

## Education As a Reflection of Tradition

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### Abstract

The history of Brazil is divided into three periods: colonial (1500-1822), imperial (1822-1889), and republican (1889 to the present). From 2015 to 2024, there have been distinct definitions of what “education” is in Brazil. Therefore, I will examine the concepts of education presented by Dilma Rousseff in her Message to the National Congress (2015), by the National Common Curricular Base – BNCC, (2017), and by Jair Bolsonaro also in the Message to the National Congress (2019), respectively, focusing on the forms of humanist, technicist and elitist education. Having explained the definitions, I present the analysis of two Brazilian “unpublished documents” – a Compendium Philosophicum (1756) and Offended and defended Slavery 1840 – as examples of an education based on innovation and social commitment. From them I point out a critical reading of elitist and technicist forms and advocate for critical and emancipatory education, based on three elements: 1) the need to produce knowledge on a global scale with symmetry, reciprocity and recognition, 2) education thought as an action that transforms the human being, and 3) knowledge and education as the basis for the inclusion and overcoming social inequalities.

**Keywords:** education for human development, history of education in Brazil, knowledge production.

## Образование как отражение традиций

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### Аннотация

История Бразилии делится на три периода: колониальный (1500-1822), имперский (1822-1889) и республиканский (с 1889 года по настоящее время). С 2015 по 2024 год в Бразилии существовали различные определения того, что такое «образование». Данное исследование обращено к концепциям образования, представленным Дилмой Русеф в ее Послании Национальному конгрессу (2015) и в Национальной общей базе учебных программ (BNCC, 2017), а также Жаиром Болсонару в его Послании Национальному конгрессу (2019), то есть к формам гуманистического, техницистского и элитарного образования. Кроме того, в работе представлен анализ двух бразильских «неопубликованных документов» – «Compendium Philosophicum» (1756) и «Offended and defended Slavery» (1840) – как примеров образования, основанного на инновациях и социальных обязательствах. Автор даёт критическое прочтение элитарных и техницистских форм, обосновывает преимущества критического и эмансипаторного образования, которые способны удовлетворить потребности современного мира [1] в производстве знаний в глобальном масштабе с симметрией, взаимностью и признанием;

[2] в образовании как действии, преобразующем человека; [3] в знаниях и образовании как основе для включения в общество и для преодоления социального неравенства.

**Ключевые слова:** образование для развития человека, история образования в Бразилии, производство знаний.

## Introduction

Brazil has been named like this since the 14th century according to Phoenician and Irish cartography (Chauí, 2001). This country lived for more than three centuries under Lusitanian colonization (1500-1822). After Independence, we still had two Lusitanian emperors during the Empire (1822-1889). The proclamation of the Republic on 15 November 1889 was followed by the First Republic (1889-1930); the Provisional and Constitutional Government (1930-1937) and the Estado Novo when Getúlio Vargas' dictatorship took effect (1937-1945). Democratic management made a comeback in the Second Republic (1945-1964) until it was overthrown by the civil-military dictatorship (1964-1985). Only then did the country enter the era of the New Republic, including the promulgation of a new Federal Constitution (1988).

Re-democratization was marked by the resignation under imminent impeachment of former President Fernando Collor de Melo (1992), succeeded by his vice-president (Itamar Augusto Cautiero Franco, 1992-1994; and after, by two terms of Fernando Henrique Cardoso (1995-2002), two of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (2003-2010); two of Dilma Vana Rousseff (2011-2016), the last of which was again interrupted by impeachment (according to conservative and liberal narratives) or by the 2016 coup (according to progressives and researchers). The second term of Dilma, the current President of the New BRICS Bank, had the motto *Brazil, Educating Homeland (Brasil, Pátria Educadora)*. She was succeeded by her former vice-president, historically a proponent of conservative politics in customs and liberal politics in the economy, Michel Miguel Elias Temer Lulia (2016-2018). In turn, he was succeeded by the ultra-rightist Jair Messias Bolsonaro (2019-2022), whose main opponents were intellectuals and the educational agenda.

In the last decade, Brazilian education has been managed under three not only distinct, but openly opposing conceptions. For this reason, I will first characterize these conceptions in order to understand the enormous changes that have taken place in the present, especially since the *Messages to the National Congress*<sup>1</sup> and the *National Common Curricular Base* (2017<sup>2</sup>). Next, I will present some characteristics of the *Research Transformation of Teacher Tradition*. I will do so by going back in time, defending tradition as the basis for innovation. In this part, I will consider, on the one hand, a *Compendium Philosophicum* (1756) taught in the north region of Brazil at a Franciscan college and, on the other, a contestatory writing by a Lazarist priest who worked in the southeastern region of Brazil (Antônio Ferreira Viçoso) when he opposed the politics of slavery and defended education as a form of social liberation in his writing *Offended and defended Slavery 1840 (Escravidura ofendida e defendida 1840)*. Finally, in the third section, I will present three elements that were fundamental at the time and which, compared to today,

<sup>1</sup> A management instrument sent by the President of the Republic at the beginning of each legislative year to the Chamber of Deputies and the Federal Senate to present the political proposals that the Executive will implement during the course of that Legislature. This instrument contains not only management proposals for the year, but also the political and governmental identity that will be implemented with the actions during the course of that Legislature.

<sup>2</sup> “The *National Common Curricular Base* (BNCC) is a normative document that defines the organic and progressive set of essential learning that all students must develop throughout the stages and modalities of Basic Education, so that their learning and development rights are ensured, in accordance with the provisions of the *National Education Plan* (PNE)” (BRAZIL, 2017, p. 7).

are worth considering in order to think about what innovation means in the educational process.

### Method

This article is part of my studies in the history of Brazilian education, which is why it is based on bibliographical research of recent documents from the Presidency of the Republic and documentary research from the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. This characterizes qualitative research based on a historical perspective and integrated with comparative studies on colonial and republican Brazilian education. As part of a broader project, which began in 2015 and is currently being developed in the *Scripta Brasiliana* Project, this analysis considers, firstly, as a general historical hypothesis, the possible subordination of the Brazilian educational agenda to economic interests and, secondly, it assumes the need for internal criticism of the documents (based on presidential speeches) and external criticism (analyzed in the light of the history of education and Brazilian society) in order to explain the causal links that determine decisions on educational policies in contemporary Brazil.

### Results of Literature Review

#### *Education as a Political Dispute*

Since 1991, Brazilians have been aware of the status of education as a field of political, economic and pedagogical dispute. Paulo Freire was not the first to say this, but he was explicit enough to expose how the Brazilian social arena deals with the issue: “education is a political act. There is no educational practice that is indifferent to values” (Freire, 1991, p. 20). It always implements a political and economic project that can either serve the interests of economic and political groups or respond to the desire for pedagogical responsibility within the educational process. In any case, education “cannot be indifferent to a certain project, desire or dream of society. No one is an educator by chance” (Freire, 1991, p. 20). We are the result of a history and producers of a reality to come.

At the Davos Forum on February 26, 2002, the former President of the Federative Republic of Brazil, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, adhered to the World Trade Organization's proposal (WTO Document S/CSS/M/13 Restricted, 2002: no. 46) dealing with the autonomous release of trade in services and, directly, the possibility of “international trade in the education sector [which] could complement and support education policies” (WTO, 2002, No. 234). The proposal signed by the former President (WTO, 2002, No. 224) admitted “the extension of the existing classification with respect to adult education and other education services” and, in fact, adhered to the need to “study formulas to liberalize trade in education services” (WTO, 2002, No. 234). This decision meant both a disorderly expansion of private education in the country and growing pressure to divide the public budget between public and private institutions.

This budgetary dispute has intensified in the last decade, mainly due to the different educational concepts in dispute in Brazilian politics. The result is explained by the budget reduction since the 2016 coup that ousted former President Dilma Rousseff. For example, in 2016, Brazilian inflation was 9.68% while US\$1 was equivalent to R\$3.47; in 2017, inflation was 7.99% and US\$1 was equivalent to R\$3.27; in 2019, inflation was 4.31% and US\$1 was equivalent to R\$4.14. With this, it is possible to think about how much Brazil invested in education in the period, and the result was a 40% budget reduction between 2015 (the year before the coup against Dilma Rousseff) and 2022 (the last year of Jair Bolsonaro's government), according to the Ministry of Education, Transparency Portal (below).

**ORÇAMENTO DO MEC***Em R\$ bilhões*

| ANO   | PREVISÃO <sup>1</sup> | EXECUTADO <sup>2</sup> |
|-------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 2015* | 174,4                 | 114,9                  |
| 2016* | 158,2                 | 129,9                  |
| 2017  | 140,84                | 126,22                 |
| 2018  | 139,91                | 120,22                 |
| 2019  | 149,74                | 119,77                 |
| 2020  | 142,11                | 114,25                 |
| 2021  | 145,70                | 90,29                  |
| 2022  | 134,6**               | –                      |

1. Recursos previstos para a educação pública no orçamento da União.

2. Valores executados.

\*\*Projeção da Lei Orçamentária (LOA) enviada ao Congresso Nacional. Valores destinados ao MEC e unidades orçamentárias vinculadas (como institutos federais, universidades, Inep e Capes).

Fontes: MEC, Portal da Transparência, \*Todos pela Educação

Beyond the numbers are the political reasons and economic interests within the educational agenda. It is therefore interesting to consider the motivations that determined the government decisions leading the country to go from a government whose motto was *Brazil, Educating Homeland* to an administration that is viscerally opposed to emancipatory educational policies. In 2015, the illiterate Brazilian population still stood at 8.3% (around 16.9 million people), which is why there was a greater effort to build the *National Education Plan* (PNE 2014-2024), whose guidelines were:

i) the eradication of illiteracy; ii) the universalization of school attendance; iii) overcoming educational inequalities; iv) improving the quality of education; v) training for work and citizenship; vi) democratic management in public education; vii) humanistic, scientific, cultural and technological promotion; viii) valuing education professionals and promoting the principles of respect for human rights, diversity and socio-environmental sustainability; and ix) setting a target for the application of public resources in education as a proportion of Gross Domestic Product, GDP (Rousseff, 2015, p. 150).

The guidelines were not unaccompanied by a republican position on education. On the contrary, the twentieth guideline of the *National Education Plan* was to increase overall investment in education from 6.6% of Gross Domestic Product to 10% until 2024. In short, the former President Dilma Rousseff had not only chosen *Brazil, Educating Homeland* as her motto, but included this decision within the policies of “equal rights and opportunities”, since she took on “education as a priority among the government's

actions from 2015” (Rousseff, 2015, p. 150). A process of social inclusion and overcoming social injustices had been underway since the country's re-democratization and more directly during the progressive governments of Lula and Dilma. She was certain of the commitment she had made to the nation: “the reduction of inequalities, the elimination of poverty and the expansion of social rights are fundamental marks of my government, which we will never be able to renounce” (Rousseff, 2015, p. 9). This was not a government closed to economic development; on the contrary, she adds to the previous statement by saying that she seeks economic growth with social inclusion. However, the Brazilian political game, fostered by a conservative elite and a liberal economic agenda, not only orchestrated the coup that ousted the former President, but also implemented a contrary educational policy.

As such, her successor, the former President Michel Temer was the main mastermind behind the proposal to reform basic education (primary and secondary education), and the result was the approval of the *National Common Curricular Base* (2017). It came as a reaction to the democratizing policies of the *National Education Guidelines and Bases Law* (Lei das Diretrizes e Bases da Educação Nacional: LDB 9394/96) and, above all, the quota laws that prioritized the access and permanence of students in primary and secondary education from impoverished social classes. The discourse of social inclusion was replaced by the concept of competence, which is central to the BNCC (Brasil, 2017). Added to this is the priority adoption of international assessment models promoted by the *Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development* (OECD), the *Program International for Student Assessment* (PISA), UNESCO indicators and the *Latin American Laboratory for the Evaluation of Education Quality* (*Laboratorio Latinoamericano de Evaluación de la Calidad de la Educación*, LLECE) (Brazil, 2017).

The educational policy born of this realignment with the liberal educational agenda has, on the one hand, emphasized the centrality of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values reduced to forms of “knowing” and, on the other, the promotion of competence to solve problems in everyday life, exercise citizenship and insertion into the job market, whose focus is reduced to “knowing how to do”. The BNCC presupposes, first and foremost, an education where “knowing” serves only as an instrument for “knowing how to do”, where knowledge is reduced to certain learning, since the “explicitness of competences offers references for strengthening actions that ensure the essential learning defined in the BNCC” (Brazil, 2017, p. 13). Knowledge is superimposed on wisdom, and executional skill on science. By comparison, in Dilma Rousseff's *Message to the National Congress* (2015), social inclusion appears associated with education in most of the 22 occurrences on 468 pages; in the BNCC, social inclusion appears associated with religious education and secondary education with 3 occurrences on 600 pages. The result is a radical change in educational policy from inclusive, democratic and citizenship-promoting education to education centered on competence and insertion into the job market: “in the BNCC, competence is defined as the mobilization of knowledge (concepts and procedures), skills (practical, cognitive and socio-emotional), attitudes and values to solve complex demands of everyday life, the full exercise of citizenship and the job market” (Brazil, 2017, p. 13). Analyzing the BNCC, Ana Mae Barbosa explains the political core of this instrument: it “intended to make public schools a place for training technical workers and defenders of the status quo, albeit poorly paid” (Barbosa, 2021, p. 39). According to the author, what is at stake in the BNCC is an educational model that operates on “enjoy, but don't think”.

The election of Jair Bolsonaro radicalized the central options of the BNCC, in addition to the constant attacks and slander against teachers and educational institutions. His first *Message to the National Congress* (2019) is divided into economy; infrastructure; social and citizenship; strong nation; public management and annexes. Within social and

citizenship, he devoted less than 10 pages to education, starting by praising the values dedicated to education (which he considered exaggerated) and defending the reduction of costs with higher education and prioritizing primary education. Right from the start of his *Message*, he made it clear that he wanted to invert the order of the educational pyramid, prioritizing primary education to the detriment of higher education. In this sense, he proposed instituting a “priority for basic education and technical secondary education” in order to insert young people into the job market (Bolsonaro, 2019, p. 65). More than that, education does not need to go beyond the scope of the minimum necessary, which, according to him, would be defined in a few words: “in this sense, teaching content and methods need to be changed. The teaching and learning processes in Mathematics, Science and Portuguese must be emphasized and any initiative for ideological indoctrination and early sexualization in the school environment must be abolished once and for all” (Bolsonaro, 2019, p. 65).

The change in content and method would be justified for him because of inefficient forms of schooling that were centered on teaching humanities and did not prioritize insertion into the job market. The second fundamental element would be a reduction in secondary knowledge (Geography, History, Sociology, Philosophy, Pedagogy, etc.) in favor of core knowledge (Mathematics and Portuguese) and operational knowledge (technical-scientific knowledge). Basic education would be reduced to literacy and reading/writing skills, combined with scientific knowledge that would have suitable for teachers in each region of the country. The third element—abolishing, once and for all, any initiative for ideological indoctrination and early sexualization in the school environment—was the main motto of his ideological war against what he said was Brazilian cultural Marxism. And so decolonial studies, studies of subalternized cultures and humanities should be excluded from Brazilian schools. A bill with this format was sent by the former Minister of Education (Abraham Weintraub). He suggested cutting funding for the maintenance and teaching of teachers working on these subjects. Fortunately, the bill failed thanks to social resistance

With this, the scenario of Brazilian education in the last decade becomes clear: there was the project of a country thought of as an *educating homeland* in Dilma Rousseff's government, which went on to become a *beloved homeland* (the slogan used by Bolsonaro), but which actually saw a shift from progressive education to a technicist (in the BNCC) and neoliberal (with Bolsonaro) educational project, reducing education to the supply of cheap labor for the market. This change has happened not only ideologically, but economically as well.

#### *Luso-Brazilian Tradition as the Basis for Innovation*

The *Tradition as the Basis for Innovation* can be understood in at least two ways: one centered on the attachment to *novelties*, especially allied to new technologies with a strong interactive appeal and under the demands of the market; another oriented by the search for what is *novum*, original, radical and, in this case, *innovation means going back to the roots of historical processes*, to what refers to the primary, to the historical basis of knowledge within its source and development (Marques, 2022, pp. 2-6). This is the sense in which I will consider *innovation* as the possibility of rediscovering what was best, accessing the roots or origin of knowledge beyond novelty. I am doing this from the perspective of my country's history. In order to understand the tradition of teaching in Brazil, I return to two writings: a *Compendium Philosophicum* (1756) written in north Brazil at a Franciscan college; and another, *Escravidura ofendida e defendida* (*Slavery offended and defended*, 1840), by a Lazarist priest Antônio Ferreira Viçoso, who worked in southeastern Brazil and opposed slave policy by defending education as a form of social liberation.

The question now is to explain how the production of knowledge in Brazil's colonial and imperial periods helps us to understand aspects that are relevant to educational policies in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. To explain these reasons, I will present a summary of the two writings and the conditions of their production. Based on these elements, we will understand the foundations of the educational process in Brazil at that time. Far from any polemical intentions, I claim that there was a noteworthy educational development in both the colonial and imperial periods, although it may have been the heroic work of individuals devoted to building a better country. This is not to say that education was inferior or reduced to colonialist and imperialist interests.

The teaching of philosophy in colonial schools was not limited to teaching reading, writing and counting. This was the literacy phase, which was followed by classes in grammar, languages, rhetoric and humanities. In addition, the year 1575 is the date of the first bachelor's degree in philosophy offered in Bahia (northeastern Brazil), and 1576, the date of the first degree. From then on, the Jesuits created several schools from the north to the south of Brazil, as well as 17 colleges (which offered higher education courses) until 1759 when the Ignatians were expelled. Other religious orders also offered arts (or philosophy) courses during this period: the Benedictines in Rio de Janeiro (in the southeast), the Carmelites in Pará (in the north) and the Franciscans in Rio and Pará (in the southeast and north, respectively). Franciscan education in Rio enjoyed university status in its Convent of Santo Antonio from 1776 (Titton, 1970). All of these religious orders produced *cursum philosophicum* (philosophy courses), except for the Jesuits, considering the documents catalogued to date. The Franciscans wrote two *cursum* given at the Serenensi College in Mato Grosso, in 1756 and 1759-1762, the latter signed by Friar Manuel de Santana.

Of the two *cursum*, we are interested in the first. It is a complete *cursum*, as it is divided into logic or rational philosophy (folios 1 to 279), physics or natural philosophy (folios 280 to 819) and metaphysics or transnatural philosophy (folios 820 to 871). The text is signed by two Franciscan friars, Inácio de São José and Manuel dos Anjos, and its full title is *Philosophical Compendium revised according to the philosophy of our most subtle Blessed John Duns Scotus*<sup>3</sup>. The first 13 folios make up the proem, which is divided into two questions: one dealing with what philosophy is, *if it is, how it is and why it exists*<sup>4</sup>, and the other explaining its efficient, formal and material causes. In turn, the first book (folios 14 to 279) is divided into nine treatises dealing with an introduction to general logic (in treatise 1), its object and function (2), the being of reason (3), universals (4), predication (5), the theory of interpretation (6), and syllogism theory (7 to 9 treatises). In turn, each of the treatises is divided into disputes; the disputes, into questions; the questions, into chapters; and the chapters, into paragraphs arranged in Arabic.

The second book deals with physics and is the core of the manuscript. The book is divided into four treatises: the first deals with the eight books of Aristotle's *Physics* (folios 283 to 547) where the main themes are the *in fieri* principles of natural things (dispute 1), the intrinsic principles of beings (2), physical nature (3), the exemplary, efficient and final causes (4), the continuous, the infinite and movement (5), place and emptiness (6), time (7) and the conception and derivation of natural things (8); the second treatise (folios 548 to 644) sets out the constitution of the world (dispute 1), the heavens (2) and the elements in common (3); the third treatise (folios 645 to 686) deals with change, and then the generation and corruption of bodies; the fourth treatise (folios 687 to 819) presents Aristotle's *On Soul* (*De anima*) in three disputes (*disputationes*): what the soul is (1), the

<sup>3</sup> *Compendium Philolosophicum et Recopilatum ad mentem subtilissimi divo nostri Joannis Duns Scotus.*

<sup>4</sup> *Quid sit Philosophia. An sit? Qualis sit? Et propter quid sit?*

vegetative and sensitive soul (2) and the rational soul (3). Finally, the third book deals with metaphysics (folios 820 to 871) in three disputes: the nature of metaphysics and of being (1), the existence of finite being (2) and substance and accidents (3). It should also be noted that each of the treatises is complete and was finished without losing any parts of the manuscript. It should also be remembered that this is a second version of the text, both because of the title *Philosophical Compendium revised (Compendium Philosophicum et Recopilatum)* and because of the obvious editing marks present throughout the text, as well as some corrections that were inserted after the second version was written.

As for the theoretical references, the manuscript presents both a note on the origin of thought in the Hebrew, Chaldean, Egyptian, Greek and Latin cultures in the preface. From there, it highlights four main strands of thought and their respective representatives: dialectics, with Zeno of Eleia; natural philosophy, with Thales of Miletus; ethics, with Socrates; and astrology, with Atlas. He also lists other Greek sources of philosophy - Pythagoras, Plato, Aristippus, Epicurus, Pyrrhus and Zeno of Scythia. Among the Latins, he highlights Augustine, Thomas Aquinas and William of Ockham, and goes as far as the moderns, citing René Descartes. However, among the Greeks, the main authority is Aristotle and, among the Latins, John Duns Scotus.

All these elements are listed only to illustrate both the physical structure of the writing and the theoretical basis of the authors, at no point differing from other manuscripts of the period present, for example, at the University of Coimbra, as well as in a similar relationship with the famous *Cursus Conimbricenses*. We should also remember the common tendency of the modern *cursus* to slightly reduce the centrality of logic, expand and diversify the content of physics and practically extinguish the exposition of metaphysics. It should also be noted that the two Franciscan friars – Inácio de São José and Manuel dos Anjos – certainly had a classical education in philosophy, although it is not yet known whether it was in Brazil or Portugal, but this research is ongoing. Nonetheless, it is clear that these were people with a solid philosophical background which, if they were trained in Brazil, reveals the rigor of the teaching developed in the colonial period and, if they were trained in Portugal, indicates how there was a transit between royal training and the right to teach in the colonial territory, highlighting the global nature of the production of teaching. This form of knowledge production and dissemination characterized the work of both the University of Salamanca and Coimbra at the time, as they were the main Iberian hubs for scientific dissemination within the *res publica christiana* (Duve et al., 2021).

I conclude the presentation of the *Compendium Philosophicum* of the friars Inácio de São José and Manuel dos Anjos by returning to their definition of education, which still seems today to be a manifesto conducive to emancipatory and critical educational conceptions of society (book II, treatise 1, disp. 1, q. 3, c. 3, fol. 357 § 23): “education is the transforming action of the subject, for which reason it is distinguished from the objects of creation (*eductio est actio transmutativa subjecti, et per hoc distinguitur a creatione*)”.

The second text I am highlighting was written in 1840 (during the imperial period: 1822 to 1889). Its whereabouts were unknown until 2019. It is one of the texts from the Colégio do Caraça (which functioned as an educational institution from 1820 to 1968), located in the state of Minas Gerais (southeastern Brazil). For a fair assessment of the writing, it should be borne in mind that in 1831 Emperor Dom Pedro II (1825-1891) declared all slaves coming from outside the Empire free, and imposed penalties on importers of the same slaves. After the law was passed, the African slave trade to Brazil did not end. From then on, there was a virulent reaction among writers who defended the maintenance of the slave trade and the slave system. Both Frederico Leopoldo César Burlamaque (1803-1866) wrote *A memoir on the slave trade, in which the intention is*



to show that the slave trade is more of a good than an evil for them (*Memória sobre o comércio dos escravos, em que se pretende mostrar que este tráfico é, para eles, antes um bem do que um mal*, 1837) and the Lazarist who worked at the Colégio do Caraça, priest Leandro Rebello Peixoto e Castro (1781-1841), published a *Pamphlet* in 1838 reaffirming the maintenance of the slave trade and the defense of the slave system.

The rapid dissemination of the texts by Frederico Burlamaque and Leandro Castro was enough to call into question the validity of the law published in 1831 under Dom Pedro II and under the Regency of Diogo Antônio Feijó (1784-1843). Not only did they challenge it, but they presented four supposed reasons for maintaining the system: the need for labor for the Brazilian economic system; the benefit of introducing the enslaved into a more developed country; the social rescue of the enslaved, who would go from being condemned to death and hunger to simply losing their freedom; the possibility that, once converted to Christianity, they could save their souls by obeying their masters as if they were obeying God himself. Ultimately, the two writings combined two more arguments to defend the repeal of the 1831 law: it would be a cause of obvious harm to the country's economy and it did not have the force of law, as it had not yet taken effect and could therefore be repealed (Viçoso, 2020). This is the context in which the text by Antônio Ferreira Viçoso (1787-1875) should be interpreted.

The foundation of the Colégio do Caraça is due to the work of two priests from the Congregation of the Mission: Leandro Rebello Peixoto e Castro (author of the 1838 *Pamphlet*) and Antônio Ferreira Viçoso (author of *Slavery offended and defended 1840*). Antônio Ferreira Viçoso's manuscript, published in 2020, was written on 67 folios, front and back. It is not a polemical piece of writing, nor does it contain inflammatory rhetoric. On the contrary, the author was precise enough to stick only to his confrere's arguments. Furthermore, he summarizes all of Leandro Castro's arguments in the 11 folios of his writing. Biographically, Leandro Castro was born in the Province of Minho in Portugal, graduated in philosophy in 1799 and in theology in 1800, both at the Braga Seminary, where he taught philosophy, literature and mathematics. Antônio Ferreira Viçoso, also Portuguese, was born in Peniche and trained equally in philosophy and theology. His teaching activity took place at the Évora Seminary, where he taught philosophy, before both were sent to Brazil, where they founded the Colégio do Caraça.

Both their academic training in Portugal and the teaching model they reproduced at the Colégio do Caraça are once again similar to what Thomas Duve (Duve et al., 2021) presents as a global system for the production and dissemination of knowledge. It is in this context that we can understand the arguments that Antônio Viçoso countered with those of Leandro Castro, and which are coextensive with Frederico Burlamaque. He did so by using the arguments present in the *Decretum Gratiani* or *Concordia discordantium canonum* (1140-1142), by Franciscus Gracianus (12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> centuries); in the *First Constitutions of the Archbishopric of Bahia* (*Constituições Primeiras do Arcebispado da Bahia*, 1707); in *The Universal Traveler, or News of the Ancient and Modern World* (1803), by Joseph de Laport; in *On the Laws of War and Peace* (*De iure belli ac pacis*, 1625), by Hugo Grotius (1583-1645); in *Traité de morale, ou devoirs de l'homme envers la société, et envers lui-même* (1776) by M. Lacroix; in the *Institutiones Juris Lusitani, cum Publici tum Privati* (1789), by Pascoal José de Mello Freire dos Reis; in the legal works of François-Charles-Louis Comte (1782-1837); in the *Dictionnaire theologique*, by Nicolas-Sylvestre Bergier (1718-1790); in the *Ecclesiastical Conferences of the Diocese of Angers* (1804-1832), a diocese in southwest France; in the *Resolutionum moralium* (1653), by Antonini Diana Panormitani; *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* (1780), by Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832); in the *Breve Pastorale officium* (1537), by Pope Paul III; in *The Free Will*, by Augustine of Hippo; in *Ethica christiana sive teologia moralis*, treatise De

*Legibus* (1770), by Ioannis Vincentii Patuzzi (1700-1769); in *De Legibus* (1601-1603), by Francisco Suárez (1548-1617) and in the works of the English abolitionist Granville Sharp (1735-1813). Two elements can be seen from the list of works and authors: the erudition and theoretical relevance of Antônio Viçoso's readings and the break with the theoretical bases of classical philosophy, since he no longer argues on the basis of classical authors, but on the basis of modern law (see the authors he lists) and the liberal thinking of authors such as Jeremy Bentham and Granville Sharp.

We can summarize their arguments as follows: first, no economy can declare itself just if the benefit of some equals the sacrifice of others; second, any work of displacing labor power that does not respect workers is violent, so no enslaved person can continue to be kept as a labor force; third, any action of social rescue presupposes above all respect for the law, and every enslaved person introduced into the country after 1831 would be being enslaved illegitimately; fourth, Christian life within society presupposes as a priority the conditions of human dignity and no enslaved person enjoys dignity, so no one can be enslaved within a Christian society; fifth, the harm to the Brazilian economy will not be greater than the disaster to the lives of the enslaved, so nothing justifies the possibility of slavery; sixth, finally, any law that has not been revoked by its promulgator (in this case, the Emperor) is in force, and is not relativized either by the supposed ignorance of the subjects or by neglecting it for one's own benefit, because any legitimately promulgated decree retains the "force of law" and obliges the subjects to obey it (Viçoso, 2020, p. 148). Moreover, Antônio Ferreira Viçoso also makes a point of recalling that once the slave trade had been abolished, the law required former slave masters to reintegrate them into social life in the following terms: "it was decided that blacks would be granted the same civil prerogatives enjoyed by whites, without any distinction other than that of personal merit; and that the greatest attention would be paid to their education and moral and religious instruction" (Viçoso, 2020, pp. 192-193). Abolition was not enough; rather, social reparation was sought for those who had been enslaved, reintegrating them into social life through education<sup>5</sup>.

## Discussion

The transformation of the teaching tradition in Brazil allows us to understand at least three elements that could have repercussions on current teaching practices. It is not a question of freezing tradition, but rather of learning what is best in that tradition in order to shed light on teaching practices in our time. In this sense, *Tradition* is not only *the Basis for Innovation*, but the one that can offer the best elements for a fair assessment of the current situation in Brazilian education. As we saw earlier, in the last decade Brazil has lived under three very different concepts of education: the first was promoted by Dilma Rousseff and was centered on valuing teachers, improving the quality of teaching and promoting human beings, science, culture and technology, the principle of which was education for human development (to use Martha Nussbaum's expression); the second was marked by a strong technical content and reduced education to the formation of competences and skills with merely qualitative assessments and rankings, according to the BNCC, under the government of Michel Temer; the third radicalized the second

<sup>5</sup> The reference to these two writings is only because they are of interest for the purposes of this reflection. There are several other *cursus philosophicus* with the similar content from the colonial period, as well as a collection of almost 600 letters by Antônio Ferreira Viçoso that was recently published (*Dom Antônio Ferreira Viçoso, Correspondência (1823-1875)*). Edited by L. Marques, M. Camello *et alii*. Brasília: FUNAG, 2024). In them it is possible to understand other aspects of social, political and educational life during the Imperial period. In addition, other manuscripts from the Colégio do Caraça and other Brazilian colleges will soon be published in the *Scripta Brasiliiana* Series.

by prioritizing technical education, insertion into the job market and the reduction of content that could form critical and emancipatory awareness, as we saw in Jair Bolsonaro's speech. For this reason, we want to return to the best of tradition, not out of conservatism, but to reinvigorate education as the basis for human development and the formation of critical consciousness. We should consider the following points:

1) The education of the authors of the two writings presented a model of knowledge production on a global scale, as practiced by religious orders in the Old and New Worlds. This breaks with both the tendency towards colonialist forms of knowledge and the understanding of education as an instrument of domination. Analysis of the writings shows that the teaching practiced in the colony was far from being teaching for the mere reproduction of information or second-hand teaching. It follows that there is a very interesting dimension to consider in this process: the teachers who worked in Portugal and later worked in Brazil, and their writings were, to a greater or lesser extent, received within the Portuguese academy as well. For this reason, it may be important to recover the dimension of epistemic production on a global scale, not reduced to manuals, but produced as *networked knowledge* based on the principles of *reciprocity*, *recognition* and *symmetry* between the parties involved.

2) At a time when some countries seem inclined to close their borders to foreigners, control knowledge, Big Data and even deny science, education could build *processes of teacher mobility* with reciprocity between its institutions through agreements of solidarity and academic empathy. This would involve teachers from different countries exchanging for a fixed period of time in order to strengthen the improvement of teaching practices and international collaboration networks. It would not just be a question of teacher mobility, but of fostering forms of cooperation for educational development between developed and developing countries within the framework of a proposed *World Education Research Network*.

3) Contrary to the distortions that try to reduce education to meeting global rankings and metrics that sometimes disregard the profound inequalities in the proposition and application of global tests and/or that want education only for the insertion of cheap labor in the market, namely the model criticized by Martha Nussbaum (2012) that reduces education to an instrument for economic growth, education can be promoted as a form of social commitment based on republican foundations and a democratic spirit. After all, knowledge is not just a service distributed on a global scale. Education can be, above all, another means of *social emancipation and a way of rebuilding the social fabric* with respect for cultural differences, human diversity, the biosphere and with a view to rescuing decent conditions for human life in the world.

## Conclusion

Just as Antônio Ferreira Viçoso advocated granting the same education to the enslaved in order to rescue them socially, today we advocate a new education for all those who have been impoverished by a liberal economic system that widens social inequalities and fosters competition. Both the decisions that reduce the possibilities of access to public, secular, free and quality education are under strong pressure from so-called educational groups, leading to policies that reduce education to the provision of paid services, and the pressure from the market for mere immediate technical training reduces the possibilities for individuals to consolidate their education. In both directions, there is a predominance of an educational model subordinated to economic growth without commitment to the integral development of the human being, in other words, education for insertion into the job market without social emancipation.

I am not thinking of forms of educational welfarism, but of educational policy proposals centered on the full development of the human being, as Paulo Freire once proposed (2009, p. 86): “in search of *being more*, [which] however, cannot be realized in isolation, in individualism, but in communion, in the solidarity of existents, hence it is impossible to take place in the antagonistic relations between oppressors and oppressed”.

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