



Vandick Londres da Nóbrega: a conservative intellectual in the educational context during the Brazilian military dictatorship (1964-1979)¹

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Vandick Londres da Nóbrega: un intelectual conservador en el contexto educativo durante la dictadura militar en Brasil (1964-1979)

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Abstract

This article analyses the political and educational actions of Vandick Londres da Nóbrega in the context of the Brazilian military dictatorship. He was a Latin teacher and principal of *Colégio Pedro II* between 1964 and 1979. His life trajectory is marked by the intense dissemination of his principles and political positions through books, newspaper articles, speeches, congress conferences, and his work in the *Conselho Federal de Educação* (Federal Education Council). These documents ground the discussion about the establishment of his conservative profile, dialoguing with the concepts of engaged intellectual and mediating intellectual. We highlight the fruitfulness of his written production to understand the maneuvers of negotiation and resistance he used in his professional trajectory during the dictatorial period.

Keywords: Vandick Londres da Nóbrega. Brazilian military dictatorship. History of Education.

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Resumo

Este artigo analisa a atuação política e educacional de Vandick Londres da Nóbrega no contexto da ditadura militar brasileira. Professor de Latim e Diretor do Colégio Pedro II no período de 1964 a 1979, a trajetória da personagem é marcada por intensa divulgação de seus princípios e posicionamentos políticos por meio de livros, matérias em jornais, discursos, conferências proferidas em congressos e a atuação no Conselho Federal de Educação. Tais documentos subsidiam a discussão sobre a constituição do perfil conservador desse sujeito, em diálogo com os conceitos de intelectual engajado e intelectual mediador. Destacamos a proficuidade de sua produção escrita para a compreensão das manobras de negociação e resistência assumidas ao longo de seu percurso profissional durante o período ditatorial.

Palavras chaves: Vandick Londres da Nóbrega. Ditadura militar brasileira. História da Educação.

Resumen

Este artículo analiza la actuación política y educativa de Vandick Londres da Nóbrega en el contexto de la dictadura militar brasileña. Profesor de latín y director del Colegio Pedro II en el período de 1964 a 1979, la trayectoria del personaje es marcada por intensa divulgación de sus principios y posicionamientos políticos por medio de libros, artículos en periódicos, discursos, conferencias proferidas en congresos y su actuación en el Consejo Federal de Educación. Tales documentos subsidian la discusión sobre la constitución del perfil conservador de este sujeto, en diálogo con los conceptos de *intelectual engajado* e *intelectual mediador*. Destacamos su producción escrita proficua para la comprensión de las maniobras de negociación y resistencia asumidas a lo largo de su carrera profesional durante el período dictatorial.

Palabras clave: Vandick Londres da Nóbrega. Dictadura militar brasileña. Historia de la educación.

Introduction

Professor Vandick Londres da Nóbrega (1918-1982) was a conservative intellectual who worked on various fronts throughout his professional career: he was an author of books, a teacher and professor, and Principal of *Colégio Pedro II*, as well as being a member of the *Conselho Federal de Educação* (CFE-Federal Education Council). At that institution, he was an advocate of Latin teaching and responsible for the curriculum adaptation according to the Act 5692/71, specifically the Vocational High School Education. The aim of this article is to analyse his work in the field of education during the military dictatorship, as an engaged intellectual. We will analyse some of the dimensions of his professional activity, finding the processes of accommodation and adaptation and the articulation with sociability networks, according to the different situations and needs. For this purpose, we will highlight his career as headmaster of *Colégio Pedro II* in Rio de Janeiro (1964-1979), a position that gave him prominence in the educational scene of the period and through which he made explicit the contradiction between his defence of humanist principles and an obligation to implement the vocational training imposed by the dictatorial regime. As a Latin teacher and defender of the humanism idea, he managed the curriculum adaptation of Act 5692/71 at *Colégio Pedro II*, arguing that the High School would set an example in vocational education (NÓBREGA, 1974).

Throughout History, the concept of intellectual² has always been fluid. Arising from the open letter proposed by Émile Zola when analysing the Dreyfus Affair between 1898 and 1899,³ this concept implies a symbolic power and a collective identity⁴. From the perspective of the social history of intellectuals, it assumes a polysemic character, changing according to the historical moment. Therefore, it is necessary to recognize "[...] that ideas do not walk naked down the street; that they are taken by men who belong to social groups" (SIRINELLI, 1996, p.257-258).

In his *doctorat d'Etat* thesis, defended in 1986, Jean-François Sirinelli points out two definitions for the term "intellectual", the first being comprehensive, which includes all subjects involved in activities related to writing and to cultural mediators; the second, more restricted, refers to the participation in public space, to interfere and seek contributions in collective decisions in political conduct⁵. These two dimensions of the term, according to Rebeca Gontijo, "(...) They are not mutually exclusive: both have a socio-cultural nature, which contributes to intellectuals having their activities recognized by their peers and by the society in which they live. This recognition legitimizes their intervention in the same society" (GONTIJO, 2005, p. 263).

Intellectual mediators and *Engaged intellectuals* are two criteria that must be historically contextualised, considering engagement as a historical construction that includes a chronology, metamorphoses, and interactions in specific circumstances. (ALVES, 2019).

Biographical studies on intellectuals in Brazil have been produced since the mid-19th century (VIEIRA, 2015), gaining new contours in line with the historiographical renewal at the end of the 20th century. Although there is a great diversity of studies and theoretical

² The 1960s and 1970s, with the so-called linguistic turn and the criticism of macrosocial and deterministic explanatory models, opened new possibilities for studies in the following decades, 1980/90, with new approaches, new methods, and challenges for the historiographical field, and with them, the study of intellectuals (CASTRO; HANSEN, 2016).

³ The "*J'accuse!*" manifest was published by Émile Zola in January 1898, and stood for the dissatisfactions of French society at that time; contributed to the social recognition of writers who were publicly in favour of reviewing the case that had sentenced to life imprisonment the Jewish officer accused of espionage.

⁴ Intellectuals would be a socio-professional category marked by their scientific vocation, in Weber's definition, or by the specialization of "cultural capital" and the "symbolic power" conferred on them, in Bourdieu's terms (CASTRO; HANSEN, 2016).

⁵ The author links the intellectual to political activity and gives politics a cultural dimension (SIRINELLI, 1998).

orientations, the role of intellectuals in relation to engagement in political struggles stands out. According to Bruno Bontempi Júnior (2019), in the History of Education, the research that mobilizes this concept tends to use prosopography and to establish dialogues with the New Cultural History and Pierre Bourdieu's Sociology (BONTEMPI JR., 2020). We can highlight the studies of Luciano Mendes de Faria Filho (2015), Clarice Nunes (2015) and Ana Waleska P. de Mendonça (2015).

According to Giroux (1997), we can consider teachers as intellectuals, when analysing the political and historical meanings of these teachers, when they are in central positions, and by the strategies they adopt in the classroom and in society in general. The teaching profession as a possibility of intellectuality can be analysed as a way of issuing educational ideas and situating them in the projects of society and education.

We propose to analyse the constitution of the conservative profile of an intellectual little known in the Brazilian educational scene⁶, despite his extensive performance in the dictatorial period. From Sirinelli, we looked to understand the professional career of Vandick Lopes da Nóbrega as a historical actor who was formed and self-constituted in the process of building networks of sociability and in dialogue with his generation, in circumstances of adherence and dissent. To do this, we analysed the *Microclimates*, that is, the power relations that cross these sociability networks, namely, the relations of friendship and sympathy, as well as rivalries and resentments that bring their members closer or further away (SIRINELLI, 1986, p.105).

We used as sources part of Vandick Lopes da Nóbrega's extensive production, consisting of books, transcribed conferences, articles in newspapers of his authorship and about his performance as Principal of *Colégio Pedro II*, as well as articles from the magazine *Documenta* and⁷ documents from the archive of the National Research System (SNI).⁸ This diversity of sources was selected because it represents the intellectual production written by the subject of this article, in different instances and approaches: as a reference author of books on Latin, education and politics; as a board member of the CFE; as a high school principal, in contrast to the sources of the SNI, who place him as being investigated for accusations of a fiscal, moral and political nature. The crossing of heterogeneous sources made it possible to problematize the profile of this intellectual in its complexity, in a dense way.

Vandick Londres da Nóbrega was born in the capital of *Parahyba do Norte*⁹, on February 10, 1918. He studied part of his secondary education at the *Liceu Paraibano*, where he was a student leader, completing his studies at the Pius X Diocesan College of the Marist Brothers. He graduated in Legal and Social Sciences from the Faculty of Law of Recife in 1939 (SNI, 1973). During his higher education, he was a member of the Academic Directory for three consecutive years and was elected its President in 1937 (JORNAL DO BRASIL, 1937, p.14) and 1938 (DOCUMENTA, 1965). In the same year that he completed the course, he was

⁶ Hauer (2007) mentions aspects of the subject's trajectory.

⁷ Monthly publication of the *Conselho Federal de Educação* (Federal Council of Education), during 1962 and 2006, having opinions on issues related to Federal and higher education courses. Vandick Nóbrega was a member of the Board from 1964 to 1972.

⁸ The National Intelligence Service (SNI) was conceived by General Golbery Couto e Silva and it was made official on June 13, 1964, from Act No. 4. 341, replacing the Federal Information and Counterintelligence Service (SFICI) of 1946, and by the National Security Doctrine (DSN). The SNI was supposed to be an intelligence agency, being a secret service that aimed to surpass the earlier one, having greater financial autonomy and opening regional agencies, without intermediaries between the Presidency of the Republic, in addition to the end of the submission of control by somebody of the Executive (MOTTA, 2014)

⁹ Currently State of *Paraíba*.

appointed Federal Inspector of Education in the¹⁰ State of Pernambuco, where he also worked as a Latin teacher. In 1941 he was transferred from Pernambuco to São Paulo by the Director of the National Department of Education, Professor Abgar Renault. Vandick da Nóbrega would later work with Renault at the Federal Council of Education and at the *Colégio Pedro II* (DOCUMENTA, 1965).

In 1942, Vandick began his activities at *Colégio Pedro II*, where he applied for and was approved in a competitive examination for the position of Latin teacher at the boarding school and was provisionally taken on as a teacher at the regular school (DOCUMENTA, 1965). In March 1945, he was appointed Professorship I at *Colégio Pedro II* (JORNAL DO BRASIL, 1945)¹¹, when he presented his thesis entitled *The Poetic Art of Horácio*¹². He was admitted as a professor of Roman Law at the University of Brazil in 1954 (JORNAL DO BRASIL, 1979), and as a Full Professor of Roman Law at the National Law School of the same university in the following year.

Vandick was a member of the National Textbook Commission from 1953, of which he became president in 1956. In August 1957 he was elected to the position of the National Council of Education and became effective in 1961 (DOCUMENTA, 1965).¹³ In 1963, he was elected a member of the Institute of Brazilian Lawyers¹⁴.

During the government of João Goulart (1961-1964), Vandick da Nóbrega went into self-exile in Germany, claiming that he did not agree with the policy of the new government (JORNAL DO BRASIL, 1979, p. 14). With this statement, he positioned himself in favour of the earlier government, of Jânio Quadros, with whom he was a friend and in whose electoral campaign he took part, through the *Movimento Popular Jânio Quadros*. During his self-exile, he attended conferences and taught Roman law at the Free University of Berlin. In March 1964, President Humberto de A. Castello Branco invited him to the post of Director of the Pedro II Boarding School (idem). He was appointed a member of the *Conselho Federal de Educação* (Federal Education Council) by the President of the Republic in September of that year (DOCUMENTA, 1965), serving on the commission appointed to investigate acts of corruption and subversion in the Ministry of Education and Culture (NÓBREGA, 1975). He became an effective Counsellor in January 1966, staying until March 1972. In 1976, he joined ARENA, at the invitation of Admiral Heleno Nunes, President of the party, and at the request of President Geisel (NÓBREGA; CORREIA, 1976).

¹⁰ He was appointed on an interim basis and on commission as an inspector of a secondary school in Pernambuco (JORNAL DO BRASIL, 1939, p. 5). School inspectors had the function of supervising the functioning of schools, the enrolment and attendance of students and teachers (MARTELLI, 1972). Decree 19.890/31 determined the appointment of school inspectors through a public examination and the candidate had to be Brazilian, between 22 and 35 years of age, present a certificate of moral suitability and prove approval in all subjects of the secondary course, which would be replaced if the candidate presented a special certificate of studies at the Faculty of Education, Sciences and Letters (EVANGELISTA, 2002).

¹¹ According to Soares (2015), Vandick da Nóbrega was the only case in which a teacher reached the professorship without first having been a teacher at any other level at *Colégio Pedro II*, between 1925 and 1945. Furthermore, he became director of the boarding school three years after his appointment as professor, a period considered to be brief. The position of professorship was a lifetime appointment, as he was a specialist in a particular area of knowledge. He had to pass a competitive examination and be appointed by the Minister of Education.

¹² In the competition in which he was approved, two Latin vacancies were reserved for the Boarding School, but only he took office. It was not until 1950 that the other vacancy was filled.

¹³ Act No. 4,024/61 created the *Conselho Federal de Educação* (Federal Council of Education) and the State Councils of Education (Act No. 4,024, dated 12/20/1961)

¹⁴ The IAB was created on August 7, 1843, by authorization of the Minister of State for Justice, Honório Hermeto Carneiro Leão.

On April 4, 1979, denounced for involvement in acts of corruption and illicit use of public resources, Vandick da Nóbrega was dismissed from the direction of *Colégio Pedro II*, by the President João Baptista Figueiredo, at the age of 61 (JORNAL DO BRASIL, 1979, p. 25).

Considering this diversity of actions over a period of decades, Vandick's political and educational performance will be analysed from the following axes: his position in relation to the dictatorial regime that began in 1964; his participation in the CFE; and finally, his actions around the educational reform of 1971 at *Colégio Pedro II*.

The Revolution of 1964 – apology and dissent

Throughout the years 1964 to 1979, Vandick da Nobrega positioned himself in favour of the military regime at various times, by different means, such as in the books and newspaper articles he wrote, in the speeches and ordinances produced during his time at the CFE and as Principal of *Colégio Pedro II*. In this process, he built his networks of sociability, showing the marks of his conservatism. One of them is the fact that he called the coup and the military regime as the "Democratic Movement of March 1964", or the "revolution", as he did when he gave his inaugural speech at the *Conselho Federal de Educação* (CFE-Federal Education Council) in 1964:

For the Revolution to go further, for the good of Brazil, leaving behind the inquisitorial aspect, it is necessary that educators actively participate in this work of sanitation and the launch of guidelines that are not based on nonsense or demagoguery. It is regrettable that we have not yet reached sufficient political maturity to prevent the intervention of military forces, in the performance of a constitutional duty, so that our democratic institutions are preserved. (...) Surgery was performed to prevent the disease from spreading, but now, when the sick man is convalescing, true patriots must help him to recover completely and to regain the vigour with which he was before he was stricken by the threatening virus. The Revolution of March 31 was not made to suppress freedom and place the arbitrary above the law, but to re-establish the rule of law and order (DOCUMENTA, nº 30, 1964, p. 15).

He told his support for the dictatorial regime, seeing it as a "necessary evil" to re-establish "law and order". And in another prominent situation on the political and educational scene, in his speech to the President of Germany (during his visit to Brazil in 1964), Vandick da Nóbrega expressed his support for the government once again, emphasising the affinities between the two countries:

With the current government under the leadership of President Castelo Branco, we have freed ourselves from the evils of a totalitarian regime that would appear under the aegis of the same experts who dominate, by force, part of the territory of indivisible Germany. The provisional suspension, admitted in the Constitution of the Republic, of the political rights of some demonstrably committed to the rebellion articulated to overthrow the democratic regime was the only adequate remedy to preserve the freedom of most of the Brazilian people. (...) The three words, which appear on

the emblem of the Free University of Berlin, are also incorporated into the moral patrimony of this University: *veritas, justitia, libertas*. And we can go further by saying that they summarize the orientation of the current government of Brazil, which, through acts and with the moral authority of those who constitute it, saved the legal order and the democratic regime (SNI, 1964, n.p.).

Vandick's advocacy of the regime, and particularly his explicit support for President Castello Branco, can be traced back to the recent favour he had granted him by appointing him to the post of Director of the Pedro II Boarding School. At the time, the president had mentioned that the position of Director of the Boarding School was "below" what Vandick deserved, and that when a vacancy arose for the *Conselho Federal de Educação* (CFE- Federal Education Council), he would be the nominee, as indeed he was (JORNAL DO BRASIL, 1979, p. 14).

This declared support for the dictatorial regime remains constant: at the plenary meeting of the CFE, on April 18, 1966, Vandick da Nóbrega comments on the 2nd anniversary of the *Democratic Revolution on March 31*, with the approval of the following motion: "To express recognition of the effort made by President Humberto de Alencar Castello Branco in the performance of his enormous mission; confidence and hope in its performance aimed at leading the country to its great destiny as a democratic and free nation" (SNI, 1973, p.2). It should be noted that in the following year, 1967, Vandick became Principal of *Colégio Pedro II*, the position he coveted in that institution.

In 1975, the Principal of *Colégio Pedro II* continued to praise the regime, by issuing a circular commemorating the 10th anniversary of March 31, 1964, "considered the great significance of the Democratic Movement". On that occasion, he gave a speech that was transcribed in the newspaper *Diário de Notícias* in which he states that "March 31 is a milestone in our history, which should be pointed out as the beginning of a phase of progress, responsibility, tranquillity and security" (DIÁRIO DE NOTÍCIAS, 1975, p. 8).

In his books published 10 years after the coup and after the start of his activities at *Colégio Pedro II*, he still made his adherence to the dictatorial government explicit, building counterpoints to the "chaotic" past and emphasising the population's support for the regime, as in the following excerpt from the 1975 book *A energia nuclear e seus cavalos de troia* (in free translation "Nuclear energy and its Trojan horses"):

The chaotic situation to which our country was led after the regrettable resignation of Jânio Quadros marked the end of a sad era and the beginning of a new goal, defended by civilians and military who, taking advantage of the lessons of the past, decided to establish and defend a form of development which must be carried out in a planned manner and placing above all the supreme interests of the Nation, to the detriment of the strengthening of economic groups or very personal interests (NÓBREGA, 1975, p. 22).

In another work published in 1977, entitled *1964: segurança e Defesa do Brasil* (in free translation "1964: Brazil's security and defence") he states: "there would be no need to ask if there was salvation for Brazil, because the security designed for the preservation of the regime assures it this defense" (NÓBREGA, 1977, p. 18). According to him, the book was the way he found to enhance the image of the "Democratic Movement" against those who tried to disfigure Brazil's image abroad. For the author, censorship did not exist, but rather the control of sensationalism in the society, being, therefore, beneficial to the youth and to the rest of the population. In addition, according to Vandick, it was necessary to have a connection with the

faith and the support of the Catholic Church, since Brazil was not developed and did not have political preparation for the "Democratic Movement" to be successful, as in other countries.

Being the Principal of a secondary school, and being in contact with the youth, his position also encompassed the concern for the new generations who, according to him, had the immaturity and vigour, potential elements for the establishment of communist totalitarianism:

It is necessary to guard and warn our young students not to allow themselves to be ensnared by the cunning artifices of the eternal and universal enemies of democracy, but who make use of it and allude to it as false defenders of aspirations, which never make proportionate to the people in the countries where the totalitarian dictatorship of communism has succeeded in being implanted. These are the Trojan horses placed on our territory at the service of spurious ideologies and foreign powers, although they use a language that allows them to pass as nationalists. They are not interested in the normal functioning of our democratic institutions, and so they try to disrupt the environment in many ways by surreptitiously penetrating every sector in which they manage to drive a wedge. The youth has been one of the sectors preferred by them, because the vigour of young people, who allow themselves to be catechized, is one of the most effective weapons to carry out the plan outlined. However, Brazil progressed thanks to the governmental policy of the governments after March 31, 1964, they already imposed themselves on the world as a power (DIÁRIO DE NOTÍCIA, 1975, ed. 16264, p. 8).

The "Trojan horses" to which Vandick refers are related to the diplomatic relations set up between the government and the USSR, due to commercial interests with the socialist bloc, which generated discontent and criticism from the extreme right (MOTTA, 2010). This openness extended to the permissiveness of cultural activities of Soviet origin (cinema, literature), in addition to the formalization of exchanges for Brazilian students to go to Soviet universities (MOTTA, 2007). The Greek metaphor seems proper, given that, in a later speech, Vandick takes up the communist threat with a focus on youth, admitting the success of these tactics among young people.

The instrument they use for the attainment of their supreme goal has lately been youth. They avail themselves of the great fountain of idealism of the young and the natural force of their impulses to indoctrinate and try to instil in their minds that the delights of paradise, which Adam and Eve did not know how to preserve, will be assured to them with the implantation of communism. Unfortunately, **they have been able to** [...] (JORNAL DO BRASIL, 1976, ed. 00354, p. 3 [emphasis added]).

As Rodrigo Motta (2020) points out, the imaginary that the strength of the communist enemy was present among the students predates the coup, and even though there were political and economic interests involved, the fear was effective, which is why the discourse of combat would have been persistent. There were, therefore, the moderate conservative sectors, from which Vandick distanced himself since he admitted the need for repressive control and declared fear of keeping relations with socialist countries.

The defense of the regime also took on a personalistic tone, when Vandick publicly praised the presidents, as mentioned above, but also when he defended them from criticism. An example of this is the response to the columnist of the *Jornal do Brasil*, J. C. de Macedo Soares Guimarães who, in an opinion piece, criticized the government of President Geisel. Vandick da Nóbrega authored the article "We are in a hurry, yes, Mr. Guimarães" published in the *Correio Brasiliense* on July 20, 1976, in defence of President Geisel's acts. Analysing point by point the criticism of the president, Vandick says: "we consider the orientation that **President Geisel** has been giving to the direction of the state's affairs to be correct and deserving of the support of all Brazilians." (DSI, 1976 [emphasis in original]). In relation to education, he says that the criticisms were disconnected, that he would have reasons to disagree with the implementation of the Education Reforms, but recognizes the improvements obtained with the new Law 5.692/71. For Vandick, the haste only led to negative results, as in the case of the obligation to "implement a vocational education without the necessary resources and instruments, an orientation for which the current Government is not responsible" (ARQUIVO NACIONAL, 1976). Thus, he suggested that the problems in the implementation of vocational education in the second grade were the responsibility of the government at the time of the reform, possibly a criticism of the President Medici. Vandick continued, "We are convinced that we live under the aegis of the law, under a regime that it was necessary to adopt to prevent the debacle [...] of communist totalitarianism" (NATIONAL ARCHIVES, 1976).

Nóbrega published an ordinance in 1977 to commemorate three years of the Geisel government. A student was chosen by the board to repeat the following speech, published in the *Jornal do Brasil*:

We, the students of *Colégio Pedro II*, consider the President of the Federative Republic of Brazil, Army General Ernesto Geisel, to express our gratitude to him, which is also that of the Brazilian people, on the occasion of the third anniversary of his Government, in view of the serene, firm, courageous and patriotic conduct with which he has been able to face the multiple and complex problems submitted to his decision. May Almighty God and the light of the Holy Spirit continue to inspire you so that, in the future, you will pursue with the same attitudes with which you have been able to honour, defend and elevate the concept of a common homeland, for which we will give, if necessary, our lives. To His Excellency, our President and to all the high helpers who make up your Government team, as well as to your most worthy family, we proclaim that you have the full support and solidarity of the youth of this college, whose roots already exceed two centuries of existence, we express our sincere thanks, fully justified, for the much you have done in the defence of our country and for the integrity of an independent nation, demonstrating that he has been able to honour, with recent attitudes of a great Head of State, similar to those with which our Homeland began to dictate the norms of its destiny without any concern for hegemony or expansionism, but with the firmness of never renouncing the prerogatives arising from the self-determination of peoples (JORNAL DO BRASIL, 1977, p. 6).

The involvement of students in the praise of the government was criticized by the newspaper itself. In that same edition, the articulator Ricardo Mello said that, at *Colégio Pedro II*, adolescents who studied would not be responsible for the relationship between the Director and President Geisel, and would be "anti-didactic flattery", the responsibility of Vandick da Nóbrega, and that "it was not by reading panegyrics that generations were formed". Reinforcing

this criticism, Hersyl Castello Branco de Pereira Franco¹⁵, another reader, rejected the action of the principal, according to which he forced students to repeat what they might not share, recalling Hitler's mass salutes (JORNAL DO BRASIL, 1977, p. 10).

Vandick da Nóbrega's right of reply was published in the *Jornal do Brasil*, granted by decision of the 15th Criminal Court. He justified that he took advantage of significant dates to mark the main achievements of the government, and that the head of the nation would know very well how to distinguish the sycophants from those who did it out of conviction of the civic act¹⁶.

Despite his seemingly consistent public stance of supporting the dictatorial government for more than a decade, it is possible to find contradictions in Vandick da Nóbrega's actions that became visible after the investigations conducted by the *Serviço Nacional de Informações* (National Intelligence Service). Although these are controversial and debatable accusations, due to the very nature of the source, it is possible to see the relations of "friendships and enmities" of Principal Vandick da Nóbrega.

As President of the MEC Commission of Inquiry, appointed by Minister Suplicy, Vandick da Nóbrega analysed the case of UnB (Brasilia University), acquitted all those accused of corruption and subversion of that institution, with no punishment and in all votes of the investigation.

When the late President Castelo Branco entrusted us with the arduous mission of chairing the Commission of Inquiry to investigate irregularities in the MEC, we knew how to conduct ourselves with dignity and fairness, since we indicted all those who had practiced, in the exercise of office, an act of political proselytise, subversion or corruption, but we did not take away from any of the nominees the sacred right of defence. And even considerable amounts, belonging to the State, we collected from a private bank account, as can be attested by the then colonel who stood for the National Security Council in Guanabara and today Head of the SNI, to whom we presented the holder of this amount (NÓBREGA; CORREIA, 1976, p.77).

In a later interview, Vandick da Nóbrega points out that, in this commission, he was able to prevent injustices such as in the case of Professor Maria Ieda Linhares and kept personal contact with Figueiredo, future president and responsible for his dismissal from *Colégio Pedro II*, when Figueiredo was still working at the National Information Service (SNI).

In addition, the investigations point to several actions, since 1966, that involved the defence of students, both from *Colégio Pedro II* and from the National Faculty of Law (FND) of the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, where he was a professor: the permission of students to leave the boarding school to participate in protests, the reception of "subversive elements" in the College in 1969, without punishment occurring; the non-attendance in class and participation in a strike in support of FND students, support for the Cândido Oliveira Academic Centre (CACO), of that Faculty, and the alleged strengthening of ties with the Reform Party, the CACO election ticket (SNI, 1973).

We can also see the relationships of "friendships and enmities" established by Vandick at the FND when his name was withheld from a Commission of Inquiry because the professors

¹⁵ According to the reader's statements, Vandick da Nóbrega accused him of writing articles that attacked the post-1964 government when he, Hersyl Castello Branco de Pereira Franco, was Consul in Boston. *Jornal do Brasil*, ed. 00009, April 17, 1977. Letters: Pedro II, p. 10.

¹⁶ According to the Newspaper, this publication had already taken place in the Readers' Letter, in the March 5 edition. *Jornal do Brasil*, ed. 00041, May 19, 1977. JB Report, p.6.

said he was in favour of JANGUISTA's "reforms", but, according to the DSI/MEC document (SNI, 1973), this could not be confirmed. In any case, his cycles of friendships and enmities within the FND are clear when, in 1967, he was chosen Patron of the FND class, but did not attend the Graduation Ceremony because he did not agree with the election of the principal of the same school, of which he was Commencement speaker of the Class.

When invited to a CACO assembly on 6 August 1968, he said of Education Minister Tarso Dutra:

A man lost in a desert, with no ability to administer any Ministry, who gave the impression of a tired horse¹⁷. The government was bad at everything, it was a surrenderer. That neither the Minister of Education nor the Government had the capacity to make any improvement in the educational field (SNI, 1973).

During this same period, Vandick was removed from the commission that would draft the university reform. In the Federal Council of Education, other actions also indicated a possible connivance with the alleged "subversives", according to an investigation by the SNI, such as in 1969, in the process in which, as a Counsellor, he won the case for the student Marcelo Figueiredo de Almeida¹⁸, from UFRJ, without listening to university officials, and was therefore sought out by three university professors (SNI, 1973).

Therefore, it is possible to perceive his "movement" in the networks of sociability according to his interests, his interlocutors, and his needs. His rapprochement with the students took place at the same time as his public support for the dictatorial government, and intensified when he lost power in influential political spaces, such as the CFE. In the circle with the students, he supported them, even criticising Minister Tarso Dutra. At other times, he praised President Geisel, whose mandate was from 1974 to 1979, a period in which he had already left the CFE, had investigations linked to his name in the administration of the *Colégio*, which led to his dismissal in 1979¹⁹.

Acting in the *Conselho Federal de Educação* (CFE-Federal Council of Education)

Vandick da Nóbrega was sworn in on July 29, 1964²⁰ as an interim member of the *Conselho Federal de Educação* (CFE-Federal Council of Education), due to the impediment of Counsellor Dom Helder Câmara (DOCUMENTA, 1964).²¹ In his inaugural speech, he thanked the Council for coming back, which he had already taken part in when it was still the *Conselho Nacional de Educação* (National Education Council) in 1961; he mentioned the important role of the *Lei de Diretrizes e Bases da Educação* (LDB-Law on Education Guidelines and Bases) and said he understood its importance and that of the Council in the phase of "re-democratisation of our homeland":

¹⁷ This was the same image passed on by *Veja Magazine*, according to a study by Motta (2014). The report classified the minister as unfit for the job and more concerned with his electoral bases, than facing the problems of the Education portfolio.

¹⁸ The student was expelled from UFRJ and when he went through the Council, his enrolment was redone, without listening to the professors and employees about the case.

¹⁹ Director Vandick Londres da Nóbrega was investigated several times by the SNI: 1970, about irregularities at UFRJ, as a professor. In 1971 on his political tendencies; in 1972, for irregular hiring of professors for *Colégio Pedro II* without competitive examination and on the Faculty of International Relations, of which he was a partner; in 1973 a survey was made of his life; in 1975, about an alleged love affair with a student, corruption, influence peddling and favouring friends and teachers.

²⁰ Documenta No. 29, September 1964.

²¹ Retired to assume the Bishopric of Olinda, Pernambuco.

In the last months that preceded the Democratic Revolution of March 31, the activities carried out in certain sectors of the Ministry of Education can serve as a point of reference for tomorrow the impartial historian to analyse the path taken by the supreme government authorities and where we would have already plunged if it were not for the patriotic attitude of those who avoid, at the last moment, the complete extinction of all freedoms. The Ministry of Education was one of the preferred fields for the creation of a climate of insubordination, confusion, and hostility to the hierarchy of laws. Ministerial ordinances cunningly drawn up, after judicious examination by this Council, which recommended their revision, were revoked by the Government set up after March 31. [...] The performance of the thorny mission, entrusted to us by the current government, allowed us to better assess what was being done in the MEC. [...] the assault carried out at the Ministry of Education was not, as a rule, carried out by those who already worked here, but by a wave of adventitious people. [...] It should be noted that at that time the independent voice of the illustrious Counsellor Abgar Renault was heard when it was intended to denounce the agreement signed between Brazil and the United States for the improvement of our primary education (DOCUMENTA, 1964, n° 30, pp. 15-16).

The CFE played an important role during the dictatorial period, responsible for the elaboration of the doctrine of the curriculum for all levels of education (MARTINS, 2000). The function of the body was to standardize the studies of 1st and 2nd grade education and to prepare opinions on various aspects of education. The opinions were prepared by the councillors and discussed in the Teaching Chamber and, after being approved, were sent to the Executive Plenary with all the councillors.

Among the various opinions prepared by Vandick da Nóbrega in the *Conselho Federal de Educação* (Federal Council of Education), some stand out, such as the investigation carried out at the University of Brasília to check allegations of corruption (SNI, 1973). In 1965, when he chaired the Commission of Inquiry of the Ministry of Education, appointed by Minister Suplicy, Vandick da Nóbrega analysed the case of UnB, acquitting all those accused of corruption and subversion of that institution, and no punishment was carried out (SNI, 1973).

In the *Readers' Letters* section, in response to an article in the *Jornal do Brasil* about the episode at UnB, Vandick da Nóbrega stated that the Rector of UnB was complying with the LDB- Law of Guidelines and Bases of Education, and criticized the publications in newspapers that accused the University of Brasília of being a "den of corrupt, corruptors, agitators and subversives" (JORNAL DO BRASIL, 1965, p. 6). The defence of UnB was apparently related to the proximity to professors at the institution, such as Mário de Sousa Lima, according to an investigation by the SNI.

Vandick was appointed in 1968 as a member of the Working Group set up by Decree 63.422 of 14 October 1968 (BRASIL, 1968) to analyse the increase in enrolments in higher education²². He was elected president of the group to carry out a complete survey of the situation of university education. In 1969 he was appointed by the Governing Board, with Professor Maria Terezinha Tourinho Saraiva, to join the Working Group to elaborate the Reform of Primary and Secondary Education in the Country (SNI, 1973).

²² The group should be made up of representatives from the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Ministry of Planning and General Coordination, the *Conselho Federal de Educação* (Federal Council of Education), the Council of Rectors, and experts. The purpose was to study, within thirty days, the increase of places in the universities.

The report of this Working Group was delivered to the Minister of Education, Jarbas Passarinho, in December of that year. For the elaboration of the Project, a smaller group was formed, from which Vandick da Nóbrega was excluded. At that time, there was a discussion between humanistic education and more scientific education, which debated the need to expand secondary education from the perspective of training the elites or more focused on the labour market. As the director made clear, humanistic teaching, in his understanding, was essential for the formation of the human being²³. It is possible that Vandick da Nóbrega was excluded from the second formation of the Reform working group because he did not agree with the withdrawal of teaching humanistic disciplines, such as Latin and Greek. In the introduction to the book *Gramática histórica para o 2º grau e vestibulares* (in free translation Historical grammar for high school and university entrance exams), published in 1972, by the authors Dolores Garcia Carvalho and Manoel Nascimento, he emphasised that, during the extinction of Latin in the high school and collegiate curricula, "those responsible for setting national education guidelines, in the name of a hypothetical freedom, profoundly harmed the classical teachings" (CARVALHO; NASCIMENTO, 1972, n.p.).

Instead, a memo nº 628/72 was sent by Vandick to the Director of the National Intelligence Service (SNI) on 30 October 1972, asking for clarification on the veto of his name for reappointment to the *Conselho Federal de Educação* (Federal Education Council), because even though there were three vacancies, he was not reappointed. In this letter, Vandick extolled his attitudes in the fight against subversion and corruption, saying that no one could doubt his ideological position. He elaborated a history with his main contributions to the CFE, emphasizing his commitment to overseeing and combating fraud, his participation as Chairman of the CFE's Legislation and Standards Committee. To this end, it gathered about 200 opinions reported by him. Even after his arguments, he was not reappointed to the position (SNI, 1972).

Maria do Carmo Martins (2000) states that one of the roles of the CFE was to legitimize the forms of domination of the authoritarian regime, in the maintenance of public order. The reforms legitimized the State, through Opinions and Indications, which "create a formal rationality, standardize and seek to establish the rules of social behaviour, in this case, in the area of Education" (MARTINS, 2000, p. 55). Having the name of Vandick da Nóbrega in these documents could raise doubts about the character of the Council itself, since the Principal was accused and investigated several times by the SNI. The Counsellors formed the elite of the Brazilian educational system, and their decision-making power gave de facto power to the representatives. Thus, there was a concern to keep in the body a collegiate body with technical competence, but with less power than the Ministry (MARTINS, 2000). Vandick da Nóbrega publicly showed his support for the government, but also relativized some decisions in the opposite direction to that proposed by the regime, which in other situations had also caused the removal of other councillors²⁴.

Reform: Between humanism and professionalisation

We found 32 books authored by Vandick da Nóbrega, including Latin and Latin textbooks²⁵, on Roman Culture, Roman Law, Youth, Education, and Politics. In the books on

²³ In the curricular reform of 1951, Vandick da Nóbrega presented a letter so that the commission created for the decongestion of secondary education programs would have in its formation representatives of the Congregation of *Colégio Pedro II*. Thus, the professors could organize the programs, since they had lost this right (RIBEIRO JÚNIOR; MARTINS, 2018).

²⁴ Motta (2014, p. 112) highlights the case of a member of the CFE, Dumerval Trigueiro Mendes, who was retired from AI-10 in 1969. The UFPB professor was removed from the CFE for opposing the proliferation of isolated schools and criticizing the government's educational policy, including the creation of the discipline of Moral and Civic Education.

²⁵ We catalogued 20 books on the subject.

Latin and Roman Culture, the main contrast in the constitution of this conservative intellectual can be found - in favour of a humanistic education in a context of the dissemination of the technical nature of education. Textbooks can be sources of studies on the processes of knowledge construction associated with the school world (GASPARELLO, 2011), so it is extremely relevant to identify that, since the beginning of his career as a teacher, Vandick da Nóbrega has published books on the teaching of Latin in the middle school and in the College, in accordance with the current norm by the s on the subject. However, during his years at the head of *Colégio Pedro II*, he had to adapt the curriculum according to a law that reduced the workload of these disciplines and general education, expanding the professional disciplines. To demonstrate support for the government's proposal, he stated that the *Colégio Pedro II* would be a reference in Brazil in the implementation of the Reform established 1971 Law, which generated a contradiction in what was defended by the Principal as a teaching reference, humanism, and what was led to implement.

In 1948, in his book *Humanismo e Educação* [Humanism and Education], Vandick da Nóbrega analysed the advantages of humanism in the high school curriculum, because, according to him, without the humanistic training, study would be incomplete. In *A presença do Latim* (The Presence of Latin) published in 1962, the same author made explicit his position on the teaching of Latin, which would be present in most everyday relationships:

In almost all the words we use to convey our thoughts; in customs, which we have inherited from our forefathers; in the literary works of those authors, who have served as a source of inspiration to the great geniuses of mankind in all times; in the legal system, which governs our life in society; in the spirit of Latinity, which constitutes an invisible but real, with the purpose of bringing together and keeping the Nations together, which the beneficent sap of imperishable Rome so well knew how to shape; in the essence and in the Law of the Civilization to which we belong; in the blood, which runs through our veins (NÓBREGA, 1962, p. 15).

During the period from 1945 to 1964 there was an expansion of public education in Brazil, especially secondary education. According to Rosa Fátima de Souza (2009), from the discussions on the LDB - Law of Guidelines and Bases of Education, which began to be processed in 1948, issues such as the purposes of this branch of education, the inclusion of practical disciplines in the middle school, the methodological renewal and curricular flexibility, were guided. In this sense, the theme of humanism was present in the educational affairs of the 40s and 50s of that centuries. After the two world wars, the development of science and technology, as well as economic and social issues, caused the general principles of the teaching of the humanities to be questioned. From the 1940s onwards, the discussion on humanism, according to Souza (2009, p. 85), was guided by the debate between literary and scientific culture in the secondary education curriculum, and in the "horizon of this debate was the democratization of secondary education and its renewal, including technical-professional training". In the LDB of 1961, Latin became an optional subject in the secondary school curriculum.

For Vandick da Nóbrega, the campaign that was taking place at that time against the presence of Latin in the school curriculum, with the publication of LDB/61, was an "attack against ourselves, against everything that is most dear to us, because it affects the spirit: - it is the preliminary phase of a crime against culture" (NÓBREGA, 1962, p. 15). Other defenders of Latin also spoke out in his defence, such as the Latinist Ernesto Faria, whose death would have been a consequence of indignation at the treatment given to Latin in the curriculum. According to Rosalvo do Valle, (...) "The violent protest, which he had begun to write in the

morning at home, was little more than a page long. The great defender of classical studies and humanistic training died with Latin." (VALLE, 2006, p. 22 apud SOBRINHO, 2013, p. 25)

In the book *the presence of Latin* (1962), written at the request of the Director of INEP Anísio Teixeira, who would become Vandick da Nóbrega's companion in the *Conselho Federal de Educação* (Federal Council of Education), the Director said that the great enemies that led to the removal of Latin as a compulsory subject would be the teachers:

It is the teachers themselves who mummify Latin and do not know how to awaken in their disciples the beauties and virtues of language and civilization, which Rome bequeathed to the world; they are those who teach without souls; they are the ones that do not lead the students to read and feel; without the aid of a dictionary or any other foreign means, the thought of a Latin author; they are the ones who have the translation memorized; they are the ones who only know how to translate by dissecting the elements of the sentence, just as a master of anatomy would do in front of an inert corpse; they are the ones who do not convince the inexperienced young people of the evils of the so-called "donkeys"; They are the ones who, imbued with a false conception of goodness, commit the crime of approving candidates without the minimum knowledge of the subject corresponding to the series. These are the greatest enemies of classical culture because they have only succeeded in making the disciples learn to detest Latin! (NÓBREGA, 1962, p. 17)

According to Vandick da Nóbrega, to solve the problem of students not liking Latin, legislators suppressed their teaching of the basic laws of secondary school, filling these gaps with technical teachings - "the adolescent of today and the man of tomorrow would be better able to meet the demands of the progress of contemporary life. It is pure illusion, because the substitution adopted may serve, at most, to form man-machines, but not man-men" (NÓBREGA, 1962, p. 18). For Vandick, in addition to the contact with ancient authors, the study of Latin in secondary schools was what formed in the minds of the students the conditions for higher education. His proposal was that the student should have the subject in the last five years of the seven mandatory years, through a rational and scientific method.

Vandick argued that being a humanist did not mean being against science, nor belonging to the past, and it would be a mistake to think that humanism would cease to exist when technology began. For the professor, it had already been proven that technique without spirit was a weapon against the very man who developed it. He exemplified this statement by problematizing that the comfort of contemporary life, with radio, television, and cinema, when not used rationally, did not develop individual qualities, in addition to expanding atomic bombs. Humanism was the overall formation of man, thus constituting his judgment and his personality, by nourishing the spirit:

Our thesis consists in proclaiming the necessity of creating, in a preliminary way, a proper terrain so that, based on it, scientific knowledge can be treated and developed. And the teaching of Latin contributes extraordinarily to the better preparation of this terrain (NÓBREGA, 1962, p. 35).

Discussions about the defence of humanistic or technical education ended in 1971, when Act 5.692/71 was passed in 1971, which set up the reform of Basic Education and changed the school system. The 1st grade, which lasted eight years, unified the primary school and the middle school with the elimination of entrance exams to the middle school. To replace high school, a terminal vocational high school was created (SAVIANI, 1996). The curriculum should have a common core, reorganised into areas of knowledge, prescribed by the *Conselho Federal de Educação* (Federal Education Council). In addition, the diversified part, the responsibility of the State Education Councils, would be linked to the specificities of local and their cultural and regional diversities.

In relation to Act No. 5,692/71, it is possible to see that Vandick da Nóbrega (who assumed the position of Principal of *Colégio Pedro II* in 1967) was reticent about the application of vocational education. In 1971, he proposed an amendment to the CFE recommending that the introduction of vocational education in official establishments should be conditional on the granting of the necessary resources for the installation of workshops. The amendment was rejected by the Council.

Even though he was against his convictions, the Director publicly affirmed that the *Colégio Pedro II* would be the model school for the new professionalisation system. This statement is in his book, *Ensino Planificado e Educação Comparada* ("Planned Teaching and Comparative Education", 1974), in which he analyses the implementation of the law in the early years at *Colégio Pedro II* and compares it with education systems in other European countries:

The CPII, because it has always stood out for the practice of humanistic study, is unjustly qualified by some as reactionary, precisely in order not to give a pretext to those who do so, we made a point of acting in such a way that it would be the first in the application of the Reform (NÓBREGA, 1974, p. 81)

After the Law was enacted in 1971, the principal met with the Departmental Council, and it was agreed that the reform would take place gradually. From that two commissions were set up to draw up a plan for the implementation of teaching in the 5th grade of the Primary School (5ª série do 1º grau)²⁶ and the 1st grade of the high school (1ª série do 2º grau)²⁷, aiming mainly at the pedagogical aspect, such as curricular change. It also dealt with the material measures necessary for the immediate operation of the 1st grade of High School in the following year, 1972. Through ordinance no. 5, of 15 February 1971, "Pedro II adapts to the Teaching Reforms", a commission was created to adapt the school curriculum to the reforms of secondary and higher education (NÓBREGA, 1974, p. 81).

The results of the Commissions were presented to the *Conselho Federal de Educação* (Federal Council of Education) in 1971, with the elaboration of the defined curricula, according to General João Bina Machado, quoted by Nóbrega:

In preparing its curricula, the CPII was careful to try to circumvent the consequences resulting from the reduction of weekly hours of the disciplines considered to be of "General Education", which suffered a sharp reduction so that, in compliance with the legal imperative, the professional disciplines were introduced, with a greater weekly workload. For this reason, curricula were organized that, in addition to providing

²⁶ The former 1st grade of the middle school (*Ginásio*) corresponds to the 5th grade of Primary School.

²⁷ The school did not have the first four grades of the Primary School.

professional qualifications [...] as decided by law, teach, with greater development, the teaching of the subjects required in the respective entrance exams (NÓBREGA, 1974, p. 82).

In Nóbrega's book, there is a subtle criticism of the new structure proposed, which valued professional subjects and not the search for integral knowledge. According to Nóbrega (1974), other principals should be careful not to contribute to the development of what are known as preparatory courses or pre-university entrance exams, if care was not taken in the elaboration of the curricula, since the disciplines known as *General Education* lost half of their hours, which were previously 21 hours per week. Nóbrega (1974) said that this aspect would have been very well circumvented at *Colégio Pedro II*, at least in relation to language teaching, which was not unnoticed by the Opinion of the *Conselho Federal de Educação* (Federal Council of Education). According to the director, the College had never been opposed to the teaching of the "hard sciences", but the cultural formation of man should not be underestimated, based on the development of his spiritual tendencies:

Colégio Pedro II, faithful to its trajectory of more than two centuries and to its tradition, based on the study of the humanities, could never pretend to be in an anachronistic position. Precisely because it follows the normal evolution of the times, it recognizes the benefits arising from the study of the sciences and, in this case, of the professional disciplines, supported by the aforementioned warning of Bertrand Russell, it has organized, strictly within the legal norms, its curricula, in which the superiority of hours attributed to the subjects of special training will be tempered by the teaching of disciplines that directly contribute to making man more spirit than matter. And by doing so, we will not be contributing to the realization of the gloomy fear of the English philosopher, when he admitted the destruction of humanity, victim of the lack of wisdom in the application of the extraordinary scientific knowledge acquired. On the contrary, it only moves us with the purpose of collaborating and contributing so that young people, at the end of their courses, leave here not only qualified to exercise a profession, but mainly endowed with a spiritual formation, which enables them to recognize that they were created in the image and likeness of God (NÓBREGA, 1974, pp. 83-84).

Vandick da Nóbrega emphasised his opposition to the removal of Latin from the secondary curriculum and criticised the technical teaching, turning to technological developments, which he considered to be the end of humanism. In any case, seeking to build a conciliatory position, in his book entitled *O Tomismo é incompatível com o Marxismo* (Thomism is incompatible with Marxism) published in 1976, Vandick da Nóbrega defended the government:

Why is our youth being betrayed? Is it because the Government, for the first time in history, is taking the cancer of illiteracy seriously? Why are many facilities being provided to our young people for professionalization and for the training of technicians? (NÓBREGA; CORREIA, 1976, p. 78).

Amid controversies and contrary to its principles, vocational training ended up being set up at *Colégio Pedro II*, through agreements with other establishments, such as the Celso Suckow da Fonseca Technical School. However, early in its operation, the Principal was accused of irregularities, issuing false certificates; He tried to deny the allegations of irregularities in the establishment, with flimsy arguments, as can be seen below, in response to the allegations:

The fact that it was not possible to supply satisfactory vocational education cannot be considered irregular, but this occurred for reasons beyond the control of this high school, which, in time, clarified to the higher authorities the lack of material resources for this purpose. Therefore, it is dispensable to the normal functioning of vocational education. If these material elements are not within our reach, vocational education will be deficient, but this deficiency should not prevent the promotion of pupils. From there is a difference to the issuance of false certificates (DIÁRIO DE NOTÍCIAS, 1976, p. 2).

Vandick published a new justification afterwards, which argued that there had been an internal investigation and that the process of collecting the diplomas and drawing up the documents, which showed the weekly workload and the list of subjects, had been checked for fairness, concluding that only the subjects taken were mentioned on the certificates:

For example, in the Translator and Interpreter course, the teaching of Shorthand should have been taught, but the high school does not have a teacher in this discipline, nor has it obtained authorization to hold a competitive examination or hire a teacher. For this reason, the course, for reasons beyond the control of this school, as in many other establishments, was nevertheless deficient, which we acknowledge, but not irregular. (DIÁRIO DE NOTÍCIAS, ed. 16506, 1976, p. 14).

Final considerations

Vandick da Nóbrega's diversity of themes and ideas was publicised through his publications. He showed support for the dictatorial government and argued that a certain level of authoritarianism was essential to ensure order and development in the country (NÓBREGA, 1975). In his textbooks, we can see his criticism of the curriculum changes showed in the LDB/61, which made Latin an optional subject in the secondary school curriculum, because he was a national reference for the teaching of the subject. However, this stance conflicted even more with the need to adapt the curriculum to a vocational education, following the compulsory nature of Act 5.692/71 and the creation of secondary education at *Colégio Pedro II* during his time as headmaster.

He was an engaged intellectual who worked at various public institutions and advocated for the military regime. According to Sirinelli (1986), intellectual activity goes beyond the production of texts, but also refers to participation in events, as a leading figure or a member. Thus, it is possible to see Vandick's intellectual leading role in the public sphere, in power instances related to educational policies. As an intellectual mediator, he played the role of disseminator of educational ideas, took part in the public debate around certain proposals for education, among other issues. He sought to transform the educational landscape from the position he occupied as Principal and teacher of *Colégio Pedro II*, as a full professor at the

National Faculty of Law, as a member of the *Conselho Federal de Educação* (Federal Council of Education) and as author of twenty textbooks and forty-one documents including books on various subjects, conferences in congresses, thesis, and reports. In many of his works²⁸ he defended the teaching of Latin in middle schools (*Ginásio*) and high schools.

The ambiguous position in which he placed himself, according to convenience, can also be verified, mobilising his network of sociability in his favour, when necessary, in other words, proving that his position varied according to the context. Vandick da Nóbrega can be considered a conciliator and negotiator, who acted according to his interests, his needs, and his interlocutors. The main positions that guaranteed him a prominent place in the Brazilian educational scene, that of CFE counsellor and principal of *Colégio Pedro II*, were the result of appointments by the rulers of the military regime. On the other hand, in his work on the UnB Inquiry Commission and the University Expansion Commission, he didn't condemn any teachers who had been denounced as subversive, he protected his friends at *Colégio Pedro II* and voted against the condemnations of students at the CFE. At various times, he worked with a strategy of conciliation/negotiation between the various groups of students, teachers, and politicians.

Therefore, we understand the principal as an intellectual who moved between his cycles of friendship and enmity, turning to the members of his network when necessary. Despite acting with convenient and efficient actions to achieve his goals, he was the target of accusations of influence peddling and, above all, corruption, which is why he was removed from the *Colégio*. In some cases, he was considered an enemy of the nation and even a communist.

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