

PUBLIC INSTRUCTION ON THE “FEMALE SEX” IN MARANHÃO: IN THE DIRETÓRIO DOS ÍNDIOS AND THE BEGINNING OF THE 19TH CENTURY

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Abstract

Public education for women in Maranhão is addressed, from the period that includes the publication of the *Diretório dos Índios*, during the Pombaline government, in the 18th century, to the beginning of the 19th century, from 1822 to the 1830s. The results indicate a need for greater attention to the effects of the publication of the *Diretório dos Índios* on female public schooling and record information about the first public female teachers in Maranhão in the 19th century. The study concludes by relativizing the current statement in historiography that attributes to the *Lei das Escolas de Primeiras Letras* [Law of First Language Schools], of 1827, the initial demarcation of female public schooling in Brazil.

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INSTRUÇÃO PÚBLICA DO “SEXO FEMININO” NO MARANHÃO: NO DIRETÓRIO DOS ÍNDIOS E INÍCIO DO SÉCULO XIX

Resumo

Aborda-se a instrução pública feminina no Maranhão, do período que abrange a publicação do *Diretório dos Índios*, durante o governo pombalino, no século XVIII, ao início do século XIX, de 1822 até a década de 1830. A pesquisa contemplou análise documental do *Diretório dos Índios* de 1757, imprensa do Maranhão (1822-1838), ofícios de professores, documentos paroquiais e legislações brasileira e portuguesa. Os resultados indicam necessidade de maior atenção aos efeitos da publicação do *Diretório dos Índios* sobre a escolarização pública feminina e registram informações sobre as primeiras professoras públicas maranhenses do século XIX. Conclui-se pela relativização da afirmação corrente na historiografia que atribui à *Lei das Escolas de Primeiras Letras*, de 1827, a demarcação inicial da escolarização pública feminina no Brasil.

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INSTRUCCIÓN PÚBLICA DEL "SEXO FEMENINO" EN EL MARANHÃO: EN EL DIRETÓRIO DOS ÍNDIOS Y EL COMIENZO DEL SIGLO XIX

Resumen

Se aborda la instrucción pública femenina en el Maranhão, desde el período que abarca la publicación del Diretório dos Índios [Directorio de los Indios], durante el gobierno pombalino, en el siglo XVIII, hasta el inicio del siglo XIX, desde 1822 hasta la década de 1830. La investigación contempló un análisis documental del Diretório dos Índios de 1757, la imprenta del Maranhão (1822-1838), cartas de profesores, documentos parroquiales y la legislación brasileña y portuguesa. Los resultados indican la necesidad de una mayor atención a los efectos de la publicación del Diretório dos Índios sobre la escolarización pública femenina y registran informaciones sobre las primeras profesoras públicas del Maranhão del siglo XIX. Se concluye por la relativización de la afirmación corriente en la historiografía que atribuye a la Lei das Escolas de Primeiras Letras [Ley de las Escuelas de Primeras Letras], de 1827, la demarcación inicial de la escolarización pública femenina en el Brasil.

HISTORIA DE LA EDUCACIÓN • EDUCACIÓN DE LA MUJER • LEGISLACIÓN EDUCATIVA

INSTRUCTION PUBLIQUE DU "SEXE FÉMININ" À L'ÉTAT DE MARANHÃO: DANS LE DIRETÓRIO DOS ÍNDIOS ET AU DÉBUT DU 19ÈME SIÈCLE

Résumé

Cet étude porte sur l'instruction publique féminine à l'état de Maranhão pendant la période qui s'étend de la publication du Diretório dos Índios [Directoire des Indigènes], pendant le gouvernement du Marquis de Pombal, au XVIII siècle, jusqu'au début du XIX siècle – de 1822 aux années 1830. La recherche a compris l'analyse documentaire du Diretório dos Índios de 1757, la presse de l'état de Maranhão (1822-1838), des documents officiels des instituteurs, des documents paroissiaux et les législations brésilienne et portugaise. Les résultats qui en découlent signalent qu'il faut faire plus d'attention aux effets du Diretório dos Índios sur l'enseignement public féminin et nous renseignent sur les premières institutrices publiques au Maranhão du XIX siècle. On conclut qu'il faut relativiser l'affirmation historiographique courante selon laquelle la Lei das Escolas de Primeiras Letras [Loi des écoles de premières lettres], publiée en 1827, a été le premier jalon de l'instruction publique féminine au Brésil.

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IN RECENT YEARS, THE FIELD OF THE HISTORY OF BRAZILIAN EDUCATION HAS SHOWN A significant expansion of its production, marked by theoretical-methodological diversification and the enrichment of document collections, based on individual research or in articulation around the same research purpose (Vidal & Faria, 2003). It is noted the multiplicity of studies that contemplate regional singularities, contrasting with generalizing tendencies not anchored in the national plurality (Gondra, 2005). The mature view of the need to focus on regional singularities in historiographical studies is, in part, a consequence of the understanding that, throughout national history, different trajectories have been developed in the constitution of education systems, given the limitation of the central power to finance, articulate and control education in an extensive territory.

In the 19th century, these differences bear the mark of the autonomy granted by the Additional Act of 1834 to the provinces, when a succession of events linked to the organization of education systems was triggered, with a prominent role of legislative assemblies (Faria, 2000). Administrative autonomy had a direct impact on school policy, although one should not ignore the influence of projects by conservative forces linked to central power on local politics, visualized by the similarity between provincial legislation and those produced in the Court (Castanha, 2006). The same line of understanding extends to the period of the First Republic, which, from the Constitution of 1891, reinforces administrative autonomy and allows the continuity of the organization of public education systems in each state (Araújo et al., 2012; Souza et al., 2013).

In the historical period prior to 1834, the climate of centralization was more accentuated with the enactment of the Lei Geral das Escolas de Primeiras Letras [General Law of First Language Schools]. Through this first national legislation, measures were instituted that focused on the organization of public education after independence, which are indicative of the intention to achieve unity in national education. Such measures consisted of: indication of the use of the Lancaster method in schools; standardization of the contents to be taught; accountability of the public power in the supply of utensils and buildings; definition of salary range; and demand for teacher training according to the Lancaster method (Lei de 15 de outubro de 1827, a Lei Geral da Instrução Pública [General Law of Public Instruction]).

Another issue raised by the effectiveness of the Lei Geral das Escolas de Primeiras Letras concerns the effects of expanding elementary education, by authorizing the creation of schools, for both sexes, in populous places of the Brazilian Empire where they were deemed necessary (Lei de 15 de outubro de 1827). This law formalized the female presence in public education and has been repeatedly cited in historiography as a milestone of women's entry into state schooling (Carra, 2019; Chamon, 2006; Hahner, 2011; Munhoz, 2022).

In this article we analyze aspects of female schooling in the history of Maranhão, based on indications of the existence of public classes of first letters for women prior to 1827. Thus, two historical periods are chosen that can raise recognition of regional particularities and contribute to the historiographical enrichment of female education. In both, initiatives around public education were under the responsibility of local authorities, without the need to resort to central power in the tasks of creating classes, appointing teachers and paying teachers' salaries.

The first moment contemplates the Pombaline Reform, in the 18th century, and corresponds to a reflection on the possible effects of the publication of the Diretório dos Índios of 1757 (Diretório que se deve observar..., 1758). Diretório dos Índios is the name given to the Regiment of May 3, 1757, in which the Portuguese Crown ordered a set of rules aimed at indigenous civilization. This occurred, at first, to be executed in the Capitania do Grão-Pará e Maranhão, in 1757, two years after

the end of indigenous slavery in that captaincy was enacted.¹ Later, in 1758, the *Diretório dos Índios* was extended to all parts of Brazil.

When we refer to the Pombaline Reform, we are considering a set of modernizing measures by the Portuguese State triggered by Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo, the Marquês de Pombal,² in the period from 1750 to 1777, in the reign of D. José I series of Enlightenment-inspired acts favorable to the strengthening of the absolutist monarchy and unfolded in the administrative, political, economic and educational spheres. According to Maciel and Shigunov (2006, p. 467, own translation): “[the Pombaline Reforms] required strong state control and efficient functioning of the administrative machinery and were undertaken mainly against the nobility and the *Companhia de Jesus*, who represented a threat to the king’s absolute power”.³

In the midst of this set of measures, in addition to the *Diretório dos Índios* of 1757, the Pombaline Studies Reforms stood out, which were undertaken in the specific field of education. The Pombaline Studies Reform comprised two phases, the first being triggered by the *Alvará Régio*, de 28 de junho de 1759 [Royal Permit of June 28, 1759] (*Alvará de regulamento dos estudos menores*, 1825), whose validity extends to 1771, and the second, initiated with the *Lei de 6 de novembro de 1772* [Law of November 6, 1772] (Mendonça & Cardoso, 2007).

The second historical moment contemplated in this study is at the beginning of the 19th century, between 1821 and 1823, during the government of prince regent D. Pedro I. In this period, there was a phase of administrative decentralization, when the Courts of Lisbon established the creation of the Provisional and Administrative Board of the Province of Brazil, which received the function of exercising the executive power in each province, shortly after the Return of D. João to Portugal. This period succeeds the Johannine period (1808 to 1821), under the authority of D. João VI, a time when the field of education was marked by the foundation of higher education schools, without changing the system of royal classes implemented in the 18th century (Ribeiro, 2003).

The Provisional and Administrative Boards of the Provincial Government of Brazil mark a short period in which the autonomous activity of the province in matters related to public education was the responsibility of the local government. This attribution was granted by the *Régia Portaria de 3 de abril de 1822* [Royal Ordinance of April 3, 1822], which conferred on the Government Boards the function of “inspecting schools, reforming, creating again all those for reading, writing and counting”⁴ (Silva Belford et al., 1822, p. 1, own translation).

The thematic focus of this article covers only public education, not ignoring the wide possibility of historiographic production on domestic and private education, which, since the colonial period, presents “evidence that . . . it served a much larger number of people than the public network”⁵ (Faria & Vidal, 2000, p. 21, own translation).

The methodology used included document analysis of newspapers, professors’ correspondences, Portuguese and Brazilian laws, as well as a search on the *FamilySearch* website, which is a space accessed online, dedicated to historical genealogical research, based on data registered in a digitized parish collection.

1 The indigenous liberation in Grão-Pará and Maranhão took place on June 7, 1755 under the government of captain general Francisco Xavier de Mendonça Furtado, by order of the Portuguese prime minister (1750-1777). The liberation from indigenous slavery was only extended to all of Brazil three years later, by the *Alvará de 8 de maio de 1758* [Charter of May 8, 1758] (Santos, 2014).

2 The title of Marquês de Pombal, which gave rise to the name attributed to the Pombaline Reform, was only granted to him in 1770; previously, he only held the title of count of Oeiras, received in 1759 (Rosa & Gomes, 2014).

3 In the original: “[as Reformas Pombalinas] exigiam um forte controle estatal e eficiente funcionamento da máquina administrativa e foram empreendidas, principalmente, contra a nobreza e a *Companhia de Jesus*, que representavam uma ameaça ao poder absoluto do rei”.

4 In the original: “inspecionar as escolas, reformar, criar de novo todas as de ler, escrever e contar”.

5 In the original: “indícios de que . . . atendia um número de pessoas bem superior à rede pública”.

The newspapers consulted were *O Conciliador do Maranhão* (1821-1823), *O Farol Maranhense* (1828-1831, 1832), *Publicador Oficial* (1831) and *Publicador Maranhense* (1842-1866), published from the second decade of the 20th century onwards.⁶ *O Conciliador do Maranhão* was the gazette that inaugurated the Maranhão periodical press, published on April 15, 1821, in manuscript. In November of the same year, it started to be printed in the installation of the National Typography of Maranhão (Galves, 2010).

The analyzed correspondences were produced by male and female teachers in response to government official notices, between 1828 and 1837. They were handwritten documents that record a variety of information about public elementary school classes and are part of the collection of the Arquivo Público do Estado do Maranhão [Public Archive of the State of Maranhão] (APEM).

The Portuguese legislation explored in this study was limited to the 18th century, and included the 1757 regiment of the Diretório dos Índios (Diretório que se deve observar..., 1758), the Alvará de 28 de junho de 1759 and the Lei de 6 de novembro de 1772 (1858). The aforementioned legislation is part of the set of measures implemented by the Portuguese Prime Minister.

The Brazilian legislation contemplated in the study was the Brazilian Imperial Constitution (Constituição Política do Império do Brasil, 1824), the Lei de 20 de outubro de 1823 [Law of October 20, 1823], which orders the administration of provinces through presidents, and the Lei Geral da Instrução Pública de 1827.

The article is organized in three parts. In the first one, the Diretório dos Índios is analyzed as the first legal measure favorable to female schooling in the towns of Maranhão and Pará. In the second part, public instruction in the first decades of the 19th century was approached, when primary classes for girls were effectively created under the supervision of the State, with the guarantee of payment of salaries by the provincial public coffers. The third part brings information about the first public female teachers to be employed in the province of Maranhão.

Regiment of the Diretório dos Índios and women's schools for reading and writing in the colonial period

The colonial education system was configured, first, by a strong influence of the Catholic Church, when school education was presented as a branch of religious service. In a second phase, when the Portuguese State assumed responsibility for public education, with the Pombaline Studies Reform, we witnessed the first efforts to constitute a state education system, with the teaching career institutionalized in the list of civil servants (Mendonça & Cardoso, 2007).

The Pombaline Studies Reform, in its two phases, which began in 1759 and 1772 respectively, brings together a set of actions aimed at organizing the state education system. The main highlights of this reform are attributed to the Alvará Régio de 28 de junho de 1759, and the Lei de 6 de novembro de 1772 (1858). In the first phase of the Reform of Studies, the creation of royal humanities classes (Latin grammar, rhetoric and Greek) and the extinction of the Jesuit schools were contemplated (Alvará de 28 de junho, 1759). In the second phase, the reform of the statutes of the Universidade de Coimbra, the creation of royal reading, writing and calculus courses, in addition to expanding the number of humanities courses (Lei de 6 de novembro de 1772, 1858). It was one of the "first attempts to organize an official elementary education system in Europe, with the exception of Prússia, which had created it many years before"⁷ (Adão, 1987, as cited in Cavalcante, 2008, p. 223, own translation).

6 The newspapers consulted are part of the periodical press of Maranhão and are available on the website of the National Library (<http://memoria.bn.br/>). They are in the set of the first newspapers of the province.

7 In the original: "primeiras tentativas de organização de um sistema de ensino elementar oficial, na Europa, com exceção da Prússia, que o criara muitos anos antes".

In the pioneer spirit of the Pombaline Studies Reform, there is inequality in the distribution of vacancies and the diffusion of instruction throughout the Portuguese territory, with a greater disadvantage for the colonial part (Mendonça & Cardoso, 2007). Almost all the chairs created in the two phases of the Reformation were concentrated in the European territory, while a small part was destined for America and another tiny part, less than a dozen, distributed to Africa and Asia (Lei de 6 de novembro de 1772, 1858).

In addition to the inequality in the opening of royal classes in relation to different spaces in the territory, there is the maintenance of the culture of exclusion of women from the public education system. A visible demonstration of this reality is in the fact that the royal classes, of reading, writing and humanities, constituted "a state-owned network of minor Studies [which] were only aimed at the education of young men"⁸ (Adão, 2014, p. 58, own translation).

Meanwhile, female education mainly contemplated religious teaching and domestic economy and could be accessed in the family space or inside convents and gatherings. In Portugal, the first *Recolhimentos*, created in the 15th century, had the function of educating women for marriage, differentiating themselves from convents, which aimed at religious training. In Brazil, most of the penitentiaries emerged between the end of the 17th century and the first half of the 18th, and assumed many functions, which served the interests that went beyond the objective of secular training (Algranti, 1993).

Although the spaces for women's education at the Court historically did not focus on instruction, the first two public classes were offered on the premises of the convents of the Congregation of the Ursulines of France, for external students, from 1780 onwards. In the two convents the Congregation started to receive girls from the neighborhoods where they were created (Adão, 2014).

Public schools outside the religious space were only created in Portugal in 1790,⁹ by the *Resolução Régia de 31 de maio* [Royal Resolution of May 31], when the Royal Board granted a favorable opinion to the installation of 18 classes for women in the Court, in the government of D. Maria I (from 1877 to 1792) (Adão, 2014). The fact that there was a queen in charge of the Portuguese kingdom may have influenced the creation of these classes, despite the time gap between their creation, in 1790, and the authorization for their completion, which only occurred in 1815 (Adão, 2014; Cavalcante, 2008).

Although the classes created by the Pombaline Studies Reform did not intend to include girls, one cannot hastily discard the possibility that public elementary education reached some women in the 18th century, if we consider the colonial space of Portuguese America.

The text of the Regulation published on May 3, 1757, for Grão-Pará and Maranhão, and confirmed by the *Alvará de 17 de agosto de 1758* [Charter of August 17, 1758] (*Diretório que se deve observar...*, 1758), which extended its effects to the entire Brazilian territory indicates the occurrence of public classes of literacy aimed at females in Portuguese America, before their creation in Portugal.

The document in question, entitled *Diretório que se deve observar nas povoações dos índios do Pará, e Maranhão: Enquanto Sua Majestade não mandar o contrário* [Directory that must be observed in the settlements of the indigenous people of Pará and Maranhão: Whereas Their Majesty does not order otherwise] (1758) consisted of a measure aimed at regulating relations in the settlements of the colony that included several aspects, as pointed out by Santos (2022, p. 265, own translation):

8 In the original: "uma rede estatizada de Estudos menores [que] dirigiram-se apenas à educação dos rapazes".

9 Regarding the private lessons for girls, in 1785 there was authorization for the French woman Catarina Teresa Germana to teach reading, writing and French language at the Court. In 1792, Teresa Maria Madalena Macdonell also received a license to teach reading, writing and math, as well as English and French for three years. (Mendonça et al., 2014).

In its 95 paragraphs, the Diretório addresses, among other matters, the civilization of the indigenous people; the demarcation of borders; the mandatory use of the Portuguese language; the requirement to use names and surnames, with preference for those of Portuguese origin; of settlement; of cultivation and trade; of taxation; of the work relations of the indigenous people; of marriage; the prohibition of nudity; the need to establish housing in separate houses; the fight against alcoholism; and the figure of the "Director", a substitute of the missionaries.¹⁰

Among the guidelines contained in the text of the Diretório dos Índios, paragraphs 7 and 8 stand out, referring to the public instruction, as follows:

7 . . . there will be in every town two public schools, one for boys, in which they will be taught the Christian Doctrine, as well as to read, write and count in the way that is practiced in all civilized nations, and another for girls, in which, in addition to being instructed in the Christian Doctrine, they will be taught to read, write, sew, yearn, and all other duties proper to that sex.

8 For the subsistence of the aforementioned schools, and of a Master, and a Mistress, who must be people endowed with good morals, prudence and capacity, so that they can carry out the important obligations of their jobs: sufficient wages will be paid by the parents of the same indigenous people. . . . *In the event, however, that there is no Person in the villages who can teach girls, they may be instructed up to the age of ten in boys' schools*, where they will learn the Christian Doctrine, to read, write, so that together with the infallible truths of our religion acquire more easily the use of the Portuguese language.¹¹ (Diretório que se deve observar..., 1758, p. 4, own translation emphasis added).

Guerra (2016) demonstrates the role of this legal document as an instrument at the service of the linguistic colonization and Portuguese domination. The civilizing purpose is explicit in the text of the document, when it affirms it as a way of removing "peasant peoples from the barbarities of their ancient customs"¹² (Diretório que se deve observar..., 1758, p. 3, own translation). Therefore, the opening of schools became something indispensable.

The concern with the availability of classes and the interest in replacing religious power with civil power in indigenous populations already indicated the modernizing intent of Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo. In this case, public education in the colonial space is placed under the orders of the State, even before the implementation of the Pombaline Studies Reform, which will have its first phase launched a year after the Diretório dos Índios is extended to the entire Brazilian territory. Therefore, it is evident that, although the creation and publication of the Diretório dos Índios took place in the context of the period administered by Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo and was part

10 In the original: "Em seus 95 parágrafos, o Diretório trata, entre outros assuntos, da civilização dos índios; da demarcação de fronteiras; da obrigatoriedade da Língua Portuguesa; da exigência em se utilizar nomes e sobrenomes, com preferência daqueles de origem portuguesa; do povoamento; do cultivo e do comércio; da tributação; das relações de trabalho dos índios; do casamento; da proibição da nudez; da necessidade em estabelecer moradia em casas separadas; do combate ao alcoolismo; e da figura do 'Diretór', substituto dos missionários".

11 In the original: "7 . . . haverá em todas as povoações duas escolas públicas, uma para meninos, na qual se lhes ensine a Doutrina Cristã, a ler, escrever e contar na forma, que se pratica em todas as nações civilizadas e outra para meninas, na qual, além de serem instruídas na Doutrina Cristã, se lhes ensinará a ler, escrever, fiar, fazer renda, costura e todos os mais ministérios próprios daquele sexo.

8 Para a subsistência das sobreditas escolas, e de um Mestre, e de uma Mestra, que devem ser pessoas dotadas de bons costumes, prudência e capacidade, de sorte que possam desempenhar as importantes obrigações dos seus empregos: se destinarão os ordenados suficientes pagos pelos pais dos mesmos índios. . . . *No caso, porém de não haver nas povoações Pessoa alguma que possa ser mestra de meninas, poderão essas até a idade de dez anos serem instruídas nas escolas dos meninos*, onde aprenderão a Doutrina Cristã, a ler, escrever, para que juntamente com as infalíveis verdades da nossa Religião adquiram com maior facilidade o uso da Língua Portuguesa".

12 In the original: "rústicos das barbaridades dos seus antigos costumes".

of the set of reformist measures, it cannot be included in the set of legislations referenced as the Pombaline Reform of Studies. The regiment of the Diretório, although it guided the opening of schools, consisted of a broader measure aimed at incorporating indigenous peoples into colonial society as subjects of the Crown, which goes beyond the teaching axis.

Therefore, the Diretório dos Índios legalizes the female presence in reading, writing and math classes in indigenous villages, which was something dissonant from the current custom in Portugal, where until then women had not been granted the right to public instruction. Another issue raised by the Diretório dos Índios is the definition of a differentiated school knowledge between men and women. Even when the presence of the latter was admitted in schools for the former, it limited them to the study of only a small part of what should be taught to them, with the addition of domestic economy (Diretório que se deve observar..., 1758).

However, even with the orientation to start specific classes for both sexes in towns and villages, the difficulties imposed by the reality of the countryside for women's access to schools must be observed. Before the 19th century, finding the right profile for female teaching could only occur as an exception, given the limited educational opportunities faced by this gender.

In Maranhão, there are no bibliographic records or the identification of documents that attest the occurrence of public chairs in towns and settlements during the 18th century linked to the effects of the execution of the Diretório dos Índios, considering the lack of studies on this period. Extrapolating the space of Maranhão, in the captaincy of Ceará, three mixed schools managed by men were identified, as described:

In this first phase of public education in the captaincy of Ceará, few schools were created. The first of them was installed on July 9, 1759, in Aldeia-Caucaia, and it was elevated to the status of village in October of the same year, under the name of Vila Nova de Soure. Its registration on the opening date indicated the number of 142 students of both sexes, of which several were married. On the same day, another school was inaugurated in the village of Paiacú, with a total of 54 students, 34 female and 20 male. Yet another was created in the same year in Viçosa.¹³ (Sousa Pinto, 1939, p. 65, own translation).

The schools identified by Ceará's historiography were installed days after the first phase of the Pombaline Studies Reform began, in 1759, instituted with the Alvará de 28 de junho. However, one should not link these schools to the first phase of the Portuguese Reform of Studies, given that, at that time, the orders were for the creation of humanities classes (Latin grammar, Greek and rhetoric), and not for reading, writing and tell. These classes were only included in the second phase of the Reform of Studies, which began in 1772, so they were installed in Ceará as a result of the effects of implementing the Diretório dos Índios.

Attention is drawn to the compliance of the content of the Diretório dos Índios, especially with regard to the payment of teachers' salaries in schools in Ceará. According to Sousa Pinto (1939, p. 65, own translation, emphasis added): "each teacher received 50 reis per student plus a *bushel of cassava flour per year*, expenses borne by the students' parents or guardians".¹⁴

The Diretório dos Índios was revoked by the Carta Régia de 12 de maio de 1798 [Royal Charter of May 12, 1798], having officially been in force for 40 years (Moreira, 2011).

13 In the original: "Nesta primeira fase do ensino público na capitania do Ceará, poucas foram as escolas criadas. A primeira delas foi instalada em data de 9 de julho de 1759, na Aldeia-Caucaia elevada, em outubro do mesmo ano à categoria de vila, sob a denominação de Vila Nova de Soure. A sua matrícula da data da abertura, acusava o número de 142 alunos de ambos os sexos, dos quais vários eram casados. No mesmo dia, uma outra escola foi inaugurada na aldeia de Paiacú, com um total de 54 alunos, sendo 34 do sexo feminino e 20 do sexo masculino. Ainda outra foi criada, no mesmo ano, em Viçosa".

14 In the original: "cada professor recebia 50 reis por aluno e mais um alqueire de farinha de mandioca, por ano, despesas estas custeadas pelos pais dos alunos ou seus responsáveis".

Although in Maranhão there is still a lack of knowledge about the occurrence of female schools created due to the effectiveness of the Diretório dos Índios, when the focus is on the beginning of the 19th century, the public collection of APEM allows the identification of the first initiatives of female public schooling in the history of the state.

First public classes for girls in Maranhão

In the 19th century, the schooling of women in public schools appeared as a result of the initiative of the Provisional Government Board, when in 1822 it defined, among other measures, the opening of a public tender for the nomination of a teacher of first letters in the capital of Maranhão.

The Provisional Boards of Government were instituted to replace the power previously conferred for the general captains and captaincy governors (Camargo, 2013; Goularte, 2014). As a rule, captaincies were transformed into provinces, and the administrative power, formerly concentrated in the authority of independent governments, was now carried out by a board of five to seven members chosen, by parish voters, among "known men in the region, who in by virtue of their businesses and authority, established social networks that led them to this new position of power"¹⁵ (Goularte, 2014, p. 189).¹⁶

In Maranhão, the first governing board was elected on February 15, 1822, and was replaced by a second board, elected on August 7, 1823, after Maranhão joined the Independence of Brazil (Marques, 1970).¹⁷ The second Provisional Board, awaiting the nomination of the president of the province who should be nominated by emperor D. Pedro I, underwent an alteration in December 1823. This last configuration of the board remained until April 1824, when it became known that the president of the board had been chosen as the first constitutional president of the province of Maranhão (Meireles, 2001).¹⁸

As a first measure in the field of Public Instruction, the governing board of Maranhão dedicated itself to the reform of Minor Studies, which was carried out through the Portaria de Governo de 8 de julho de 1822 [Government Ordinance of July 8, 1822] (Silva Belford et al., 1822, pp. 1-3) and the Edital de 15 de julho de 1822 [Public Notice of July 15, 1822] (Edital, 1822, p. 3), published in the newspaper *O Conciliador do Maranhão*, on July 17 of the same year.

In the Ordinance of the governing council of Maranhão, of July 8, 1822, it was authorized to hold a public tender for the provision of teachers of Latinity, Rhetoric and for teachers of First Letters for the capital and two other subjects of first letters (male positions) for the interior, distributed between Jugado do Mearim and Freguesia de Nossa Senhora do Rosário do Itapecuru. Procedures were also established for conducting the public tender, with the location of the exams, content for discussion and indication of the members of the examining boards, who should be all male (Silva Belford et al., 1822, pp. 1-3). There was also a special recommendation for the examination of Female Teachers of First Letters, as follows:

15 In the original: "homens conhecidos na região, que em virtude de seus negócios e autoridade estabeleceram redes sociais que os conduziram a essa nova posição de poder".

16 In October 1823, D. Pedro I, as Emperor, extinguished the boards and transferred the function of executive power in the provinces to presidents (Lei de 20 de outubro de 1823), which did not prevent that in some locations, such as Maranhão, they still remained active.

17 The state of Maranhão was slow to recognize the Independence of Brazil (September 7, 1822), which only took place on July 28, 1823.

18 The first president of the province of Maranhão, who ruled after the Independence, was the provisional lawyer Miguel Inácio dos Santos Freire e Bruce, whose inauguration took place on July 10, 1824. He was president of the first and second Provisional Boards, installed after the Independence of Brazil (Marques, 1970).

... I recommend that the Female Teacher of girls should, in addition to being examined similarly, albeit with less rigor, offer at the time of the exams, certifications from *Senhoras distintas desta Cidade Mães de Família*, who uniformly attest that the applicant knows how to sew, sew lace, and the more activities proper to their sex.¹⁹ (Silva Belford et al., 1822, p. 1, own translation).

The main focus of the exam for women was not domestic skills, but reading, writing, counting and religious doctrine, "with less rigor" than what was foreseen for men. Although there was no intention to equate the schooling of both sexes, there is a preponderance of knowledge from elementary education over domestic knowledge, even if this relevance seems more a consequence of the male composition of the examining board. If more emphasis were given to domestic skills, it would be essential to put a woman to the examination board, among the men chosen for the examination.

Regarding the first letters classes, two for boys and one for girls in the capital and two other classes for men in the countryside were created through the public notice. For the two classes outside the capital, attention is drawn to the detail that girls could apply for male schools "whom their age allows, and their parents consent, in terms of paragraph 8 of the Regiment of May 3, 1757, confirmed by the Charter of August 17, 1758"²⁰ (Silva Belford et al., 1822, pp. 1-3, own translation).

The detail in question is the confirmation of something that had already been raised by the Diretório dos Índios, which is the institution of mixed classes, with the freedom granted to girls to attend public classes of first letters for boys that were being created in the countryside. This way of remedying the lack of specific schools for women signals a reflection on the origin of mixed classes, as something inaugurated by the context of a lack of women's schools in rural and interior areas, as was the case in Ceará.

It is observed that the Diretório dos Índios of 1757 was used as legal support by the Administrative Board of the Government of Maranhão in the public notice for the creation of public schools, even after its revocation (1798), demonstrating the longevity of this legal instrument. Moreira (2011, p. 5, own translation) explains that, due to the absence of another instrument to replace it, it "ended up being officially in force in some provinces",²¹ until, in 1845, D. Pedro II published new regulations on the subject.

The precarious school reality of Maranhão in the early 1820s cannot be ignored, since that, with few places available, public education was a privilege of few people. In 1821, Maranhão had a capital, São Luís, 12 villages (Alcântara, Caxias, Itapeturu-Mirim, Tutoia, São Bernardo, Paço do Lumiar, Guimarães, Icatu, Pastos Bons, Vinhais, Viana and Monções) and 19 settlements (Meireles, 2001). In 1822, in the whole province there was only one class of first letters, which was located in the capital and was directed by Father Domingos Cadávilla Velloso,²² and had 140 students (Marques, 1970).

The first royal chair of first letters in Maranhão was created by the Carta de Lei de 6 de novembro de 1772. Although its functioning is unknown since the period of its creation, it was inactive for some time in the beginning of the 19th century, which came to be modified by bishop Joaquim de Nossa Senhora de Nazaré, who was at the head of the Diocese Maranhense from 1820 to

19 In the original: "recomendo que a Mestra de meninas deverá além de ser examinada semelhantemente, ainda que com menor rigor, oferecer no ato dos exames atestações de duas Senhoras distintas desta Cidade Mães de Família, que uniformemente atestem que a pretendente sabe fiar, fazer renda, costura, e os mais ministérios próprios do seu sexo".

20 In the original: "as quais sua idade permitir, e seus pais consintam, em os termos do parágrafo 8º do Regimento de três de maio de 1757, confirmado pelo Alvará de 17 de agosto de 1758".

21 In the original: "terminou ficando oficiosamente em vigor em algumas províncias".

22 In Marques (1970), the name of the teacher of first letters in the male subject is spelled as Domingos Cadávilla Velloso. In *O Conciliador do Maranhão* of March 13, 1822, he is spelled as Domingos Cadávilha Vellozo (Conceiro, 1822).

1824. He made the aforementioned chair work, which was financed in 1821 by governor Bernardo da Silveira Pinto (Marques, 1970).

Bishop Joaquim de Nossa Senhora de Nazaré became the first president of the Maranhão governing board, which was installed before Maranhão joined the Independence of Brazil. Even before assuming the presidency of the board, enjoying the authority of a bishop, he had already put father Domingos Cadávilla Velloso in charge of the school of first letters. In 1822, the anniversary of the chair of first letters in the capital was celebrated, and the ceremony began with the bishop and was supplied with provincial resources, as can be seen in the publication of the newspaper *O Conciliador do Maranhão*, in March 1822 (Conceiro, 1822).

In 1823, after the efforts of the governing board, the number of male chairs distributed in the province increased to 11, with only one female chair created. The male chairs were located in the following locations: capital, Alcântara, São Bento, Guimarães, Viana, Munim, Itapecuru-Mirim, Rosário, Mearim, Vila do Paço and Vinhaes (Marques, 1970). The only female chair in the capital was occupied by Justiniana Joaquina Amada. With the exception of the male chair in the capital, which had already been provided since governor Bernardo da Silveira Pinto, who preceded the government of the first governing council, all other classes of first letters were provided by the governing board (Marques, 1970).

The classes of first female letters gradually expanded, going from one, which operated in the capital, in 1823, to three, in 1830, with the opening of the public tender for two more chairs, one for the capital and another for Alcântara (Edital, 1830, p. 828); in 1835, the fourth chair was created in Caxias. This number of girls' schools had only increased since 1837, when the Lei de 15 de outubro de 1837, which determined the opening of elementary schools for both sexes in populated areas, completed ten years of existence. This expansion took place with the creation of six new female classes in the province, in the following locations: Guimarães, Viana, Itapecuru-Mirim, São Bernardo do Brejo, São Bento and Rosário (Carta de lei n. 41..., 1837).

As can be seen, the Reform of Public Instruction envisaged by the governing board of the Maranhão province, regulated by means of the Portaria de Governo de 8 de julho de 1822 [Government Ordinance of July 8, 1822] and by the Edital de 15 de julho de 1822 [Public Notice of July 15, 1822], had as its main practical effect the provision of chairs of first letters and humanities in some localities of the province, and the creation of the first public chair of first letters destined for females, paid for by the state treasury and installed in the capital starting from the year 1823.

Although the public notice that guided the provision of chairs pointed to the holding of a public tender and even defined the examiners by name, the filling of such vacancies seems not to have been carried out through a public tender, possibly due to the great political instability that Maranhão went through in the period between 1822 and 1824. There were three governing boards at the head of the Maranhão administration, between February 1822 and July 1824, and the first president of the province, after Maranhão's accession to the Independence of Brazil, only remained in office from July to December 1824 (Marques, 1970).

In 1830, we find the first records of exams for teachers of first letters, in accordance with article 7 of the Lei Geral de Instrução Pública de 1827, which determined public exams by presidents, in the Provincial Council. By means of the Edital de 10 de maio de 1830 [Notice of May 10, 1830], published in *O Farol Maranhense* on the 21st of the same month, the opening of public tenders for the provision of first letters and humanities chairs is declared, with the following content:

1° The public tender for filling the vacant chairs of Latin Grammar in the Villas de Guimarães, Vianna and Itapecuru-Mirim is open; and those of First Letters of Santo Antônio e Almas, São João de Cortes, and São Vicente Ferrer do Termo de Alcântara; the villas of

Vinhais, Icatu and Tutóya; of the places São José da Lapa and Pias, and of the School for Girls of Villa de Alcântara, and of the parish of Sé, in this city. . . . 5° The current Teachers of First Letters who are occupying the respective Chairs without the examinations required by the law of October 15, 1827, must also compete to enjoy the benefit of it in the increase of new salaries.²³ (Edital, 1830, p. 828, own translation).

The text of the public notice indicates the intention to expand the number of schools in the province, with greater benefits for men. As for women, a slight advance can be seen, with the opening of two chairs, one new for the parish of Nossa Senhora da Victória, in the capital, which was provided by Henriqueta Cândida Ferreira in 1830, and another, outside the capital, in Alcântara, which Anna Joaquina de Seixas Corrêa requested to occupy, in 1833 (Sessão, 1833a, p. 680).

In addition to the requirement that new teachers should pass exams to occupy the new chairs, the announcement of May 10 highlights the determination that former teachers who already taught in schools could be submitted to examinations. This is how the three public teachers of the first letters of the capital requested to be examined in the contents established by the law of October 15.

João Francisco da Cruz,²⁴ teacher at the Escola de Primeiras Letras in the parish of Nossa Senhora da Victória, was the first to do the exams, on June 11, 1830 (Artigos D' Ofícios, 1830). Later, Alexandre José Rodrigues and Justiniana Joaquina Amada, both from the parish of Nossa Senhora da Conceição, did the same.

Teachers of first letters for females in Maranhão: Teaching of public classes

It was the act of opening the school established by the governing board, in 1822, which guaranteed the first known designation of a teacher to the public chair of Primeiras Letras in Maranhão, which only occurred in the following year. Justiniana Joaquina Amada was exclusively in the female public education in the capital until 1830, when a second teacher, Henriqueta Cândida Ferreira, was appointed for another public chair in the capital.

The first public female teacher in Maranhão in the 19th century was the daughter of Joaquim Gomes, born in 1803 (FamilySearch, 2020), and she started teaching at the age of 20 years old. This was something that contrasted with the guidelines established in Portugal, from 1822, which stated that mature women should be hired, avoiding those under 40, to guarantee a good moral formation of the students (Adão, 2014).

D. Justiniana was appointed at the end of 1823, when Maranhão had already recognized the imperial authority of D. Pedro I and was officially disassociated from Portugal. It can be assumed that, in this initial period of national independence, public classes for women appeared as an exception, as it was still not possible to define parameters on the issue. It was with the Imperial Constitution of 1824 that the age of 25 appeared as a condition for the usufruct of political and civil rights, such as holding public office (Constituição Política do Império do Brasil, 1824).

In 1830, Justiniana had the following note published in the newspaper *O Farol Maranhense*,

23 In the original: "1° Fica aberto o concurso para provimento das cadeiras vagas de Gramática Latina das Villas de Guimarães, Vianna e Itapecuru-Mirim; e das de Primeiras Letras de Santo Antônio e Almas, São João de Cortes, e de São Vicente Ferrer do Termo de Alcântara; das villas de Vinhais, Icatu e Tutóya; dos lugares São José da Lapa e Pias, e da Escola para Meninas de Villa de Alcântara, e da freguesia da Sé, nesta cidade. . . . 5° Os atuais Professores de Primeiras Letras que se acham ocupando as respectivas Cadeiras sem os exames que exige a lei de 15 de outubro de 1827, deverão concorrer igualmente para gozar do benefício dela no aumento de novos ordenados".

24 João Francisco da Cruz succeeded father Domingos Cadávilla Velloso in teaching first letters to boys in the capital. He was born in 1795 and died in 1849, aged 54.

in which she mentions her exam to fill the same chair in which she exercised the first letters:

D. Justiniana Joaquina Amada, teacher of First Languages in the parish of Nossa Senhora da Conceição in this city, announces that she has moved to house No. 80 on Rua do Sol, which used to belong to the deceased Cardoso, teaching in the form of Law of October 15, 1827, for having been appointed to this same chair, which he already held, in view of the examination he publicly took before the Provincial Council, therefore notify parents who intend to educate their daughters in the first letters, Grammar of National Language, the four main species of Arithmetic and Home Economics, should address the same house.²⁵ (Avisos, 1830, p. 4, own translation).

In another document written by her, she refers to the beginning of her teaching activities in the parish of Nossa Senhora da Conceição and records the number of students who attended her classes (Amada, 1833, own translation):

I acknowledge having received the official letter that Your Excellency dated the 8th of the current year, which was addressed to me, I have the honor to comply with it. Thirty-four students attend my class currently and since 1823, when I have served this job until the present date, I will not give a certain number of those that have left ready due to lack of an exact memory, but I think there are two hundred, a little less.²⁶

By 1833, Justiniana had taught for ten years and is believed to have instructed about 200 girls, although none of them were publicly examined and thus declared graduated in elementary school subjects. This fact is justified by the teacher, in another letter, in which she records the difficulty that prevented her students from completing the subject of first letters (Amada, 1835a, own translation):

In compliance with the document dated from January 31st, under nº 32, I have the honor to present to Your Excellency the included list of the students who currently attend my class with the statements presented in the same letter from Your Excellency, not being able to indicate the times of their exams because this was not practiced due to the lack of constancy of most of the girls' parents, who, satisfied only with the four arithmetic operations, and some domestic tasks, took their daughters out of class without any further satisfaction, being able to assure, Your Excellency, that within three years of this part will have been ready to the satisfaction of their parents for more than fifty girls²⁷.

Justiniana Joaquina Amada is the name with which the teacher corresponded with the government, although in this document she used the surname "Gomes", attributed to her father. The difficulty pointed out by Justiniana in the document of February 3 (Amada, 1835a) was not experienced only by her, as a teacher of girls, but something also experienced by her colleague who

25 In the original: "D. Justiniana Joaquina Amada, professora da Cadeira de Primeiras Letras da freguesia de Nossa senhora da Conceição desta cidade, faz público, que se acha mudada para a casa nº 80 na rua do Sol, que fora do falecido Cardoso, ensinando na forma da Lei de 15 de outubro de 1827, por ter sido provida nesta mesma cadeira, que já exercia, a vista do exame que publicamente fez perante o Conselho Provincial, avise portanto aos Pais de família, que pretendem educar suas filhas em primeiras letras, Gramática da Língua Nacional, as quatro espécies principais de Aritmética e economia doméstica, dirijam-se a mesma casa".

26 In the original: "Acuso o recebimento de ofício que por V. Exa. datado de 8 do corrente ano, me foi dirigido, tenho a honra de dar-lhe cumprimento. Presentemente frequentam a minha aula trinta e quatro alunas e desde o ano de 1823, que sirvo este emprego até a presente data não darei um número certo, das que tem saído prontas por falta de uma exata lembrança, porém julgo ser duzentas, pouco menos".

27 In the original: "Em observância do ofício de 31 de janeiro último sob o nº 32, tenho a honra de apresentar a V. Exa. a relação inclusa das alunas que presentemente frequentam a minha aula com as declarações apresentadas no mesmo ofício de V. Exa., não podendo indicar as épocas de seus exames por se não ter assim praticado pela falta de constância da maior parte dos pais das meninas, que satisfazendo-se unicamente com as quatro operações d' Aritmética, e mais prendas domésticas tiram suas filhas da aula sem mais satisfação alguma podendo asseverar a V. Exa. que no prazo de três anos a esta parte terão sido prontas à satisfação de seus pais para mais de cinquenta meninas".

taught in the same parish. According to Alexandre José Rodrigues, since he started his classes in January 1829, for which he had been appointed since November 1828, he had only exempted two of his students for the exam at the end of elementary school. The reasons alleged by him ranged from difficulties related to the precariousness of the building where she taught her classes, to the lack of utensils and the parents' lack of interest in their children staying for an extended period of schooling, as stated below:

... an old habit that still worries some parents, who limit the teaching of their children only to knowing how to read, write, and the four main types of arithmetic. ... and that the will of parents is free; I wish it wasn't: as soon as the children can read, and barely sign their names, they assign them a job through which they can later acquire means of subsistence, as they express themselves, for not having to leave them, that is, in need of wealth, such children, in great numbers, attend my class.²⁸ (Rodrigues, 1830, p. 4, own translation).

In the two transcribed documents, the teachers reveal the unwillingness of less wealthy families to leave their children involved in schooling obligations for a long time.

The last document produced by Justiniana dates from February 25, 1835, and it is a declaration of the impossibility to exercise the teaching function, due to being ill. The document is accompanied by a certificate from the anatomical surgeon Manoel Rodrigues da Silva Sarmento, in which he declares that the patient has repeatedly suffered from intestinal problems, with blood loss and that, therefore, she would be forever prevented from continuing with her tasks, both domestic and educational (Amada, 1835b). The surgeon's assertion that the teacher could never perform her duties again was confirmed by her death on May 27, 1835, aged 32 (FamilySearch, 2020).

The second public female teacher of girls in Maranhão was Henriqueta Cândida Ferreira, daughter of the couple Miguel Inácio Ferreira and Catarina Mendonça, born in 1796. She married Antônio José Guilhon, captain-major, who was a justice of the peace in the parish of Nossa Senhora da Victoria, at Sé, on September 18, 1819 (FamilySearch, 2022).

Although we do not know Justiniana Joaquina's marital status and whether she was a mother,²⁹ as for Henriqueta, it appears that she had children – at least four have been identified. Two were men, José Antônio Guilhon and Henrique Guilhon, and two girls, Maria Rita Guilhon and Rosa Carolina Guilhon, registered on the elementary school where she taught.

Henriqueta began her duties as a teacher of first letters in the parish of Nossa Senhora da Victória on September 4, 1830, and retired in 1856 (Governo da província, 1856, p. 1), although she remained in private teaching until 1876, when there is the last reference to it in newspapers and almanacs in Maranhão. Throughout her career, Henriqueta was part of examination boards for students who were completing their primary education, as well as examination boards for other teachers.

The second teacher in the parish of Nossa Senhora da Conceição was Ester Leopoldina Pinheiro, Justiniana's substitute. She requested the government to do the exams publicly, which was granted with the appointment for October 7, 1833. The examiners were "Alexandre José

28 In the original: "mania antiga que ainda preocupa alguns pais de famílias, que limitam o ensino de seus filhos unicamente em saber ler, escrever, e as quatro espécies principais de Aritmética ... e que a vontade dos pais é livre; oxalá que não fosse: logo que os filhos sabem ler, e mal assinam seus nomes, destinam-lhes um ofício por onde possam depois adquirir meios de subsistência, como eles se expressam, por não ter que lhes deixar, isto é, os necessitados de bens de fortuna cujos filhos em grande número ornaram a minha aula".

29 A girl named Anna Joaquina Gomes was identified among Justiniana's students, and, given the similarity with the teacher's name, one can guess the degree of kinship between them.

Rodrigues, 2nd Lieutenant Engineer José Joaquim Rodrigues Lopes and the two public teachers of this city [Justiniana and Henriqueta]" (Sessão, 1833c, p. 836, own translation). It is possible that Ester underwent an examination aiming at a vacancy not yet created, remaining as surplus. It was common for teachers to request the exam even before there was a vacancy. They were, therefore, waiting that as soon as there was an opening or vacancy of some school they could be employed.

Ester Leopoldina Pinheiro was called to replace Justiniana, entering the public service approximately two months after the death of the previous one. Classes began on July 29, 1835, as can be seen from the map with the list of students, sent to the government on November 18, 1836. It contains a total of 32 girls, with entry registration, of the two oldest ones, on July 29, 1835. Among the students, one was Claudina Maria Pinheiro, ten years old, who can be assumed as Ester's daughter (Pinheiro, 1836a).

The first female public school teacher outside the capital was Anna Joaquina de Seixas Corrêa, appointed to the city of Alcântara. This chair was created in 1829 and put out to public tender in 1830; but its competition was only scheduled for June 12, 1833, after the Provincial Council responded to the request of Anna Joaquina, who was interested in occupying it. Its examiners were Francisco Sotero dos Reis, lecturer at the Liceu Maranhense, Alexandre José Rodrigues, professor of first letters in the capital, Justiniana Joaquina Amada and Henriqueta Cândida Ferreira, whose names were once again omitted in the publication of the government file, being referred to as "the two teachers" (Sessão, 1833b, p. 714).

Regarding the aspect of teacher training through the Lancaster method, in Brazil we had the Escola Normal da Corte and its counterparts in the provinces, created between the 1830s and 1840s, intended only for a male audience. However, this does not mean that only male professors from the period after the Lei de 15 de outubro de 1827, were obliged to teach their classes using the aforementioned method.

Schwartz and Ferreira (2014), despite analyzing the conception of female education embedded in the Lancaster method, demonstrate that in the context of England in which such a form of teaching was structured, there was a female demand for the performance of textile industrial activities, with the need to develop "manual skills, reading and writing" (p. 59, own translation). This context influenced some parity in the elementary education between the two genres, at least with regard to reading, writing and counting. However, for women, the knowledge peculiar to the demands imposed on them by the manufacturing market should be added. Despite the parity nature of elementary knowledge (reading, writing and counting) proposed for men and women in England, Schwartz and Ferreira (2014) demonstrate how in Brazil a differentiation in teaching content was exacerbated, especially when a smaller portion of knowledge is defined in the elementary school for girls and the industrial training is replaced by domestic skills.

Although with differences between the teaching of women and men in relation to the elementary content, when the Lancaster method was made official and the opening of women's schools in populous places was franchised, this method became common in both male and female classes. In the case of Maranhão, the first public teachers of first letters (Justiniana, Henriqueta and Ester) demonstrate, in their communications with the government, that the requirement to use the Lancaster method was equally established for teachers, as can be seen from the reading from teachers' jobs to the government, highlighting the organization of teaching compatible with the Lancaster method.

The female school conducted by Henriqueta, in 1833, was divided into five classes, with the respective number of students for each: 16, 17, 5, 16 and 12 (Ferreira, 1833). At another time, she declared that two of her students had passed the exam "in the subjects recommended

in the law that created the First Language classes, using the Lancaster Method"³⁰ (Ferreira, 1835, own translation).

The school run by Justiniana Joaquina, in 1835, shortly before her resignation from teaching duties, was organized into three classes, as they were called: reading classes, arithmetic classes and grammar classes. The female students were divided into eight other classes, included in the three described (Amada, 1835a).

The classes conducted by the female and male teachers did not show a pattern in relation to the amount of time spent. Ester Leopoldina, for example, declared that:

. . . I teach 2 times a day, 3 and 5 hours each time, starting in the morning at 7 o'clock and ending at 10 o'clock for those who only learn to read, and at 12 for those who learn to read and home economics, and late at 2, and ending at 5, and at 6, for the same reason.³¹ (Pinheiro, 1836b, own translation).

Henriqueta worked for less time: "I teach twice a day for four hours the first and three hours the second, starting in the morning at 8 and in the afternoon at 3, namely: this last lesson is sewing"³² (Ferreira, 1836, own translation).

The daily class time was different among the teachers: while Ester worked for up to nine hours, Henriqueta worked for seven. The same lack of standardization can be detected in João Francisco da Cruz's class, when he declared that his students studied for 6 hours: "I teach twice, 3 hours in the morning and 3 in the afternoon, starting in the morning at 7 am and ending at 10, starting in the afternoon at 2, and ending at 5"³³ (Cruz, 1836, own translation).

Spending more time teaching girls seemed to be in agreement with what was established by Lancaster. For him, the female classes, since they focus on technical training, should be divided into two parts, with "half of the day . . . entirely devoted to [manual] work, and the other half to learning [reading, writing, geometry]"³⁴ (Lancaster, 1807, as cited in Schwartz & Ferreira, 2014, p. 59, own translation).

Final remarks

The results of this study indicate the need for greater attention to the documentation of the colonial period, especially in relation to the effects of the publication of the regimento dos Diretórios dos Índios of 1757, which provided guidance on the civil administration of indigenous settlements and instituted guidelines for colonization, with emphasis on the role of public schooling, for boys and girls.

The promotion of studies on this historical period, in the various Brazilian states, may contribute to the expansion of knowledge about Brazilian female public education. Despite the little knowledge on the issue, attention should be paid to the great importance of this legislative device that established the creation of a public class to learn how to read and write for women in Brazil, prior to the Pombaline Studies Reform, when not even for the female Court education was a priority.

30 In the original: "nas matérias recomendadas na lei de criação das aulas de Primeiras Letras, pelo Método Lancasteriano".

31 In the original: "leciono por dia 2 vezes, 3 e 5 horas, em cada vez, começando de manhã às 7 horas, e acabando às 10 para as que só aprendem a ler, e às 12 para as que aprendem a ler e a economia doméstica, e a tarde às 2, e acabando às 5, e às 6, pela mesma razão".

32 In the original: "leciono duas vezes por dia por espaço de quatro horas a primeira e três a segunda, começando de manhã às 8 e de tarde às 3 a saber: esta última lição é de costura".

33 In the original: "leciono por 2 vezes, sendo 3 horas de manhã e 3 de tarde, começando de manhã às 7 horas e acabando às 10, começando de tarde às 2, e acabando às 5".

34 In the original: "a metade do dia . . . inteiramente dedicada ao trabalho [manual], e a outra metade para aprendizagem [leitura, escrita, geometria]".

On the other hand, it can be observed that the first public teacher in Maranhão hired with public resources was appointed in 1823, shortly after Maranhão joined the Independence of Brazil, therefore, before the Lei de 15 de outubro de 1827. Then, three others female teachers were selected and took over the service of female education in the early years of the 1830s, thus composing the cadre of the precursors of the female public teaching service in Maranhão.

Such data draw attention to the need to relativize the current statement in historiography that attributes to the Decreto das Escolas de Primeiras Letras, of 1827, the initial demarcation of female public schooling in Brazil.

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The data underlying the research text are reported in the article.

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