



Francisco Rangel Pestana, a History of Educational Intellectuals in São Paulo at the end of the 19th century¹

Francisco Rangel Pestana, uma História dos Intelectuais da Educação em São Paulo de fins do século XIX

Francisco Rangel Pestana, una historia de los intelectuales de la educación en São Paulo a fines del siglo XIX

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Abstract

This article aims to trace the life journey of Francisco Rangel Pestana (1839-1903), a figure identified by scholars in the political history of São Paulo as the leading force behind the republican movement in the then province of São Paulo. His prominence in this movement, particularly from the 1870s, with the establishment of the newspaper “A Province of S. Paulo” (now known as “O Estado de S. Paulo”), as well as his involvement in various congresses and political parties of his time, cannot be overlooked. While acknowledging Rangel Pestana’s significant role in championing for the press and for the republican cause in São Paulo, this work seeks to shine a light on his multifaceted engagement in the fight for education. He contributed as an author of articles and textbooks, as a teacher, and alongside his wife, as the proprietor of an educational institution. Rangel Pestana's educational philosophy aligned with the enlightened notion that education was the key to building a republican nation, where individuals could truly become responsible citizens.

Keywords: History of Education; Intellectuals; Press; Republic.

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Resumo

O artigo tem por objetivo resgatar a trajetória de Francisco Rangel Pestana (1839-1903), identificado pelos estudiosos da história política de São Paulo como protagonista do movimento republicano na então província paulista, sobretudo, a partir dos anos 1870 com a criação do jornal *A Província de S. Paulo* (atual *O Estado de S. Paulo*) e seu envolvimento com congressos e partidos políticos em seu tempo. Sem deixar de colocar em relevo o importante papel desempenhado por Rangel Pestana junto à imprensa e a causa republicana em São Paulo, no âmbito desse trabalho, pretende-se jogar luz em sua trajetória como um militante engajado na luta pela educação, seja como autor de artigos e livros didáticos, seja como professor e, ao lado de sua esposa, de proprietário de estabelecimento de ensino. Rangel Pestana, em termos de concepção educacional alinhava-se à ideia ilustrada de que por meio da educação dar-se-ia a construção de um país republicano onde o indivíduo seria capaz de se transformar em cidadão.

Palavras-chave: História da Educação; Intelectuais; Imprensa; República.

Resumen

El artículo tiene como objetivo rescatar la trayectoria de Francisco Rangel Pestana (1839-1903), identificado por estudiosos de la historia política de São Paulo como el protagonista del movimiento republicano en la entonces provincia de São Paulo, especialmente a partir de la década de 1870 con la creación de el periódico *A Província de S. Paulo* (hoy *O Estado de S. Paulo*) y su vinculación con congresos y partidos políticos de su época. Sin dejar de resaltar el importante papel jugado por Rangel Pestana con la prensa y la causa republicana en São Paulo, en el marco de este trabajo se pretende arrojar luz sobre su trayectoria como militante comprometido en la lucha por la educación, ya sea como autor de artículos y libros de texto, o como profesor y, junto a su mujer, como propietario de un establecimiento de enseñanza. Rangel Pestana, en cuanto a la concepción educativa, se alineó con la idea ilustrada de que a través de la educación se realizaría la construcción de un país republicano donde el individuo pudiera convertirse en ciudadano.

Palabras clave: Historia de la Educación; Intelectuales; Prensa; República.

Introduction

Intellectuals have a history. Despite all the conflicts within the historiographical field and social sciences, whether in terms of approaches and forms of understanding, whether in the way of understanding their role in societies, or in their representation, intellectuals occupy a place in contemporary society as mediators, producers, and social actors.

Constituting a relatively recent field of studies, the history of intellectuals involves different approaches, revealing a plural and multidisciplinary field of investigation encompassing different aspects such as life journeys and biographical sketches, constitution and performance of groups united by generational and ideological affinities, spaces of intervention and conviviality, and the production and circulation of ideas.

Darnton (1990), reflecting on conceptual inaccuracies and difficulties in apprehending the object, identifies the possibilities of intersections that present themselves to researchers in the field of intellectual history:

the history of ideas (the study of systematic thought, usually in philosophical treatises), intellectual history proper (the study of informal thought, climates of opinion and literary movements), the social history of ideas (the study of ideologies and diffusion of ideas), and cultural history (the study of culture in the anthropological sense, including conceptions of the world and collective *mentalités*). (DARNTON, 1990:188)

From the intersection of different aspects – social history, history of ideas, cultural history – the interface with politics stands out. The political history of intellectuals offers opportunities for studies that make it possible to shed light on certain periods and spaces through knowledge of journeys, political activity and disputes for the legitimacy of ideas on the part of intellectuals and their affective groups.

Sirinelli (2003), after remembering the difficulties for researchers in the history of intellectuals, above all due to his own the ostracism experienced given his political history and the specific difficulties in characterizing intellectuals, points out three fundamental aspects in theoretical-methodological terms for a new approach: the text corpus, the prosopography of itineraries and the reconstruction of engagements:

For those who study the action of intellectuals, the problem of their role and their “power” necessarily arises, a problem that, in a somewhat prosaic way, can be summarized as follows: would these intellectuals, on a given date, have influenced events? (SIRINELLI, 2003: 235)

In this way, the execution of a research plan for uncovering the history of intellectuals involves, according to the perspective adopted by Sirineli (2003), three important notions: the reconstitution of itineraries, that is, mapping the territories of engagement, which allows us to identify the diverse forms of organization, ideological affiliation and more diffuse affinities; the notion of structures of sociability, that is, the shared spaces that reveal the intellectual world, such as magazine and newspaper editorial offices, manifestos; and, finally, the notion of generation, an important conceptual component, as it refers to groups of intellectuals that come together around the effects of age and generational phenomena or through commitment to a founding milestone that comes to define existence of the group to which they belong.

In this sense, the notions of itineraries, generation and sociability, suggested by Sirineli (2003), account, from a methodological point of view, for the object treated in the scope of this work, that is, the life journey and action of Francisco Rangel Pestana, an intellectual who lived in São Paulo in the second half of the 19th century and the first years of the 20th century. With little expressive social capital in regard to his family, he studied, however, in one of the references of the intellectual exercise of the 19th century: the Law School of Largo de São Francisco, in São Paulo, a space for scholars and protesters, since the times of the romantic turn, and a developer of political elites, both during the Monarchy and the Republic.

He lived in a São Paulo that was going through a process of rapid economic and urban transformation, driven by coffee import that impacted not only production spaces, but also social relations, such as the development of newspapers, magazines, the import of machines and ideas, the emergence of new social and economic actors, the improvement of the urban apparatus through gas lighting, and the expansion of railway lines connecting the coffee producing areas with the export port of Santos.

Shedding light on Rangel Pestana's journey allows us to highlight the historical moment of transition between the Empire and the Republic through the eyes of an intellectual who used all spaces, in an intellectually and materially precarious society, to intervene in the political debate and education at the time.

Living in a markedly slave-owning and hierarchical society, like Brazil at the end of the 19th century, Rangel Pestana proposed a debate via the press and through parliamentary action on what was his main area of action: education as a vehicle for transformations in the political and economic regime, with a noticeably liberal inspiration imported, to a large extent, from the North American experience.

Family Background, Academic Life and Career Beginnings

Born in Iguaçú, Rio de Janeiro, on November 26, 1839, in a modest family in the interior of Rio de Janeiro. Francisco Rangel Pestana was the son of João Jacinto Pestana and Luiza Rangel Pestana. He lost his father at the age of 16 and his education was entrusted to Antônio Caetano da Silva and his godfather Colonel Francisco José Soares, head of the Conservative Party in Iguaçú. (ANTONIO CARLOS, 1877:61).

His primary, secondary and preparatory studies happened between the Court in the city of Rio de Janeiro, and São Paulo, through different educational institutions of the time, according to Hilsdorf (1988:21-25), such as Colégio Pedro II, Liceu Paulistano and Colégio Mamede. He was among a developing group of future protagonists of political life in the Empire-Republic transition, such as Campos Sales, Bernardino de Campos, Francisco Quirino, among others, in social groups of which he would be part until the beginning of the republic, participating in literary associations and writing of small periodicals. He entered the Law School of Largo de São Francisco in 1859, graduating in the class of 1863.

During his period as a law student in São Paulo, he revealed his inclination towards the press, a vocation that would mark him throughout his life, and over time, he became one of the references of journalism in São Paulo in the second half of the 19th century. He was also active in associations and newspapers that brought together students from the São Paulo Law Academy: a speaker at *Ateneu Paulistano*; a member of the *Associação Culto à Ciência*, of which he was one of the founders and contributor to its memoir magazine, as well as a member of the *Instituto Acadêmico Paulistano*.

In academic journalism, he was director of the *Revista do Ensaio Filosófico*, also taking part as a writer and contributor to the newspapers *O Lírio* (1860-1861), a literary newspaper that advocated the reform of women's education; *O Futuro* (1862), a newspaper that brought together the students Theophilo C. Ottoni, Cesário Alvim and Belfort Duarte,

the same group that would create, the following year, *A Época*. In *O Tymbira* (1860-1861), a newspaper with a liberal tendency that brought together, among others, Limpo de Abreu and Monteiro de Souza, Rangel Pestana was responsible for the editorial team (ANTONIO CARLOS, 1877:62). From his time as an academic journalist, there were records like this one published by *O Lírio*, in an 1860 edition:

The day when there are no more slaves in our country, the future of our families will be brighter, happier, but more rational, because our children's education will be better. Happy will be the day when our descendants can say: - We are children of a country where freedom reigns! On this day, Brazil will have the right to present itself to the educated nations of the world as a civilized and respectable nation. On this day, Brazilians will be free and patriotic, because we hope that then there will be more civility, dignity, more modesty, because this servility that undermines our national pride, embarrasses us abroad and even makes us forget our own dignity as free men, will cease! (apud HILSDORF, 1988:32)

From his relations with said group of students in São Paulo, Rangel Pestana strengthened personal and professional relationships by building a network of sociability and sharing that was typical of the processes of social insertion of individuals from less prestigious social strata, as was his case.

According to Sirinelli (2003), individuals engaged in intellectual activities such as the press, law and education, reveal themselves to be skilled in the processes of social insertion through social networks built in educational establishments and newspaper and magazine editorial offices, in addition to generational convergences and age-appropriate ideas.

In 1864, after completing his Law course, he took up residence at the Court in Rio de Janeiro, and faced with the frustration of not being appointed public prosecutor in the province of Rio de Janeiro, it occurred to him to accept an invitation from Counselor Zacarias de Góes e Vasconcelos to become the editor of the Official Gazette, a position in which he remained for a short time, possibly due to conflict with the political orientation of the newspaper:

Months later, counselor Zacarias de Góes called Pestana to the editorial office of the Official Gazette. His time in the editorial office of this newspaper was quick; profound divergence in the way of considering the paper's political positions made him incompatible with the head of the cabinet, and he preferred, with commendable independence, to withdraw rather than lie to his convictions [...] (ANTONIO CARLOS, 1877:63)

Despite his initial failure, Rangel Pestana continued his journalistic activity, which would occupy his entire professional and political life. Many of the publications in which he will be involved from then on are directly related to the fluctuations in the political field during the crisis that marked the history of the 2nd Reign in the 1860s, with the splits within the Liberal Party that gave rise to different political groups.

He then revisited the personal relationships he built during his time at the Law School in São Paulo and alongside Henrique Limpo de Abreu, who was at the time the deputy for the province of Minas Gerais to the General Assembly, and José Luiz Monteiro de Souza, he founded the newspaper *Opinião Liberal* in 1866. Its creation took place in the context of a political split within the liberal field due to dissatisfaction with the direction taken by the

government policy developed by the Progressive League, which had been in power since 1862 with the rise to the head of the Council of Ministers by Zacarias de Góis and Vasconcelos, the main name of this political group.

The *Opinião Nacional*, as this paper was called, spoke out energetically against personal power, which the *Opinião* considered to be the creation of the constitutional charter: it advised the *historics* to fight for the extinction of the Moderating Power; for direct and generalized vote; for free education in relation to school and teaching; for the abolition of the national guard; for elective politics; for the temporary nature of the senate; for provincial frankness on the elective principle; for the slow and gradual replacement of slave labor with free labor; and for the emancipation of farming through credit institutions adapted to the conditions of its existence. (BRASILIENSE, 1979:31-32)

Rangel Pestana's newspaper then became the public expression of the dissident liberal faction that later became known as Radical Liberals. This group united different actors, such as the brothers Theophilo and Christiano Ottoni (activists from various episodes in the political history of both the Empire and the Republic), Urbano Sabino Pessoa de Mello (author of a book about the Praieiros Revolt, in Pernambuco), José Maria do Amaral (poet, diplomatic representative and Advisor to the Empire), among others.

Opinião Nacional was extinguished in 1868 and its editorial program, despite its extinction, continued the following year, with the emergence of *O Correio Nacional*, which took place in a new political context with the rise of the Conservative Party to government. In *O Correio Nacional*, Rangel Pestana shared editorial tasks with Henrique Limpo de Abreu. In their debut editorial, the editors explained the political program they intend to defend:

Correio Nacional wants, like the best modern publicists, the government to be just the government, to distribute justice, maintain order, punish crime, collect taxes, represent the people; but without transposing the natural goal, or replacing society; May freedom be the light that guides it in the enormities of administration and politics. (BRASILIENSE, 1979:38)

After listing what they consider to be the characteristics of the Empire's government – “a government that depreciates institutions through fraud, sophistry and corruption; which defends the representative system, but distorts it in its origin and circumvents it in its effects; which promises the abolition of the servile element, but reduces those whose services it enjoys to slavery” (BRASILIENSE, 1979:34) – the editorialists of *O Correio Nacional* provoke the reader with a proposal that they considered radical:

Let us free the individual, the municipality and the province from government supervision. Let us emancipate the individual by guaranteeing him freedom of worship, association, voting, education and industry; The municipality – by recognizing its right to elect its police, to provide for its peculiar needs, to apply its income, and to

create them within the limits of its autonomy. The province – by freeing it from the sterilizing and tardy action of the center, respecting its own life, guaranteeing it the full use and enjoyment of all rights with the election of its presidents, so that they can administer themselves without other restrictions beyond those strictly claimed by the union and general interest. (BRASILIANSE, 1979:36)

Rangel Pestana found himself, at that moment, absorbed by the political environment, and not only by *Correio Nacional* – the synthesis of a reformist program of greater density promoted by the liberal field – but he would also take part in conferences and public meetings promoted by the Clube Radical, in Rio de Janeiro. The hesitation, however, of the leaders of the Liberal Party and other activists in the same political field alienated Rangel Pestana, who approached the republican movement which, at that time in 1870, was in full swing in the city of Rio de Janeiro.

The political articulation between those dissatisfied with the Liberal Party resulted in what would become the landmark of the republican movement in Brazil: on December 3, 1870, the first issue of the newspaper *A República* was launched (the result of the merger of *Opinião Liberal* and *Correio Nacional*) and with it, the Manifesto Republicano, which was signed by around sixty citizens from the most different professional occupations, including public servants, farmers, engineers, teachers, journalists, doctors, traders, and lawyers.

Among the signatories are names that would mark the country's political history in the last decades of the 19th century and the first decades of the 20th century: Rangel Pestana and his classmate from Law School, Henrique Limpo de Abreu, Aristides Lobo, Saldanha Marinho, Quintino Bocaiúva (who was credited with drafting the manifesto), Salvador de Mendonça, Lopes Trovão, Américo Brasiliense, among others. (ANTONIO CARLOS, 1877: 66).

At that time, due to health problems, Rangel Pestana had to not only give up the position for which he had been appointed by the recently founded Clube Republicano – editor of the newspaper *A República* – but also establish residence in Campinas, in the interior of São Paulo. He remained in Campinas practicing law and maintaining constant collaboration with the newspaper *Gazeta de Campinas*, through which he kept contact with some of the members of the group of intellectuals from São Paulo, in this case, José Maria Lisboa, Francisco Quirino dos Santos and Campos Sales, all linked to the same Campinas paper.

He returned to the Court in Rio, where he remained until 1874. During this period, Pestana, in addition to once again getting involved in the republican campaign, took part in attempts to save the movement's main vehicle from bankruptcy - the newspaper *A República*, the official organ of the republican movement, which was experiencing a moment of financial insolvency. He also participated in his first experiences in the educational field, by founding, alongside Henrique Limpo de Abreu, the Escola do Povo, an educational institution aimed at workers, offering separate courses at night.

The Escola do Povo was inaugurated in the Court on August 1, 1873, representing the most comprehensive attempt to implement the political-pedagogical thinking of democratic leaders of the early 1870s on popular education, largely influenced by North American standards. It was an institution created by the private sector, built with associated capital, with an updated curriculum, different from the official program,

offering regular daytime courses and separate evening classes for both sexes, library services and careful equipment and material facilities, etc. This collective venture was organized by Pestana, Henrique Limpo de Abreu, Miguel V. Ferreira and José Teles Menezes, well-known names among the radicals and republicans of the Court, with the objective of "giving the country real, civil and scientific instruction". In its evening classes, it offered real training courses, guidance and democratic and scientific-positivist content. (HILSDORF, 1988:60)

With *Escola do Povo*, Rangel Pestana began the other side of his intellectual and professional activity through management and teaching in school institutions. (ANTONIO CARLOS, 1877:66). Imbued with scientific, positivist and liberal influences, philosophical conceptions which were in vogue and precariously transmitted and consumed by the intellectualized society of his time, Rangel Pestana projected into school education the bias of anti-monarchical action that met the interests of the political and economic elites of São Paulo, eager for prestige and recognition.

Press, Education and Parliamentary Activities

Upon returning to the province of São Paulo in the mid-1870s, Rangel Pestana, intensified his activities in both the educational and journalistic fields. In 1874, he was in Campinas, at the invitation of George Nash Morton, a North American Presbyterian missionary who had just founded the *Colégio Internacional de Campinas*, taking the chairs of Rhetoric and National Language. (ANTONIO CARLOS, 1877:67-68).

According to Hilsdorf (1986), Rangel Pestana's interest in education was heightened when he exchanged ideas and experiences with Nash and other Presbyterian and Methodists, who maintained schools in São Paulo and Campinas, following the North American pedagogical model. From then on, education became one of the important pillars in Pestana's repertoire as a tool for criticizing the monarchy and its institutions. Through education, he believed it was possible to reform, politically and mentally, Brazilian society.

Education imposes itself, therefore, as an important tool in Rangel Pestana's political thinking and practice in what he understood to be the indispensable process of transforming national political life through the moral and intellectual development of new generations of Brazilians. From then on, the defense of education guided his interventions, whether as a writer or contributor to newspapers, or in participation in political congresses as well as in his activities in legislatures.

In a short time, he became a member of a group of intellectuals who shared the same spaces and ideals revolving around educational institutions, both in the capital and in the interior, such as the *Colégio Culto a Ciência*, based in Campinas, created in 1874 on the initiative of a Masonic brotherhood whose members were also part of the republican social circles of São Paulo; the aforementioned *Colégio Internacional de Campinas*, an initiative of Presbyterian denomination led by Reverend George Nash Morton, in addition to schools in cities such as Itu and Amparo, among other locations, generally in the West of São Paulo.

In São Paulo, Rangel Pestana founded the *Colégio Pestana* for the education of girls – which he ran alongside his wife Damiana Quirino, sister of Francisco Quirino dos Santos, his classmate from his Law School days and at the time, the chief editor of the *Gazeta de Campinas*, a newspaper that brought together a group of scholars and politicians dedicated to the republican cause. In an advertisement in *Almanach Litterario de São Paulo* for the year 1877, published by José Maria Lisboa (1877:180-181), we learn about the administrative and pedagogical functioning of *Colégio Pestana*.

The school opened in 1876 and was located on Rua da Boa Morte, 36 with teachers such as Américo Brasiliense, Américo de Campos, as well as the directors themselves. The curriculum was defined in six years. Over the years, subjects from different areas were offered, such as Foreign Languages, Portuguese, Mathematics, notions of Natural Sciences, Literature, Geography and History, integrated with a set of practical subjects such as Crafts and Embroidery, and even “women’s rights in Brazilian society”, something unusual for the conservative moral standards of Brazilian society at the time. Furthermore, the advertisement emphasized that teaching methods followed Swiss, German and North American standards.

Pestana transferred control of the school to Ana Schraeder, one of the foreign language teachers, in 1879. In the same line of action, that is, following the liberal-positivist ideology in the transformation of the political-social order through education, Rangel Pestana connected with João Kopke, and together they created the Escola Neutralidade, in 1884, in São Paulo, and he started teaching there, in addition to writing textbooks:

Organized according to the methodological requirements of the time, of intuitive and concrete teaching, Escola Neutralidade stood out in São Paulo's teaching frameworks also because it was ostensibly positivist in its foundations, objectives and work regime. It offered children aged seven to fourteen what the progressive elites considered necessary for the up-to-date training of their members: languages, physical, natural and exact sciences, humanities and fine arts. Conceived as an organ attached to the family, it provided, under a co-education regime - "because the family co-educates" - physical, mental and moral instruction "without the special concern of exams, without the routine of so-called classic compendiums, of improvised points. Teaching (...) will be limited to a few teachers and a lot of work; few books and a lot of attention: little remembering, lots of notes and exercises. (HISLDORF, 1988:66)

According to Panizzolo (2011), João Kopke and Rangel Pestana were contemporaries since their time at the Law School of Largo de São Francisco, and later strengthened their bonds of friendship through joint actions in the press and in educational institutions. Kopke was not exactly a militant of the republican cause, but like Rangel Pestana and other members of the political-intellectual group he frequented, he also understood education as a strategy for anti-monarchical struggles. His career was much more marked by his work as a teacher and pedagogue:

Kopke was a director and teacher of various subjects in primary and secondary education and dedicated himself to a fruitful written intellectual production focused on themes related to education and teaching, in addition to having participated in the main events of educational life of the period, giving pedagogical conferences and participating as a critic and polemicist, always at the service of the “holy republican cause”. (PANIZZOLO, 2011:82)

The years 1870/1880 saw the Empire's political crisis deepen. The fall of the Zacarias de Góes Cabinet in 1868 opened a split within monarchical politics, which was taken advantage of by opposition groups, in particular groups linked to the Manifesto Republicano of 1870, dispersed between Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Rio Grande do Sul and other locations. Groups

of interests and political and ideological affinities were created and consolidated, and aimed at debating the most important topics for that historical context, such as federalism, decentralization, slave labor, immigration, the representation of monarchical parties, and the direction of education.

At this moment, education and the press, in addition to institutional political activity, become the main focus of Rangel Pestana's work. In São Paulo, through his work in the press, he maintained close personal relationships with the group of republican activists, coffee farmers and political elites in São Paulo, leading him to become the main voice of these groups when it came to the educational issue, which led him to take representative positions in the Republican Party.

According to Hilsdorf (1993), the political-pedagogical ideology defended by the emerging economic elites of São Paulo, of which Rangel Pestana was their main educational representative, linked school education to the needs of economic development and the establishment of a political regime based on decentralization and federalism. In this way, the elites of São Paulo aspired to create:

A school network that offered modern, scientific education, at secondary and higher levels, for the “dominant classes”, and a primary school enriched in its content and extensive in terms of clientele, for the preparation of a free workforce. (HILSDORF, 1993:146)

Professional interests, ideological choices and personal ties led Rangel Pestana to join the society that gave rise, in 1875, to the newspaper *A Província de São Paulo*, in which he would have the role of editor, initially sharing it with Américo de Campos, having in José Maria Lisboa a manager and administrator, and through which his journalistic activities would achieve greater visibility and notoriety. He would remain at the helm of the newspaper from its foundation until the beginning of the Republic when he left to hold positions in the dawning regime.

Gravitating around *A Província de São Paulo* was a group of scholars, coffee farmers and liberal professionals, notably lawyers with political aspirations, such as Américo Brasiliense, Manuel Ferraz de Campos Salles, Martinho Prado Junior, Francisco Glicério de Cerqueira César, among others, who maintained relative unity of ideals and objectives in the most different fields.

Due to the influence of Rangel Pestana, *A Província de São Paulo*, in its first year of creation, began to express opinions on education, as in the editorial of February 4, 1875, in which it related the level of education of the people to the pattern of economic development of North American society.

The citizens of that wonderful country, whose extraordinary progress in all branches of human activity fills the civilized world with just admiration, when they want for themselves a lasting title of nobility capable of perpetuating their name in the memory of future generations, do not look for these blazons that disappear with the course of life and that ultimately mean nothing, but they treat it with a disinterest and a nobility of soul, worthy of imitation, of engraving it on the entrance of a temple, that can gather the people to teach them to meditate and to reason. And when individual effort is not enough to carry out such a great work, scattered elements come together, isolated wills come together, and in the face of this communion of forces, the impossible disappears. (A PROVINCIA DE SÃO PAULO, editorial, February 4, 1875)

Throughout its history, the newspaper took the position of verbalizing the repertoire defended by the dominant economic and political-intellectual group, emphatically debating themes that confronted the monarchical political system, such as federalism, decentralization, immigration policy, railway expansion, public education, reform of the political system that suppressed the Lifetime Senate and Moderating Power, among many others.

At the head of the newspaper's editorial team, Rangel Pestana prioritized defending public and secular education, in the spirit of the limits of liberalism defended by the republican group of São Paulo, to which he was linked. Education at the service of the republican citizen, was the educational ideal advocated in editorials and articles published in *A Província de São Paulo*. In the edition of August 28, 1880, after condemning the general lack of interest in education on the part of the monarchical government, the precariousness of scientific training and teaching methods, it denounced the lack of resources to change the country's educational reality:

In our country, which does not excel in economy and good use of income, the budgets have little provision for teaching in its various degrees, or at least, those who think otherwise must confess, the funds voted do not correspond to the needs of the mentality popular. From bad primary schools, as we have them, to higher education courses, you could say, everything is yet to be completed. (A PROVÍNCIA DE SÃO PAULO, 08/28/1880)

According to Hilsdorf (1988:54-53), Rangel Pestana and *A Província de São Paulo* took a position through editorials, articles, news and notes against monarchical and Catholic teaching (which they called Jesuit) as they considered them anti-democratic and anti-scientific, in addition to representing obstacles to elevating the country to the status of the most prosperous nations at the time (read the United States, a model to be followed, according to the ideas of the São Paulo republicans). They defended education models based on secularism, free thought (following the liberal teaching model) and scientific ideal (positivist ideals).

A quick glance at the advertisements for educational establishments on the pages of *A Província de São Paulo* allows us to understand what the journalist and teacher Rangel Pestana possibly understood as “the best instruction” for the standards of the time: Colégio Piracicabano, then under the directed by Miss M. H. Watts and dedicated to primary and secondary education, announced the restart of the school year; the Escola Alemã, a day school for boys and girls that offered primary and secondary education, located on Rua da Constitution in São Paulo; Colégio Pestana, at the time under the direction of Ana Schraeder, who came from Germany, and which had among its teaching staff people such as Américo de Campos, Américo Brasiliense; Colégio Alemão, located in São Paulo and under the direction of Berta Wegner, offering a curriculum based on foreign languages, arithmetic and piano teaching; Colégio Internacional, in Campinas, under the direction of G. Nash Morton.

On the other hand, and concomitantly with his work in education, Rangel Pestana also embarked on party politics, serving as Deputy for the Republican Party in the 1882-1883 and 1886-1887 biennia. Alongside candidates and party activists such as Campos Sales, Prudente de Moraes, Martinho Prado Jr., Francisco Quirino, Luís Pereira Barreto, Américo Brasiliense, among others, he took part in the elaboration of a relatively comprehensive political program involving different propositions such as immigration, secularization of cemeteries, political and financial decentralization, freedom of worship, among others.

Rangel Pestana, however, presented himself as his party's main proponent in educational matters, defending public and free education at all levels, in addition to the creation of high schools in all provinces.

Ahead of the parliamentary mandates, Rangel Pestana proposed bills aimed at financing public education and a reform plan for elementary and normal education. (HILSDORF, 1993:145). An example is the editorial published in *A Província de São Paulo* on November 7, 1882, arguing that the investment of resources from a lottery created for the building of a monument commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of Independence should be used to create secondary schools:

We are in favor of secondary education institutions based on broad bases [...] The main destination, however, to be given to the proceeds from the Ypiranga lotteries must be the creation of an educational establishment with the capacity for the classes of a good high school, for the Escola Normal and for the special classes of the Liceu de Artes e Ofícios [...] We think like the illustrious Dr. Luiz Pereira Barreto and many modern publicists: teaching reading and writing is not the way to prepare people to understand their duties, nor to enable them to overcome the difficulties that surround them. Generalizing poor education is not, and has never been, a way to raise the moral and intellectual level of a people. (A PROVINCIA DE SÃO PAULO, 07.11.1882)

He then presented a project to the Provincial Assembly with a proposal to create secondary schools with resources from the then Ypiranga lottery, which, however, not only did not receive successful approval but also dragged on through several legislatures until the first years of the republican regime.

The proposal to create secondary schools – the Agricultural School, the Liceu de Artes e Ofícios, in addition to the reform of the Escola Normal – was part of the vision for education of the republican nucleus of São Paulo, in which Rangel Pestana took part, who wanted the training of qualified work to leverage the economic expansion desired by the coffee farming elite and linked to the export market.

Still during his parliamentary run, Rangel Pestana also turned his attention to the Escola Normal, understanding that it should undergo renovation that would put it in a position to meet the needs of the time. He criticized the school's curricular structure and the constant political interference in its functioning. In an editorial in *A Província de São Paulo* dated August 1st, 1880, he wrote:

Public education is a very important matter and requires a lot of care. [...] Do not believe the honorable Mr. Dr. Laurindo that the Escola Normal comes to remedy the flaws of public education and raise it to the needs of the time. The good effects of this institution depend on other measures relating to the direction of public instruction. [...] As long as the teacher is not in a position to just be a teacher and dedicate himself to teaching, the chairs will remain vacant. [...] No man of merit and strength to work wants to take up public teaching, and the few who appear, experience the thorns of the chair and leave it to dedicate themselves to profitable work. (A PROVINCIA DE SÃO PAULO, 08/01/1880)

During his two parliamentary terms, Pestana was not completely successful in his proposals for reforms in public education, as was said at the time. Bills for the creation of schooling institutions or the reform of existing ones were, to a large extent, altered by interests other than his own or were set aside by those implementing local public policies, due to political differences. However, many of the ideas he sowed at that time were adopted later, especially after the proclamation of the Republic in 1889, when he played a prominent role in the government of Prudente de Moraes, supporting the reforms undertaken by Caetano de Campos.

After the Proclamation of the Republic, Rangel Pestana was appointed for positions and functions in the new regime both at state and national level, such as, for example, representing São Paulo on the Commission that prepared the draft of the first republican Constitution, or holding several elective mandates as Senator and Federal Deputy for both São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro.

Final Considerations

Francisco Rangel Pestana belonged to the generation of Brazilian intellectuals called the “1870 Generation”, walking a typical path for an intellectual of his time, that is, combining several professional actions – press, law, education, and party-parliamentary politics.

However, his engagement in the educational aspect accredited him to be an actor different from others who were present in the context of the Empire-Republic transition. Unlike many of his contemporaries who were signatories of the Manifesto Republicano of 1870, or who were engaged in congresses and publications of a republican nature, Rangel Pestana had the understanding that the republic would only be successful among Brazilians if they were educated to that end. Hence his efforts as a teacher, as the founder of educational institutions, as the author of press articles and textbooks and, finally, as a parliamentary actor in favor of education and the reforms he considered necessary.

Given that he was not exactly a theoretician about education and, therefore, did not present a vast book production, Rangel Pestana took up the role of author of textbooks for primary and secondary schools and of teacher.

As was typical of the generation of intellectuals of his time, the bulk of his ideas about education were conveyed through press vehicles, from the times of academic journalism, when he defended female education, to political journalism, properly speaking, when through the pages of *A Província de São Paulo*, he committed himself to debating issues regarding school curricula, educational reforms, teacher training and teaching methods.

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