

PUBLIC EDUCATION AND INDEPENDENCE IN SPANISH AMERIC AND BRAZIL: LANCASTERIAN EXPERIENCES IN THE 19TH CENTURY

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ABSTRACT

The diffusion of the Lancasterian or monitorial / mutual instruction method is closely linked to the need to extend education to all social classes, the struggle waged by the Enlightenment and put into practice, at least on paper, in the early public education systems of the Nineteenth Century. After the independence process of the Spanish and Portuguese colonies, the issue of Elementary education was one of the problems to be solved in the emerging republics. The method of Bell and Lancaster was adopted in various countries: Cuba, Puerto Rico, Guatemala, Mexico, Uruguay, Argentina, Chile, Peru, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Paraguay. In 1818, Joseph Lancaster, at the invitation of Simon Bolivar, made a visit to South America where he disseminated his method to established schools. Later, he also visited the United States and Canada. This study analyzes the diffusion and implementation of the monitorial/mutual instruction teaching method in some Latin American countries, focusing on the Brazilian experience, emphasizing its contribution to the development and spreading of Elementary education. The adoption of the method in the Americas was in tune with the process of internationalization of educational knowledge and educational models in the first half of the nineteenth century.

Keywords: *Journal of Latin American Education History, public education, Lancasterian method, independence, the nineteenth century.*

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INTRODUCTION

The diffusion of the Lancasterian or monitorial/mutual instruction method is closely linked to the need to extend education to all social classes, a struggle undertaken by Enlightenment and put into practice, at least on paper, in the early systems of public education of the 19th century².

According to Vincent mutual instruction begins with the industrialization process, aiming to impart to all students, rapidly and at low cost, the *knowledge* and *know how* indispensable to that historical moment. It is a stage in public instruction and literacy schools, as part of the process to incorporate the *modernities* of the central countries that were undergoing industrialization, and consequently forming citizens adapted to that reality. The diffusion of elementary education to the working masses required the rationalization of the pedagogical act – by quick teaching, low cost, discipline and order, using few teachers and several student-teachers³.

In Spanish America and in Brazil, elementary education was one of the problems to be solved after the colonies of Spain and Portugal became independent⁴. The Bell and Lancaster method was adopted in several countries: Cuba, Puerto Rico, Guatemala, Mexico, Uruguay, Argentina, Chile, Peru, Brazil, Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Bolívia⁵, and Paraguay⁶. In 1818, at the invitation of Simon Bolivar, Joseph Lancaster travelled to South America where he disseminated his method and established schools. Later he also travelled to the United States and Canada.

The present study discusses the history of monitorial/mutual instruction. It analyzes its diffusion and official adoption in some Spanish America countries, focusing on the Brazilian experience, and emphasizes its contribution to the development and generalization of elementary education.

1. Some History of Monitorial/Mutual Education

In the last years of the 18th century we see the rise of a new teaching method: monitorial or mutual instruction. Until then, teachers of basic education had adopted individual and/or simultaneous teaching in which the agent of education is the teacher. In the monitorial/mutual

² Maria Isabel Cortis Giner y Maria Consolación Calderón España. El método de enseñanza mutua. Su difusión en la América Colonial Española. *História da Educação* v. XIV-XV (1995-96): 279-300.

³ Guy Vincent, *L'école primaire française. Etude sociologique* (Lyon: PuLyon, 1980), 261.

⁴ Argentina (1810); Bolívia (1809-1825); Brazil (1822); Chile (1810-1826); Colômbia (1819); Cuba (1898); Ecuador (1822/1830); Guatemala (1821); (México (1810); Paraguay (1811); Peru (1821); Uruguay (1828); Venezuela (1821/1830), Cuba (1895), Puerto Rico (1898).

⁵ Bolívia also adopted mutual instruction through a law of February 9, 1827. This teaching method was adopted only for a privileged group.

⁶ About Paraguay, see Heinz Peters, *El sistema educativo paraguayo desde 1811 hasta 1865*. (Paraguay: Instituto Cultural Paraguayo-Alemán, 1996).

method, the responsibility is shared between the teachers and the monitors, aiming at democratizing the functions of teaching⁷.

When Zélis outlined the history of mutual education, he stated that in a sketchy form it is found in the monastic schools, in the school of the Brethren of the Common Life in the High Middle Ages, and in certain charity schools during the period before the French Revolution,⁸. Libercourt also points out that Comenius had advocated this method because it allowed teaching everything to everyone⁹. The method, however, would be separately systematized by Andrew Bell (1753-1832) and by Joseph Lancaster (1778-1838), who claim its paternity.

Bell, a physician and Anglican pastor, applied the principles of the method to the British Indies, in Madras, where he ran an orphan asylum from 1787 to 1794. Since he could not count on the services of trained teachers, he had the idea of using the best students – the monitors – to impart to the others the knowledge that they had learned from the teacher, which allowed providing instruction to over two hundred students. When he returned to England he published *Essai d'éducation fait au collège de Madras* (1797), in which he reports his experience: “the means by which an entire school can instruct itself under the supervision of a single teacher”.

At the same time, Lancaster, who was a Quaker, created a school for poor children in London (eight hundred boys and three hundred girls) in 1798. Faced with the problem of instructing a larger number of students free of charge, without using many teachers, I decided to divide the school into several classes, and appointed a student with greater knowledge than the others as a monitor of each class, under the immediate supervision of the teacher. He realized that, using this method, a single teacher was enough to run, in an orderly and easy manner, a school with five hundred to thousand students. In 1803 he published *Improvements in education at it respects the industrious classes of the community*, in which he highlights the results achieved, encouraging the opening of many schools adopting the Lancasterian method. With some nobles, he organized the Royal Lancastrian Society, which allows the wide diffusion of the method and its teaching materials.

The Lancasterian method is based on the teaching of students by themselves, divided into several classes, usually six, all with a similar level of knowledge, ie., no student knows more or less than the other. The student is integrated into a class after their knowledge is verified. The class studies at a given rhythm with a program to develop reading writing and arithmetic. Each student may belong to several classes at the same time: they may be more advanced in reading than in writing or reckoning. Each class is run by an instructor, the monitor, the main agent of the method. It is one of the students of the class who, within a given specialty, is distinguished by their results and placed at the head of the class. Before the class begins, the teacher gives a special explanation and specific indications. The monitor then controls the class and classifies the

⁷ About the pedagogy of mutual instruction, see Anne Querrien. *L'école mutuelle, une pédagogie trop efficace?* (Paris: Empencheur de Penser en Rond, 2005).

⁸ Guy Zélis, *L'École Primaire en Belgique, depuis Moyen Âge*. (Belgique: Galerie GGER, 1986-87), 133.

⁹ Alexandre Libercourt, Bell and Lancaster. Promoteurs de l'enseignement mutuel. *Revue Education Enfantine*: n° 985 (dec. 1996).

students. When one student distinguishes himself, when he is regularly the first in class, he may rise to the higher class, occupying the last place. If, after some time, no progress is noted, he returns to the class where he was before. He can also help the monitor and, if the latter is absent or promoted, replace him. Thus, throughout the school year there is a continuous movement of student classification.

With this organization, the teacher's role is restricted. He has no direct contact with the students except before class begins with the monitors. During class he remains at his desk in front of the students, on a platform, helped by one or two monitors, the oldest and with the most knowledge, who transmit his orders and replace him if he is not there. Like the head of an orchestra, he regulates school activity. To conduct and evaluate the hundreds of students correctly, the teacher issues precise, easily understood orders, using a bell, whistle or cane. He also controls the students' movements: arrival, departure, settling on the school benches, changes of exercise. He controls and regulates the monitors' work and, if one of them shows little zeal for his function, places him in a higher class and appoints a successor; conversely, if he notices that a monitor is abusing his power, he admonishes him. The *telegraph* ensures communications between the teacher, the general monitor and the other monitors.

At the mutual school, time is strictly disciplined. The sequence of activities and the commands needed for their implementation are meticulously foreseen and described in the guides, manuals and treatises published for the teachers. The teaching program includes, for the boys reading, writing and reckoning; for the girls, besides these disciplines, sewing. Each subject taught is based on a precise and detailed program that is found in the guides and treatises elaborated by Nyon, Bally, Sarazin and others. Each program is divided into eight grades in a hierarchy, which must be followed successively. The rates of learning and acquisition of knowledge vary according to student and discipline. The method uses various techniques and materials in the classroom. It constantly uses summary tables and illustrated tables, syllabaries, reading tables and reckoning tables, the blackboard, slate, writing letters on the soil with a finger¹⁰.

The method is enthusiastically accepted because it is easy to maintain discipline. A hierarchy of rewards encourages the students to work. Personal satisfaction is stimulated by the quick progress from class to class, or by the possibility of becoming a monitor, or by the distribution of prizes – games, books – or money, ie., the monitors receive a small payment. Finally, those who are outstanding during the course receive a certificate that makes it easier for them to find a job. Sanctions to the students are in a rising order, according to infraction: to be quarantined to a specific bench; kept in isolation in a special office during class; solitary confinement; remaining in class after the end of the exercises; remaining in front of a sign listing the misdeeds committed and finally, being expelled from school. The most severe sanctions, that were out of the monitor's and even the teacher's control, are recorded in the *black book*. The sanctions are determined by a jury of the students themselves, who evaluate their peers, as in a real court case.

¹⁰ Pierre Lesage, La pedagogie dans les écoles mutuelles au XIX siècle. *Revue Française de Pédagogie*: n.31 (abril-mai-juin 1975), 62-69.

The main advantage of the method is economic, since it allows a teacher to teach a large number of students in a short time. Besides this, compared to *individual* schools, the method keeps the students disciplined, used to order and rules from the first class onwards. From the pedagogical point of view, forming homogeneous disciplinary groups makes the activities proposed correspond to the students' real level of knowledge. The criticism is based on the incompetence of the monitors, mostly unable to supply complementary explanations or to adapt to the level of understanding of their colleagues; on an *empirical and practical* system, based on *mechanical procedures*, and thus without educational value; on inculcating formulae and recipes; on the transmission of *superficial and valueless* knowledge that does not make the students think and does not develop intelligence. The student is the great victim of the mechanics of the monitorial/mutual system; he is caught in a real military system that makes him act only on orders and submit to conditioning that is to make him a docile, obedient citizen. Foucault considers mutual teaching a machine to break bodies and intelligence¹¹.

2. The Diffusion of the Lancasterian method in Latin America

According to Caruso, the diffusion of the Lancasterian method is part of the history of the internationalization of pedagogical knowledge and of models of education, with a view to rendering the school order and modern pedagogical knowledge official in the 19th century¹². The worldwide expansion of the method was a diffusion process unprecedented in the history of education, above all because of its speed and generalized presence, but also because it was the first movement proper towards internationalization in the field of methods and didactics. The system was rapidly implemented in England, in many countries in Europe (Portugal, Spain, France, Italy, Denmark, Bulgaria, Holland, Belgium, to mention a few), in the African territories (Sierra Leoa, South Africa), in Australia, in the United States, in Canada, in the Americas, in Brazil. The officialization of the method to schools of the new republics also implied deciding what type of republican subject was to be educated, by homogenizing the school system, in order to produce certain dispositions connected to the expansion of knowledge and literacy¹³.

Some Central American countries implemented the method while still under the guardianship of the Spanish Metropolis. In Cuba, in 1814, articles published in the daily newspaper "El Cena" refer to the method as a solution to the problems of lack of schools and teachers in the country at that time. Later, Lancasterian schools and a Normal School were founded in Havana, to diffuse the method, with students from Puerto Rico, Santo Domingo, Caracas¹⁴.

¹¹ Michel Foucault, *Vigiar e Punir* (Petrópolis: Vozes, 1977), 125-204.

¹² Marcelo Caruso, La oficialización del método lancasteriano. América Latina em el contexto del movimiento internacional por la educación mutua en: *Anais do VI Congresso Iberoamericano de História de La Educacion Iberoamericana: história de las ideas, actores e instituciones educativa* (San Luis de Potosi/México, 2003), 1.

¹³ Caruso, *La oficialización del método lancasteriano*, 6.

¹⁴ Giner y Calderón España, *El método de enseñanza mutua*, 284.

In Guatemala the handbook by Nyon– *Manual practico del método de mutua enseñanza para escuelas de primeiras letras* -, was translated in 1819, the same year it was published in France. After independence (1821), several plans were made recommending that the method be adopted, but it was only in the 1830s that the initiatives were implemented, when the country established lay, free and mandatory schools (1835). The first school to use this method is from 1830, and a Lancasterian normal school was founded in 1835¹⁵.

Already in 1819, in México, a few schools and teachers were found who adopted the monitorial method, but the system became popular after independence, when the philanthropic association – *Compañía Lancasteriana* (1822) – was founded, for the purpose of promoting primary education among the poor classes¹⁶. The diffusion went so fast that in 1823 there were almost eighty private schools with a total of 3,800 students. In the same year, the first Lancasterian normal school was established. The prestige and success of the *Compañía Lancasteriana* could be measured twenty years later, when, in 1842 the Government gave the responsibility of the *Dirección General de la Instrucción Primaria Pública*, increasing the number of schools and cities that adopted the system. In the 1870s, these schools begin to become decadent, and go over to the public system, culminating in the dissolution of the philanthropic association in 1890¹⁷.

In South America the first Lancasterian school was probably founded in Uruguay in 1815¹⁸, by initiative of Friar Camilo Henriquez, who created the *Instituto Nacional*, establishing schools to teach basic education using the monitorial method. This fact alone is a contradiction. The Catholic Church was a great opponent of the system, especially in France, together with conservative segments, because it considered that it was founded by foreigners who were Protestant and educated people to become automatons.

From 1817 to 1825, Uruguay belonged to the Portuguese Crown- United Kingdom of Portugal, Brazil and Algarves, identified as the Cisplatin Province. In 1817 general Carlos Frederico Lecor, Baron of Laguna, who had a progressive mind, took the initiative of opening a Lancasterian school. Another school was created in Concepción, in the province of Entre Ríos, under the protection of Commander José Antonio Berdum and the regency of Solano Garcia, a teacher who had emigrated from Chile. On April 20, 1820, James Thomson passed through Montevideú, intending to present his pedagogical ideas regarding the method. He made contact with Dom Damásio Antonio Larrañaga who, together with Lecor, founded the “Lancasterian Society”, which, on November 3, 1821 inaugurated a school in Montevideo. According to the school by-laws, every day the teacher was to read a chapter of the Holy Bible out aloud. Other

¹⁵ Giner y Calderón España, *El método de enseñanza mutua*, 287.

¹⁶ About this, see Marcelo Caruso y Eugenia Roldán. El impacto de las nuevas sociabilidades. Sociedade civil, recursividad comunicativa y cambio educativo em la Hispanoamérica postcolonial. *Revista Brasileira de História da Educação/SBHE*, n. 26 (mai-ago 2011).

¹⁷ Giner y Calderón España, *El método de enseñanza mutua*, 291.

¹⁸ About the method in Uruguay, see Jesualdo Sosa, *La escuela lancasteriana* (Montevideo: Letras, 1954); Elomar Tambara, A escola lancasteriana na província cisplatina en *Anais do VII Encontro Sul-rio-grandense de pesquisadores em História da Educação* (Pelotas: UFPel/ASPHE, 2001), p.271-281; Ferreira, Fábio, *O general Lecor e a escola Lancasteriana: método e instalação na Província Cisplatina* (Tema Livre, n.13, 2002).

schools were created, but administrative injunctions, the propaganda against the method (the boys were given military instruction in order to oblige them to become soldiers, no Christian doctrine was taught, it was impossible for the students to learn to read and write on blackboards), the diminished number students, led to closing the schools in 1825, but the method prevailed officially until 1840¹⁹.

In Argentina²⁰, we have heard that the method was applied in 1816, concomitantly with Spain. The translation of Lancaster's work into Spanish— *Orígenes y progresos del nuevo sistema de enseñanza mutua* (1817), published in Buenos Aires, made it easier for his ideas to circulate. But the arrival of James Thomson, a member of the British and Foreign School Society, in Buenos Aires, in 1818, for the purpose of disseminating, applying and expanding the Lancasterian system in the overseas colonies. With the support of Franciscan monks he created a school in 1819, initially for boys and then for girls. In 1821 he founded the Lancasterian Society and in 1823 a normal school. The system spread to other Argentine provinces, Mendoza and San Juan.

In 1821 Thomson went to Chile, also under contract to the Government, where he established a school at the Universidad de San Felipe and at other public schools (Valparaíso, Coquimbo). The first attempts were made at the Instituto Nacional, which opened a free school using this method. In order to increase the diffusion of the method, a teacher from England was employed – Antonio Eaton, who arrived in 1821 and dedicated himself to training the teachers and teaching English. O'Higgins, one of the leading personalities of Chilean independence (1818), on January 17, 1822 founded the “Lancasterian Society”. In 1833 the Lancasterian school of the Instituto lost its non-fee status because the results were considered very weak due to the inadequate training of the monitors. It was still adopted for some time, especially in the Sunday schools for adults, promoted by Andres Bello²¹.

From Chile, Thompson went to Peru in July 1822, where he was received by San Martín who gave him full official support. A Normal School was immediately established at Colegio de Santo Tomás, to implement the method. In the *Republic of New Granada* (Colombia, Venezuela and Ecuador)²², Simon Bolívar, who gave special attention to popular education, the combined result of the ideas of the Enlightenment and of the revolutionary and philanthropic ideas of his time²³, sponsored the creation of schools using the Lancasterian method. On his own initiative, he created a “Chamber of Education” (1821) which was to take over the education of all children

¹⁹ Elomar Tambara, *A escola lancasteriana na província cisplatina. Uma experiência brasileira?* en: *Anais do II Congresso Brasileiro de História da Educação/SBHE*. (Natal: NAC-UFRN, 2002);

²⁰ About this, see Mariano Nardowski y Claudina López, *El mejor de los métodos posibles : la introducción del método lancasteriano en Iberoamérica en el temprano siglo XIX*, en *A Escola Elementar no século XIX. O método monitorial/mútuo* Eds Maria Helena Camara Bastos y FARIA Filho, Luciano Mendes de Faria Filho (Passo Fundo: Ed.UPF, 1999), 45-72.

²¹ The Lancasterian system in Chile and in other South American countries was the object of a study by Domingo Amunátegui Solar in 1895. About this, see José Rojas Flores, *Historia de la infancia en el Chile Republicano (1810-2010)* (Santiago: Junta Nacional de Jardines Infantiles, 2010).

²² About this, see Caruso, *La oficialización del método lancasteriano* (2003).

²³ Giner y Calderón España, *El método de enseñanza mutua*, 296.

aged zero to 12 years, the age limit of mandatory schooling and also of maternal education. Among his activities, he aimed at publishing, in Spanish, the best foreign works on education; to send teachers on pedagogical missions; to hire teachers who had full knowledge of the method; to establish normal schools in Bogota, Caracas and Quito²⁴. Simón Bolívar tasked Vice-President Francisco de Paula Santander with drafting a law to implement normal schools (January 26, 1822)²⁵. For teacher training, the “Manual del sistema de enseñanza mutua aplicado a las escuelas primarias de los niños” (Bogotá, 1826) was published, as an initiative of the Comisión Central Del Instituto de Borough de la Sociedad para las Escuelas Británicas y Extranjeras, which promoted Lancaster’s work. In 1845, the Governor order the printing of the “Manual de enseñanza mutua para las escuelas de primeiras letras”, by José Maria Triana, director of the Escola Normal²⁶.

In 1818, Lancaster himself emigrated to the Americas, due to problems with Bell and with the Anglican clergy, and lived in Caracas/Venezuela from 1824 to 1827. With the support of Simón Bolívar, he ran the first Normal School, in Caracas. The intention was to disseminate his system throughout Gran Colombia. However, several factors helped make his project impossible: the language, the lack of appropriate places to establish schools for a large number of students, the lack of materials needed to put the method into practice and, finally, his illness. In 1829 he went to Canada where he received a government subvention to disseminate the method. He returned to the USA and died in 1838. During the period from 1821 1844, the State made the Lancasterian system official, but the method continued to be propagated and continued to prevail in the study plans in Colombia until the mid-19th century and, in some places until the end of the 19th century, thus solving the scarcity of teachers, and as a resource to allow teaching basic education to a large number of students²⁷.

Differently from the Spanish colonies, Brazil, in 1808 became the seat of the Portuguese Crown and a number of measures were taken in the field of culture and education. Public instruction in teaching basic education, however, did not merit the attention of the authorities. Dom João VI tasked Minister Antônio de Araújo with studying a “method to give the institutes, the academies, the unity necessary for the schools, the unity necessary to form a great people”. The Earl of Barca concerned himself with education as a problem of State and shared the interest of the political spheres in the Lancasterian system of education, having read the works *Travail sur l’éducation publique*, by Mirabeau, le Viel, and *Improvements in education as it respects the industrious classes of the community*, by J. Lancaster²⁸.

²⁴ José Pascual Mora-García, Aproximación filosófica a la nueva ley orgánica de educación: aciertos, silencios e vacíos. *DIKAIOSYNE* n.23. (Julio-diciembre, 2009),120.

²⁵ Francisco de Paula Santander was one of the main ideologues and persons responsible for implementing the educational program. About this, see Mora-García, *Aproximación filosófica a la nueva ley orgánica de educación*, 119.

²⁶ Olga Zuluaga, Entre Lancaster y Pestalozzi: los manuales para la formación de maestros em Colômbia (1822-1868), en *Anais do VI Congresso Iberoamericano de História de La Educacion Iberoamericana: história de las idéias, actores e instituciones educativa*. (San Luis de Potosi/México, 2003).

²⁷ Giner y Calderón España, *El método de enseñanza mutua*, 299.

²⁸ Maria Beatriz Nizza da Silva, *Cultura e Sociedade no Rio de Janeiro (1808-1821)* (São Paulo: Nacional; Brasília: INL. 1977), 177-78.

The *Correio Brasiliense* (a Brazilian newspaper published in London), from April to October 1816, printed a series of articles on the Lancaster method that presented “a historical summary of the principle and progresses of this new system of education in England, and explained the advantage of these institutions.”²⁹ The article provided publicity on the method to the Brazilian reader - “the systems of education that were invented in England and have achieved successive improvements, are aimed at fulfilling those seen, and that is why we intend to propose them as an example worthy of following in Portugal and in Brazil, where there is such a clear need for elementary education that we believe it unnecessary to provide a demonstration ” (*Correio Brasiliense*, April 1816. p. 346-350)³⁰.

A particular aspect of the implementation of the Lancasterian system in Brazil is the initiative of French people who lived in the country, applying it to black slaves as a device to achieve their freedom:

I busied myself with communicating, in Brazil, the benefits of mutual education, especially applying it to young black of both sexes, who are brought from the coast of Africa, in whom the moral faculties are practically nil. I have already achieved promising results. The ideas are established and self-esteem is developed by the desire to become a monitor, difficult it is to train them. So far I have made all tables by hand and compose them myself. Because of the formalities of Customs and censorship on printed objects, I was unable to overcome the difficulties to introduce the materials needed to apply the method, unless the society could send me one or two exemplars of all tables, and all that they publish, especially what involves instruction of girls, a part that I have not followed up much and that is very important in this country. It would be necessary to have this sent via de Ministry, addressed to the French Consul, to whom I would reimburse the expenses and freight. The fate of blacks is so deplorable that if we help assuage it we will certainly be entering the philanthropic aspects of our society. Through instruction, the blacks manage to gather the funds needed to buy their freedom and that of their children. I have nothing to add to this remark. As soon as my tests have been approved by the government, I'll send a copy of the minutes to the Society and inform them of the results of my efforts that will, as I hope have overcome all obstacles³¹.

In August 1819, the *Journal d'éducation* informs of another initiative.

by a Frenchman who founded a school in Brazil for young blacks of both sexes, coming from the African coast, requested instructions and advice from the Society. This wish was greeted with enthusiasm and we sent to Rio de Janeiro the models, books, tables, etc. Through instruction, the unfortunate blacks managed to buy their freedom and that of their children³².

²⁹ Maria Helena Camara Bastos, A Educação Elementar e o método lancaster no Correio Brasiliense (1816). *Revista História da Educação*. ASPHE/UFPeI, v.9, n.17 (abr. 2005), 193-222.

³⁰ Lancaster's book was also translated in Portugal, under the title “Systema britânico de educação: sendo um complexo tratado de melhoramentos e invenções praticadas por...” (Porto, 1823), for classes in the United Kingdom of Portugal, Brazil and Algarves.

³¹ *Journal d'éducation*, año IV, N.X, juillet (Paris: 1819).

³² *Journal d'éducation*, ano IV, N. XI, août (Paris: 1819), 230.

In August 1820, the periodical publishes another letter from the Earl of Scey, dated June 4, in which it informs that "the Earl of Gestas followed my example in his land, and all his slaves received elementary knowledge of the French and Portuguese language, religious education, and gained a lot from this" (*Journal d'éducation*. Paris, year V, n.XI, août 1820, 313.). This letter shows the dissemination of the method among the French established in Brazil and the content taught to the blacks.

These first private initiatives were also accompanied by government measures such as the Decree of July 3, 1820, which "grants to João Batista de Queiroz an annual pension to go to England to learn the Lancasterian method"³³ This measure shows both the official interest in the implementation of the mutual method, and also the search in England for a framework needed to train teachers. From 1820 onwards, the State gradually implemented the method officially. Thus, in a Decision of the Kingdom n° 83, of July 24, 1822, "the Mutual Education School of this city (Rio de Janeiro) is under the responsibility of the War Business Department".

The Independence of Brazil, in 1822, does not alter the situation of public education, and the interest in implementing the monitorial/mutual system. Emperor Dom Pedro I's speech at the opening of the Constitutional Assembly on May 3, 1823 denotes this intention "knowing the advantage of mutual teaching, I also had a school opened that uses the Lancastrian method". The Decree of March 1, 1823, "creates a school to teach literacy, using the Mutual Education method, to instruct military corporations, adding "that it benefits not only of the military in the Army, but all classes of my subjects who wish to make use of such an advantageous establishment". It is interesting to observe how the Government recruited the teachers, according to the tendency to create, control and manage the Mutual Education schools via the Department of War – the military were considered more appropriate to act as teachers in the schools/lessons for literacy using the Lancasterian method. This preference shows an approach between the discipline and the order demanded and adopted by the method at both institutions – military and school³⁴. The official origin of the mutual education schools connected to the Department of War appears to have followed an orientation already given in the Mother Country.

The Decree of Basic Education Schools, of October 15, 1827, the first law on National Public Instruction in the Brazilian Empire, proposes creating elementary schools adopting the Lancasterian method. This decree officially determines the pedagogical method to be adopted in all basic education schools in Brazil. For teachers who did not have the necessary training for this method, the decree foresaw short term instruction and at the cost of their wages in the schools in the capitals.

The schools will be for Mutual Education in the provincial capitals; they will also be so in towns, villages and populous places where they can be established. For mutual education schools the buildings that have sufficient place will be used, obtaining the necessary utensils paid for by the Public

³³ Josephina Chaia, *A educação brasileira. Índice sistemático da legislação (1808-1889)* (Marília: FFCL, 1963), 34.

³⁴ This system to recruit teachers among the military appears to have lasted a few years. It was only on May 12, 1837 that Decision n° 166 of the Empire rendered the military and public school teacher functions incompatible when it declared that "a military man cannot be allowed to take the competitive examination to become a public school teacher" Bastos, *O ensino mútuo no Brasil*, 106.

Treasury. The teachers who do not have the necessary instruction in this Method will be instructed over the short term, at the cost of their wages in the schools in the capitals. The teachers will teach how to read, write, the four arithmetical operations, practice of fractions, decimals and proportions, the more general notions of practical geometry, the grammar of the national language, the principles of Christian morals and doctrine of the Catholic and Roman Apostolic Church, provided for the understanding of the boys; for teaching, reading the Constitution of the Empire and the History of Brazil will be preferred (...) they will also teach home economics skills (..) The punishments will be applied according to the Lancaster Method.

In the discussions regarding the Bill of Law for Elementary public Instruction, utterances are recorded that both question the method - “that the teacher should be given the judgment to teach using the system he considers best, and he must not be obliged to use the Lancaster method; is the mutual education school different from the others? asks Mr. Hollanda Cavalcanti”; and also advocate it - “of all I have read, I have not found a method like Lancaster’s, it may be bad, but there is no better; he imbibed this great doctrine in India, and from there he brought this great method of teaching, he does not know how one can say that the mutual education method is not good, and that there can be arguments that show the contrary, says Mr. Cunha Mattos”³⁵. These utterances will be recurrent from 1827 onwards, during the period of implementation and generalization of the method in the provinces, which ran up against a number of obstacles: lack of adequate school buildings and materials needed to adopt the mutual method; discontent among the teachers, lack of protection from the authorities and pecuniary rewards; adequate training of the teachers.

In order to solve, at least partly, the problem of teacher training, the first Normal School in Brazil was created (1835-1851)³⁶, in the capital of the Province of Rio de Janeiro - Niterói. It was created as part of a larger project of the Rio de Janeiro state conservative group that took over the government of the Provinces when the Additional Act of 1834 was enacted. This perspective includes another initiative by President Paulino Soares de Souza, that determines, in 1839, the translation and printing of Baron de Gérando’s work, titled “*Curso Normal para Professores de Primeiras Letras ou Direções relativas a Educação Physica, Moral e Intellectual nas Escolas Primárias*”, published in France in 1832.

In 1838, Minister Bernardo de Vasconcelos, in his report, analyzes the drawbacks that prevented the monitorial/mutual method from corresponding to the expectations of those who were its propagandists in Brazil and in Europe:

However the results of the Lancasterian method do not correspond to the public expectation, either as to time, or as to perfection. And this is not seen only in our country: in Europe, where there are many highly trained teachers and it is easy to meet all requirements for the strict implementation of this system, the same occurs, as we see in the recent publications by Mr. Cousin who examined the establishments of instruction in Prussia and in Holland. It is known that the Lancasterian method is limited to gross instruction, so to say, appropriate for the lowest classes of society, and that it does not extend to fine tuning and delicateness, and correction, and calculation, which in grammar, in religion

³⁵ Primitivo Moacyr, *A Instrução e o Império. Subsídios para a História da Educação no Brasil (1823-1835)*. (São Paulo: Cia. Ed. Nacional, 1936),181.

³⁶ About this, see Heloísa de O.S. Villela, O ensino mútuo na origem da primeira escola normal do Brasil em A *Escola Elementar no século XIX*, eds Bastos y Faria Filho, 145-176.

and in other knowledge, civilization today requires in the elementary instruction of all classes higher than those which, on the contrary of what happens in Europe, cover the same population.

What is perceived in different discourses is an intransigent criticism of the method, focusing on the difficulties in implementation, the lack of adequate school buildings or to the active principle of the method: a machine, *without any life principle*. The period of adoption of mutual instruction in Brazil cannot be delimited precisely. Legally we could say that the Couto Ferraz Reform (Decree n. 1331, of February 17, 1854, that regulates elementary and secondary schooling in the municipality where the Court is located), in article 73, establishes that the teaching method to be adopted at schools in general is the simultaneous one. Once this regulation came into force, at schools one found the presence both of the simultaneous method, and the mutual method, and a syncretism of both, called the mixed method.

CONCLUSION

The Lancasterian system in Latin America was officially adopted at a time marked by a strong idealization of education, by the unlimited belief in the civilizing effect of instruction. According to Lessage, “the Lancasterian method, through the debates to which it led, profoundly marks the didactics of the 19th Century. Thanks to it the issue of schools was to become, at least at the institutional level, a national matter, expanding the prospects of development and generalization of elementary education r”³⁷.

In Spanish America, the official implementation of the method by the new republics was the solution sought to expand schooling of the popular classes, but also for the proliferation of the liberal ideals, through the action of the philanthropic societies created for their diffusion. However, expansion did not last long, as a result of the lack of economic resources, due to problems inherent to the method itself (school buildings, teaching materials, etc.), to reactions of the teachers, and the constantly changing monitors³⁸.

In Brazil, on the contrary, for Xavier “the adoption of the mutual method expressed precisely the lack of motivation of the agricultural export and slave-owning country to guarantee the minimum conditions for public school to function, ie., the adequate training and remuneration of teachers Thus it became one more factor to fragilize elementary public school at that time, in terms of quality”³⁹.

Concerning the implementation of the method, we can underline a few important mechanisms that remained in the teaching systems: the slow and gradual expansion of elementary schooling extending it to the popular classes, the systematization and separation of the disciplines by grade, the use of various teaching materials in the classroom (mural boards, books, copybooks, presence lists, enrollment list, etc.), the school calendar, order and discipline.

³⁷ Lesage, *La pedagogie dans les écoles mutuelles*, 23.

³⁸ Giner y Calderón España, *El método de enseñanza mutua*, 299.

³⁹ Maria Elisabete Xavier, *História da Educação: A escola no Brasil* (São Paulo: FTD, 1994), 65.

The adoption of the Lancasterian method in the Americas and in Brazil was attuned to the movement to internationalize pedagogical knowledge and educational models in the first half of the 19th century. However, we cannot state that there was a homogenization of an ideology of education, considering the many variations between the projects to nationalize the method and to construct national identities.

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