

The pedagogical bond to the class regime: Discourses on the practices and training of secondary school teachers in Portugal in the first half of the 20th century

JORGE RAMOS DO Ó

jorge.o@ie.ul.pt

University of Lisbon, Portugal

ABSTRACT:

The framework of the discourse about the pedagogical training of secondary school teachers in the first half of the 20th century in Portugal allows one to glean an overriding objective — the structuring of the class regime. As happened in other fields, the guidelines regarding the work involved in teaching and its control, as well as the skills and duties of the teachers, were during this period to a very large extent subsidiary to the Jaime Moniz Reform (1894-95). This text aims to understand the genesis and the development of this operationalization, which marks the start of the modernisation of the public Portuguese education system, and focuses on the work and training of the teachers.

KEYWORDS:

Secondary School education, Teacher Training, Educational Reforms, Class Regime.

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THE JAIME MONIZ REFORM

The alternative to the atomism of the regime of subjects, created by Pombal in the second half the 18th century and which remained in place until the end of the eighteenth century, involved designing a framework of distribution of the knowledge, separated by years or classes, in which each disciplinary branch was dissected, both as regards its own particularity and as regards the contribution it actually makes to the absolute value of secondary education. The reformer at the end of the 19th century made it his essential task to produce *curricular alchemy*, in one of the senses presented by Popkewitz (1998, pp. 99-116): operation that, in transforming the various disciplinary fields — mathematics, literature or the sciences, etc. — into secondary school subjects or programmes, will emphasise the transmission of information in small parts, whereby this administration, in exchange, brings a single text for pupils and teachers. For the first time in the history of the Portuguese secondary school, a need was felt to think about all the parts as a whole which another author, Ivor Goodson (1997, p. 20), labels the *narrow curriculum*: the study plan, the programmed guidelines and the textbooks of the different subjects.

The modern curriculum was thus born, in 1894-95, as another social product which the school authorities fell back on to restore the lost order, and above all repopulate the secondary schools of the State which at the time were almost deserted. The dark phase of the “last thirty years”, continued the

decree, in which “disorder followed on from disorder”, would be overcome if both the position and the role of each disciplinary province was thoroughly determined, and very well justified. The history of the curriculum — and the history of the construction of the scientific truth which was always associated with it — therefore began as a problem of power and a problem with an eminently discursive solution. New terminology was coined to show how the division of the material would be undertaken in a complex system or in an animated body of live components that were articulated among one another. The roadmap for secondary school teaching proposed in 1894-95 thus began to result in language games that attempted to replace the “disconnection” or the “tumultuous lack of unity” with a “lively cohesion” and “unity of thought” (Decree of 22/12/1894). Talking about the curriculum as a social construction of truth implied, therefore, a permanent quest for better articulation of the part as a whole.

Secondary education, in this first modern version implied: (1) that the programmes of the different subjects were drawn up so that in each class they corresponded, as much as possible, to the same degree of mental development of the pupil; (2) that the facts were always condensed into increasingly broad generalisations and within limits compatible with the intellectual development of the pupils and the knowledge they had meanwhile acquired; (3) that this appropriation of disciplinary contents was undertaken in accordance with the logical methods of positivism, in other words, in line with trial and error

processes; (4) that the relations were established not only with the knowledge learned previously but also among the neighbouring sciences.

THE PEDAGOGICAL ARTS

Also for the first time the governors concerned themselves with classroom management techniques and imagined that it would be in their daily conduct that the teacher would ensure achievement of the purposes of secondary education as had been outlined since 1894-95. The authorities insist in imagining a social actor forever in search of equilibriums and a sensible action on schoolchildren, whereby the law established that the teacher: (i) would fulfil the “programmes” and in doing so would practise all the “stipulations” associated with their profession; (ii) would supply “the school exercises” always taking into account the weight of the different lessons of their class and balancing “as far as possible the distribution of these exercises among all the pupils (notwithstanding extra tuition for the less able)”; (iii) would not fall into the trap of “insufficient or excessive” teaching work; (iv) would maintain “as far as possible the concentration and bond between the subject or subjects”; (v) would correct “in good time the written exercises of the pupils”; (vi) would uphold discipline in the lessons “with a firm hand”, and to do so may report to their superiors “any fact that occurred” or use “the essential means” that the Government granted them that ranged from “registering” the occurrences to “censure”, “the order of leaving the classroom or punitive punishment” (Decree of 14/8/1895).

This was followed by the necessary changing of positions. If the law attributed these duties and even a disciplinary power to the teacher, the “class system” made it, also for the same reasons, directly dependent on a new pedagogical actor: the class director. This *head teacher* arose effectively as the “principal authority”, responsible for “safeguarding himself and making sure others safeguarded” the essential, i.e. “the internal connection or the scientific and disciplinary unity in the class entrusted to his care”. He should “achieve understanding” with his subordinated colleagues, in order for all to “remain

together in the combined action in the exercising of education”. To do so he would hold regular “sessions” in which he would promote the “appropriate execution of the programmes”. Furthermore, he would regulate the effort that each teacher demanded from his pupils, always respecting their “physical and psychic development”, avoiding the “encumbrance of overloading them”. Also within the scope of the class director’s responsibilities was the “promotion of order and discipline in the classrooms”, whereby he was charged with “inspecting the fulfilment of the legal stipulations” with respect “to the pupils and teachers and was to make decisions accordingly as regards their practice” (Decree of 14/8/1895). Several subsequent initiatives made these and other ideas of the 1894-95 reform commonplace, in spite of the fact that the Reform was not always seen as sprouting them and even, from time to time, the measures were announced as novelties from the governing powers and even in one case the class regime was renounced. Given this background it is no exaggeration to speak about a doctrinal block.

But not everything was easy. The first recommendations showed a degree of irritation of the government members with the teachers, who were reluctant to carry out and accept the new pedagogies of the Reform. In January 1898 Agostinho de Campos sent a Circular to the headmasters in which he stated that he was aware that some teachers were persisting “in the ingrained habit” of organising lessons for pupils which had to be studied outside the classroom “without prior preparation”. The lack of observation and even the “infringement” of this regulatory stipulation — which dictated as we saw that homework should be reserved only as a complement of the study that took place in the secondary school under the guidance of the teacher — was only possible because “old habits of professional education persisted, together with lack of knowledge of the pedagogical methods” (Circular de 13/1/1898).

I have no more news regarding deviations, non-compliance or conflicts. What subsequently took place was to justify that it was necessary to do more and better in order to unify the means and processes of education. Something along these lines: that the class regime was not yet totally established and so it was necessary to develop new ways of working

that would reinforce it. The discursive item that best exemplifies this insistent request for better efficacy dates back to September 1914, and was ordered to be published by the minister for Public Instruction at the time, Sobral Cid. It is a Decree practically devoted in its entirety to the teacher's desired performance in the classroom and titled not by chance "Instructions for teaching in class". If skimmed through one can see that it repeats the indications supplied by Jaime Moniz's team, but a more careful analysis brings to light the wish to deepen, emphasise and clarify objectives about how each teacher can contribute to the continued circulation of the curricular content and to the group homogeneity of their pupils. This actor was essentially thought out as another promoter of social regulation. I do not believe there is another document, legal or otherwise, produced in the first half of the nineteen hundreds in which such an aim is laid out in such clear terms as here. These generic considerations exemplify this fact: "the general capacity of the pupils and the demands of the other subjects of the class are two conditions that teachers should always bear in mind, at every moment, in their spirit to regulate the progress of the instruction" (Decree 230, of 21/9/1914).

The *pedagogical arts* came to the forefront in the regulation of the teachers' work. The "inflexible rule" or the "most pressing duty" of the teacher, which the "teaching conditions" were completely subordinated to, would now consist of "striving to be understood" and "checking at every moment" that they had indeed been comprehended. They would have to move forward in small but steady steps, not neglecting for a single second that the "quality" of the education would always take precedence over the "quantity". The most important thing was to be clear. Furthermore, all the teaching methods and processes should be submitted to the unavoidable goal of modernity, i.e. the purpose of the secondary education is less to do with the "sum total and variety of the acquired knowledge" than the "development of the faculties of the spirit". As such, "the heightening and profiting of the education" would depend on the "form" in which it was administered and not so much on "its own essence". To put it another way: more "about the methods adopted and followed" than the "perfection of the programmes and excellence of the books". The

technical-pedagogical knowledge definitively outweighed all the academic competencies of the teacher. If the classroom was the "place of excellence for study", the teacher should for this purpose "properly prepare the lesson of the pupils, solving all their difficulties and helping them study". The "teaching of children and the modern pedagogical processes" demanded, simultaneously, a "patient diligence" and detailed "preparation at home of the lesson of the day" (Decree 230, of 21/9/1914).

The authorities started to look upon the teachers as a guarantee, in the first instance, of the cohesion and uniformity of the population as a whole. It was important that they did everything so that the assessment of their pupils' performances did not register big discrepancies or variations. All the grades would be "agreed after conferring" among the class teachers. And each teacher who exercised a management role in the secondary school should "take note", case by case, of all the pupils who showed "unequal application in the different subjects", in order to take measures so that they "profited more" from the lessons they were "behind" in. But this responsibility was not restricted to these individuals. It extended to all the teachers. It is the standardising language in its pure expression that here again came to the fore. It was the teacher's obligation to make sure the class progressed "with compact and homogenous education, without leaving anybody behind". As soon as it was "noticed" that a pupil was lagging behind, one should "investigate the nature of the failing" that was evident in this pupil, so that the process to combat it could be "usefully applied". It was on this point, on this exact instant of discovery of he who differed from the standard, that new forms of documental records arose, involving all the hierarchical chains of the institution. One was forbidden from giving a grade lower than "inferior to satisfactory", without the teacher of the subject having "informed in writing" the teacher appointed the class director of the reasons — "not in undefined and vague terms, but specifying the assumed cause, in other words, lack of attention and application, poor comprehension and application" — for the poor performance. In turn, this second figure should transmit the information "in a bulletin" to the school headmaster. This document will report all the means and methods put into practice to combat the "failing", as well as gauging

their “effectiveness or non-effectiveness”. In the latter situation the school headmaster would inform the family of the pupil, and “this communication should be registered”. Likewise, the same process would be implemented when a student received a “grade lower than good in behaviour”. In order for the information about this problem-pupil to be “complete”, the teacher should also “confer with the class teachers”, finding out their “opinion” about the pupil in question in order to “complete their own concept”. All this because in the “modern orientation of the education” the simple isolated efforts were “deficient” (Decree 230, of 21/9/1914).

In this year of 1914 the question of the government of the school population, as regards teacher intervention, was the order of the day, constituting a prime concern of the central authorities. Another Decree dictated that, twenty years on from the Jaime Moniz Reform and the affirmation of the class regime — this “bedrock” that secondary education of “all the cultivated countries” was based on — the system had not been “completely executed among us, owing to a lack of true class directors”. A contribution to this situation had been the higher attendance of pupils who distracted these main teachers from their actual teaching tasks. The resumption of pedagogical supervision led to the need to “divide the school population” and consequent introduction into the secondary schools in Portugal’s three largest cities of “division managers”, employees who aided the school headmasters in the “pedagogical, administrative and disciplinary management”. Their functions were confused in many aspects with the former class directors — they should agree the plan, the unity, the coordination and the graduated pace of the education with the teachers, as well as helping to calibrate the distribution of the programme content throughout the week with the presentation of new material, revisions and written exercises — but it was specified that the division manager would focus “with special interest on the pupils who were behind, drawing the attention of the teacher, the family and the school doctor to them, and when possible “bring them nearer to the average of the class constituting a special class with them”. Here again we see the *average* given prevalence, identifying pupils through their output and placing them in new groups with less status but also

less variability. This division manager was also responsible for “centralising the information of the teachers as regards the performance and behaviour of the pupils” (Decree 858, of 11/9/1914).

However, the references to this institutional figure disappeared in the following years. Through Decree 3.091, of 17 April 1917, the respective responsibilities were again handed to the class director. The 1918 Reform (Decree 4799, of 8 September) attributed the class directors more responsibilities, but this time outlining above all the maintenance of “good discipline and order in the class”. In these terms the class director should therefore (i) mix with the pupils “in the lessons and in the lesson intervals and in their associations”; (ii) “lend them paternal advice” with regard to everything concerning “their presentation, hygiene and posture and the way they interact with the teachers, school staff and colleagues”; (iii) pay attention “to the state of repair and conservation of the textbooks, exercise books and other utensils used”; (iv) become aware of “all the facts” that could upset the discipline in the lessons or out of them”, correcting the pupils under their responsibility through “persuasive methods” and organising the application of the “regulatory punishments”. In 1930 both the supervision of the teachers’ work and these responsibilities of a disciplinary nature were withdrawn (see Decree 18827, of 6 September). Two years later, the minister Cordeiro Ramos signed another Decree in which he advocated that “the moral education of the pupils” was the “foremost function of the class director”. Whatever the circumstances, this mission would always respect the “personality of the pupils”, who would be “gently guided in the correction of their defects and the development of their qualities”, in order to train “*men aware of their duties and their rights*”. As regards the issue of “punishment” the law also leaves little margin for doubt. It would be the “last resort to impose discipline on the pupils and improve their education”; it would always be “graduated and valued”, so as to avoid its “harsh and frequent” application: chastisement given by the class director, “away from the eyes of the other pupils” was “often more effective than a harder punishment” (Decree 21963, of 9/12/1932; italics in the original). The Carneiro Pacheco Reform

(Decree 27084, of 14/10/1936) replaced this figure with the “cycle director” but did not attribute responsibilities to this position, as happened with the subsequent Reform, of 1947 (Decree 36508, of 17 September).

There is one more sequence of time that must be established. It is linked to the teachers’ duties. What I cited from the 1894-95 Reform above, relative to this particular matter, did not change significantly over the following half century. In 1918 the Government felt it was necessary to exhaustively list the different responsibilities of the teachers. This list would later be reproduced in its entirety in the following decrees: Decree 6675, of 12/6/1920 and Decree 7558, of 18/9/1921 — or systematised in their core points (see Decree 15948, of 12/9/1928). The aim was to submit the teachers as far as possible to the functioning logic of the class regime and the complex mechanisms of calibration and control that its functioning implied. New ideas only appeared from 1936 onwards, when it became “compulsory for all the teachers to carry out school-related service”, namely in “the form of conferences and education trips” (Decree 27084, of 14/10/1936). Participation in the activities outside the study plan would also contribute towards, at this level, the institutionalisation of the formation of the *character* of the pupil and the centrality of this aspect within the goals of secondary education. The 1947 Reform presented a new version of the duties of the teachers in which the moral, religious and nationalistic facets were emphasised, with a view to a complete social integration of the schoolchildren. The law would reflect the old fantasy of the spirit of mission, sacerdotal dedication to the cause of education and teaching.

TEACHER TRAINING

It was crucial that the issue of the professional preparation of the teachers was put at the top of the agenda, in order to respond to this growing trend that placed extreme value on the pedagogical capacities and competencies. Therefore, and in tandem with the above, it is necessary to relate another history; that of the construction of institutes responsible for the training of future secondary school teachers.

The origins date back to 1901. In Decrees 4 and 5, of 24 December of this year, for the first time it was established in Portugal that special preparation was required to exercise the teaching profession. For the future teachers of the so-called Literature group, it was decided that a Secondary School Qualification Course was necessary. The lessons took place within the Literature Higher Education Course in Lisbon and lasted four years. The first three years comprised of the “scientific preparation” — although at the end a module was included called Pedagogy and the History of Pedagogy and Especially the Teaching Methodology from the 16th Century onwards — while the last year was entirely focussed on the “pedagogical practice”, either because the students attended a series of conferences divided into subject areas or because they began their teaching career. In the preamble of the second decree it was mentioned that the authorities were very concerned about “regulating” and “making secondary education beneficial” both through the study of the different subjects that constituted the secondary school curriculum at the time, and also through the “correlative pedagogical knowledge”. The justification seemed obvious: it was “impossible to calculate the number of hours” that could be “wasted away in secondary school classes owing to lack of Pedagogical knowledge, notwithstanding the diligence of the teachers”. Also discussed was the fact that this shortfall was “one of the most efficient causes, perhaps even the main one, for the excessive intellectual fatigue” that afflicted a large proportion of the secondary school pupils at the time. For the future Mathematics, Physical and Natural Sciences, and Design teachers a three-year preparatory course would also be created, in 1902, which would be administered in Lisbon and Porto, which would be added to by a fourth — for which the candidates were forced to move to the Higher Education Literature Course in Lisbon — consecrated in the study of the material taught in the Pedagogy and History of Pedagogy modules and Especially the Teaching Methodology from the 16th Century onwards. The following years brought slight transformations in this model (Gomes, 2001; Rodrigues, 1908).

There was an obvious effort to develop knowledge on the teaching practice that was as close as possible to the renovating currents that had taken

hold from the research carried out abroad and the emerging field of the Education Sciences. As early as 1901 one could notice the influence of *hygienic reasoning*, namely with the appearance of the problem of *surmenage* (mental fatigue). Here it was the modern psycho-pedagogical field that was intended to be reproduced, absorbing the positivist and experimental dimension that characterised Psychology at the time. The very name of the institution was inspired by French thinking. The 1911 decree also dictated that in the first year of preparation, and as well as the “secondary school lessons”, various “conferences” would be programmed each week, which would always be followed by a debate and free discussion “either on the work of the great educators, from the 16th century onwards, or on the pedagogical books or articles recently published in Portugal or abroad, or on questions of school methods, hygiene or discipline”. Also this year there was a broad set of “practical tasks”, as follows: (i) “written exercises in the lessons, on points chosen by the teachers”; (ii) “preparation of model lessons, drawn up in collaboration with pedagogy teachers or in the light of the history of pedagogy, and always followed by a reasoned criticism”; (iii) “experimental pedagogy exercises”; (iv) “child psychology studies” drawn up, as with the preceding ones, in the “Psychology Laboratories of the Literature Faculties”. The second school year, which would see the training teachers start giving lessons, was split into two periods. The first, which lasted until the end of December, would involve the trainees observing lessons in the secondary schools, where they would receive “indispensable notions about the special methodology of the respective subjects”. But each candidate would “teach at least once a week, preparing the lessons in writing, under the guidance of the supervising teacher”. In the rest of the academic year the teaching would be “exclusively” carried out by the candidate, “under the inspection of the supervising teachers”, who would examine “their corrections in the exercises done by the pupils”, and would always “observe their lessons, correcting them when necessary and guiding them with their advice”. The teacher trainees were also required to attend all the “meetings of the class” in which they were serving their apprenticeship, as well as the “school council” meetings which dealt with the grades of the pupils and also the exams. At the

end of this practical year, the pedagogical qualification would be assessed through the so-called “State exams” which comprised three different tests undertaken for a panel nominated by the Government and which was made up of three secondary school teachers and four teachers from the Literature or Science Faculties. In the first test the teachers had to make their case in two “arguments” each lasting half an hour, based on “points selected at random” on teaching material, one of which would focus on the “lower classes” and the other “the upper classes of the secondary schools”. The second test comprised a lesson given to a class, also with randomly selected material, and which would be followed by the “respective pedagogical discussion lasting an hour”. Finally, the third test consisted of the presentation of a “dissertation, printed or typed, on a didactic topic of secondary education, as chosen by the candidate” (Decree of 21/5/1911).

In the so-called Camoesas Reform — named after the head of the Public Instruction department and which was drawn up principally by Faria de Vasconcelos — dated to 1923, it was noted that in relation to the “teaching personnel”, they comprised “excellent raw material” but there was a lack of “suitable resources and bodies to enhance the aptitudes and select the men”. The “efficiency and the output” of the teachers did not match what they were able “to supply through their zeal, their patriotism and their willingness”. Among the causes that prevented the teachers from “carrying through their mission, as they desired” at the forefront was the “professional preparation undertaken in the different teacher training schools”. It was “insufficient and defective”. In truth, it seemed to the reformers that these institutions were not “as they should be, exclusively technical schools”; their programmes did not revolve “actively and essentially around the essential subjects (didactics, scientific pedagogy, psychology and hygiene)” and did not establish, in the same manner, the “true individual creative work” of their students; they did not have “authentic schools of application” available, where the professional practice is carried out “in effective training conditions” with children (Draft law on reorganisation of national education, of 21/6/1923).

The break away from the past advocated by the Camoesas-Faria de Vasconcelos duo never got off

the ground, as is widely known (Fernandes, 1979, pp. 119-121; Nóvoa, 1987, II, pp. 542-549). The same thing did not occur however with many of the ideas the plan contained. Seven years later a new decree would tackle the question of teacher training, and brought about alterations in the same terms as the aborted initiative of 1923. One of the governments of the Military Dictatorship acknowledged that the Higher Education Teacher Training Schools, in addition to the Qualification Course for the Secondary School Teachers, which preceded it, had not produced “what had been expected as regards the perfecting of secondary school teaching”. What had been lacking was “a unity of visions, one line of thinking and a common action”: instead of the “homogeneous work of common cooperation”, what had been witnessed over time was the “unarticulated work of many”. While the principle continued to be “the division between pedagogical culture and pedagogical practice”, it was fundamental to bring about change: the former would again be entrusted to the Universities and the latter completely handed to the schools of the level that the future teachers were destined to work in. As for the aspects of theoretical training, there was a need to restrict the number of modules and clearly establish which ones were the core subjects. There were no great doubts about this. The new study plan comprised the following subjects: “pedagogy and didactics, the history of education, school organisation and administration, general psychology, school psychology and mental measures, and school hygiene”. As well as the appearance of administration, it can be seen that the major new aspect was the predominance of the *psy* knowledge in pedagogical culture. These modules — all of which were annual apart from the last one, which lasted six months — constituted the “3rd Section of the Faculties of Literature, under the name of Pedagogical Sciences”. Next on the agenda was the question of the practice. Attempting to provide “suitable working environments”, the Government authorised the creation, in Lisbon and in Coimbra, “of practical preparation schools for secondary school teachers — The Teacher Training Secondary Schools”, one of which started functioning immediately “through the conversion of the Pedro Nunes Secondary School”. It would be the model institution, the benchmark: Lisbon Teacher

Training Secondary School (Pedro Nunes) was thus “set up as an environment to perfect the whole organisation and better execution of the secondary school teaching services”, given that this would be, at the same time, “a practising school for teachers”, intended for “professional perfecting” and “pedagogical trials”. To put it another way: it was charged not simply with “complying with rules from above”, like the rest of the secondary schools, but also with “taking initiatives”. The professional preparation of the secondary school teacher candidates in the Secondary School comprised two years of training. The 1st was devoted especially to the “observation of model lessons”, some of which were given by the trainee himself, and discussed “in a group, by the methodology teacher and by all the trainees” who were doing practical work in the same subject. In the 2nd year each trainee took charge of the education they were assigned, also “under the supervision of the methodology teacher and the inspection of this teacher and others of the secondary school, as well as the headmaster”. The qualification for the secondary school teacher continued to be obtained through the State Exam, constituted “by culture tests and pedagogical tests” (Decree 18973, of 16/10/1930).

In the next year a new decree stipulated that the headmasters — the law allowed the creation of a second Teacher Training Secondary School in Coimbra, hence use of the plural — also organised the holding of “pedagogical conferences” themselves, making attendance and participation in these events “compulsory for the trainees and for all the teachers exercising in the teacher training secondary school”. The quality of the model secondary school and the experimentalist nature of the Lisbon Teacher Training Secondary School (Pedro Nunes) conferred it a special place: all the headmasters of Portugal’s secondary schools supplied the Pedro Nunes Secondary School with information it requested, “personally or in writing”, particularly with regard to the “improvements introduced”. In exchange, the establishment in the capital would publish a *Bulletin* every quarter in which it filed reports of the various *practical trials* carried out in the school, with the periodical distributed “To schools, teachers and other people” who were interested in secondary school issues, “and considered official for all legal purposes”. It was further

stipulated that the Pedro Nunes School would function under the “semi-boarding regime”, the administration of which was the responsibility of the headmaster as regards the pedagogical part, and the school association as regards the economic aspects (Decree 20741, of 18/12/1931). This tells us that the sought-after demand for educational innovation did not go hand in hand or indeed oppose the public teaching model advocated. The Pedro Nunes School was not an epiphenomenon, but precisely the opposite, a reality that should contaminate and inform the whole structure of the Portuguese middle education structure in the epoch. It is not by chance that also at this time the old principle was instituted, so often called for, whereby the pupils could stay inside the secondary school after the lessons had finished. The experimentation of methods and pedagogical techniques and the boarding aspect seemed to intertwine mutually. The Pedro Nunes School was the specific expression of the secondary school as a *house of education*.

TO CLOSE: THE MONOLITHIC BLOCK OF MODERN EDUCATION

There is not enough space herein to debate the history of teacher associations. This issue can be pondered in another discussion that I undertook (Ó, 2003, pp. 383-399) and where I noted a coincidence in the positions among politicians and teachers as regards the suppositions of the Jaime Moniz Reform, which comprised the defence of a pedagogical framework of the class regime and active forms of learning, leading to the hygiene of the soul of the pupil. The organic unit of the study plan and the ideal of a healthy and active pupil characterised the discourse of the class, in so doing deepening the quest for consensus.

Faced with the fantastic saturation of a similar kind of discourse, emanating from all quarters, the

researcher has obviously to conclude that the *reality* or *system* existed because they were fed, continually and in many different forms, by the same model of announcement. This confluence must be pointed out, and one should not be surprised by the conflicts that sometimes characterised the stage of the events. This seems to me to reflect more the struggle to obtain the *single* criterion of truth available in the educational market than any programmatic or deep-rooted divergence. The manifestations of affirmation of a professional culture or disagreement with the central authorities were, in my opinion, historical moments in which the teachers incorporated the categories, divisions, classifications and relations present in the intelligibility regime which, as we know, had been at the forefront of affairs since the end of the eighteen hundreds. Therefore, in their specific positions they reiterated the evidence that there was only one way to imagine the secondary school and to govern the respective pupils. The agenda of the Ministry was always aimed at the topic of the imperfect institutionalisation of the class regime, as was the agenda of the teachers. In these terms the classic question, and one which for one reason or another constantly comes up in the course of any historical analysis, of trying to distinguish what the intentions were and what, in actual fact, had happened in the reality of men and things, I believe is to a large extent clarified here. It is not that the theory-practice dichotomy is of interest to me or supplies any explanation. It is another point I am making and one of great significance for my argument: the ongoing claims translated the fact that *power is not exercised from outside*, through decree, through the force of the sword or as a consequence of a policy of fear. Criticism of the system corresponded in truth, and simply, to a sequence of arguments whose purpose was to bring about improvement and more efficiency.

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