



Poverty and Political Conflicts in Night Schools in the Interior of the Province of Grão-Pará (1871-1879).

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SUMMARY:

The 1870s marked the birth of night schools in the province of Grão-Pará, a movement that had been taking place in various provinces of the Brazilian Empire at that time, such as Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Minas Gerais, Paraíba, Santa Catarina, Bahia, Ceará and many others, which, in their own way, implemented teaching to teach free adults to read and write. In April 1871, the president of the province, Joaquim Pires Machado Portella, approved the regulation of public education, specifically in “Art. 27. For the primary education of adults, there shall be one night school in each of the cities of the province and at least two in the capital”. The regulation of night classes stimulated a rapid demand for enrollment in the school of the municipal council of Belém, run by Father Felix Vicente de Leão and politician João Diogo Clemente Malcher, its founders. However, it was not long before disagreements began, with members of the political forces formed by liberals and conservatives disputing hegemony over control of the night schools created in the interior of Grão-Pará from 1871 onwards – Vigia, Ponta de Pedras, Soure, Marapanim and Óbidos were some of the municipalities in which night schools were established. This historical research, using newspapers and manuscripts from the Pará Public Archives, seeks to debate aspects of these conflicts that were now focused on the education of working adult students, as well as exploring the interests in controlling night schools by those linked to political groups in the province of Grão-Pará.

Keywords: Night School. Interior. Political Conflicts. Province of Grão-Pará.

ABSTRACT:

The 1870s marked the birth of night schools in the province of Grão-Pará, in this movement that had been occurring throughout the various provinces of the Brazilian empire at that time, such as Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Minas Gerais, Paraíba, Santa Catarina, Bahia, Ceará and many others, in their own way, put into practice teaching to make free adults literate. In April 1871, the president of the province Joaquim Pires Machado Portella approved the regulation of public instruction, precisely, in “Art.27. For primary education for adults there will be one night school in each of the cities in the province and at least two in the capital”. The regulation of night classes stimulated a rapid search for enrollments at the Belém city council school run by Father Felix Vicente de Leão and politician João Diogo Clemente Malcher, its founders. However, it did not take long for disagreements to begin, members of the political forces formed by liberals and conservatives disputed hegemony for control of the night schools created, from

1871, in the interior of Grão-Pará – Vigia, Ponta de Pedras, Soure, Marapanim and Óbidos were some of the municipalities in which night schools were established. This historical research, using newspapers and manuscripts from the Public Archive of Pará, seeks to debate aspects of these conflicts that sometimes focused on the training of working adult students, as well as exploring the interests in controlling the night school by subjects linked to political associations in the province of Grão-Pará.

Keywords: Night School. Interior. Political Conflicts. Province of Grão-Pará.

1. INTRODUCTION

Night schools in the province of Grão-Pará, effectively regulated in the provincial legislation of 1871, were the result of movements in the field of national education that sought to debate the social function of schools in the process of development of productive forces, amid changes in the political, cultural, economic and educational fields, combined with the effervescence of incipient republican ideas that began to gain strength from 1870 onwards. Schools and education, according to positivist canons, should be responsible for the formation of a model of disciplined, obedient citizens dedicated to the progress of the country.

However, the theoretical context discussed by men of letters linked to education who emphasized sympathy for these ideas to lead society to civilization, came up against the economic difficulties existing in the country and in the province of Grão-Pará at that time - the lack of budgetary resources to put into practice the plot of this educational project put different positions on a collision course for literacy among the poor and adults.

As a result, the school, in its organizational principles, became a space disputed by Freemasons and liberals who defended schooling as a way to overcome the educational backwardness of the province of Grão-Pará. On the other hand, conservatives believed that education was useful for teaching the first letters to the group of citizens historically excluded from schooling.

The reflection of this text, in the period from 1871 to 1879, aims to understand how the first night schools were implemented within the interior of the province of Grão-Pará, regulated by educational legislation. Night classes were ratified in legislation by the president of the province, Joaquim Pires Machado Portella, who in the instruction regulation aimed to organize and discipline the operation of primary schools, being the first to regulate the existence of night classes. "Art.27. For primary education

for adults there will be one night school in each of the cities of the province and at least two in the capital” (Ordinance of April 20, 1871 - Collection of laws of the province of Grão-Pará - Volume: XXXIII, Pará, Typography of the Diario do Gram-Pará, p.19)

In this process, subjects with different political positions took part, from the creators to the participating students, without whom the night classes would never come to life; subjects against and in favor; wealthy and poor; enslaved and slave owners, progressive and retrograde were these actors who took part in these first moments of the existence of night schools.

Reflecting on this historical perspective, I have begun to seek clues in sources from the past, avoiding ready-made answers, as much as I intend to point out the solution to the problems that are part of the daily life of resistant institutions. Historical permanences such as poverty, prejudice, age classification, evasion, and lack of resources are emblems that have characterized night education in the capital, especially in the interior.

By problematizing historical periodization (Le Goff, 2015, p.132) he shows that there is a systematic movement of sources in the field of problematization, making history a science with objective support that is continually remade, as new problems are addressed and researched. The debate, therefore, with new historical sources allows the education researcher to identify nuances of the struggles for the implementation of night classes in the daily life of the imperial society of Pará.

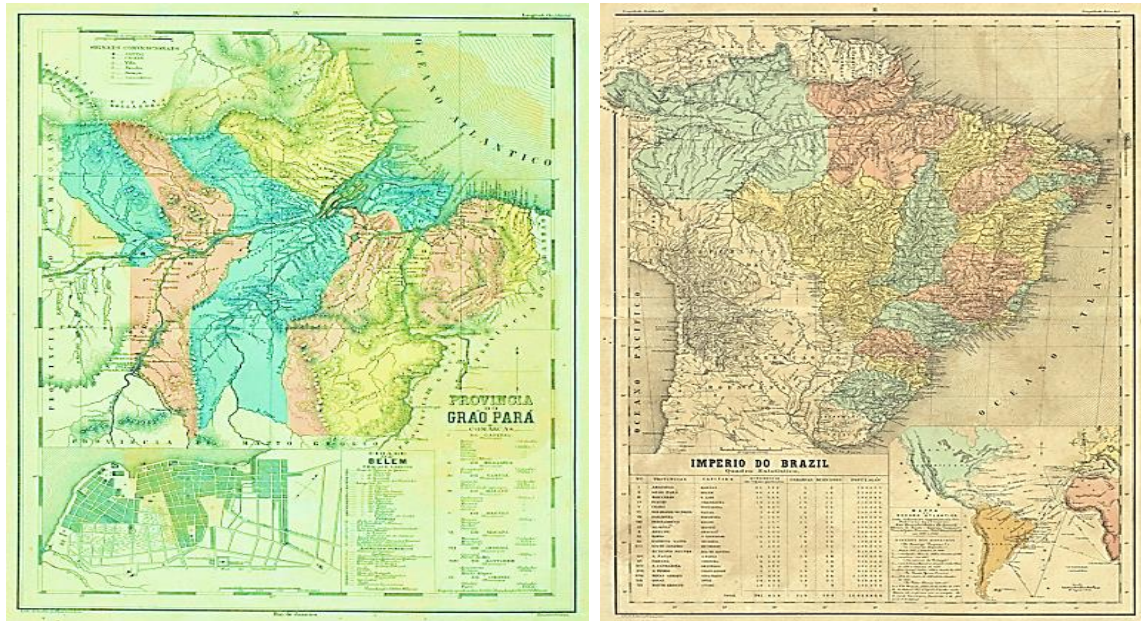
Given this scenario, understanding how this process of implementing night classes took place in the 19th century and consequently the resulting experiences fostered by the subjects who were involved in educational changes, leads to a problematization of the school and the subjects contained within it over time.

NIGHT SCHOOLS: FROM THE CAPITAL TO THE INTERIOR

Still in 1871, a columnist for the newspaper O Liberal do Pará, excited by the idea of the first results with the rapid demand for enrollments in the night school of the Belém municipal council, stated: “I hope it reaches the interior” and rightly so in his comments, as soon as the inauguration of the first night school was proclaimed in the capital, the interior region would follow in the footsteps of the capital in this process aimed at educating adults.

Concomitantly with those in the capital, the parishes of the province begin to open night classes for their residents to study. Contrary to what is thought, the night schools in the backlands of Pará are undertaken amidst applause, but they also follow in the footsteps of poverty, misery, controversy, and political intrigues, which are some of the characteristics that mark the first night schools in the interior of Pará.

Source: MENDES, Cândido Mendes. Atlas of the Empire of Brazil including its respective divisions



administrative, ecclesiastical, electoral and judicial: dedicated to His Majesty the Emperor, Lord D. Pedro II, intended for the public education of the Empire, with special attention to the students of the Imperial College of Pedro II, p.46. Available at: <https://www2.senado.leg.br/bdsf/handle/id/179473>

This, however, did not prevent several people enthusiastic about the idea of adult classes from opening spaces in rented houses and rooms to put into practice what was once considered a utopia: popular education. And so it was that Vigia became the first city in the interior to receive a night school, founded by the young teachers Francisco Ferreira de Vilhena Alves and Francisco Quintiliano de Araujo Nunes, named “Recreio Litterario”, and in 1871 it published its statutes:

Regulatory articles for teaching and management of “Recreio Litterario”

Art. 1º With the name of Recreio Litterario, a private school for boys and adults is created in the city of Vigia.

Art. 2 - It will consist of the following subjects: reading and writing; elementary and philosophical grammar; developed arithmetic, especially the metric system; moral and religious instruction: the number of classes may be increased when deemed convenient.

Art. 3 Only boys who are not enrolled in public schools will be admitted to enrollment: for adults, however, there will be no distinction.

Art. 11 - Each of the senior students will contribute at the time of enrollment the amount of 2\$000 reis, which will be used to purchase books, in order to set up a small popular library: where the students themselves, as well as the people of Vitoria, can acquire a greater amount of useful knowledge.

Art. 14 - Education for boys will be exempt from any and all contributions. Art. 16 - There will be a book for enrolling boys and another for adults.

Art. 17 - The teaching method will be simultaneous.

Francisco Ferreira de Vilhena Alves

Francisco Q. de Araujo Nunes.¹

The regulations of the “Recreio Litterario” embody a pedagogical proposal of a school aimed at serving boys and adults, with a Lancasterian method that used the help of students (adjuncts), that is, those more advanced to assist the teacher in the classroom. The night classes at the school of Vilhena Alves and Araujo Nunes, employed “developed” reading and arithmetic, making no distinction of age when older people sought school. However, in order to register the enrollment of students, a small amount of money was required, the fund of which was intended to open a “popular library” to encourage the population of Vigiá to seek clarification in books to understand the local, national and foreign political reality.

Vilhena Alves understood that the freedom of the people and the construction of civility were consigned to knowledge. Therefore, reading and counting represented the key to overcoming backwardness, organizing the formation of a citizen aware of his rights, thus, the conception of education of the man of letters and teachers placed instruction as the basis for overcoming social degeneration. Thus:

Popular education? It is the greatest guarantee of the civil and political rights of a people; it is the support of their freedom (...) an educated people can more easily study the laws of their country, in order to guide their actions by the rules of equity and not commit those horrible crimes that are put into practice every day in countries that are not very advanced in civilization. (...) an educated people who know their rights and duties (...) education is the basis of freedom (...) educate the people and they will be completely free (...)²

Vilhena Alves thought of school as an institution responsible for manipulating social reality, but which played a fundamental role in the process of forming citizens. However, in order to understand what he called “rights and duties” it was necessary to make use of the instruments that school could offer, above all, popular education, which had been denied for decades by the State to poor, destitute adult men in the society of that imperial era.

The solution, he says, was to offer free public schooling to those who needed it most in order to have the knowledge necessary to overcome educational backwardness, in relation to a prior understanding of the laws that regulated the State. Therefore, the meaning of freedom was to practice and respect the laws of the country; breaking them would bring people closer to “countries that were less advanced in civilization.”

Thus, popular education will be built in the city of Vigia as the basis for raising the values advocated by the “Literary Recreation”. Engaged in the first night school of Vigia, several teachers began to lead this movement that would multiply throughout the plains of Pará - “the following gentlemen taught: Professor Araujo Nunes, in Arithmetic; José Joaquim de Carvalho Junior, in Physics and Chemistry; Professor Antonio R. de Souza, in Reading and Writing; and Vilhena Alves, in Grammar”.³

Soon after the city of Vigia, other night schools would open throughout the province, due to the establishment of municipal chambers. In January 1872, in the city of Macapá⁴, former territory of Pará, the municipal council decided to establish a night school for adult education:

The municipal council of this city, authorized by art. 27 of law 695 of October 25, created a night school for adults, which was installed, in the same chamber's passage, on the 8th of this current month at 7:00 p.m. Days before, the council published its notice inviting not only people who wanted and were in the case of being enrolled, but all citizens in general (...) On that occasion, 53 students were enrolled (I will say a few words in relation to the 1st letter teacher of this city, Manoel José de Pinho. (...)) Over the course of more than three years, it has given sufficient proof of its negligence and incapacity.

Mr. Pinho, appointed by the exm. Mr. Abel Graça, president of this province, a teacher at a night school, published an announcement announcing the opening

from his school on the 8th of this month, at his home, located on Rua da Atalaia, (a street that never existed in this city).

The appearance of this announcement posted in every corner of the city provoked laughter from everyone who saw it. On the announced day, the old door of his house was opened, and only the teacher presented an old lamp, which he used every day. The room did not undergo any changes, preserving the furniture of old benches from the old school. The result was as expected – not a single student has appeared before him to this day. (...)

The three friends of Instructions

According to the information provided by the whistleblowers, “the three friends of education”, Professor Manoel José de Pinho’s night school was not able to regularly serve its students, since the school was not operating at the address indicated, “Rua da Atalaia”. However, the comments published in a newspaper opposed to President Abel Graça’s political group make it clear that there was a gap in the presentation made by the “three friends of education”, since after more than three years of Mr. Pinho’s night school operating, they were able to assess its “inability and negligence”.

This way of discrediting the work, giving innocuous relevance to the facts, was a way of seeking visibility to neutralize their political adversary and take over the night school. To this end, they adopted the practice of characterizing the work environment by postponing the appropriate decisions about the closure and teacher punishment “(...) the room did not undergo any changes, preserving the furniture of old benches from the old school”. The humility of the room lit by a lamp, the criticisms of Mr. Pinho’s work, said he was responsible for the disappearance of the initial 53 students who sought the school to study at night.

Domingos Soares Ferreira Penna⁶, made the following comment about classes in schools in the interior of Grão Pará:

⁵Macapá January 18, 1872, Mr. Editors. The Liberal of Pará, N.20, P.2, JAN 26, 1872.

When one goes to study, whether casually or intentionally, in the interior of the province, the teaching industry is involuntarily unpleasant, between what one sees and what one reads, (...) The state of education in the interior of the province is not at all flattering. Student enrollment is almost always *an official fiction*, is a relationship of frequency is often not the least.⁷(Author's emphasis)

The condition, therefore, of poverty and manipulation of the numbers of enrolled students, in Ferreira Penna's opinion, seemed to be unanimous, informing that the frequency in the call and activity registration maps did not coincide with the information passed on to the public education board. The interior, marked by distance, isolation and abandonment of the provincial State contributed to the population remaining oblivious to what was happening inside the capital.

The dirty classroom, old furniture, used objects, the typical setting for criticisms such as that described about Professor Pinho's night school in Macapá, would never have been noticed if false or true allegations not published in the newspapers had come to light, and the pedagogical authorities had not bothered to verify the veracity of the information. The provincial government treated the rural population with a certain disdain, which was seen through the lens of racist theories, as Ferreira Penna rightly points out:

(...) teachers are all more or less zealous in fulfilling their responsibilities obligations. Evil has its main origin in habits, customs and, frequently, in the lack of resources of the majority of inhabitants, mainly, those who have never had any education.⁸

The problem was in the population itself, accused by Ferreira Penna of bad "habits and customs." Poverty said a lot about people, especially adults. With its residents made up predominantly of mixed-race people, whites, blacks and indigenous people, these racial groups fuel disbelief and exacerbate the lack of investment in public education for adults. However, the archaeologist recognizes the efforts of teachers who are always "zealous" with their students.

In a note published in 1872, the columnist for O Liberal do Pará observed the opening of the night school in both Vigia and Macapá as positive:

The great movement initiated by that distinguished corporation was not limited to the capital. In the cities of Vigia and Macapá, night schools will also be opened for the people, and another has just been installed in the parish of Acará thanks to the efforts of the respective public teacher, Mr. Antonio Roiz de Lima, who also took charge of directing it. On the day of the opening, 17 students will enroll in this school. On behalf of the inhabitants of the province and the most vital interests of our chara homeland, we thank with the most sincere outpouring of recognition the noble and praiseworthy commitment of these apostles of progress, who will thus seek to render such a distinguished service to the country, and we hope that such fine examples will continue to be imitated, so that primary education can spread throughout all parts of the province as a demand for our backward state and the general interests of the population.⁹

The night school, therefore, was not restricted to the capital, it spread to the interior, consolidated in the city of Belém, the “people”, according to the newspaper, were receptive to the classes adults, while some treated the opening of these classes with pessimism, the description in the text points to another view of the motivation that led teachers from distant locations to adhere to this form of schooling for working men.

In Vigia, teachers Vilhena Alves and Araújo Nunes, in Macapá, teacher Pinho, and in Acará, teacher Antônio Roiz Lima, with his first 17 enrolled students, began to receive the baptism of “apostles of progress,” since they were working in a field of service that would bring important results for the country and also for the province. Therefore, the general interests of the population were strengthening the movement in favor of the night school in the backlands of Grão-Pará. And, heading towards Santarém:

In this city there are two night schools run by Professors João Pereira Gomes, who is paid by the province, and Manoel Sebastião de Moraes Sarmiento, who is paid by the municipal treasury. More than seventy [70] students attend these schools, including adults and minors, free and slave. Public education is being widely spread in this city, for all classes, and the results of such a salutary measure will be reaped later. We would also like a school to be created on each of the rivers that are most important for their population and agricultural industry, such as Aritapera and Arapixuna, so that all those who, due to their condition and circumstances, cannot attend the schools in this city can learn the first rudiments of primary education there. Since such a measure depends on an act of the provincial legislative power, we trust in the unwavering patriotism of our deputies, so that in the next legislature they will draft a law on this subject.¹⁰

The night school run by teachers João Pereira Gomes and Manoel Sebastião de Moraes Sarmiento, who were financed by the state and the municipality in their respective schools, brought together more than 70 students, a mix of free and slave students, minors and adults, whose aim was to popularize the presence of the school in society. However, in the vicinity of Santarém, on the Arapixuna and Aritapera rivers, there were agricultural and industrial communities inhabited by a significant number of adults who needed to “learn the first rudiments of primary education”, and even asked legislators to pass laws that would provide attention to the residents of these two locations.

In the northeast region of the province, in Bragança, the following note was published about the night school of professor Augusto Heleodoro de Azevedo Corrêa:

The Municipal Council of Bragança – As requested by the Municipal Council of Bragança in an official letter dated the 5th of this month, I hereby give my consent for the night school established by this municipality to operate from now on in the house where the public primary school operated by Professor Augusto Heleodoro de Azevedo Corrêa operates, given that this same teacher is in charge of the said night school, which cannot continue to be established in the Municipal Palace due to lack of facilities, and for which the Council cannot rent a special house due to lack of specific resources, as alleged. This has been communicated to the interim director general of public education and to the provincial treasury.¹¹

The representative of the Bragança city council explained to the primary school teacher Augusto Heleodoro that although the city hall had encouraged the creation of the night school, there was no place to install it, given the lack of resources and adequate space that the council did not have. Therefore, the night school should continue to operate in the same residence of the teacher to avoid its closure and increase in expenses, it is noted, “the little way” that the councilors found to have classes for adults in operation. And, from Santarém, there is also a note in the *Jornal do Pará* with the following clarification:

Santarém – This council in its report, among other things requested for the good of its municipality, asks you for the following: (...) That you set aside an annual bonus of 120\$000 rs for an assistant to the night school teacher, given the large number of students who attend that school,

and the teacher cannot, on his own, perform the functions of his position without this assistant.¹²

The spread of night school throughout the countryside, not always as requested by the Santarém council, represented hope for state funding, since the public education department responsible for the transfer of resources left teachers in a difficult situation, as was the case of Manoel Sebastião de Moraes Sarmento, who demanded that the council hire an assistant teacher to help him with his classes, since the night class was quite full. Therefore, there was no way to guarantee teaching and instruction without the presence of an assistant to teach the lessons and correct the students' activities.

In Marajó, in the village of Chaves, against the coast of Marajó, in the year 1875, the Judge Dr. Joaquim Jonas Bezerra Montenegro

(...) I am pleased to acknowledge receipt of the official letter in which you informed me that on 28 January of this year you had set up a free primary night school for adults in the town of Chaves. Praising the performance of your assistance, I approve the conduct of the public teacher in that town who took charge of the management of said school.¹³

The Judge was responsible for opening a night school, appointing a teacher to take over the duties at the primary school for adult male residents, similarly, in the parish of Ponta de Pedras, in 1877, the "The Board of Directors of the "Palestra Litteraria" Society creates its night school:

Board of directors of the society "Palestra Litteraria" in Ponta de Pedras, August 13, 1877 - - Ill and exm.sr.[João Capistrano Bandeira de Mello Filho] - (...) of the same society, created on March 1 of the current year, on the initiative of the assistant teacher of the public school of this locality with the aim of creating a library and maintaining a school for adults, in which the following subjects are taught: grammar of the national language, arithmetic, elementary principles of music and French.

An important difference in the Ponta de Pedras night school is its curriculum, which is different from that of the schools in the capital, including French and music classes for students. In this way, schools were created through the initiatives of teachers. In the case of Ponta de Pedras, an assistant teacher, that is, a student, had to take charge of adult education, and on August 13, 1877, he managed to establish a library that would serve all residents, especially young men who had been enrolled to attend night classes.

In Monte Alegre, in the lower Amazon region, however, the night school promoted by councilor and public teacher João d'Annuniação d'Oliveira Pantoja will have other objectives, as its founder declares:

Professor João d'Annuniação d'Oliveira Pantoja, deputy councilor of the council. The current council created a night school for its municipality, which costs six hundred thousand réis (600\$000) annually!! (...) Sixteen years ago, they were in charge of the municipality [Monte Alegre]. They put the liberals in the municipal council, they did absolutely nothing for the municipality that would deserve the approval of its citizens, they dismissed those from the council, they put the conservatives there, who began their apprenticeship with a most magnanimous act, the creation of a school, where it provides education free of charge to the proletarian class of society, by means of which the crime statistics would later be reduced, contributing to the development of agriculture and arts in the municipality (...) Y.¹⁴

Professor João d'Annuniação d'Oliveira Pantoja's night school, in his view

He sought to create a counterpoint to the presence of the liberals in power in Monte Alegre, as they had spent 600,000 reais per year, a fact that would have caused a great waste of public resources, in relation to the purposes of education. For the teacher, the arrival of the conservatives brought "progress" since the night school would come with the possibility of both serving the group called "proletarians", however he bet his objectives on the liberation of adult men being far from transgressions.

Therefore, it had been identified that idleness was responsible for the increase in crime. To solve this problem, schools would have the status of a lifeline for those considered dangerous within Monte Alegre society. Furthermore, it would promote development in this adult social environment, making men more disciplined in their work in agriculture, as well as in technical trades.

The Monte Alegre city council, however, became emphatic with dual exercise of public function, the target became the night school teacher João d'Annuniação d'Oliveira Pantoja:

To the president of the municipal chamber of Monte Alegre, Miguel Calmão d'Assunção – transmitting, by copy, enclosed, the official letter of the 12th of this month, addressed to me by the councilors of that chamber Joaquim Barbosa d'Amorim and Nunes Loureiro, recommending that you. That you inform, urgently, on the subject of the same official letter, being hereby informed that your procedure was regular, summoning and swearing in to take your seat in the chamber, as a substitute councilor, to professor João d'Annuniação d'Oliveira Pantoja, since, in addition to the positions of councilor and public teacher being incompatible, as expressed in the notices of July 22, 1843 and no. 385 of September 1861, art. 77 of the public education regulations prohibits teachers from exercising any employment or position unrelated to their profession; in addition to the circumstance that the teacher in question is an employee of that chamber, given that he is running the night school established there at the expense of the municipality.¹⁵

The mayor, in his duties of supervising the services that were his responsibility, is supposed to have liberal affiliation, and ordered councilors Joaquim Barbosa d'Amorim and Nunes Loureiro, as a matter of “urgency”, proceed regularly and present as an option to professor João d'Annuniação d'Oliveira Pantoja, who by oath and based on notices from 1843, 1861 and on art. 77 of the public education regulation that the said professor would have to choose whether to remain in the position of alternate councilor or whether to continue to head the night school supported by the municipality.

It is not known what the Monte Alegre teacher's choice was, but it was clear that his political choice was the cornerstone of his decision to continue as a councilman or to continue keeping his adults away from crime. In the village of Faro, on the other hand, in Monte Alegre the night teacher had great respect and acceptance from the local population:

Night School–And also from Belém, Pará, the following news that we extracted from *Constitution* of December 20th. “– The Faro council informed the presidency that it had inaugurated its night school on the 1st of this month, having appointed the former public teacher of that town, Mr. Francisco de Salles Borges, to run it. He has always been well-liked, not only by his students but also by the parents of the students”. It is a good thing that public teachers are appreciated there!¹⁶

The newspaper of the city of Rio de Janeiro, focused on dealing with pedagogical matters, reinforced the importance that night school was beginning to occupy in the Amazon, the circulation of information even with the difficulties of the time, did not exempt the positive praise of the columnist, referring to the work of professor Francisco de Salles Borges who had praised qualities for the exercise of the position that earned him the respect of parents and students. This positive assessment was not the same in the capital of the empire, where teachers were persecuted and many did not have the same adjectives as the professor from Faro.

The night school founded by the police sub-chief and run by professor Manoel Joaquim Campos Machado initially enrolled 7 adults and 6 minors. Some were sent by their fathers and others by their mothers. The students at this school came from the city of Faro, but there was one Portuguese, another from Belém, another from the city of Tefé, Amazonas, another from Breves, in Marajó, and one of the students was already working professionally as a shoemaker. The place, therefore, shows the great migratory flow that existed in the Amazon, in this case, in the province of Grão-Pará.

Night schools ended up becoming a hope for those who had not attended school, however, maintaining some of these schools in the plains of the province was a great challenge for educators and students. In an official letter dated November 1879, teacher Conrado Conceição Nicolau communicated to a higher authority the conditions and commitment of his school:

Public School of 2nd Entry in Óbidos, November 23, 1879. Most Illustrious Sir. I am sending you the annual maps and those of the last trimester of the academic year that has just ended, of the day and night schools that I run: through the president of the municipal council who is currently in charge of the house and the literary delegate; the examination terms of those schools will be sent, by which you will be responsible for the fact that 53 students attended, 39 in the day school and 14 in the night school; from the first school, 2 were prompt in all the subjects of the primary course and passed with distinction, the others were admitted. The government has never provided the night school with lamps for its lighting, and for seven years now its expenses have been my responsibility: I ask you to take steps in this regard. I reiterate my assurances of high esteem and consideration, Most Illustrious Sir - Joaquim Pedro Correa de Freitas - MD General Director of the Public Institution. - Professor Conrado Conceição Nicolau.¹⁷

In order to ensure that they receive municipal funds, primary school students were required to submit attendance records showing the students' attendance and absences. Professor Conrado Nicolau fulfilled his obligation in a courteous manner, showing in his official letter the number of students who attended and were absent from the final exams. However, a fact described shows the lack of commitment of the state "The government never provided the night school with lamps for its lighting, and for seven years its expenses have been my responsibility".

The school operated through the financial resources of the teacher who supported it in lighting by purchasing kerosene or another flammable substance to brighten the classroom environment. The government must have certainly been aware of the situation at Professor Conrado Nicolau's night school, since he had been complaining for 7 years about the difficulties he and his students were experiencing. In the document sent to Joaquim Pedro Corrêa de Freitas, perhaps measures were taken or not, but the truth was that the existence of the night school did not always represent prosperity and "progress", since maintenance expenses were high. Therefore, the presence of the State became essential to ensure assistance to teachers and students.

Night school was not designed to attack the origin of the problem of illiteracy, behind the intentionality of its creators lay a dominant discourse "in every society the production of discourse is at the same time controlled, selected, organized, and redistributed by certain procedures that have the purpose of conjuring its powers and dangers"¹⁸. In some cases it would come to solve the problem of crime, free its audience from barbarity and mold them into the canons of civility.

The interior of the province, Vigia, Cametá, Bragança, Óbidos, Marapanim, Faro, Monte Alegre, Soure, Santarém, Ponta de Pedras, in addition to other parishes will gain their schools for adults, on the other hand, the implementation of the school did not guarantee its operation, teachers had to choose between the classroom or the pulpit of the city council, others were accused of not fulfilling their teaching obligations by not sending the attendance map to the public education directorate in the capital "damned Butucudos politics".

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Thus, the night schools of the backlands of Grão-Pará were created in the effervescence of the blood of liberals and conservatives, so it was not surprising that it was in the field of

electoral conflicts involving the two main political forces in the Brazilian empire of the 19th century. However, there is no denying that there were those who believed in the social principles that schools could offer and teach their students, such as the principles of “knowledge of law” to build critical, libertarian thinking, making students aware of the value that citizenship has in social equity, as developed by Francisco Ferreira de Vilhena Alves from Vigí.

On the other hand, night classes for adults reflected several conflicts that were part of the local reality, from the lack of materials, hiring of teachers and local political interests in the interior of Grão-Pará. Some of the founders identified the literacy of students as a way of counting votes in municipal elections, others as a way of getting rid of crime, each in their own way perceived different objectives in opening night classes, common to all, observed in historical documentation, was the abandonment of adults by school laws, a problem that is still part of the reality of Pará and many states of the Brazilian federation.

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