

# NOTES ON THE PEDAGOGY OF ORATORIANOS IN PORTUGUESE AMERICA

Apontamentos sobre a pedagogia dos oratorianos na América Portuguesa

Apuntes sobre la pedagogía de los oratorianos en la América Portuguesa

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**Abstract:** This text studies the work carried out by the Congregation of the Oratory – especially in the Captaincy of Pernambuco. It also discusses its pedagogy and its relevance to the studies in the field of history of education in Brazil. The research is bibliographic and document-based. The educational activity of the Oratorians was developed from the Crown's and the Portuguese society's elite demands. The royal privileges enabled the Oratorians to enter the field of education as an alternative to Jesuit teaching. Their actions also had repercussions outside the Portuguese metropolis, as they happened in Pernambuco – in Portuguese America – and in Goa. The political, religious, and educational role of the Oratorians was relevant between the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries and lasted until 1830. The Oratorian schools were focused on the study of the national language rather than Latin. In addition, there was a strong emphasis on mathematics, natural sciences, history related to geography, and experimentation.

**Keywords:** History of Education; Religion; Oratorians; Pedagogy.

**Resumo:** Este texto investiga a atuação da Congregação do Oratório, especialmente na Capitania de Pernambuco, e discute sua pedagogia e relevância para os estudos na área de história da educação no Brasil. A pesquisa é de caráter bibliográfico e documental. A atividade educacional dos oratorianos foi se desenvolvendo a partir das demandas da Coroa e da elite da sociedade portuguesa. Os privilégios régios possibilitaram aos oratorianos sua inserção no campo da educação, como uma alternativa ao ensino jesuítico. Suas ações também repercutiram fora da metrópole portuguesa, como ocorreu em Pernambuco, na América Portuguesa e em Goa. O papel político, religioso e educacional dos oratorianos em Pernambuco foi significativo entre os séculos XVII e XVIII e se estendeu até 1830. As escolas oratorianas eram voltadas para o estudo da língua nacional em vez do latim; além disso, havia uma grande valorização da matemática, das ciências naturais, da história ligada à geografia e da experimentação.

**Palavras-chave:** História da Educação; Religião; Oratorianos; Pedagogia.

**Resumen:** Este texto investiga la actuación de la Congregación del Oratorio, especialmente en la Capitania de Pernambuco, y plantea su pedagogía y relevancia para los estudios en el área de la historia de la educación en Brasil. La investigación es de carácter bibliográfico y documental. La actividad educacional de los oratorianos se ha desarrollado a partir de las demandas de la Corona y de la élite de la sociedad portuguesa. Los privilegios régios possibilitaron a los oratorianos su inserción en el ámbito de la educación, como una alternativa a la enseñanza jesuítica. Sus acciones también repercutieron fuera de la metrópoli portuguesa, como ocurrió en Pernambuco, y en la América Portuguesa y en Goa. El papel político, religioso y educacional de los oratorianos em Pernambuco fue significativo entre los siglos XVII y XVIII y se extendió hasta 1830. Las escuelas oratorianas se volvieron hacia el estudio de la lengua nacional en lugar del latín; Además, había una gran valoración de la matemática, de las ciencias naturales, de la historia vinculada a la geografía y de la experimentación.

**Palabras clave:** História de la Educación; Religión; Oratorianos; Pedagogía.

## INTRODUCTION

The theme of this manuscript is the education developed by the Congregation of the Oratory, especially in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries in Portuguese America. The insertion of the Congregation of the Oratory in Brazil began in 1659 with the arrival of two priests: João Duarte do Sacramento and João Rodrigues Vitória, who worked in the creation of new villages and the diocese of Olinda in 1676. From 1759 onwards, with the institution of the so-called “Pombaline reforms of public education”, a measure that would initiate broad reforms in Portuguese education at all levels, the Oratorians gained greater expression, given that they took over important Jesuit institutions in the Kingdom of Portugal (Carvalho, 1978). These measures were innovative as they placed the State as the guide of education and instruction. Since the Portuguese State was still governed by the patronage statute, the ideas of rationalist enlightenment pedagogy, up until that moment, were linked to the Church. On the presence and work of the Oratorians in Brazil, we have memories recorded in two extraordinary baroque monuments: The Church of the Mother of God, built between the years 1680 and 1709, and the Convent of the Oratorian priests of Saint Philip Neri, built between the years 1720 and 1732 (today a shopping center), both in Recife. In the convent, candidates for religious life were trained under the Oratorian rule.

Typically, emphasis is placed on the period between 1549 and 1759, dominated by Jesuit educational practices. Certainly, the Society of Jesus made a great contribution to the field of the history of education and was hegemonic; however, other religious orders also stood out, with their history, worldview, and the way they dealt with the issue of education.

In the field of the history of education, this is a topic that has been little explored, even more so when the historical role of Religious Orders is analyzed in the historiography of Brazilian education. To understand the work of the Congregation of the Oratory in Brazil, we first need to discuss its origins in Portugal and the conflicts with the Jesuits. It is important to make it clear that the Congregation of the Oratory was not born marked by a pedagogical vocation.

According to Father Bartolomeu de Quental, founder of the Congregation in Portugal, the main objective of Oratorian spirituality involved the dissemination of a new understanding of religious experience and assistance to those most in need. The need for training new religious people and those who wanted to learn in their schools encouraged the creation of classes aimed at teaching the first letters, as well as for those who wanted to continue and deepen their studies.

The religious activities of the Oratorians depended on a dedication to science that enabled teaching, preaching, the salvation of souls, and the glorification of God. In this context, the progressive consolidation of pedagogical activity among the Oratorians was intrinsically linked to religious needs. To coordinate pastoral

activities, involving preaching and directing consciences, it was necessary for the congregation to invest in the training of its staff.

The catechetical and formative work developed by Oratorians in Portugal and Portuguese America marked a period of significant changes in education. The marks of this pedagogy can be seen in the educational practice of the Oratorians. It is worth highlighting, for instance, in the field of elementary training, the use of the work entitled *Instrução de principiantes, e novo methodo de se aprenderem as primeiras letras para o uso das escolas da Congregação do Oratorio*, written in 1780 by the Congregation of the Oratory and intended to be an important pedagogical manual for training on first letters.

Some textbooks of the Congregation of the Oratory published at the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century are important study references for the History of Brazilian Education, since the pedagogical program of the Oratorians, following the royal and pontifical determination of 1745, enabled the educational action of religious Oratorians in the field of public, elementary and secondary education.

Education, in Portuguese America, played a strategic role and aimed at implementing the civilizational model that provided for the Christianization of Indigenous people to dominate the territory. It was a fundamental part of Portugal's historical movement, which was modernizing. And the Oratorians disputed political and educational, as well as religious, hegemony with the Jesuits and Franciscans, proposing alternative teaching methodologies and curricula.

To conduct the research, we looked for references about the Oratorians in theses and dissertations defended at different universities: Federal University of Pernambuco; Federal Fluminense University; State University of Maringá; Federal University of Paraná; University of Lisbon; University of Porto, and Portuguese Catholic University. The vast majority of studies are focused on historical research, with emphasis on the work of the Oratorians in villages, the intellectual work of religious members of the Order, and matters related to archeology. In the field of education, we highlight a manuscript on the pedagogy of the Oratorians, written by Antônio Alberto Banha de Andrade in 1981, as a result of his PhD in History from the University of Lisbon.

To analyze the role of Oratorians in education, we held a discussion about the presence of this congregation in Portuguese America. Secondly, in the final part, we analyze the text entitled *A Congregação do Oratório de São Filipe Néri em Pernambuco*, written by José Antonio Gonsalves de Mello, published in 1984, as well as the text called *A Biblioteca dos Oratorianos*, published in 1978, both found in the IAHGP journal.

## THE ORATORIAN IN PORTUGUESE AMERICA

To talk about the Oratorians in Portuguese America, we must, albeit briefly, highlight their emergence in Portugal. The congregation emerged in Portugal in the second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The spirituality and religious inspiration of the Oratorians did not resemble Ignatian religiosity. The Ignatian project was based on a counter-reformist religious practice, and what brought them together were these objectives: evangelization and Christianization. The Oratorians were not tied to obedience or perpetual vows. Pedagogical practice also differed. In Oratorian schools, there was greater space for practices aimed at teaching the national language, as opposed to teaching Latin (Cambi, 1999).

The Ignatians developed a formation based on rationality, logic and rhetoric. The Ignatian pedagogical action was virtually the same anywhere in the world. The intervention strategies and action guidelines were precise. And divergences in the action plan were assessed by superior hierarchical members, without the right to appeals. The effectiveness in teacher training, recruitment, and student preparation made the Ignatians recognized and prestigious. They were listened to by kings, ministers, military personnel, governors, and the colonial elite. The political and cultural influence of the Ignatians was almost always unquestionable. In this sense, speaking about the modern Portuguese era without highlighting the Ignatian legacy would be a very serious error (Santos, 2010).

The work of the Oratorians, compared to that of the Ignatians, could be fit into a modest role, given the small number of members, the number of institutions in Portugal and the Americas, and the period of activity in society. Furthermore, it is worth highlighting that the formation of part of the first Oratorians was the result of the intellectual work of the Ignatians, such as priests Bartolomeu do Quental and Manuel Bernardes, Luiz Antônio Verney, among others.

Religious Oratorians are historically recognized for the role they played in Portugal and its colonies, both on a pedagogical and theological level, inspired by modern philosophy. Among the innovations, we highlight the direct study of the vernacular language, grammar and Portuguese spelling without the intermediation of the study of Latin. Philip Neri (1515-1595) frequented Ignatian spaces and appreciated the organization and action plans of the Jesuits. He was an admirer of the work of Saint Francis Xavier (1506-1552), carried out in the East. Philip Neri's work was not based on the typical religiosity of the counter-reformation. His actions were more discreet, always guided by sensitivity, affection, charity and patience. The congregants of the fraternity of the so-called "Oratorians" did not take the vows of the monastic orders.

What bound them was pastoral work. Each religious man had complete freedom of action. The congregation of the Oratory was constituted as an original institution with no equivalent. To understand its objectives and operating structure, we need to take into account the life story and religious action of Philip Neri, its founder.

He was of Tuscan origin. His first teachings took place in the Dominican monastery of Florence, with the friars of San Marco. In 1533, he went to live in Rome to work as a missionary. There, he worked as a tutor in the house of an aristocrat; two years later, he began his studies, under the guidance of the Augustinians. Philip lived as a layman in Rome for over 17 years. In 1544, he met Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556). To serve poor pilgrims, in 1548, with his confessor Persiano Rossa, he founded the brotherhood of the Holy Trinity of Pilgrims and Convalescents.

The brotherhood became a center for providing assistance to the poor. They welcomed, confessed, guided, helped with meditation and prayer. The work was carried out near the Church of S. Jerome of Charity; shortly afterwards, the place became known as "Oratory". In 1564, the space was organized as a community of clergy and lay people, united by the ideals of Philip Neri. They lived in total simplicity. Being from Florence, he was granted the ecclesiastical responsibilities of the Church of Saint John of the Florentines, which allowed him to organize daily reading practices, individual meditation, dialogues on various topics, and sermons; he also performed the chants of the canonical hours and the corporal and spiritual works of mercy (Santos, 2010).

The community organized by Philip Neri lived like that for many years, practicing collective action of free initiative. The members of this community did not practice fasting or abstinence. The practices developed by the community became known to the papacy. They were instructed to structure the community as a congregation so that the practice would remain, even after the death of its founders.

Philip Neri took on the responsibilities of the Church of S. Maria Novella, in 1575, a time when Pope Gregory XIII (1502-1585, pope from 1572 to 1585) asked the Oratorians, as they were already known, to transform themselves into a secular religious congregation and to adopt a Rule. They provisionally adopted one in 1583. In the year 1588, they made changes; and in 1595, they carried out deeper updates.

The Congregation of the Oratory was approved in 1612 by the papacy. The religious institution of the oratory was born with its own characteristics: its members did not profess any type of vows; they kept their real-state assets, and helped maintain their own livelihood. Those who did not have assets had to find a godfather to cover their expenses. The educational activities they carried out were aimed at members of the Congregation and also at the external community. In general, the Oratorians led an exemplary life dedicated to obedience to the bishops and the service to Christianity. The Oratorians of Naples followed in another direction. They had a more centralist, monastic and secular view of pastoral action.

With the death of Philip in 1595, beatified in 1615 and canonized in 1622, a series of biographies about him emerged, the oldest being written by Gallonio, Philip's friend and collaborator, in 1600. Biographies of Philip Neri were published in Latin, Italian and Castilian, and circulated among the religious elites of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, which significantly encouraged the founding of new houses throughout Europe.

Oratorian houses also emerged in France. They were organized by Pierre de Bérulle, in 1611. Some of the principles of the French Oratory were inspired by the ideas of Philip Neri; however, little by little, they became distant. Pierre Bérulle was from the aristocracy, with a solid background in philosophy and theology. He defended the exercise of authority as an essential path to maintaining a structured society. He collaborated with French politics and wrote many works, among which the following stand out: *Brief discourse on interior abnegation* and *Discourse on the state and grandeurs of Jesus* (Santos, 2010).

Bérulle obtained approval for the constitution of the French Oratorian congregation in 1613. The congregation, just as the Italian Oratory, excluded perpetual vows and was an association of priests bound by ties of friendship and trust. He defended the cult of interior life, meditation, the exercise of the priesthood, and Christocentric spirituality, in which Christ is the model and the means to reach the Father. The French Congregation provided for a Superior General and the holding of general assemblies to make decisions in all houses.

The French Oratorians stood out among the religious men. They were cultured, educated, and used language of a high cultural level, which drew the attention of the bishops, who gave them the administration of respected seminaries, especially in Paris. Important and prestigious intellectuals in so-called modern France attended Oratorian schools. Educational training in Oratorian schools was dedicated to Natural Sciences, based on experimentation and Living Languages, not restricted to Philosophy or the study of Classics.

Oratorian schools were prestigious, sought after by elites and, at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, recognized in academia. In Portuguese America, it was no different. In the texts analyzed, we observed the marks of this training more focused on mathematical and experimental studies. They were great promoters of the Newtonian thought and modern physics at that time, influenced by French religious Oratorians.

The French Congregation of the Oratory inspired the Portuguese one, particularly with regard to pedagogical and didactic practices. In Portugal, the Congregation of the Oratory was founded in Lisbon, by Father Bartolomeu de Quental (1626-1698), in 1659, also influenced by the ideals of Philip Neri. From the Italian Oratorians, he followed: the practice of charity, mental prayer, the organization of lay brotherhoods, the restriction on mortifications, and the freedom of religious people to leave whenever they wanted. From the French model, he followed the teaching curriculum and the more centralized form of organization (Ishaq, 2004).

The Oratorian pedagogy developed in America within the modern scientific model. The main subjects of the Philosophy course were Logic, Physics and Ethics. The text *A Biblioteca dos Oratorianos* reinforces this argument, that is, that pedagogy should be based on modern philosophers. These changes were introduced from the time of Bartolomeu de Quental. He played an important ecclesiastical role in Portugal as a preacher and confessor during the reign of D. João IV (1604-1656), king of Portugal and Algarves from 1640 until his death, and his successors Afonso VI (1643-1683), king of Portugal and Algarves from 1656 until his death; and D. Pedro II of Portugal (1648-1706), king from 1683 until his death. The period Bartolomeu de Quental lived was marked by the reflections of the advance of the Protestant Reformation, by Christian humanism and by the splendor of the so-called “Golden Age” of Spanish spirituality, which had a significant influence on his way of thinking and acting, from the examples of Saint Ignatius of Loyola, Saint Francis Xavier, Friar Luís de Granada (1504-1588), Saint Teresa of Jesus (1515-1582), Saint John of the Cross (1542-1591), among others (Gomes, 2016).

Father Bartolomeu de Quental was influenced by *Devotio Moderna*, a movement for the renewal of Catholic spirituality between the 14<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries. He knew the greatest difficulty of the Portuguese kingdom, namely: the lack of preparation of the clergy for the exercise of the priesthood. In this context, the founding of the Oratory in Portugal aimed to change the practice of religious life. He introduced into the Royal Chapel a type of prayer in a mental prayer scheme; in addition, he carried out strong missionary activity in Portugal.

He toured towns and villages in the diocese of Lisbon, developing doctrine preaching practices, seeking to combat religious ignorance and, through general confessions, bringing repentance to the faithful. He advocated the development of missionary action that helped people grow spiritually.

The mission of the Oratorians in Portuguese America began around 1659, under the government of André Vidal de Negreiros (1620-1680), governor of the Captaincy of Pernambuco from 1657 to 1660, with the arrival to Brazil of the Portuguese Oratorian priest João Duarte do Sacramento (1610-1686), accompanied by his confrere João Rodrigues Vitória. Bartolomeu de Quental was interested in missionary work in Brazil, even more so after the expulsion of the Dutch, and sent his confreres to restore the Catholic faith. There were reports that the residents lived without spiritual assistance. Their purpose was to establish missions within the Captaincy of Pernambuco to catechize the Indigenous people (Gomes, 2016; Medeiros & Medeiros, 1993).

Priests João Duarte do Sacramento and João Rodrigues Vitória took possession of the hermitage of Santo Amaro, in the city of Olinda, in 1662. Shortly afterwards, with the help of residents and governor Francisco de Brito Freire (1625-1692), governor of Pernambuco from 1661 to 1664, they built a convent around the hermitage and expanded the Church, dedicated to Our Lady of the Incarnation.

Officially, Pernambuco's Congregation of the Oratory of Saint Philip Neri was founded in 1670, with headquarters in Olinda. The Holy See granted Brief *Ex injuncto nobis coelitres*, on July 17, 1671, by Pope Clement X (1590-1676, pope from 1670 until his death). Father João Rodrigues Vitória was sent to Rome to obtain definitive approval for affiliation to the Congregation of Saint Philip Neri. At the time, before going to Rome, he visited Portugal and, at the request of Bartolomeu de Quental, he also requested approval and affiliation to the Congregation of Portugal.

The Oratorians of Portuguese America gave up their autonomy to join Portugal's Congregation of the Oratory of Portugal in exchange for support for missionary work. The incorporation took place on March 29, 1686, in the city of Lisbon. The new superior of the Congregation, Father José Lobo, left for Brazil, accompanied by the two procurators and twenty other priests and brothers to collaborate with the missionary project of the Brazilian Oratorians.

The beginning of educational practices occurred sometime later with the installation of the Oratorians in Recife, at the Convento da Madre de Deus, built between 1679 and 1680. The Chapel was made public in 1683. At the Convent, the religious men began to teach courses to candidates for the priesthood and to the external community. Concern with the quality of teaching led religious men to bring in famous intellectuals to teach Philosophy and Theology. The royal privileges, donations and intercessions from the Portuguese Crown to the Oratorians contributed significantly to the pedagogical, spiritual and political purposes of these religious men, consolidating their presence in the Portuguese kingdom.

Father João do Sacramento responded as a substitute for the newly created bishopric of Pernambuco, in 1677, with headquarters in Olinda, while prelate D. Estêvão Brioso de Figueiredo (1630-1689), who served as vicar general of the Archbishopric of Lisbon, did not arrive. Father Sacramento held the bishopric until 1678, when D. Estêvão arrived in Brazil. Due to his charisma, dedication and respect from the population, Father Sacramento was chosen to succeed the first bishop in the See of Olinda, when the latter returned to Portugal to assume the bishopric of Funchal, on Madeira Island.

The main catechization centers for Oratorians in Pernambuco were: Ipojuca (Tabajaras indigenous people), Iratagui (currently Alhandra), Limoeiro (Tupis), Ararobá (Xucurus). It is worth noting that not all of these missions were created by the Oratorians; some of them had been founded by the Jesuits (Lima, 1979). With the expansion of the activities of the Oratorians in the Convent of Recife, D. Pedro II granted a license for the convent to become the main one of the Congregation. This authorization was given through an Apostolic Brief issued by the Holy See in the first of July 1688, handed over to the Oratorians by the third Bishop, D. Matias de Figueiredo e Melo (1653-1694). The Brief established the Convent of Recife as the main one of the Congregation; and the Convent



of Santo Amaro, in Pernambuco, would serve as a hospice for convalescents and a vacation spot for students (Simis, 2005).

The Oratorians worked on missions in Pernambuco between the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, especially. The missions contributed to the occupation of the inner parts of the hinterland. They were started after the expulsion of the Dutch in 1654, with the expansion of livestock activities and land distribution. The *Junta de Missões*, a consultative body linked to the central administration, was the regulatory body for the missions which, in Pernambuco, comprised the regions of Alagoas, Itamaracá and Paraíba.

The Seminary for Oratorian studies was founded in the 17<sup>th</sup> century in Recife; and expanded in 1754. In it, religious people dedicated themselves to teaching Philosophy, Theology, Arts and Humanities; and were responsible for the formation of new religious and lay people. The work *Instrução de principiantes, e novo methodo de se aprenderem as primeiras letras para o uso das escolas da Congregação do Oratorio* was used as a primer for the first degree in the training of its religious men. The Oratorians' library was highly esteemed, because it had a vast collection, with more than four thousand books. Missionary activities in the countryside were gradually directed to the city of Recife. The Oratorians' farms in the countryside were sold and, as a result, they managed to increase their real-estate assets in the city of Recife (*Aula Patrimônio...*, 2007).

Renowned masters in the field of Philosophy and Theology came to this Seminar to teach classes, such as: Friar Bartolomeu do Pilar (1667-1733), the first appointed bishop of the Diocese of Belém, took office by proxy in 1721, and his arrival in Belém occurred in 1724. In 1702, in Lisbon, Friar Bartolomeu earned the degree of Apostolic Doctor in Theology. He was a renowned speaker, having several of his sermons printed. In Pernambuco, he also served as: Synodal Examiner, Visiting Commissioner (1699), and Commissioner of Carmelite Convents (1704). On September 9, 1717, Friar Bartolomeu was chosen to be the first bishop of Grão-Pará; the appointment was confirmed on March 4, 1720 by Pope Clement XI, in the Bull *Apostolatus officium*.

Among the reasons for the arrival of the Oratorians to Portuguese America, we can highlight: the need for spiritual guidance to Christians in the face of the presence of the Dutch – expelled in 1654. There was a lack of religious men to catechize the indigenous people, preachers in the villages, and there was no practice of Christian obligations and the frequency of sacraments. Many of the villages run by the Jesuits were left without religious men, since many of them acted decisively in defending the territory against the Dutch; however, several villages were taken between the period from 1630 to 1654 (Lima, 1979). With the expulsion of the Dutch, these villages were left devoid of guidance and instruction, even more so due to the need to purge widespread Calvinist ideas.

Through the presentation of the works *Notícia que dão os Padres da Congregação de Pernambuco acerca da sua Congregação, desde a sua ereção* and *A Biblioteca dos Oratorianos*, we see that the Oratorian pedagogy is inspired by the success of its French confreres. The educational action of these religious men developed within the congregation for the training of its members and people, as they carried out catechesis and Christianization work. French oratory authors contributed to the reformulation of Portuguese oratory studies and, consequently, of America.

## THE CONGREGATION OF THE ORATORY OF SAINT PHILIP NERI IN PERNAMBUCO

The manuscript called *Notícia que dão os Padres da Congregação de Pernambuco acerca da sua Congregação, desde a sua ereção*, published by José Antonio Gonsalves de Mello (1916-2002), in the IAHGP journal (Mello, 1984), was the result of his work on reading and spelling updating. This is an important reference, as in it we can identify the main missionary and training activities carried out by the religious men of the Order. They played a fundamental role in organizing the guiding documents for the new teaching proposal in Portugal and Portuguese America. The pedagogy developed by the Oratorians was an important basis to the Pombaline pedagogical project, a period that corresponds to the teaching reforms that took place in Portugal and its colonies, especially from 1759 onwards.

At the time, the Society of Jesus dominated education both in Portugal and in its colonies (1534-1773) and were the main defenders of the scholastic tradition, but they also debated modern ideas. In Brazil, for instance, the Jesuits had exclusivity in so-called secondary education. The reform occurred following the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1759 and due to the need to reform education; however, despite the efforts of the Oratorians, the expulsion of the Society of Jesus left Portugal and its colonies without enough teachers to provide secondary and higher education. Furthermore, the expulsion also corresponded to the monarchy's desires regarding economic reforms, necessary for the transition from the mercantile to the industrial stage (Fonseca, 2006; Calazans, 1992; Seco & Amaral, 2006).

From the document *Notícia que dão os Padres da Congregação de Pernambuco acerca da sua Congregação, desde a sua ereção*, we understand that the Oratorians spread new currents of thought in Portugal and Portuguese America. They were the propagators and defenders of a new pedagogy. They defended the dissemination of the ideas of Descartes, Newton, Galileo, Mussembroeck, Gravesande, among others. The dissemination of the basic principles of philosophical enlightenment through Oratorian pedagogy was supported by a conception of man who thought for himself and defended the interests of the collective over those of the individual. The

compendiums created encouraged the formation of good customs and models for society at the time.

The work *Tratado de la eleccion y metodo de los estudios*, written by Claudio Fleury (1717), translated into Castilian, in Madrid, by the press of Francisco del Hierro, in 1717, was an important reference of French teaching that influenced the Portuguese thinking. In the first part, his discussion focuses on the study method in public schools; to do so, he resorts to the origins of the history of studies. In the next chapters, he revisits the history of studies among the Greeks, Romans, Christians, French, Arabs, and scholastic studies. In chapter VIII, Fleury wrote about studies in Theology, Law, Medicine and Arts. In the ninth, he talks about the study of the liberal Arts: grammar, rhetoric, dialectics, arithmetic, music, geometry and astronomy. He explains that studies in Theology, Philosophy, Law and Arts basically consisted of the study of Aristotle. And, in the last chapter of the first part, he talks about the need to renew studies.

In the second part, Fleury proposes, at the beginning, the need to understand what teaching meant and what should be proposed for study. He starts from the argument that study must have a utilitarian character. Knowledge, according to him, must have an application, and, mainly, that men must be able to fulfill their professional obligations by using this knowledge. On teaching children, he argues that most of them lack attention and experience. Offering them knowledge of great principles would not be effective in understanding science, much less the Creator. Knowledge must be taught based on experience, so that concepts are explained clearly, satisfying students' curiosity. In this sense, in the discussion of studies, he argued that studying was a learning experience for life. Therefore, it should be chosen carefully, always starting from the knowledge necessary for everyday life.

They organized in Portugal and Portuguese America a curricular teaching program inspired by the model of French schools (Cambi, 1999). The Oratorians carried out the reform of scholastic teaching methodology by disseminating Cartesian and Newtonian theories. The preconized education theory emphasized the method; moreover, it had a practical utility character. According to this pedagogy, human beings were capable of coming to the Creator. They defended the study of logic as an instrument to reach truth and avoid error.

The pedagogy of the Portuguese Oratorians was based on a set of methodologies already widely tested in the classrooms of French Oratorians. The marks of this teaching methodology were present, for instance, in the Modern Philosophy classes of João Baptista (1705-1761); as well as in the work *Novo Methodo da Gramática Latina*, by Manuel Monteiro, written in 1746. Not to mention, also, its presence in the work of Luís António Verney: *Verdadero Método de Estudiar* (Santos, 2002).

The Congregation prepared a series of publications with the purpose of serving as pedagogical guidance documents aimed at teaching practices (Araújo, 2017). These works were written in Portuguese, in dialogue, using simple and easily accessible

language. It was a pedagogical proposition with the premise that scientific knowledge was not exclusive and restricted to school institutions, much less to those who had knowledge of Latin. The pedagogical proposal developed aimed to ensure that everyone could understand natural phenomena (Domingues, 1988).

The Order of the Oratorians in Brazil was responsible for the missions in Ipojuca, Uratagui, Limoeiro and Ararobá. In these locations, they carried out preaching and other religious activities, such as conversions, confessions, and teaching of the Christian doctrine. To teach first letters, the Oratorians translated the “Catechism of Montpellier”. This work was considered a reference text. The Oratorians developed a new pedagogy, with new forms and content aimed at training at all levels.

In Portuguese America, the Order’s higher studies in Recife served as a basis to the catechization, teaching and Christianization work. Training in Philosophy and Theology took place in Recife, in the mother house of the Congregation of the Oratory in Pernambuco (*Notícia que dão os padres...*, 1984). Religious men held sermons and spiritual conferences in neighboring areas, in addition to teaching the Christian doctrine and the rudiments of faith. One of its former students, Father João Álvares da Encarnação, was considered one of the great names in the oratory missionary work conducted in Ceará (Maia, 2013). As for teaching practices intended for converting indigenous people, they used the forces of persuasion, charity, and the practice of virtues (Studart Filho, 1956). The missionary work of the religious men was highly valued, as it was considered a prerequisite for the stability of the Portuguese settlement in the northeast region of Brazil, enabling an adequate condition for the use of the riches, as stated in the document *Memória das drogas que há nestas cinco Capitânicas de Pernambuco, Itamaracá, Paraíba, Rio Grande e Ceará* (Conselho Ultramarino, 1681).

The Oratorians were granted a set of privileges. In the sixth chapter, “In which all the papers that are in the register office of this Congregation of Recife are summarily listed, which will show the Briefs, privileges and donations that this Congregation has had”, there is an indication of a series of briefs granted to the Oratorians by the Holy See. The third bundle of briefs contains the missionary privileges granted to the Oratorians. In the fourth bundle, there are several papers; in the fifth, there are briefs granted by Pope Innocent XIII in 1772; in the sixth bundle, there are inventories of relics; in the seventh, letters from Rome in response to some of the Congregation’s business in Brazil; in the eighth bundle, information that Father Sacramento took from the chapter of Bahia, for the founding of the Congregation; item of religious certificates and letter from governor Francisco de Brito Freire; item – power of attorney which Bishop D. Estevão Bioso, the first bishop, granted Father Sacramento to take office in the bishopric; item – a provision by the same bishop in which he appoints Father Sacramento the Provisor and Governor of the Bishopric, in his absence, in Lisbon, Portugal. And bundle nine contains several originals about the lives of religious men, such as: Father Sacramento; Father João Álvares da Encarnação, and Father Luís Ribeiro (*A Congregação do Oratório...*, 1945).

In the second compartment of the Register Office, there are inquiries from the priests and brothers of Brazil's Congregation of the Oratory. In the third compartment, there are deeds of assets of some priests, and wills. In the fourth compartment, there are several provisions and royal letters. Another bundle contains letters from Father Bartolomeu de Quental, and another bundle, letters of resolutions from the Congregation of the Kingdom to that of Pernambuco. In the fifth compartment, there are several letters from prosecutors of the Congregation and other people relating to the business of Brazil's house. In the sixth compartment, there is title to land on which the Oratorians raised cattle and grew crops to support the house. In the seventh compartment, an indication of the lists of indigenous people from the tribes catechized and taught by the Oratorians. In the eighth compartment, letters from the prosecutors of Lisbon and Porto. The ninth contains various credits, receipts and discharges belonging to the Congregation. In the tenth compartment, several opinions from priests on the construction of a new house of the Order in Recife. In the eleventh compartment, several books belonging to the government of the house in Brazil, concerning the admission of new brothers and the provisions of the boards. And in the twelfth, there is a communication of the votes of the Brazilian congregation (*A Congregação do Oratório...*, 1945).

The document helps understand the restructuring of teaching practices experienced in the context of Portuguese America. Such changes occurred in accordance with the proposals to reform teaching at the University of Coimbra and minor studies. The changes in universities that took place in Europe spread throughout the Portuguese Court. In this spirit, for example, the Royal Academy of Portuguese History and the Medical Academy were created in 1722. It was in this context that the Oratorians obtained permission to establish secondary schools in Portugal and its colonies. They sought to facilitate teaching and reading models, as they adopted experimentalism.

The Pernambuco government was also concerned about the lack of teachers, given the expulsion of the Jesuits. It was necessary to guarantee the right to study for the wealthiest sections of the population. The education reform initiated in Portugal, in the view of the governor of Pernambuco, would be the solution to the problems faced. It is important to highlight that the pedagogical reforms were the result of a governmental political strategy aimed at strengthening and modernizing the monarchy and the Portuguese State.

In a Letter from the Governor of Pernambuco to Sebastião José de Carvalho e Mello, on May 25, 1759, the governor requested the Count of Oyeiras to open grammar classes, and reading and writing schools in his captaincy, since, in his understanding, the progress resulting from the new method of teaching Latinities was notable (Verri, 2005).

The works *Novo Methodo da Grammatica Latina: dividido em duas partes dos Mestres das Escolas da Congregação do Oratório*, written by Father António de

Figueiredo (1725-1797), in 1752; *Instrução sobre a lógica, ou Diálogo sobre a Filosofia Racional*, written by Father Manuel Álvarez (1739-1777), in 1760, and *Recreação Filosófica, ou Diálogo sobre Filosofia Natural, para instrução de Pessoas Curiosas que não frequentarão as aulas*, written by Father Teodoro de Almeida (1722-1804), were widely disseminated in Philosophy courses taught by Oratorians in Brazil.

The work *Novo Methodo da Grammatica Latina* was inspired by the text *Grammaire Générale et Raisonnée de Port-Royal*, written by Antoine Arnauld (1612-1694) and Claude Lancelot (1615-1695). This work articulated the Jansenists' pedagogical concern with theological teachings, which were intended for instructing young people. The new teaching rules directed the pedagogical practices that departed from the vernacular language towards the teaching of grammar. Religious texts were seen as an opportunity to teach the language. In this sense, the Grammar, by Father António Pereira de Figueiredo, contributed to the dissemination of Port-Royal's ideas (Verri, 2005).

The text about the Oratorians, published in the IAHGP journal, mentions the practice of evangelization, catechization and elementary teaching idealized by the religious men in the villages where they settled, such as: village of Ipojuca (1729), Urataugui (1729), Carnijós (1760), Limoeiro (1729), Ararobá de Tapuias (1729/1760), Sertão do Rio São Francisco, Nossa Senhora da Escada (1760), Aratagui (1760), among others. In the text *Aldeamentos e política indigenista no bispado de Pernambuco*, written by Alessandra Figueiredo Cavalcanti (2009), as a result of the completion of her master's degree in History from the Federal University of Pernambuco, we also find references to the work carried out by the Oratorians in the Captaincy of Pernambuco. The compendiums used in Brazil in elementary education were the same as those used in Portugal.

The fundamental texts of the Oratorian compendiums were the following: *Carta de Letras, Sílabas e Palavras para uso das Escolas de Nossa Senhora das Necessidades*, from 1820; *Carta de Aritmética para uso das Escolas de Nossa Senhora das Necessidades*, from 1796; *Instrução de Principiantes e novo Methodo de se aprenderem as primeiras letras*; *Diálogo da Esfera Celeste e Terrestre para uso das Escolas da Congregação de Nossa Senhora das Necessidades*, from 1751; *Diálogo de História Grega*, from 1829; *Diálogo de História Romana*, from 1807; *Diálogo sobre os autores de Língua Latina*, from 1760; *Exercício de Língua Latina e Portuguesa*, containing three fascicles: 1) *Catecismo Latino e Português*, from 1748; 2) *Saudações e Diálogos*, from 1751 and 3) *Acerca de diversas couzas*, from 1751 (Andrade, 1981).

The works followed clarity and brevity as a method, that is, an instrument of analysis. They helped organize the speech, with the aim of promoting quick learning. The compendiums used in Oratorian schools were based on principles of method, clarity and brevity (Santos, 2002).

In the text *A Biblioteca dos Oratorianos*, published by Gláucio Veiga (1978) in the IAHGP journal, the author highlights the Oratorians' seminar in Recife as a reference center for intellectual activity. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Oratorians' library

contributed to composing the library of Recife's Faculty of Law, becoming the Faculty's largest collection.

The majority of the Oratorians' library collection was theological; however, there was a significant percentage of works on Mathematics and Natural Sciences. The collection included works by Newton, such as: *Philosophiae Naturalis Principia Mathematica*, in three volumes; *Opúscula Mathematica, Philosophica et Philologica*, in three volumes; and, in a single volume: *Opera Omnia*.

The library's Mathematics Course had eight volumes, and the Physics Course had three volumes. The Oratorians were great promoters of Newton and modern Physics. In 1737, Castro Sarmiento publicized the work *The true theory of the tides*, written by Issac Newton. The library had textbooks containing all the foundations and experiences of modern philosophers. The edition of *Elementos de Matemática*, translated from *Elementa Matheseos Universae*, from 1715, was divided into five volumes.

The Oratorian catalog also records the presence of the so-called Wolf Compendiums, whose logic was recommended at the University of Alcalá de Henares. Father Tosca was also included in the catalogue. His work *Filosofía* was published in five volumes, and his work *Matemática*, in nine volumes. Father Tosca was a renowned mathematician and had a great influence, for instance, on the thinking of Friar Manuel do Cenáculo (1724-1814).

The Oratorians' Library presented a series of other references from the fields of Philosophy, Mathematics, Physics and Natural Sciences, which shows that the educational processes of the period, with their innovative pedagogical theories, are also an important reference for pedagogy in Brazil. New educational models linked to the discussion of method, of the praxis of experimentation, and of the appreciation of mathematics and logic underlie the entire organization of instruction. Thus, social, cultural and pedagogical transformations boosted new teaching and learning models, and the period is certainly an important reference for studies of the history of education in Brazil.

## FINAL REMARKS

The presence of the Congregation of the Oratory in Brazil between the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries was a significant period for the field of education and for the history of Brazilian education. In this context, educational processes, training institutions and pedagogical theories were renewed. This is an essential time for the study of pedagogy, particularly of the history of education, as educational processes penetrate all sectors of society. In Brazil, this context was also marked by the presence of the Congregation of the Oratory. This religious institution drove school institutions with new pedagogical models.

In part, the Oratorians were responsible for organizing the guidance documents for the teaching reform. The reform of studies occurred in Portugal and its colonies. The Charter of June 28, 1759, known as the General Law of Minor Studies, promoted the changes idealized by Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo. He conveyed the idea that education under the domain of the Jesuits caused a significant cultural and pedagogical delay.

It is important to highlight that the conflict between Pombal and the Jesuits was more centered on a question of colonial policy, more specifically related to the demarcation of the borders of Portuguese America, and also to the Jesuits' actions towards the indigenous people. The conflict is not explained exclusively, as many believe, by the position in relation to the educational system, with political aspects deserving greater emphasis. Through the Study reform charter of 1759, the Jesuits are deemed conspirators, since they used a teaching method that had placed Portugal in an inferior cultural position compared to the other economic powers of the time. In this context, the Oratorians were considered more open to innovations and novelties in the field of philosophy. The Oratorians choosing Pombal was a result of their divergences with the Jesuits, and of their political strategies of alignment with the Catholic Church and the consolidation of a nationalist and Christian enlightenment.

In Brazil, the Oratorians played an important religious, political and educational role. With highlight to the missionary work carried out, the only means capable of controlling indigenous peoples and allowing the development of economic activities. Missionary villages also contributed to pushing the occupation of the captaincies' territory towards the inland and to "reducing" indigenous people. The political role of religious men was decisive as part of the colonial bureaucratic apparatus and in supporting the conquest in the face of conflicts with indigenous peoples. It was necessary to insert indigenous people in the colonial project; the missions, formed by reduced indigenous people, helped populate the territories.

In the teaching field, the pedagogical manuals published by the Congregation of the Oratory for use in its classes also taught external students. Training took place primarily in the first segments, that is, for elementary and secondary education. The Oratorians' school literature was organized to meet four different teaching classes: the first was about Christian doctrine, reading, writing and calculating; the second, grammar and rhetoric; the third was focused on moral theology, and the fourth was aimed at teaching philosophy.

The Oratorian pedagogy served the most different social segments: the catechization and indoctrination of indigenous and black people; elementary and secondary education in settlements, and higher-level instruction in philosophy and theology courses for both future religious men and community members. They were not only concerned with teaching Christian doctrine, grammar, rhetoric, moral



theology and philosophy, but also dedicated themselves to teaching physics through practical experimentation classes in laboratories using modern equipment.

The first Oratorian religious men in Pernambuco dedicated themselves to missions in the countryside, aiming at the organization of towns, catechization and indoctrination, in order to settle the Portuguese in the most different villages, following the colonization project. It was imperative to populate Brazil to face foreigners, such as the Dutch, English and French, who insisted on establishing alliances with the indigenous people for commercial exchanges. With the establishment of the Congregation of the Oratory in Recife, new work fronts were imposed, with the main one being teaching activities.

At the Convent of the Mother of God, in Recife, the Oratorians carried out pedagogical activities aimed not only at the formation of future religious men of the order, but also at the instruction of lay people. The institution was concerned with the quality of teaching and, in order to meet these desires, they brought in renowned professors in philosophy and theology, such as Friar Bartolomeu do Pilar, who embarked for Pernambuco in 1696, teaching for several years at the Congregation of the Oratory. In 1702, Cardinal Michelangelo del Conti, future Pope Innocent XIII (1721-1724), granted him the title of doctor in theology. Known for his intellectual knowledge, Friar Bartolomeu was a respected preacher; moreover, in Pernambuco, he served as Synodal Examiner and Visiting Commissioner (1699); Commissioner of Carmelite Convents (1704), and qualifier of the Holy Office.

The support of the crown and of the Portuguese aristocracy was fundamental for the Oratorian schools to be an alternative to the Jesuit schools. In part, the pedagogy of the Oratorians constituted a significant effort for cultural and intellectual renewal of the Portuguese State. In the schools of the Oratory, the study of the national language was valued as opposed to Latin, and the study of mathematics, natural sciences, and history linked to geography was encouraged. However, it is also worth highlighting that the monarchy, with the reforms, boosted the mechanisms for revenue collection and control of economic activities, especially in the colonies. In part, they meant more coercion and more intervention; furthermore, in the field of education, the pedagogical reforms brought about mismatches, particularly due to a lack of human and material resources, even more so due to Brazil's size.

In this way, the format of the school assumed a character of training the ruling classes and controlling school life. Schools tied to religious institutions, in opposition to the interests of the State, boosted the provision of schools for the people, aiming to combat illiteracy and elementary education. It is necessary to highlight that, in the Statutes of the Congregation of the Oratory, we see important elements of the foundations of modern pedagogy, mainly those related to the need for the formation not only of religious people, but, equally, the formation of civil man. Thus, the educational role of school institutions turned to teaching the civilization practices of good manners.

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