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The Official Inaugural Speech of Royal College of Nobles in Lisbon (1766): A Rhetorical Performance Supporting a Pedagogical Purpose

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Abstract: The Europe of the 18th century manifested a keen interest on the education of nobles and Portugal was in line with this current tendency, founding the Royal College of Nobles in Lisbon. My main interest is the study of the official inaugural speech, delivered on 19th March of 1766 by Michael Antonius Cierae, a Latin discourse, never completely translated or deeply studied¹. This rhetorical performance is an important source to study the new pedagogical program conceived by of the King Joseph I and his minister José Sebastião Carvalho e Melo, also known as Marquês de Pombal, after the expulsion of Jesuits. This discourse represents a broad view of political philosophy and for this reason, I decided to divide the present article in three parts. First, I circumscribe the political and historical context in Europe, then analyse the creation's circumstances of this Royal College, and shed light on the rhetorical structure of speech, its subjects and *topoi* articulated under all *partes orationis*. I expect to recognize in which way this official speech reveals the pedagogical philosophy to understand the political polemics and controversies of this period in Portugal.

Keywords: rhetorical performance, public speech, Royal College of Nobles, political philosophy

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¹ The official inaugural speech was fully translated from Latin to Portuguese by A. I. C. Martins and A. Scatolin. The edition is in press and will be published by Press of University of Coimbra.

Oficjalna mowa inauguracyjna Królewskiego Kolegium Szlacheckiego w Lizbonie (1766): Retoryczne przedstawienie w służbie pedagogiki

Streszczenie: W osiemnastowiecznej Europie szczególnie wyraźnie uwidoczniło się zainteresowanie edukacją szlachty, a Portugalia wpisała się w ten trend, powołując Królewskie Kolegium Szlacheckie w Lizbonie. Moim celem jest przebadanie oficjalnej mowy inauguracyjnej wygłoszonej 19 marca 1766 roku przez Michela Antonia Cierę, nigdy wcześniej w całości nie tłumaczonej i dokładnie nie zbadanej². Ta retoryczna wypowiedź jest ważnym źródłem poznania nowego programu pedagogicznego, jaki król Józef I i jego minister José Sebastião Carvalho e Melo, znany również jako Marquês de Pombal, wprowadzili po wygnaniu jezuitów. Dyskurs ten przynosi szerokie spojrzenie na filozofię polityczną i dlatego zdecydowałam się podzielić artykuł na trzy części. Zaczynam od opisu politycznego i historycznego kontekstu europejskiego, następnie analizuję okoliczności powstania Królewskiego Kolegium, objaśniam strukturę retoryczną mowy, jej tematykę i *topoi* obecne we wszystkich *partes orationis*. Spodziewam się przy tym rozpoznać, jak w tej oficjalnej mowie została przedstawiona filozofia polityczna, by zrozumieć polityczne spory i kontrowersje Portugalii tego okresu.

Słowa kluczowe: retoryczna wypowiedź, wymowa, Królewskie Kolegium Szlacheckie, filozofia polityczna

Nam ut Possidonius ait unus dies hominum eruditorum plus patet quam imperiti longissima aetas³.

I. *In limine*: the desirable nobility's education

The Enlightenment, spread all over Europe in the eighteenth century, manifested a keen interest on the education of nobles, promoting a humanistic paradigm in which the individual might be free from moral defects and also endowed with the necessary and appropriated skills to the responsibilities inherent in their socio-economic status. The nobility was progressively required to leave their palaces to acquire scientific and technical skills in order

² Owa mowa inauguracyjna została w całości przełożona z łaciny na portugalski przez A. I. C. Martins i A. Scatolina. Jest obecnie w druku i ukaże się w wydawnictwie Uniwersytetu w Coimbrze.

³ "As Possidonio said: single day of a lettered man is more profitable than the longest age of an ignorant man". In: Fray Louis of Grenade, *Collectanea Moralis Philosophiae in tres tomos distributa: quorum primus selectissimas sententias ex omnibus Senecae operibus. Secundus ex moralibus opusculis Plutarchi: Tertius clarissimorum principum & philosophorum insigniora apophthegmata, hoc est, dicta memorabilia complectitur*, (Lisboa, Apud Francisco Correa, 1971); belonging to *topos Peccatorum hoc est improborum hominum conturbantia fugienda contraque bonorum appetenda*.

to face several challenges that were arising everywhere. The nobles did not wish to resign itself to a secondary role and its place, somewhere between the intellectual worker and the manual labor force, was in such a well-demarcated society; it therefore had to embark upon learning and conquering certain domains to restore its position of authority. The first move undertaken by governments to achieve the human ideal mentioned above was to conceive and to implement a consistent educational program, as holistic and encyclopedic as possible. It was expected that the privileged class, the nobility, would recognize the value of work as such, becoming aware of its own human dimension and dignified aspect, respecting men of all activities, without any prejudices, pride or pretentiousness, moving towards the indulgence, benevolence and simplicity of a *modus vivendi*.

Among the forerunners of the colleges and academies for nobles in Europe, we can mention first the pioneer German college of Tübingen (1596–1688):

The German nobility began to recover a leading position in society which had been threatened by the rise of the bourgeoisie. Likewise, in the field of education it began to re-establish the distance between itself and the other classes, becoming the bearer of peculiar morals propounded in exclusive institutions. As early as 1589 a *Collegium illustre* for the exclusive use of the nobility had been founded at Tübingen and in 1599 a comparable institution the *Collegium mauritanum* of Kassel was established. (Ridder-Symoens 1991: 285)

Such institutions really began to proliferate in Germany and analogous developments took place in France and Spain. Although the conception of these colleges for the education of nobility had already been considered previously, it was in the eighteenth century that the statutes were defined and the social intentions were consolidated. In 1638, Louis XIII conferred upon the College of Juilly, founded by the Oratorians, under the title of the Académie Royale and his purpose was to create a school exclusively for the sons of the nobility. There are also other cases such as in Spain, where Philip IV and the Count-Duke Olivares helped to found a noble academy by the name of the Colegio Imperial or Reales Estudios de San Isidro, in 1629, whose concern was exactly the same. In 1725, was founded the Seminario de Nobles de Madrid (1725), by order of Filipe V and influenced by the confessor to the king, the French priest Daubenton. A second Seminary of Nobles in Calatayud was founded a few years later in 1752 by the Company of Jesus.

Portugal would follow this cultural and political current tendency throughout Europe conciliating the political purposes and the pedagogical ideals, expressing its theoretical affiliation with Enlightenment movement. In 1750, D. Joseph I become the King and Sebastião José Carvalho e Melo his minister of War and Foreign Affairs, also known as Marquis of Pombal, a title acquired in 1770⁴. Marquis, with his diplomatic experience, started a scrupulous Reform of educational system, implementing a public model instead of that previous domestic education for regal-classes⁵. The Minister of King, in 1746, testified as

⁴ Sebastião José Carvalho e Melo (1699–1782), known by his title of Marquês de Pombal, was allegedly the worst of the rulers and the most abominable minister, forgetting in his turn the reforms and the vast transformations that the nation suffered so that in any realm of life, religious, economic, political, social and intellectual whose evolution is known, his majestic figure, eternally covered with innocent blood, comes with achievements and innovations that are largely unknown (Busquets 1935: 64); vide about Kenneth Maxwell (2004).

⁵ About this structural reform and political decisions vide Cruz (1971); Gomes (1982); Serrão (1996).

ambassador in Austria the conception and construction of college Theresinum, founded by Empress Maria Therese. This event inspired him to conceive and to create the Royal College of Nobles in Lisbon. The Charter of Law of King Dom José I, dated 7th March 1761, approved the statutes of this Institution, assigning to it the sites of the extinct Jesuit College and novitiate of Cotovia, in Lisbon, donation of land completed in the letter of 12th October 1765⁶.

By expelling the Jesuits, Marquis of Pombal on 28th June 1759 restored the *minor* studies in Portugal, having included written and oral techniques, Arithmetic, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Rhetoric, being absolutely forbidden to handle the materials used by Jesuits⁷. They were considered by the Minister a hindrance and an impediment to reforming purposes and social development and until that moment the education was exclusively assured by them in Portugal (Buescu 2012: 60). In 1759, Marquis has decided to create lessons of Latin Grammar and Rhetoric in several villages around the country (Gomes 1982: 25–41).

Concerning the Reform of *studia maiora*, the process started in 1761, promoted by the edition of *Compendio Histórico do Estado da Universidade de Coimbra*, where there was enumerated the damage caused by Jesuits (Compêndio 1972: 88). In 1772, the Faculty of Philosophy was created, replacing the previous College of Arts⁸ and among *corpus docendi*, it can be mentioned the Italian Domenico Vandelli (Chemistry and Natural History), António Soares Barbosa (Logic, Ethics and Metaphysics), Giovanni Dalla Bella (Physics). At Faculty of Mathematics, Monteiro da Rocha taught Sciences, Miguel Franzini was responsible for Algebra and Miguel António Ciera taught Astronomy. Vandelli came to Portugal in 1764 to teach at College of Nobles, as well as Dalla Bella and António Ciera, who became the Director of Studies and the author of inaugural speech that we are going to study⁹.

The Portuguese Enlightenment does not deny a religious dimension but will redefine the role and the relation between State and Church, their limits, their influences in social and civic life. For this reason, we must consider two important concepts: secularization and laicization¹⁰. In 1760, gets underway the laicization of education, explicitly manifested and represented by Ribeiro Sanches in his *Cartas sobre a educação da mocidade* defending the experimental method. António Nunes Ribeiro Sanches, an erudite spirit and eminent physician of Jewish origin, inspired the creation of the Royal College and was an important promoter of public education in Portugal¹¹.

⁶ Besides the building and the redoubt, the old Quinta do Monte Olivete, the new institution received the furniture and the rich bookstore of the novitiate. This complex in Rua da Escola Politécnica belongs today to the University of Lisbon where the National Museum of Natural History and Science is installed, with which the Botanical Garden is integrated.

⁷ Marques (1984: 337). When the Society of Jesus was expelled in 1759 by Sebastião José was responsible for thirty-eight colleges, five seminars and five residences (vide Serrão 1996: 254).

⁸ About this aspect see Miranda (2011: 11–31).

⁹ Vide about Faculty of Philosophy of University of Coimbra, the teaching process of Natural History, Museum of Natural History and Botanic Garden, A. M. Amorim da Costa (2014: 180–208).

¹⁰ “[...] o conceito de secularização passou a conotar a perda, nas sociedades modernas ocidentalizadas, da posição-chave que a religião institucionalizada ocupava na produção e na reprodução do elo social e na atribuição de sentido” [...] Já a laicidade supõe a institucionalização da diferença entre o espiritual e o temporal, o Estado e a sociedade civil, o indivíduo e o cidadão”. Fernando Catroga (2006: 62, 273). Vide more in Miguel Pereira (1990).

¹¹ About this intersection between the political and pedagogical ideals of three Enlightenment thinkers – D. Luís da Cunha, António Nunes Ribeiro Sanches and Luiz Antonio Verney, vide Carlota Boto (2010).

II. Organization of the College of Nobles: a Portuguese case of experimental method

The Royal College of Nobles was founded in Lisbon, in 1761, and the inaugural ceremonies take place in 1766. The difficult path to gather the *corpus docendi* justifies this delay between its creation and inauguration¹². This Institution crossed two different phases: 1766–1772 and 1772–1837¹³. Due to the incompatibility of College with the principals of Liberalism, in 1837, the extinction of this Institution¹⁴ was ordered by the Minister of Foreign Affairs Passos Manuel (1801–1862).

Jacopo Facciolati (1682–1769), famous for his Logic lessons at University of Padua, was invited by the Minister to guide the Royal College, regardless of his eighty years of age. He did not accept the invitation but answered to Marquis when he demanded the statutes of University of Padua – in order to be inspired for the conception of statutes of University of Coimbra. Facciolati also gave him several suggestions to collect the *corpus docendi* (Carvalho 1959: 52–58). After several procedures and efforts, Miguel Antonio Ciera was entrusted with the direction of College, an engineer invited years ago to participate in the delimitation work of the Portuguese possessions in South America.

The College of Nobles aimed to prepare youngsters from high aristocracy families, who already could read and were between 7 and 13 years old¹⁵. In addition to the traditional education in classical humanities, a solid scientific and literary education was also encouraged in order to allow them to gain access to the University of Coimbra¹⁶. It is convenient to recognize that the inclusion of natural sciences represents a considerable novelty for this time. Maths and Physics were also included in this *curriculum*, as well as an experimental component, which was not a common practice in the Portuguese educational system¹⁷.

This Institution would also have a military and civil tendency as well as an ambitious and encyclopedic *curriculum studii*: Humanities (Latin, Greek, French, Italian, English, Rhetoric, Poetics, Logic, History), Natural Sciences (Maths, Physics, Architecture, Astronomy, Chronology, Geology, Trigonometry, Algebra, Integral Calculus, Optics, Astronomy, Seamanship, Architecture, Drawing, Horseback Riding, Fencing, Dancing) and also general principals of Law and Political Economy. In 1772, *curricula* were reformed and simplified just covering the subjects of Humanities.

¹² Vide Castilho (1904: 32), Galvão-Telles (2006).

¹³ The reform of University in 1772 overlaps the economic crisis with colonial products. Vide Macedo (1982: 85–86).

¹⁴ “[...] tratava-se de um organismo destinado a refrear as veleidades, os destemperos e os excessos da nobreza, sujeitando os moços fidalgos a regras de comportamento e dando-lhes uma iniciação científica que de modo geral, a educação no seio de suas famílias não estava em condições de poder ministrar” (Costa 2014: 182).

¹⁵ Title 6 of the statutes refers to the students and assumes the following dispositions: 1. No-one can be a student without the title of noble; 2. To enter as a student there is required an application addressed to the Rector, who will be informed by the Royal Board of Education, and referred to the king, furnishing the application with the names of the parents. The baptism certificate and the place where it was issued are accompanied by it; 3. Students can be admitted only if they are from 7 to 13 years old, are able to read and write.

¹⁶ Access to the University of Coimbra should be authenticated by the rector and presented by the Prefect.

¹⁷ Vide about the experimental education’s history vide Fiolhais e Martins (2010).

The nobility's function was not to originate wars, as in previous times, such as the medieval period, nor to keep a palatial lifestyle characteristic of the modern age. It was now necessary to win the public's respect and opinion, to reveal moral qualities, and to perform more active and interventional roles in society, not necessarily part of their blood privileges, but relying upon their own merit, the corollary of new educational principals. The project of this College was outlined by these political assumptions and ideological convictions, expressing a desire: to become recognizable as a benefit for the young nobles, but also for the rest of orders and even for whole Kingdom as Ciera affirms in his speech¹⁸.

Within the organic structure of the Royal College the most illustrious figure was the General Director of Studies, who conducted the institution, constantly watching over the fulfillment of the statutes, order and discipline. He was followed by the Rector, an individual recognized for his excellence, benefiting from honors comparable to those of the Rector of the University of Coimbra. It was expected that the Rector in charge would be a person well-versed in letters, endowed with recognized virtues and circumspection, since he would be responsible for the administration of the college. Within the range of his responsibilities was also the wording of the statutes and laws against possible punishments and non-compliance. The Rector's authority on admissions was limited, he could however make suggestions, and his residence was in the College itself. The execution of a report on the school and disciplined behavior of the students was also included in the Rector's assignments, and included reporting with the highest degree of secrecy the performance of each one of the students.

The vice-rector should also be a serious person, an example of authority, being in charge of the government of the college when the rector was absent. He should take care of the assiduous attendance of students, making systematic visits, observing if they were studying or were quiet at the proper hours, attending mass with them, accompanying their meals, amusements and any extraordinary recreations. The Vice-Rector was also responsible for granting leave permits for the students, upon written license of the parents or guardians. The entrance and exit of the students were recorded in a book countersigned by the rector.

The difficulties inherent in the constitution of the faculty's *corpus docendi* were reflected in the slowness of the whole process but finally, Jose de Quental Lobo was named as Rector, Doctor of the University of Coimbra and Counselor of the Table of Conscience and Orders. For Vice-Rector João Egas de Bulhões e Sousa was elected both with a mandate of three years joining them Michele Ciera, prefect of the studies by that time¹⁹. Ciera's role was equally illustrious and paradigmatic, responsible for the inaugural speech of the first day of the school year, the prayer of wisdom, with exquisite Latin elegance. Throughout the year, he was obliged to regulate the distribution of service among teachers and his tutorial posture could not be neglected, whether in examining and reviewing students' texts or attending all exercises and literary acts.

On 19th March 1766, the Royal College was opened and the King, the Queen and the entire Royal Family were present as also Cardinal Patriarch D. Francisco de Saldanha, Ministers and Councilors of State, Foreign Ministers and twenty-three students. Miguel

¹⁸ *Vt fateantur omnes non ad nobelium modo Adolescentum utilitatem, sed ad ceterorum etiam Ordinum atque adeo totius Regni fructum procul dubio redundare.*

¹⁹ The original nomination of this Rector is in Torre do Tombo, in Portugal, belonging to the Collection of the Manuscripts related to the Colégio dos Nobres.

António Ciera promptly spoke underlining the focus of this institution, exposing his arguments and expressing the need to revive and restore the Sciences and the Arts in Portugal, reiterating the role of Culture and Fine Arts in the consolidation and strengthening of the States. After his very long speech, the prefect of professors and twenty-three students took the oath of defense of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary throughout their lives²⁰. Although the school staff was not completed by the College's opening date, it was even smaller by the moment of initial ceremony. The Institution was created for 100 students but even during the best moment of this College the *corpus discendi* was formed by 45 students, never more than that. This circumstance did not auger very well for the future of this College (Carvalho 1959).

The official abolition of scientific education in the College of Nobles was to appear in the Charter of Law of 10th November 1772, which marks the end of a first phase, until the reform of the Institution. Portugal did not need a noble academy but a privileged high school instead and that is what it became in 1772. Reformist measures were taken over the years, some of a more pedagogical nature and others with more statutory and political purpose.

By resolution of 6th March 1780, the Rhetoric class changed the schedule to the morning and the Greek class to the afternoon: a regime which was maintained until 1828. By a warning of 27th September, new steps were undertaken. The time of French and English classes was set at two hours in each school day. On 13th May 1829, the instruction was carefully rethought: the classical studies were introduced by the study of the Latin and Greek languages. Having acquired the knowledge of both languages, the students began, at the same time, the study of Arithmetic, Geometry and History, and then Moral Philosophy, Rhetoric and Poetry.

The students were assisted by the chaplains in their studies, by determination of the ordinance of 23rd February 1835. Until 1792, classes could be attended only by students and family members, but with the decree of 16th June of that year, it was allowed that outside individuals could attend and the Royal table should outline the advertising plan of the classes. This measure was only affected by the ordinance of May 1834, making the classes public in order to promote and facilitate the development of instruction.

²⁰ Teachers present at the oath: Guilherme José Bilingue (Latin Grammar teacher); José Caetano de Mesquita (Rhetoric and Logic teacher); Miguel Daly (of Irish nationality and Greek teacher); João Ângelo Brunelli (Mathematics teacher); Miguel Franzini (Algebra teacher); Carlos Francisco Ponzoni (Drawing teacher), Andrea Alberti Tedeschini (dance teacher); José Xavier de Carvalho (Cavalry teacher). In the Statutes were also lacking History, French Language, Italian Language, English Language, Military Architecture, Civil Architecture, Experimental Physics and Fencing teachers. It seems that only in 1773 they got a History teacher, and only in 1785 an English and French teacher.

III. The inaugural speech: a pedagogical program and a political philosophy

The inaugural speech of Miguel António Ciera, Prefect of Royal College, given on 19th March presents a first panegyric part, a dedication addressed to Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo. Ciera praised his several virtues and revealed a sincere gratefulness, afraid of not being good enough for the responsibility in question, a *locus a metu* so to speak. There follows an *oratio* structured in twelve parts and divided by chapters, during which various considerations are developed under the main portico of the relevance and pertinence of Letters and Humanities.

The rhetorical and argumentative structure of the discourse is irreproachable, respecting all *partes orationis* and argumentative operations, in a formal and respectable tone, appropriated to the context of public performance. This first panegyric part is like an introductory *captatio benevolentiae*, followed by an *exordium* (I and II chapters) in which the speaker presents himself to the public and explains the subjects, interests and motivations which then give place to the *narratio* (III–V chapters) developing several *collectiones argumentationis*.

Miguel Ciera also develops his reasoning in defense of the Institution, the *contentio* enumerates the reasons why the Nobles are criticized (*congeries sententiarum*) – so often legitimate and well-founded – and how they can defend themselves (VI–VII). In the last part – *peroratio* – we witness the synthesis of purposes and subjects and a sincere commitment for the future (VIII–X), culminating with a final appeal to the audience (XI–XII).

In the formal covering of all these parts we recognize aesthetic characteristics – *puritas, perspicuitas, ornatus, maiestas* – consolidated by several tropes and figures of *elocutio*, while noting the predilection for Ciceronian precepts: *quamobrem quod unum mihi reliquum perfugium est, si quid parum apte aut minus ornate dixero, peto a Vobis ut ignoscatis, nec plus quippiam postuletis quam quantum ab homine uehementer sollicito ac perturbato praestare potest*. Concerning the initial strategy of *captatio benevolentiae*, Miguel Ciera praises the excellence of virtues, the vision and influence of the minister on the thought of the time, stating in a euphemistic dynamic that any person with some discernment would do exactly the same reading of his profile. Always assuming a tone of humility and honesty (probity), the Prefect of the Studies considers that publicly expressing this value and appreciation, the more so after having accepted the responsibility of the position. The pertinent and adjusted evocation of the aphorism of Terence – *nothing that is human can be unrelated to me (homo sum nihil humani a me alienum puto)* – has a dual argumentative functionality at this moment of the speech: i) Ciera so much tries to legitimate the isolation that had been mentioned before as necessary for exclusive devotion to the study of the relevant disciplines and to learning the complex questions of mankind; ii) he intends to intensify the enumeration of the powers of the minister, the superiority of the spirit, wisdom and firmness, common sense and prudence in the measures enacted, always in the light of the classical precepts.

Throughout the speech, Ciera recalls the motivation he received sixteen years before he arrived in Portugal, assuming the functions of engineer, and that led him to prioritize mathematical studies, neglecting the Letters. In the same way, he also emphasizes the

confidence that the king had placed in his minister by delegating to him administration and deliberation in the most important matters, a responsibility which was honored without underestimation or neglect of any detail, as a guarantee of a deservedly posthumous memory.

The *oratio* itself, in twelve chapters, expresses a coherent and cohesive argumentative logic, fertile in ethical-moral considerations, criticism, praise, political reflections and imperial management. If we organize the main thematic guidelines of each of the *partes orationis*, in the first chapter, Ciera assumes the difficulty and the responsibility of the undertaken functions, as being an arduous and ambitious project. He reiterates the need for young people to be educated in the best arts and disciplines, directed towards a dignified and liberal doctrine handed down by honest and suitable men. Then, the main objectives of the institution are presented and clearly enumerated: to promote the loquacity of rhetorical skills, to instill and cultivate the spirits in the magnificence and elevation of the precepts, to strengthen the honor and firmness of the virtues, besides the encyclopedic apprehension of technical and scientific subjects. Michael underlines that we often praise in the others what we ourselves have already known painfully from our own suffering but we also criticize others for seeking something that we vehemently search for ourselves. After divesting himself of his own merits, he recognizes with detachment and authority the value of the masters and the cream of the crop that the adolescents present, praising the dignity of the project, of the place and of what will be taught and learned there. At the end of this first chapter, he addresses the king thanking him for all the benevolence and humanity that is expected to bring fruitful benefits to the whole kingdom.

In the next chapter, the orator marks the urgency of emancipation from the early years of barbarism and ignorance, legitimizing the pertinence of the constitution of laws, guidelines and precepts, and also noting that there has never been, and will not be, a society or nation that has developed consistently without the help of literate men. In fact, in order to reinforce this idea, he presents the analogy with formerly powerful empires that have collapsed with the erosion of time to show that the once flourishing and prestigious culture is now experiencing a period of low appreciation. His main purpose is to recognize that if everything is heading for a decline, one must know how to flow with time and how to adapt to change. He also exemplifies the Lusitanian glory and exuberance, which has exalted itself over other peoples, not only by the art of war and the greatness of the empire, but also by virtue, culture, versatility and wisdom as we can confirm with several historians, orators, poets, jurists and mathematicians, who have left imperishable legacies. In this chapter, moral and philosophical reflections occur in regard to the vulnerability, fragility and ambivalence of the human condition and the need for education as a regulator of the darker side of man. At the end, it is recognized that the Nobility should occupy prominent places and positions of responsibility, exhibiting by their coherent example, a lucid and simple life.

At the beginning of the third chapter, reflection is developed in relation to economic policy, remembering the sustainability of the economic program in its connection with political power. For this reason, it is important to control the impetus and fury of enemies, defending the common good of any kind of political, economic and social encouragements. Imperial tendencies militate towards the expansionist urge, to seek and join other empires leading to greater dimensions, but not ones that endanger the other empires. Wars must be avoided; they can only be only justified if they are to expand goods and wealth, the grandeur

and glory of the Empire or mere extension of frontiers, but it is first necessary to defend and consolidate the present Empire (which was no longer so small). There is an awareness of the dangers of usury and the unbridled ambitions of men – for nothing is so suitable to man as the will and eagerness for increasing possessions.

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The fourth and fifth chapters recognize that true honor, glory and virtue derive from higher studies as part and parcel of them and not only from the distinction or inclusion of the noble title. Beyond political power, only the intelligence of men can expel ignorance, the vicious nature of human affairs. So, the most illustrious virtues are transparency, humanism, temperance and faith. To be true is to value citizens, to strengthen what is in a vulnerable condition, to curb audacity, to induce good customs, to outline the reason for living, to uphold the laws and to defend *Rempublicam* and all this requires persistence, resilience, wisdom, and culture.

In the middle of the speech, in the sixth chapter, the *orator* affirms that nothing is more arduous and difficult than discerning what is prudent and appropriate, in the most judicious consensus or deliberating on the destiny of the citizens and on the highest issues (constitution of laws, deliberations, about war and peace). In fact, defending both collective causes and their own conveniences is a difficult task and a challenge. Using metaphorical thinking in order to persuade and convince the audience, the speaker relies upon the argument from the analogy with the body of Man. Just as the body has a certain disposition of members, with all parts interconnected, conveniently, where blood can be diffused harmoniously and systemically, reaching everywhere, so every city should be composed and organized by nuclei of private families, where reason must reign together with the preservation of culture as guarantor of the essence of life. If these resources are not at the service

of everyone, society will never remain cohesive. We should never forget that the mutability and dynamism of the world require either change, or promotion or the fading of certain factors. We also have to respect the innate qualities and nature of citizens, the idiosyncrasies of men and communities bordering on a happy coexistence are valued. We also have to keep in mind that the multiplicity of opinions concerning war and peace, contradiction and contradictory causes can be perceived and understood clairvoyantly only through reason. At the end of the chapter, Plato is recalled where he affirms that the happy republics are founded by learned and wise men who guide and regulate wisdom with lucidity.

The seventh chapter opens with a rhetorical question reinforcing and reiterating the idea that the correction and regulation of customs, as well as the encouragement to proceed in the right direction of life, cannot be managed by men deprived of competences. Although vice is common among all men, the truth is that it is usually found more often among those who hold great riches, honors and titles and are more predisposed to haughtiness, intolerance and excess. In the next chapter, we recognize a critical tone and consequently a strong commitment because the Institution establishes study plans covering all the above-mentioned issues. Ciera introduces a panegyric to the people who undertook so many conquests, adventures, demands from so many different peoples, and who had never having been defeated either by the magnitude of the wars or by the ignorance of the provinces and foreign peoples. All ages have had their clairvoyant men, especially since they are now inspired by worthy masters. This leads to the conclusion that such people have always been successful and fortunate, although they have tended to underestimate the power of culture and letters in developing optimum results.

In the ninth chapter, it is immediately asked why the letters of defenders and patrons are missing; in the tenth, it is stressed that nobles should be informed individuals not diffuse and disarticulated by public opinion. Advice should be sought from the noblest of citizens. It is in the interest of the nobles to have an uncompleted and vague formation again and be aware that no study, however hard, will ever be enough to reach the end in this process of permanent and continuous learning.

The questions unfold as we move towards the end of the speech. Who will dare to seek friendship and desire its protection? Who will declare war against men of authority and knowledge? These rhetorical questions are strategic to conclude surreptitiously the main argument of this speech, in an emotional *peroratio*.

Now that we have outlined the main *topoi* and the most relevant concerns of this discourse, we must underline some formal and aesthetic features that are at the service of argumentation, under this articulation between speaker's *ethos* and public's persuasion. Syntactically, we recognize the prevalence of comparative sentences with indicative tenses – constructing analogies and similarities to promote the *amplificatio* of ideals; we also note concessive subordinate clauses with both indicative and subjunctive and consecutive clauses, which intend to intensify the *perspicuitas* in a dialectical structure of *refutatio*, and also subordinate clauses relative and conditional, which amplify the rhetorical effect of expectation and suspense.

At the lexical-grammatical level, we note the arrangement of gerundives (indicating futurity and expectation of what is to be implemented), the frequency of adjectives in the superlative absolute synthetic degree, as reinforcement and valorization of the nobles, the verbs are fundamentally declarative, putative and volitional, which give the speech

seriousness in a formal, convinced and assertive tone. Direct and indirect rhetorical questions are assisted by anaphora and parallelism contributing to the ornamentation of the speech (*ornatio orationis*).

Considering *copia rerum et copia verborum*, the reception of classical authors, their influence and resonances are undeniable: “Id vero praestantis ingenii est et hominis in maximis rebus gerendis periti et multiplici doctrinarum genere exculti ut mirari nemo debeat tam exiguum eorum numerum extitisse qui hac laude floruerint” (*De oratore* livro I) or Pro Marcello: “ad bene de litteris sperandum quae signum aliquod sustulisti” (Cic. Marc. 2); “Fruere igitur tuo isto tam eximio atque excellenti bono”. Sallustio’s ideals are also mentioned: “quod in ceteris laudent, aegre inueniant, quod autem reprehendant, diligenter requirant” (Sall. Cat. 3.2.).

In conclusion, this public performance so well-prepared, the arguments so eloquent and coherent and well-organized, the defense of these pedagogical ideals, concluded by the last assumption of Ciera – *ut dubitandum minime sit quin studia nostra tantis auspiciis suscepta felices exitus sint habitura* – almost convince us about the success and the determinant role of this Institution. However, we must point out the possible reasons behind the failure of this pedagogical program and this Institution. In the first place, the inexperience of the public encompassed, clearly unprepared for the requirements and for the method so scrupulously outlined and imposed. In the second place, despite a careful conception and organization of the study plan, there could have been little commitment and motivation on the part of this *corpus docendi*, most of them spoke a foreign language and this represents an obstacle for students. Concerning the *corpus discendi*, the negligent, lazy and abusive students resulted in the ephemeral existence of the College. Other reasons could be stressed: the fee of 120 000 \$ raise that each student should pay, at a time of prime of economic boom in the overseas provinces, when the interest in culture was relegated, and the promotion and affirmation of Letters was to be a slow and time-consuming process.

Despite the unsuccess of this Royal College, Sebastião José Carvalho e Melo was bold and audacious, conceiving a program so ambitious as meritorious, the roots for a public system of education in Portugal. However, like all those who were right ahead of time, the society was not prepared to accept his ideals, even modern and pertinent nowadays. As George Steiner said: “é essencial ser elitista – mas na aceção original da palavra: assumir a responsabilidade pelo ‘melhor’ do espírito humano. Uma elite cultural deve assumir a responsabilidade pelo conhecimento e pela preservação das ideias e dos valores mais importantes, pelos clássicos, pelo sentido das palavras, pela nobreza do nosso espírito” (Steiner 2017: 15–17).

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