from 3 to 9 thousand réis, depending on the recurrence of the crime. As a rule, someone caught for the fourth time onwards was sent to the presence of the vicar of the parish. During the 1727 visitation, three priests were sentenced for illicit communications: one in Caeté, and two in Roça Grande.

Impunity could represent the danger of a bad example; therefore, the greater the public fame and the social carat of the individual, the greater the commitment of the authorities to stop the scandal. This leads us to an important pedagogical dimension, particularly valued in the 17th and 18th centuries, the example, seen above all from the perspective of the main calls of the community to be the first to show themselves faithful to the commandments of the Church and the Crown.⁹ The constituted authorities - city councilors, judges, ombudsmen, captains, stewards and others -, to the same extent, by not respecting the norms of morals and good customs, showed themselves as a terrible example to the population, since they were, paradoxically, that they should watch over the fulfillment of such norms, for being recruited from among the 'good men'.

After the diocesan visit was over, the community returned to normality, leaving the duties of vigilance to the local parish priest, until the next visit was made. Finally, more than a measure of success that was actually configured in the successful

⁹ One of the influential authors in Portugal, defender of ideas about the need for elites to be examples for the education of the subordinate classes, was the Englishman John Locke, basis for the thoughts of the Portuguese Martinho de Pina and Proença, author of Notes for the education of a noble boy, of 1734.

containment of the mestizo population, the actions dealt with here - at the beginning when Minas Gerais was constituted - laid the foundation for something much more perennial, which would be the whitening, as a way to deny African origin, a phenomenon so perceptible today. In contrast, it may be necessary to return to the footprints left in the sand by our ancestors to understand what is happening in contemporary times, when these lines are written or read.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

In Portuguese America, the absence or small presence of schools did not mean an absence of education or instruction. Until the 18th century, States were not responsible for the education of the population, this was not their duty. It was understood that education was primarily the responsibility of the family, in the first care of children, that is, their food, clothing, health and first notions in the fields of morals and good customs. Then, that responsibility would be of the Church and of religion, providing Christian formation through catechism and promoting the participation of people in ceremonies, sacraments and rituals, educating by word and by good examples. Although very close, education and instruction could have different meanings at that time. Education was generally associated with the idea of the general formation of the individual to make him a good subject of the monarchy and a good Christian faithful to the Church and religion, and therefore it should be available to the entire population. In this way, the role of families and the Church itself was emphasized, but also of the State, which was in charge of reinforcing principles of loyalty to the monarchy and obedience to hierarchies. As these educational actions were not always associated with school institutions, researching and analysing them implies expanding the possibilities for understanding the meanings attributed to them in that historical period and, above all, identifying the processes by which they happened.

In this article we seek to associate what we understand as educational strategies to cultural values and the forms assumed by colonial society in a specific region - the Captaincy of Minas Gerais -, where the dominant institutions, Church and State, have established themselves in a complex, active and vigilant way as to the movements of a population that seemed to constantly escape from European "civilizing" ideals. Even though it incorporated principles of law and custom, it did so in the midst of everyday solutions considered deviant or rebellious, whether in the conformation of family arrangements, or in behavioral and moral transgression. Thus, taking care of children born outside the legal marriage, raising them, educating them and instructing them to insert themselves with distinction in society, in accordance with accepted and legitimized principles, were two sides of the same coin. And, in addition to the arm of law and repression, those who put themselves in the position of caretakers of religion and monarchy also used educational actions aimed at adjusting to a project of society

constantly harassed by a complex reality resulting from multiple cultural and ethnic intersections. In these plots, we can glimpse problems that are of interest to the study of the history of education in a context prior to the establishment of a school structure that, little by little, would assume many of the functions that, as we have seen here, were in charge of families and the Church.

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