

António Manuel Hespanha, *A note on to recent books on the patterns of Portuguese Politics in the 18<sup>th</sup> century*: Nuno Gonçalo Monteiro, D. José, Lisboa, Círculo de Leitores, 2006; José Subtil, *O terramoto político (1755-1759). Memória e poder*, Lisboa, UAL, 2007.

Two of the leading Portuguese historians on Portuguese politics in the 18<sup>th</sup> century published recently two beautiful books, although with somewhat divergent opinions (*pulcritudo in disparitate consistit* ...) on the innovative character of the political pattern of the *pombalismo*. Although the aim and the scope of both books are different, the contrasting positions they adopt about the change of political models along the 18<sup>th</sup> century, comprising both the reigns of João V and José I, are empirically well based and neat enough to invite to a fertile discussion. Both authors are excellent *connoisseurs* of the period; both cultivated a wide prosopographical research which allow them to master the personal networks of the ruling groups; both are theoretically well informed, notwithstanding somewhat divergent empathies: Nuno G. Monteiro more dependent of a (enriched) "social history" approach; José Subtil more attracted by authors like Pierre Bourdieu and Michel Foucault and, therefore, more leaned towards a symbolic-oriented narrative or even towards a narrative where the protagonism is given to objective mechanisms, like communication channels, career's profiles or administrative handling.

With this note, I tried to put the two readings in dialogue, keeping in the lowest profile my own opinions about a theme whose empirical background I cannot dominate as they do.

In a synthetic chapter on the baroque monarchy, Nuno G. Monteiro reassesses the along the book prevailing image of a overwhelming continuity in the patters of politics after the Restoration and José I's reign. For him, once the war was over, the dominant political models departed notably from the corporatist model, installing "a new configuration of centers of power", along with different mechanisms of structuration of social elites" (p. 28).

Insisting on his thesis about the Portuguese singular lack of corporations intermediating the royal and the "(micro)local" levels, the A. reasserts also the fact that Portugal was not a "composite Monarchy"; what is true only if we choose a narrowed glance at formally institutionalized (mostly territorial) corporations; remaining however highly disputable if the scope of vision is enough widened to consider ecclesiastical bodies, proto-bureaucratic bodies provided with legal warranties, even larger municipal corporations, not to speak of the centrifugal overseas *dominia*. For him, the fact that palatine courts seeded in the Court is an argument enough to disregard their capacity of corporate resistance <sup>1</sup>.

Therefore, the key idea is a trend to centralization of the political decision making process around a fewer and fewer ruling group formed by grandees and affiliated people. This reduction of the concept of "centralization" supposes, eventually, a similar shrinking of the concept of realm (and of power), as if both realities were a mere transaction between king and high nobility, letting apart every other political entity, even a so conspicuous as the Church and its multiform apparatus or the *noblesse de robe et de plume* which populated the courts at several levels.

Less affirmative is the author about the growth of royal capacity of ruling. Figures about the growth of royal servants are given which support the conclusion of a "slow" and "petty" reinforcement of crown apparatus (p. 31). However, is hardly possible to find evidence of a stronger political linkage of these new officers to the crown, as their prior highly protective legal statute was kept in force, being untouched by any attempt of installing a commissarial

---

<sup>1</sup> A dubitative hint: One of the chapters of the Cortes of 1641 (ch. 16) asks the king to put an end to the impunity of the courts; however, till 1769 no legislative measure is known coping with the petition. Several other anecdotes could be told on the independence of high courts. An example: a decision of the Relação do Porto (1600) established that the judges have to obey to their superiors (i.e., the president of the court), even against a royal order, the later having the duty of giving the king the reasons of his order (cf. ANTT, Desembargo do Paço, Rep. da Justiça, Registo de Consultas, liv. No. 32, pp. 187). By opposite, Alexandre de Gusmão takes an ambiguous attitude related to a judge of the High Court of Oporto (Ignacio da Costa Quintela) who harshly condemned to death a young boy who stole some goods from a Church: he wrote him, telling that "Your Majesty let me advise Your Lordship that the sttautes were made langhty and quietly and are not to be enforced with hurry, as they always threat more than actually command, namely in criminal cases" (Alexandre de Gusmão, *Collecção de escritos inéditos [...] ,* Porto, 1841, 31); wasn't this a clear invitation to an autonomous play of High Courts ? moreover, transmitted in the form of an advise, as the condemnation was not overruled.

administration in civil government or in the crucial social area of justice. Even if we forget everything but the transactions between the king and the aristocratic group of the *grandees*, it can be said that the incapacity for the king of disciplining<sup>2</sup> the aristocratic playground of the *grandees* which seemingly the *Conselho de Estado* turned into<sup>3</sup> protracted de descerebration of the corporative monarchy, although under a different mood.

The reign of João V, however, would have been a period of the beginning of a silent change (p. 33), pushed by a circle of courtiers educated or informed about the outer world<sup>4</sup>. One of the more convincing arguments is the inversions made in the image of the king as a faithful follower of the religious orthodoxy, as well as of a powerful supporter of the Roman diplomacy. Both aspects were translated in a reinforcement of the centrality of the royal religious spaces – like the Royal Chapel, now *the Basílica Patriarcal*, or the Mafra monastery – in the courtier life. Another relevant point is the progressive loss of protagonism of the *Conselho de Estado*, more and more replaced by informal joints and, eventually, by the decision of the monarch, assisted by his principal minister, the Secretary of State. The installation, in 1736, of three *Secretarias de Estado* could have been a decisive turn in the pattern of government. However, Monteiro, agreeing with other scholars, is very skeptic about the results of such a reform<sup>5</sup>. The system of a private dispatch with an array of high courtiers went on till the end of the reign. From this hazardous evolution (“sem rei nem Roque”, a saying which seems to be contemporary and related to an eminent personage of these *ad hoc* aids of the king), it is not easy to dress a global balance about the central political issue – Portuguese government was or not inaugurating a new pattern, definitely away of the corporatist model? The “fall of the State Council” means surely a gain in independence of the king towards a permanent set of *grandees*; however, it does not necessarily lead to a planned despotism, as it will develop in the enlightened principalities of Europe; it rather follows the wave of a hazardous despotism, swapping policies with the swapping of the counselors.

Living in a golden and sleepy peaceful moment, the strength of a planned policy can be reading in the scarce quantity and in the poor quality of the produced legislation, in the lack of consistent plans to the huge issue of overseas policy (in spite of a bundle of poorly enforced measures taken for Brazil, where the gold rush was opened). As Monteiro says, if we discount the stunning foreign policy, what remains is the traditional keeping count of services and awards and some (ill-tolerated by the Justice Houses) surveying of judicial decisions. Mostly, the palatine administrative paperwork concerned the management of the grace, according to a pattern which is the core of the corporatist monarchy<sup>6</sup>. The referred “silent change” could rather be described as an involution, retroacting the government by councils, to a pure personal erratic royal government, inspired by whoever on whatever, like it occurred in the late medieval times. Nothing more distant from the planned despotism, inaugurated by subsequent events and subsequent personages.

The evaluation of the pattern of the government under Jose I, is subdued to a theoretical divide between the pattern of a government by *validos*, according to a 17<sup>th</sup> style (Sully, Richelieu, Olivares) and that of a *cabinet government*, lead by projects and not by personages, and embodying the intellectual *apport* of the Enlightenment. Tightly linked to this divide, there is a more fundamental one: that between personal rule and Enlightened rule, the later prevailing in Northern and Central European polities (cf. p. 230 ss.).

The distinction is rough and only ideal-typical, as Monteiro stresses. Anyway, the 17<sup>th</sup> oriented form of rule would be seemingly characterized by:

---

<sup>2</sup> Directly or via some political high broker (namely a *valido* or a prime minister).

<sup>3</sup> As Monteiro reminded, quoting E. Prestage, “The King is a Prince with no lack of spirit [...] ; however, as he feels himself too much dependent from the nobility [...] he doesn’t dare to decide anything by his own, forwarding everything to the Council of State [...] A principal Minister does not exit in Portugal; rather are the members of the Conselho de Estado who are called ministers” (French report, 1684).

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Monteiro, p. 47 ss..

<sup>5</sup> Whose failure J. Subtil explains by the bottleneck of information caused by a ill-organized paper flow.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Monteiro, p. 37: “as matérias da política corrente [...] são ainda e sempre as mesmas”

- the existence of a *valido* or prime minister, whose power came from the mere insinuation in king's will;
- the overwhelming dominance of the court over the public space, giving no room for a public opinion independent from that of the ruler;
- absence of an intellectual and political linkage between intellectuals and the ruler(s);
- absence of a ministerial government;
- absence of a coherent set of political program, all the efforts being consumed in a personal possession of the royal will;
- reinforcement of the ruler's network of clients;
- enrichment of the ruler.

The question is; was this the situation under Pombal ? Or corresponds Pombal's rule to the pattern of the most conspicuous Enlightened monarchies, like that of the Walpole's England, the Fleury's or Turgot's France, the Friedrich's Prussia or the von Caunitz's / von Haugwitz's Austria ?

By sure, Portugal was not neither England, nor France, nor Prussia, nor Austria, nor even Tuscany. As none of them corresponded to the other. Once more, the idea of a *Sonderweg* proves to be the projection of the conception according to which history has canonical models of development.

Easier and wiser is to answer the first question. Was Portugal's rule, under Pombal, still within the models of a *valido's* regime, schematically drafted above ?

It seems uncontroversial that Pombal exploited in the most efficient way the aftermaths of the earthquake, namely in the sense of making the king believe that he was his first aid. However, actually, he was already it. As he did not belong to the traditional elite of *grandees*<sup>7</sup>, this was not a meager exploit; and, apart from protections he surely had in the court, his experience of life in more "enlightened" countries was his more valuable asset. Secondly, he proved, in the following years, that his fame was not a misty legend; he was able, not only of domesticating men, but also of ruling a kingdom, of introducing reforms, of bettering administration, of reforming education (till the point of discussing personally some core university programs), of reorganizing the finance administration, of rebuilding the army, as he supervised the rebuilt of the capital city.

He surely had an overwhelming power on public space, with no break to allow the expressing of dissent. However, taking advantage of his lectures, along with the lectures of his closest supporters, he import – selectively, it is true – the results of debates running outside. Everyone who reads the cumbersome prologues of the contemporary legislation or those who studied the academic programs or the academic *compendia* – from where a new generation, who feed or carried on the revolution, made their minds – cannot but be impressed by the underlying *thesaurus* of readings and by the consequent renewal of doctrinal horizons. Without daring to risk what was perceived as the (inner) *pax publica*, Pombal and the *pombalistas* profit from the (outer) public space. Till the extreme of enforcing in Portugal, in crucial matters ("nos assuntos políticos, económicos, mercantis e marítimos", II, V, 2, § 16) and by a general clause which allow every discretion of lawyers and courts, the laws of the "most cultivated and polite Nations of Europe" (*Estatutos da Universidade*, Faculdade de Leis). This was the linkage we can find between the intellectual elite and the rulers. Not a personal contact, not spectacular invitations to foreign *philosophes*; instead, this almost immaterial contact books efficiently and silently provide. Through laws and reforms, through propaganda, a virtual public space was eventually set up, whose flourishing is already visible in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century and which, later on, carried and gave birth to the revolution. Contemporary eminent enlightened authors – like Luís Antonio Verney; Luigi Muratori e Cesare Bonesana, Marquise of Beccaria – celebrated Pombal as their ideological comrade (s. J. Subtil, p. 154 s.). They belonged to the Italian branch of the Enlightenment, what means that they represented one of the most efficient and wide influent

---

<sup>7</sup> Synthesis of his biographical notes in Monteiro, 48 ss..

stream of the reformatory thought, covering an array of political themes more vivid and larger than any other<sup>8</sup>.

The existence of a government depends upon concepts. Is a polyphonic body, like the *Conselho de Estado*, a government? Or, on the other extreme, is a cohort of faithful followers a cabinet? Most certainly not; instead, something in the between: a compound of self-minded people gathered according a common sense on the guidelines of a policy, but with the possibility of dissenting, perhaps without shining results, but also without dramatic risks. Both Nuno G. Monteiro and José M. Subtil are amidst the few historians who, knowing well the pombaline political personnel, can decide if this condition was fulfilled in the day by day handling of public affairs. However, if it was not, the lack is not to be put on the side of the inexistence of a strategic program, rather on the side of a insufficient autonomy of the ministers.

Those ministers were, for the most, clear Pombal's creatures. Anyway, not according to the pattern of the old beneficial system, where services were asked under the condition of economic (mostly, landed) rewards. Clients are, nowadays, people who deserve political trust and is minimally able to perform the required skilled tasks. As it was evident after his fall, Pombal did not have an eager cohort of clients, but perhaps a legion of followers, more or less critical, as they after express and went on expressing in the decades to come, celebrating his hero as a reformer. And surely not only because of alleged Masonic or anti-clerical comradeship.



José M. Subtil's book has a more precise focus. His point is to emphasize the major influence of Lisbon's earthquake (1755) in the structural change of political system in modern Portugal.

This implies that, for him, the thesis of a meaningful political reform under João V cannot cope with empirical data, neither under prosopographic nor in what concerns institutional pattern of government, political personnel, organization or political/administrative culture. Being a skilled expert both on the prosopography of ruling groups – included their shadowed level of pure bureaucrats and magistrates<sup>9</sup> – and on the structure and acting of high administration<sup>10</sup>, he could scrutinize finely the processes of political decision making, as well as the group of effective holders of decision posts. Placing the divide in the years right after 1755, Subtil means that the early years of Jose I's reign were still largely subdued to the traditional patterns of governance, which prevailed all along the reign of his father, who mostly kept the institutional design, the composition of political elites and the overall model of politics<sup>11</sup>.

His conclusions point to the permanence of the old system of government. According to his opinion, based on a careful analysis of the ruling personnel and institutions, João V's reign was not a period of sensible innovation, considered the practices of power of the late 17<sup>th</sup> century: grandees' hegemony, traditional lawyers' majority in palatine courts and councils, lifelong holding of posts, combined with the acknowledgement of rights of succession of offsprings of their holders. Based on an account based on the act of enthronization of Jose I, Subtil concludes that Court's posts are still held by high aristocrats in 65 % of the cases, mostly representatives of old noble houses (prior to João V: 85 %) (s. p. 63). From the 85 members of court councils, 71 are high judges (*desembargadores*). Most of the councils and courts are populated by old men at the end of their careers: this is the case of the *Desembargo do Paço* (p. 74), *Conselho da Fazenda* (which Subtil considers as an organ of coordination of policies, p. 76<sup>12</sup>), *Mesa da Consciência* (p. 77), *Conselho Ultramarino* (p. 78) and the *Senado da Câmara*

---

<sup>8</sup> From criminal law to judicial organization; from ecclesiastical policy to political philosophy.

<sup>9</sup> He wrote a remarkable array of (unfortunately dispersed or yet in the form of *working papers*) of papers on the judicial legal elite (s. the final bibliography of his book).

<sup>10</sup> Taking advantage of the work he realized or supervised on archival organization.

<sup>11</sup> In spite of a reform of State Secretaries (1736), historiographically over evaluated, though historically ineffective and soon reabsorbed (cf. p. 86).

<sup>12</sup> This affirmation needing some further support.

(p. 80), *Casa da Suplicação*, which nevertheless benefits from a deep renewal at the end of the period<sup>13</sup>).

Subtil's reading of the invitees and ceremonial structure of Jose I's enthronization confirms that, at this moment, the symbolic order of the old politics still prevailed (p. 87).

Before entering the analysis of Pombal's period, he makes the divide clearer, by pointing out the set of characteristics which, being ascertained by historical evidence, would mark the turning point to a post-corporatist administration:

- a. Privilege cedes to personal trust and merit;
- b. Civil posts evolve from patrimonialism to precariousness, becoming dependent of monarch's discretion;
- c. Traditional Courts and councils with a stable legal status and a due process are replaced by *ad hoc* and temporary Joints and *Intendentes*, acting as mere commissars of the Head of the Government;
- d. Symbolic power shifts from grandees to political loyalty and professional merits;
- e. Lawyers reassess their power by molding their education and culture to a new legal paradigm, centered on public utility or, in a broader version, utilitarianism;
- f. The court is replaced by the government as the *locus* for politics.

According to Subtil, the triggering effect of the whole change was the Lisbon's earthquake of 1755, which thus provoked the final collapse of the corporatist and polisynodal political system.

Also Monteiro – as well as others, namely Ana Cristina Araújo - emphasize the political impact of the 1755's catastrophe (s. p. 81 ss), pointing out the way it promoted the personal power of Pombal, who take advantage of the situation to grip the reins of power, even before it was formalized by his nomination as *Secretário de Estado dos Negócios do Reino* (almost six months later, in 4.5.1756). His rush to the royal palace after the earthquake to assist the monarch<sup>14</sup>; the creation of an inorganic government, where the grandees and the presidents of the palatine courts were mostly present, but rapidly overflowed by the flood of written orders coming from Pombal<sup>15</sup>; the dramatic widening of the range of State action<sup>16</sup>; the eventual affirmation of the *Secretaries of State*, as a center of political decision (although acting as a Pombal's *factotum*). However, as the guideline of Monteiro's narrative is to put the emphasis on an ongoing process of change, beginning in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century, and whose last phase (the *pombalismo*) was seemingly an effect of dramatization, propaganda and apologetic historiography, the structural character of the changes tend to be lessened.

The opposite, in Subtil's view. The earthquake has the concentrated – in time and in a central political spot – impact of a war. Unattended and sudden destruction<sup>17</sup> of the administrative apparatus (p. 112 ss.<sup>18</sup>), Herculean tasks to be performed, dramatic acceleration of the administrative rhythms, needs of technical skills and of a severe centralization of decision and action. The “providential” character of the disgrace to force modernization was perceived by some contemporaries, who compared it to a gigantic flood, who is to be counteracted urgently, efficiently and harshly, if necessary (s. p. 111). It was no more a far away and seasonal war. It

---

<sup>13</sup> Surely due to the fact that this Court was not a terminus in a bureaucratic career; anyway, the average age of the *desembargadores* was 53 years.

<sup>14</sup> Which also denotes a fine sense of understanding of the seriousness of the situation, along with an acute political flair.

<sup>15</sup> But, probably, also paralyzed by their own inability to such a new pattern of governing.

<sup>16</sup> Described with more detail for the years to come in his chap. 10.

<sup>17</sup> Synthesis of the damages, p. 125 ss..

<sup>18</sup> With richness of details concerning the everyday life of the administrative acting.

was now and here that the disaster struck. Practical needs call for expedite measures, which served as tentative essay to future definitive reforms. In some cases, as Subtil points out, the situation was similar to the state of exception, allowing to ignore the sacred private rights, like that of property. As it happened in the destroyed zones of the city, where the reconstruction forced to fiction a *tabula rasa* concerning the old rights of property on the soil (s. p. 130, 134 ss.)<sup>19</sup>, a brand new sensitiveness to public interest – a key concept in the years to come, before and after the revolutions – was coming into being in a civil context; or, due to the fraudulent bankruptcies, in the domain of economic activity, where an *ad hoc* Joint was installed to prevent and punish attempts against the Public Good, reinforced mechanisms of economic control congenial to mercantilism, now combined with a new sense of *disciplina*.

Also the style of choosing people and of gathering them in an efficient tool of active government lead to the constitution of task-oriented teams (s. 118 ss.), were people from diverse profile were melted, a so aggressive twist in the social established hierarchies that only a catastrophe could blur. Later on, when the spirits recovered (s. p. 120), it was already to late to return to the old hierarchies. Moreover, the practice of government, itself, established a new standard of choice of personnel: personal trust, technical skills and efficiency (s. p. 121 s.).

This overwhelming political rupture would be doubled by another political earthquake – the (problematic) attempt on the king's life (1758), followed by an alleged conjuration against Pombal himself, consisting of criticism which decisions of high politics confirmed by the crown. Taking advantage of the impious events, Pombal create a notorious political investigation commission – the *Junta da Inconfidência* –, to which he invited faithful or dubious political supporters. This bright stratagem allowed him to test the fidelity of the invitees, enrolling those who accepted the commission among his faithful political cohort; expelling from the court or sending to jail the reluctant ones. As a side effect, this act traced a political line amidst the political class, despise and hate cutting the new chosen political personnel, seen as collaborating in a dirty work, from the older elite, linked to the members of the traditional aristocracy, indicted as members of the conjuration. Finally, he still obtained the decapitation of the paramount high nobility. The way was paved for new political personnel, while the active government asked as a response to the wreck of the realm's capital claimed for an active and effective government, similar to the models arising in Central-Western Europa, a zone familiar to the former diplomat in Josephine Vienna.

To Subtil, the brand new State summit, formed by Pombal's unconditionals, was the government of 1756 (7.9.), politically homogeneous, faithful to Pombal, integrating his own brother Francisco Xavier Mendonça Furtado, ex-governor of the Brazilian Maranhão and seemingly his privileged informer on Brazilian affairs (p 90). The matrix of a government of "criaturas" still stands till 1766, while the military personal protection of the Prime Minister is reinforced and the core institution of "police" (*Intendência Geral de Polícia*, 1760) is installed (p. 99). The traditional palatine courts were not only repopulated with new politically updated personnel<sup>20</sup>, but strictly controlled on their decisions, namely by the reform of a discrete institution, less cared by historians, the *Procuradoria Geral da Coroa*, whom the allowance was granted of surveying the *consultas* (advices) of the traditional courts, before the concentration of the final decision in the *Secretaria de Estado dos Negócios do Reino* headed by Pombal<sup>21</sup> and the core tool of government<sup>22</sup>. His members belonged to the cream o the "pombalistas" (José Seabra da Silva, João Pereira Ramos de Azevedo Coutinho, José António Salter de

---

<sup>19</sup> Subtil argues that this weakening of the concept of property and its subduing to public interest was the source of later land reforms concerning entailed property (*morgados, capelas*) and life annuities over estates (*cansos*).

<sup>20</sup> The cleaning of the *Desembargo do Paço* is finished in 1761. The *Casa da Suplicação* is put under the presidency of an indefectible (Pedro Gonçalves Cordeiro Pereira). The same pattern of renewal was set up for the other palatine courts (*Mesa da Consciência e Ordens, Conselho de Estado e Senado da Câmara de Lisboa*) (cf. p. 97).

<sup>21</sup> Cf. José Manuel Subtil, *O Desembargo do Paço (1750-1833)*, Lisboa, Univ. Autónoma, 1996, chap. II.

<sup>22</sup> Controlling key departments, like the *Intendência Geral de Polícia*, the *Erário Régio* – itself restructured in a centralized and efficiency-oriented pattern -, the *Junta do Comércio* – supervising the new mercantile Companies (cf. Subtil, pp. 99-100).

Mendonça)<sup>23</sup>. Along with the domestication of the traditional administration, a new one was installed, inspired both the intential and commissarial patters of France and Central Europe (cf. 93)<sup>24</sup>. The personal dependency of this new type of civil servants was reinforced by their loose professional links: the *alvará* of 22.12.1761 (s. p. 102 s.) declared emphatically that their posts “had the nature of mere precarious service acting (*serventia*), always removable at my royal discretion”; a topic further widened and developed in a subsequent general royal charter of law of 23.11.1770, where the civil servants’ “consuetudinary right” of inheriting parent’s posts was declared “erroneous, abusive and unfounded”.

Precisely because of its narrower scope, Subtil can be more detailed and systematic on his topic. On the other hand his personal style of anticipating the goals to be proved and progressing on the disposal of the required evidence makes his discourse very clear and convincing. Monteiro, by opposite, has a more complex task in hands. His topic is the global history of a reign, furthermore centered on the person of the king. Pombal surely is the image reflected by the king; however, this bizarre optical effect – pinpointed by the editorial project - forces to blur his portrait, as if one had to describe Phillip I’s face by his shadowy reflect on the background mirror of *As Meninas*. Less shadowy could be some concept-oriented discussions – namely those on enlightenment, despotism and government on chap. 14 – or the fuzzy assessment on the renewal of political patterns during João V’s reign, an evaluation whose only sense, in a book on José I, is to introduce a guideline which is unrelentingly followed all over the book, that of lowering of Pombal’s political innovation – inaugurated before him, mixed and balanced during him, almost subdued after him<sup>25</sup>.

Summing up. Two worth contributions, here presented in an adversarial style, both equally able to give a new breath to the discussion on the Portuguese political system of the late Ancien Regime.

---

<sup>23</sup> About the politics of reshaping the central administration between 1766 and 1777, s. Subtil’s book, . DP, cap. IV.

<sup>24</sup> While in the first half of the 18th century only half a dozen of posts of *Intendente* are created, the second half knows the installment of half a hundred (v. Subtil, p. 101).

<sup>25</sup> This last step is very hard to prove in what concerns the fulcral point of legal education. Almost one hundred years later, Pombal’s creatures amidst Coimbra’s Law School – namely, Pascoal de Melo – went on structuring the legal education – and, therefore, framing the intellect of liberal State elite -, in Portugal and in Brazil.