

# Immigrant teaching: male and female teachers in the Slavic and Italian Colonies in Paraná (1878-1938)

## Magistério imigrante: professores e professoras nas Colônias Eslavas e Italianas no Paraná (1878-1938)

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#### ABSTRACT

This article deals with the different profiles of teachers of Slavic and Italian ethnic schools in Paraná from the late 19th century to 1938, covering the beginning of schooling experiences until compulsory nationalization. The objective is to discuss who these teachers were and the perspectives of Governments and the Church concerning their professional performance and tensions established to the office of the magisterium in the incorporation of legal precepts. The research question is to understand who the teachers in immigrant schools were, how the state represented them and sought to control their actions, and how these teachers mobilized themselves concerning the difficult task of teaching. The empirical ballast comprises official documents such as Government Reports, educational legislation, and institutional records of the ethnic schools and religious congregations. The results indicate different teaching profiles: from elected community members with no pedagogical training to those with professional training, such as priests, holy women, and intellectuals. In the 1920s, the Government of Paraná intensified the process of nationalizing children through schooling, which mobilized the ethnic school associations to launch tactics to confront state actions and qualify teachers.

Keywords: Migrant Teaching. Italian Ethnic Schools. Slavic Ethnic Schools. Parana.

#### RESUMO

Este artigo versa sobre os diferentes perfis dos professores das escolas étnicas italianas e eslavas no Paraná, do final do século XIX a 1938, período que abrange o início das experiências de



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escolarização até a nacionalização compulsória. Objetiva-se discutir quem eram estes docentes e quais foram as perspectivas dos Governos e da Igreja com relação a sua atuação profissional e tensões estabelecidas ao ofício do magistério na incorporação dos preceitos legais. A questão de pesquisa consiste em compreender quem eram os professores das escolas de imigrantes, como o Estado os representou e buscou controlar suas ações, e como esses professores se mobilizaram em relação a difícil tarefa de ensinar. O lastro empírico é composto por documentos oficiais como: os Relatório de Governo, a legislação educacional, documentos institucionais das escolas étnicas e das congregações religiosas. Os resultados indicam que existiram diferentes perfis docentes: desde membros eleitos pela comunidade sem formação pedagógica até aqueles com qualquer formação profissional como os padres, as religiosas e os intelectuais. Nos anos de 1920, o governo do Paraná intensificou o processo de nacionalização das crianças por meio da escola, e isso mobilizou as associações escolares étnicas, a lançar táticas que buscassem enfrentar as ações estatais e qualificar os professors.

Palavras chave: Magistério Migrante. Escolas Étnicas Italianas. Escolas Étnicas Eslavas. Paraná.

#### Introduction

Until the 1930s, Paraná received more than one hundred thousand European immigrants, who were directed to the ethnic colonies. At this juncture, the need to establish a social, economic, and cultural life guided the creation of small communities and their respective institutions: houses, churches, and schools. The process of primary public schooling in Paraná happened concomitantly with the creation of colonies and the establishment of ethnic schools. Such a process occurred because the many school institutions made possible by these immigrants also served the Brazilian population, which suffered from the lack of standardized education at that period. It happened because the many school institutions made possible by these immigrants also served the Brazilian population, which suffered from the lack of standardized education at that period. The absence of public elementary schools, especially in the interior of Paraná, was a reality until 1938 (RENK; MASCHIO, 2020). Consequently, the lack of schools unveiled another problem: the absence of trained professionals to act as teachers. The Paraná authorities recognized the problem of the lack of schools and, at the same time, the need for normalists (teacher trainers). In the 19th century, a school's opening was linked to a teacher's existence. The school constituted itself in the teacher figure, and in general, its opening depended on the existence of that teacher. In the same way, if the teacher were absent, the school would cease to exist.

Following the national trend of creating Normal Schools, Paraná was the seventh province to institute, by Law 278 of April 19, 1870, its first Normal School to train elementary school teachers (PARANÁ, 1870). The institutionalization of the Normal Schools brought up a singular administrative or pedagogical instituting process, which

enabled the training of primary teachers from several regions of the country (ARAÚJO; FREITAS; LOPES, 2008).

In the space of the immigrant colonies, the lack of qualified teachers to work in the elementary school was also a real circumstance. But children still had schools. The communities themselves, especially with the help of the Catholic Church and the governments from the countries of origin, organized themselves and created ethnic and religious schools, buying the furniture, the teaching materials, and paying the teachers, among other necessary steps.

Thus, since the early 20th century, the Directors of Public Instruction of Paraná called for teacher education schools. In the 1920s, the management of César Pietro Martinez as the head of the General Inspectorate of Education of Paraná had as its mission 'to bring civilization' and literacy to the interior of Paraná (PARANÁ, 1920). Among the strategies of action of the Inspector was the constant and uninterrupted inspection of schools, the creation of the Normal Schools of Ponta Grossa and Paranaguá to train teachers to serve the elementary school (RENK, 2009; MARTINEZ, 1923, PARANÁ, 1920).

In several reports of that period, the Inspector General of Education expressed the desire to have a teaching staff for elementary schools made solely of *normalists*. But he recognized that this condition would be plausible only by expanding the number of Normal Schools in the state. Furthermore, he criticized how the State tried to solve the problem of the lack of *normalists* with strategies such as granting subsidies to private schools or submitting candidates to examinations to become effective teachers (PARANÁ, 1920). These subsidies admitted foreign teachers to the public teaching profession without establishing precise criteria as to which qualifications they should possess for teaching.

Martinez also showed concern about rural schools, which were characterized by educational institutions set in small villages and immigrant colonies. The distance prevented good teachers from being appointed to these rural schools. In addition, the latter locations highlighted an even more significant problem: they had an almost exclusive number of foreign schools (ethnic or confessional), and, consequently, the classes were taught by teachers who were also primarily foreigners and in their native language.

According to Cesar Prieto Martinez:

The need to fill vacant chairs in the country's interior has motivated the facilitation of examinations and given entry to teaching people of insignificant competence. There is no doubt that all rendered some service, but we also recognize that the inefficiency of such schools is in direct proportion to the modest preparation of those who govern them. Nor can one demand that someone give what he does not possess (PARANÁ, 1920, p. 22. Translated by the authors).

Taking a close look at the constitution of the teaching staff of these institutions, the Inspector General of Education of Paraná reported the effort to convince the *normalist* teachers to assume the regency of elementary schools far from urban centers. Only the *normalist* teacher could guarantee the Portuguese language teaching, effectively alphabetizing the voluminous child population that attended the rural schools.

Thus, the first decades of the twentieth century were marked by significant tensions around the constant surveillance, and school supervision carried out by the Teaching Inspectorate, whose reports denote the search for the professionalization of the teaching profession and the replacement of unqualified teachers and foreigners by nationals. In contrast, immigrant communities and instructional associations created resistance tactics (RENK, 2012).

The history of immigrant teaching in the foreign colonies in Brazil has long been treated by historians of education, among whom we can cite Kreutz (2000). Moreover, many investigations have sought to explain the profile of Italian immigrant teachers in the Italian colonial region of Rio Grande do Sul. Noteworthy are the works of Luchese and Barausse (2021); Ciconetto and Luchese (2021); Luchese and Grazziotin (2015); Faggion and Luchese (2014), which analyzed the role, memories, conflicts, and tensions experienced by teachers in the colonies. Similarly, Barausse (2019) researched rural teachers, memories of Venetian immigrants, and the participation of settlers in the organization and teaching of the first ethnic schools.

In Paraná, one can highlight the works of Renk (2012; 2014), which discuss the role of ethnic school teachers in the maintenance of Slavic ethnic identity. Maschio (2012; 2021) also addressed in his works the contribution of immigrants as teachers in the schools of the Italian colonies in Curitiba. And Costa (2020) dealt with catechists and their importance in teaching the Ukrainian language.

Thus, the present study uses the historical method, which guides the theoreticalmethodological analysis based on the dialogues of Cultural History. The documental sources comprised Government Reports, letters, and requirements, the materials located in the archives of the ethnic schools, and the speeches of former students in the proposed period. It is understood that the sources keep the indications, the traces of the subjects' actions that allow us to 'read' and understand how the teaching profession was in the Slavic and Italian ethnic communities in Paraná (FARGE, 2009; GINSBURG, 1989).

In this article, we ask who these subjects were, how the State and the Catholic Church represented them and sought to control their actions, and how these teachers mobilized themselves about the difficult task of teaching in such heterogeneous environments as ethnic schools.

One understood that immigrant teaching was instituted, setting up hybrid processes. For Burke (2003, p. 31), "we must see hybrid forms as the result of multiple encounters rather than as the result of a single encounter, whether successive encounters add new elements to the mix or reinforce the old elements." Thus, hybrid processes are always unfinished because they constantly allow movements in and out of different territories. The transit between other places and ideas allows the constitution, consciously and unconsciously, of hybrid practices. Therefore, hybridization processes involving artifacts, practices, and peoples are permanently open to the possibilities of transiting (BURKE, 2003). It is understood, therefore, that the foreign teachers transited through different territories, allowing comings and goings. They established multiple encounters, favoring the circularity of artifacts, ideas, and representations, which allowed them also to develop a hybrid knowledge of how to do/be a teacher.

However, the processes of hybridization, with which the immigrant teaching profession was shaped in the colonies of Paraná, can also be identified in the constitution of the teacher. Most of these immigrants taught alongside other professional activities. Peasants, merchants, journalists, politicians, intellectuals, liberal professionals, priests, and religious women saw teaching as a sensible way to enhance personal or institutional goals. It was a hybrid activity within a culture that was also hybrid.

For Hall (2009), hybrid culture is characterized by a potential "cross of cultures." Hybridization is not synonymous with fusion without contradiction but makes it possible to understand forms of conflict. "Hybridization: sociocultural processes in which discrete structures or practices that exist separately combine to generate new structures, objects, and practices (CANCLINI, 2011, p. 19).

In this article, it is essential to understand the hybridization process of the subject member of the ethnic community. Hybridization was in the daily life of the ethnic communities in Brazilian territory, which sought to maintain their identity, especially with the use of the mother tongue in school and community spaces. In this sense, Poutignat and Streiff-Fenart (1998) analyze that ethnicity is a continuous process of construction and reconstruction, which manifests itself in the interaction between groups.

In immigration contexts, with deterritorialization and territorial relocation, subjects seek to maintain traditions and significant cultural elements while, at the same time, producing new social interactions and symbolic cultural forms (CANCLINI, 2011). One can think with Hall (2005, p. 91) that, in a certain way, life in the ethnic colonies was disconnected from a time, from a place, from Brazilian history, remembering through festivities, celebrations, and school the cultural elements of the homeland of origin, thus creating a specific tradition and producing new forms of culture. In this sense, the teacher in an ethnic school was a subject that transited between different symbolic universes and between knowledge and doings that allowed them to be and produce new contexts and social roles.

In the case of the teaching profession exercised by a farmer/community member, this subject transited in different spaces, engendering hybrid identity processes with a "reorganization of cultural settings and constant intersections of identities" (CANCLINI, 2011, p.309). Identity is a "mobile celebration" because it is formed and transformed, and "the subject assumes different identities at different times" (HALL, 2005, p. 12).

In order to achieve the proposed objective, this article is organized into three parts: the first part discusses the profile of the teachers of ethnic schools in the Slavic and Italian colonies, highlighting the teacher as a member but also as the protagonist of an ethnic schooling process. He was an agent who implicitly guided the community organization but was not exempt from the tensions arising from an embryonic system of primary education constituted at that time in Paraná. The second part discusses the profile of teachers in Slavic and Italian schools, considering the mediation of the Catholic Church in the definition of being a teacher. In the third part, we discuss the role of the Italian and Polish states in affirming the hybrid practice of immigrant teachers in the constitution of agents with the most diverse backgrounds to work as teachers in ethnic schools. Finally, the final considerations try to present, in a concise way, some concerns about the similarities and differences in the formation process and the exercise of immigrant teaching in the two ethnic groups compared here.

*Il maestro e il colono, mistrz i colonista, uchytel'i selyanyn*: the craftsmanship of the immigrant master in Italian and Slavic colonies.

In most isolated or rural schools, the teaching was done by lay teachers without a Normal School education. While institutionalizing primary education in the colonies, teaching was an important tactic used by the settlers to make the government aware of the need to create schools.

The *modus operandi*, which shaped the creation of schools in the colonization regions, had as a starting point the definition of the teacher, followed by the gathering of children of school age, as established by the educational legislation in force. Later, they set up an improvised place, usually a settler's house. Finally, the immigrant who would be responsible for the teacher position (trained, self-appointed, or designated) prepared, with the agreement of the emigrant families, the petition requesting the government a subsidy for the school.

Most of the time, when the government refused or delayed meeting the request, the families kept the class, and the teacher took over the school activities, thus establishing ethnic-community schools (RENK; MASCHIO, 2020). It is worth noting that ethnic community schools contributed significantly to the lack of public schools. Still, they were also fundamental to ensure the maintenance of the ethnic identity of the group after they arrived in the colonies. In effect, they made it possible for teachers trained in their country of origin to exercise their profession or for settlers to have the opportunity to perform functions other than those related to agricultural activities.

The performance of the settlers as teachers at the time when they established the first elementary schools in the Italian colonies brought together, in a hybrid way, the characteristics of being immigrants and the tacit knowledge of teaching. Regarding this, it is worth explaining that:

Being a teacher was an alternative to agricultural work, and, especially for women, it was a possibility of an accepted and recognized profession. Many of these teachers were marked by the migration experience and, like their students, were characterized by the different pronunciations of Portuguese. They also had an affinity for tastes and customs, such as culinary, religious, dress, way of being, socializing, and behaving. So, culturally, they resembled the students (FAGGION; LUCCHESE, 2014, p. 266).

Giovanni Batista Marconi, Giacomina Stofella, Girolamo Giareta, Giovanni Antonio Tosin, and Francisco Zardo are some Italian settlers who created and conducted schools in such an unknown land. Some declared to be educated; others were not. They gained the trust of the families, the religious, and sometimes of the national political authorities involved in organizing the social and community life of the colonies in Paraná.

It is important to note that:

In the requests for the opening of schools to fill many of the positions, there were initial indications from the families who knew qualified people or whom they believed to be so, indicating a name. It is worth remembering that the communities' attempts to arbitrate on who would be the teacher that would work in the school were constant. (GRAZZIOTIN: LUCHESE, 2015, p. 344).

For Slavs, ethnic-community initiatives also sought to solve the problem of the lack of schools and, consequently, the lack of teachers. The following account, dated 1911, from the community of Rio Claro, in the interior of Paraná, exemplifies this condition.

[...] The T. S. of Dorizon Society invites all the residents of Rio Claro, those to whom the future interests of their children are dear, to the meeting to be held on Sunday, October 1st. At this meeting, the pro-building of a school for the children of all Rio Claro residents should be resolved, as well as the construction of a house for children who live far away (HORBATIUK, 1989, p. 315-17).

The settlers' action reveals the concern about attending the children's schooling but also shows education as a value and a sign of distinctiveness concerning the Brazilians (BOURDIEU, 2011). The communities' initiative in creating associations of instructional character was remembered by P.K., who lived this experience as a child, in 1915, in the interior of Paraná.

> At that time, Dorizon [...] there were many children of school age, but no school. So, they formed a committee, with a president, secretary, and treasurer, to found the school. But there was no teacher. My mother had studied in Europe until the fifth grade at the Escola Popular, as they called it there. So, they chose my mother as a teacher there around 1915. My father had a big table where he cut things, and he accommodated the students, but who were few. My mother taught

reading, and he did the math; that was the only thing [...]. All in Ukrainian (P.K., 2008 *apud* in RENK, 2009, p. 58).

By triggering the memory, the deponent reports the possible conditions that the community managed to ensure the children's school. One can note that the interviewee's mother, a housewife, took on the teaching profession because she had an elementary education in Europe, reconciling it with caring for the home, family, and education.

Teaching, seen as an activity that generated income, an alternative to other jobs in farming, for example, was also extended as a possibility of productive work to other members of the family, especially women, who took on the regency of elementary schools in the colonies from a young age.

Still in the late 19th century, in the Italian colony, Santa Maria do Novo Tyrol da *Boca da Serra*, when he saw his ethnic-community school becoming a public school, in 1879, the Italian immigrant Giovanni Baptista Marconi requested the government to create a public school for girls, suggesting his daughter, Antonieta Marconi, as a teacher. When requesting his appointment as "master" in that colony, the immigrant justified that he was not able to work in the lots and that "as a public teacher, he could teach Portuguese and Italian language" (MARCONI, 1878, p. 74). Moreover, he emphasized that his daughter's performance as a teacher would be under his supervision. He sought to justify mastering the vernacular language to win the subsidy and to convince the political authorities that family members could establish themselves as teachers in that Italian colony since he claimed to have attended the Scuola Normale while still in Italy. The Public Instruction regulations in force did not prevent foreign citizens from taking on public teaching, provided they could prove their majority, morality, and professional ability and professed the official State religion (MASCHIO, 2012). However, the decision of the nomination passed through the sieve of the political authorities, who sometimes submitted the candidates to examinations.

It should be noted that many Italian and Slav ethnic-community schools were subsidized, becoming public schools only a few years later. In the meantime, the State hired the teacher temporarily, guaranteeing his salary and the monthly rent for the schoolhouse. Any other expenses were to be borne by the teacher. The contracts ended at exam time, so they lasted one school year and could be renewed. This condition required teachers to reiterate their requests for a subsidy from the schools every year; otherwise, there would be teacher turnover and interruption of classes, sometimes highlighting the transitory nature of the teaching work.

Only those who took qualification examinations, as indicated in clause 4 of the contract of the Italian immigrant from the *Colônia de Alfredo Chaves*, could join the public teaching staff.

Contract of teacher João Antonio Tosin. Clause 1 Obliges himself to teach all the subjects of the program to the students enrolled in his class. Clause 2 - He

is obliged to carry out, at his own expense, the necessary expenses for the school's maintenance, with the acquisition and conservation of furniture and other objects of school utility. Clause 3<sup>a</sup> The contracting teacher shall have the right to a monthly subsidy corresponding to four hundred fifty thousand reis yearly and a monthly fee of three thousand reis for renting the house. Clause 4<sup>a</sup> The present contract will have duration until the standard epoch of exams, and after showing the necessary qualifications, it may be extended for the time that is deemed convenient. Clause 5<sup>a</sup> The contracting teacher shall receive his salaries from the State Treasury through a certificate from the teaching authorities (TOSIN, 1892, p. 22).

This practice adopted by the State was widely criticized years later by the Directors of Public Instruction because it was a comforting action to the problem of the lack of public teachers. The high turnover of teachers and the instability of the classes resulting from abandonment and termination of contracts strengthened the imagination of the settlers about getting control of the school. Unlike the Brazilian teachers, who had no ties with the community, the families supported the Italian or Slavic teachers financially and morally.

In this way, it is essential to remember that teachers with pedagogical training were rare in the colonies. The communities chose a member who was "more resourceful and capable and who knew, at least satisfactorily, how to read and write [...]. Thus, the colonists transformed, in a magic trick, a rude peasant into an improvised pedagogue" (WACHOWICZ, 1970, p. 24). The settler reconciled daily work in the fields with teaching activities. But, only sometimes, the chosen ones were of unblemished morals. They were often individuals without occupation and with suspicious moral life (GLUCHOWSKI, 2005). The earnings received were few, which led many teachers to abandon the craft (WACHOWICZ, 1970). Each school family contributed to the teacher's payment, which, many times, was not made in paper money, but with farm products, such as pigs for fattening, or even eggs, beans, rice, jam, sausages, and others (BREOWICZ, 1961, p. 110-111).

There was little social prestige in the craft, and given the difficulties experienced by individuals who circumstantially were teachers, this caused them to abandon the job. "The teaching staff in lay schools was very inadequate as to its composition, ranging from simple settlers to people with academic training" (GLUCHOWSKI, 2005, p.173).

A close look at the profile of the ethnic school teachers reveals that the transition of spaces and doings was a characteristic of Professor João Falarz (1868-1947), who was Polish and was the first teacher at the Orléans elementary school in Curitiba. He was a sacristan and organist in the *Colônia Orleans* and an ensign of the National Guard. He transited in different cultural universes, between the school world in the ethnic community, in the Church, and with politicians. In the same perspective, Professor Nicéforo Modesto Falarz (1893-1984). He was the son of farmers in Curitiba's *Colônia* 

Orleans, a teacher, Director of Curitiba's Normal School and Henrique Sienkiewicz College (Polish Gymnasium in Curitiba), a politician, and he was elected State Deputy (GRANATO; PODLASEK, 2018). The trajectory of this teacher reveals the social ascension and distinctiveness, according to the subjects' positions in the "structure of the relation of forces" related to the fields at certain moments (BOURDIEU, 2011, p.201).

In many Slavic communities, school societies were experiments without continuity, as the primary goal was "to teach reading, writing, and the four operations" (ZINCO, 1960, p. 14). In the smaller localities, the schools served young people of school age, often in a multigrade class. A.N., who studied in *Colônia Marcelino* (in São José dos Pinhais, PR), relates how the teacher's work was organized: "It was altogether in the same room. It started like this: the ones who couldn't even draw a letter; then there were 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grades, all together, in one room, with one teacher" (A.N, 2008 *apud* RENK, 2009, p. 81). The last account sheds light on the difficult task of being a teacher in a multigrade class, promiscuous, in half shift, and attending four grades simultaneously, in hybrid processes of experience of being a teacher and meeting the demands of religious life.

These teachers experienced the paradox that consisted, on the one hand, of strengthening the ethnic identity of the group, on the other hand, of making the teaching of the Portuguese language feasible for the adaptation of their compatriots in that new social and economic context. How did they do this? The few signs of teaching practices in the ethnic schools show that teaching was limited to early learning of reading, writing, and arithmetic. Teaching the Portuguese language brought expressive traces of the Italian and Slavic languages or their different dialects.

As of the First World War, when the state government intensified the nationalization process, the relationship of the Paraná education authorities with the ethnic schools became tense. The Government Reports and the institutional archives reveal the Teaching Inspectors' action in supervising and watching over the constant compliance with the legislation, especially in what referred to teaching in the Portuguese language. About the Rio Preto Mixed School, subsidized by the federal government, in Prudentópolis, governed by Alexandre Kozecheu, the Teaching Inspector reported: "that the teacher taught exclusively in a foreign language and that the students' books were written in Ukrainian." So, he requested that this language be suppressed (PARANÁ, 1923, p. 56-59). The Inspector criticized many rural schools located in the colonies of immigrants because they did not meet the precepts of hygiene and ergonomics. "Many operate in truly improper houses: unhygienic and anti-pedagogical; they suffer from lack of furniture and the indispensable lack of technical material" (PARANÁ, 1923, p. 27). Professional competence is the object of criticism from the teaching authority, according to which "the teacher is a good farmer," "after examining the school bookkeeping and some students' work, I found that I was talking to a bad teacher," and also "the teacher

does not have the necessary pedagogical aptitude and lacks the necessary stature" (PARANÁ, 1923, p. 39-41).

Priests as teachers, religious women as teachers: protagonism in the hybrid relationship between pastoral ministry, mission, and teaching

The moral, social, and pedagogical influence of the Catholic Church was significant in the Slavic and Italian communities of Paraná. The teaching priests of the ethnic schools were primarily educated in Europe. In Brazil, they had professional activities in different contexts: they were teachers in schools and in seminaries for teachers' education, they published textbooks, were editors of newspapers, created instructional/ cultural associations, worked in the moral education of the youth with the construction of theater groups, of choirs, of catechesis and libraries in the colonies. Therefore, they moved through different spaces and cultural contexts, between acting as teachers and exercising other trades, in constant intersections of identities and cultural scenarios (CANCLINI, 2011).

The European religious women also had schooling when they came to Brazil to direct schools at the request of immigrants and missionaries. In addition to the work of the Congregation, the religious women took on the job of teachers in the ethnic schools. "In the beginning, the school program was two years. The sisters taught literacy, the basic elements of reading and writing and the rudiments of arithmetic [...] Some years later the program was increased to four years" (SANGALI, 2007, p. 41; RENK, 2009, p 60).

Among the religious men, the Polish priest and professor Joaquim José Góral, who exercised outstanding leadership in the Polish communities of Paraná, stands out. He divided his time between teaching, religious life, publishing books and newspapers at the Oswiata Printing House, and is the author of 15 textbooks in Polish. This priest transited in different social and symbolic spaces and exercised parallel to other activities, the office of teaching (KAWKA, 2019. p. 86).

Government reports indicate that the authorities recognized the physical and pedagogical structure of the ethnic confessional schools (PARANÁ, 1921). In 1925, the Inspector of Education, Lysimaco Ferreira da Costa, reported that the Abranches School (ethnic Polish in Curitiba) "Is, therefore, a school that recommends itself, attracting the attention of the state and federal public authorities" (ARCHIVES OF THE SÃO JOSÉ VICENTINA SCHOOL OF CURITIBA - GUESTBOOK).

In the case of the Italians, the so-called parochial schools, as Kreutz (2000) stated, were created in several Italian colonies by Father Pietro Colbacchini. The Italian priest Francesco Bonato was the first priest teacher to exercise the teaching profession with the demands of the religious office, which consisted of the arduous work of spiritual care of the Italian colonies settled in the surroundings of Curitiba in the late nineteenth century (GABARDO; MACHIOSKI, 2021). According to Barausse (2021), faced with the need to increase the number of confessional schools and expand the protective action of the Catholic Church towards its compatriots, the institution mobilized to offer support

to the religious men and women in America through the *Federazione per l'Asssitenza degli Emigrati Transcoceanici Italica Gens*, based in Turin. In Brazil, they created 12 secretariats, one of them in Paraná, which had as representatives the Scalabrinian priest Giuseppe Martini from the *Colonia Santa Felicidade* and the Italian Andrea Garau in the *Colonia Antonio Rebouças*, Timbutuva.

Among the principles of this Catholic association was organizing a cultural project for the schools that could reaffirm the national character, *italianità*. It was necessary to strengthen the network of ethnic schools, particularly the confessional Catholic ones. With a sizeable human structure, the *Itálica Gens* managed many representatives, and several religious congregations were connected to the association. Moreover, the institution maintained a periodical of the same name, with monthly publications on the condition of the schools and the development of the school work of the teachers, primarily Italian religious men, and women.

The agents' visits and the detailed reports provided this information. In one of these reports, the agent of *Itálica Gens*, Ranieri Venerosi Pesciolini, highlighted the small number of Italian schools while visiting the Italian colonies in Paraná. Among the various guidelines for increasing the schooling of his compatriots was the training of Italian teachers. Pesciolini suggested that Italy adopt the German model of teacher education for immigration.

If you wish to give the Italian schools a lasting organization, you must set them up under a systematic routine, just as the Germans did. First of all, it is necessary to train teachers; the Germans choose from among the children of the colonists those who are suitable, and some have their diplomas in the State normal schools, while others educate them in their schools, generally maintained by religious people, called pure normal schools, but in which elementary courses are conducted, as could very well be done in any of our best institutes maintained by nuns in the colonies (PESCIOLINI, 1914, p. 410 – free translation into Portuguese and then into English).<sup>1</sup>

Pesciolini advocated a training controlled by the congregations themselves, based on the needs of the colonies, with a simple, practical teaching, but that could keep the doctrine and the ethnic identity as a basis. By exalting the work of religious women, he reaffirmed that this was the ideal teaching profile for the ethnic schools in the Italian colonies. He advocated, as teachers, holy women involved in community service and committed to the instruction and moral education of the children and, by extension, of the families themselves.

The prestige of the Italian sisters' performance in the immigrant communities was evidenced in several studies and led to the creation and maintenance of prominent educational institutions, which involved the moral and intellectual education of immigrant children and descendants. According to Luchese, Matiello, and Barausse (2019), when stripping themselves of femininity, religious women could access the prominent places beyond the teaching profession, perfectly socially acceptable for women of the time, being, therefore, more than teachers, but missionary women. When analyzing the work of the Missionary Sisters of *São Carlos Barromeo* in the countryside of Rio Grande do Sul, the authors consider that it was marked by hybridism for allowing connections between the mother country and the homeland of adoption. Moreover, even if there was an Italian and Catholic school model instituted, "it is not a cultural model of school that is imported, but a school created from negotiations between what they knew and possessed as a prescription of what they taught in Italy and what was possible" (LUCHESE; MATIELLO; BARAUSSE, 2019, p. 1439).

It is also observed that the priests exercised the religious office, the teaching in elementary school, the formation of youth, and as librarians, revealing that they moved into other spaces, promoting the circulation of ideas and practices. Therefore, they built, in a hybrid and effective way, an immigrant teaching profession that went beyond teaching. However, they tried to cover the formative dimension of children and young people in the colonizing regions, adapting it to the needs and longings of the families and the Church, having as centrality the evangelization and the flourishing of vocations, but also the strengthening of the ethnic identity.

Lay teachers with pedagogical training: intellectuals and liberal professionals as agents of the Fatherland

Most of the secular schools were initiatives of communities and cult/school societies. Some were short-lived school experiments, and others were long-lasting with the establishment of gymnasiums.

Then an immigrant appeared in Dorizon; he was a very cultured person named Valentim Kutz. He was a teacher [...], and then they started to think about the school, and there was one of the merchants that had built a bigger house, and he decided to rent that house for the school. They made the benches themselves, and Professor Kutz started teaching there (P.K., 2008 *apud* RENK, 2009, p.58).

The settlers understood the schooling of their children as a necessity. Therefore, in impoverished communities or those without conditions to maintain a school, the immigrants asked the Church to bring religious people to exercise this occupation. Intellectuals considered 'progressive' and some anti-clerical lived in the Slavic ethnic communities, who also exercised the teaching profession (WACHOWICZ, 1970, p. 27-28). These intellectuals had an essential role in the cultural/school associations, making the counterpoint with the Catholic Church. From the 1920s on, a centralization of the associations was observed, being the Kultura (secular), Oswiata (religious), and *União Ucraniana do Brasil* (nonreligious), used in the cultural revival and in the attempt to homogenize the teaching in the Slavic ethnic schools.

As a lay teacher, one can mention Jeronimo Durski, considered the father of the

Polish Schools in Paraná. He was a teacher of the first letters. He graduated from the Royal Catholic Seminary of the Kingdom of Prussia. He was the first teacher in the first Polish school in Paraná. He was also the author of the book *Elementarz Dla Polskich Szkół W Brazylii*] (Manual for Polish schools in Brazil), published in Poland in 1893 (RENK, 2014). This bilingual book is "a pioneering work and was a manual for settlers and schoolchildren to learn the Portuguese language" (STAPOR, 2019, p. 902).

Thus, in the 1920s-1930s, other Polish lay teachers with university degrees in Poland worked in schools in Paraná. They were intellectuals who simultaneously exercised several trades: they were authors of Polish-language textbooks, editors of newspapers, active in cultural associations, with good relations with the Catholic Church and with the ethnic communities. They were men with a recognized and respected place of speech in Polish ethnic communities (FOUCAULT, 2013). One can mention Konstantin Lech, who wrote the book Practical and Methodological Standards (*Normas Prático-metodológicas*) for the Polish schools in Brazil (in Polish) in 1926, the Book for the Second Class (in Polish) in 1938, and also the book First book/booklet – for the Polish children in Brazil (*Primeiro livro/booklet - Para as crianças polonesas no Brasil* in Polish), published in 1936. These are some of the author's well-known books. There is also Polish Professor Konrad Jeziorowski, who wrote the Provisional Program for Polish Schools in Brazil (in Polish) and the textbook First Readings after the Primer, and Professor Francisco Hanas, who wrote the textbook Arithmetic for Primary School.

After the end of the First World War and the opening of the Polish Consulate in Curitiba, this organization became interested in maintaining ethnic schools. Wachowicz (1970, p. 62-72) cites the 1937 School Census of Polish Immigration in Brazil, which shows the expenses of the Polish schools with the payment of teachers, of which the Central of Polish Schools (through the Polish Consulate) was responsible for 11%. As a result of restrictions on the entry of immigrants into Brazil, "in the 1930s, there were, in Paraná, only six Polish teachers (who were paid by the Polish Consulate)" (RENK, 2009, p. 184). In Ukrainian communities, intellectuals from Ukraine were active in educational and cultural activities in the interior of Paraná. Defending the secular school, they founded *União Ucraniana do Brasil* -UUB, which assembled the ethnic schools and associations.

The concern with the training of Italian teachers was also recognized in Italy. According to Baia Horta (2009, p. 62), in the 1930s, there were in Italy "three significant associations of teachers: the *Unione Magistrale*, of Masonic tendency, the *Sindicato Magistrale*, of socialist obedience, and the *Associazone Niccolo Tommaseo*, of the Catholic group". These institutions also played an essential role in organizing the Italian teachers' education practice because they articulated outside Italy the administrative, curricular, and pedagogical dimensions of the ethnic schools maintained by Italians individually or with mutual aid associations.

According to Panizzolo (2018), two associations in São Paulo represented Italian

teachers; the *Federazione Scolastica Italiana*, created in 1907, and the *Unione Magistrale Italiana*, in 1908. The former brought together the most significant number of affiliated teachers. Although they had divergent propositions, both aimed at defending teachers' rights, interfering significantly in organizing the Italian subsidized schools. And this process was not exempt from conflicts and tensions and was also a space for resistance. According to Mimesse, the activities of the Associations of Italian Teachers in São Paulo were fundamental to reinforce among teachers the need to defend and propagate *italianità*, especially amid the campaigns for the nationalization of education in Brazil.

In 1908, the Unione Magistrale Italiane dello Stato di S. Paulo was founded in order to organize the Italian teachers who owned schools in the capital. In the editorial of the periodical L'Eco: d'ell'Unione Magistrale Italiane (1908, p. 1), Frugiuele called the teachers to their 'honorary office of preparing the new generations, reviving in the hearts of our children the love for the distant homeland, our language and our glorious History' (MIMESSE, 2012, p. 290).

The documentation consulted did not allow us to locate any reference to creating one of these associations of Italian teachers in Paraná, which may have occurred because of the small number of subsidized Italian schools in the state, to the detriment of a more significant number of ethnic, denominational schools, that already had the tutelage of the Catholic Church in the preparation of their teachers.

According to Salvetti (2000), repeated criticism was made in Italy about the lack of teachers for the *Scuole Italiane All'estero*, a crucial network of schools subsidized by the Italian government that brought together most of the ethnic schools. The teaching issue was the theme of the *I Congresso degli italiani all'estero*, organized in 1908 by the Italian Colonial Institute. In addition to discussing the need for funding to extend the reach of these schools outside of Italy, considering that every Italian has the right to education, Congress addressed the professional quality of the teachers. The complaint was about the need for specific education of teachers prepared to attend schools in the context of immigration and the improvement of this network of schools. For the members of Congress, the *Scuole Italiane All'estero* teachers needed to learn more than teach.

The *Legge Titoni*, promulgated in Italy in 1910, instituted, among other changes, the reorganization of the *Scuole Italiane All'estero* and the creation of the figure of the agent teacher. In an attempt to solve the problem of the qualification of the teaching staff to attend to compatriots outside Italy, this category gave more power to the teacher, who, in addition to receiving more significant financial and legal support, expanded their activities beyond the classroom. The office should also protect the emigrants with consular agents (SALVETTI, 2000).

In Curitiba, the four Italian ethnic schools, which corresponded to the *Scuole Italiane All'estero* project, were linked to mutual aid societies. The schools of the *Società*  *Giuseppe Garibaldi, Vittorio Emanuelle III*, and *Dante Alighieri* were subsidized partly by the Italian government and partly by the members. Only the school maintained by the *Società Italiana Cristofoto Colombo*, in the former Alfredo Chaves colony, was considered a *Regia Scuola Italiana*, a government school subsidized entirely by the Italian government (RENK; MASCHIO, 2020).

The Scuola Regina Margherita started operating in 1893 under the Italian teachers Giovanni Pivato and Girolamo Merlo. From 1903 on, the Scuola Dante Alighieri was under the responsibility of the Italian teachers Miguel Grassani and Brígida Feola and had an enrollment of 120 students. The many activities developed by these schools highlighted the role of the teachers in the diffusion of the *italianitá*. Among the teaching activities were public artistic presentations of works of Italian literature and music, where the families of politicians from Paraná were present (MASCHIO, 2012). According to the Report of the School Inspector Heitor Borges de Macedo, in 1923, the school started to be directed by the Italian Francisco Feola. Considering a possible kinship between Francisco and Brígida Feola, it is understood that the immigrant teaching profession was also configured as a family activity.

Moreover, it was precisely in the transit of different professions and cultural institutions that the teaching knowledge was constituted. According to Rodrigues (2009), in 1903, the Italian Feola had already been responsible for creating an Italian school in Belo Horizonte, remaining in that capital until 1914. In Curitiba, Francisco Feola was also secretary of the *Regio Consolato Italiano* and director of the newspaper *Unione*. One can see that, as a teacher and agent of the Italian government, he worked hard to spread *italianità*, circulating in both countries' political and institutional spheres.

On November 24, 1910, the teacher Giovanni Batista Lovato, who was a member of the *Società Italiana di Mutuo Soccorso Christoforo Colombo*, reported the operation of a private Italian school in the Alfredo Chaves colony, which, by receiving subsidies from the Italian government, answered by the title of *Regio Scuola Italiana*. This school taught classes in Italian and was attended by boys, children of associates (MASCHIO, 2012).

The subsidization of Italian teachers and their schools, making it possible for settlers to teach beyond their profession, was not only a community tactic of the emigrated population to guarantee an ethnic school, but it was configured as a foreign policy made possible by Italy itself. Therefore, the profile of the Italian ethnic school teachers consisted of liberal professionals and intellectuals who arrived in the colonies with the emigrant families or were recruited by the Italian government to act as agents at the *Ministero degli Affari Esteri* and, consequently, as *Scuole Italiane All'estero* teachers.

Final considerations: similarities and differences between Slavic and Italian immigrant teaching in Paraná

The empirical data collected in this article made it possible to interpret ethnic school processes, shedding light on immigrant teaching—the task of being a teacher in the immigration colonies required will, availability, and confidence. The creation of

community schools mobilized families so that children would have access to academic knowledge, even if it were only reading, writing, and adding.

. In Ukrainian immigration colonies, children's schooling was necessary to learn to read and write in the Cyrillic alphabet and to read sacred books. The school was also essential in maintaining ethnic identity since it taught in the mother tongue. But different resistance processes are observed between the Slavic schools, which sought to retain the language (especially the Ukrainians) and the mother tongue culture, and also the Italian schools, which also sought to teach in the Portuguese language.

The teachers faced tensions with the State in the figure of the Teaching Inspectors, who inspected each school establishment and established fines or sanctions for conforming to official norms. But there were differences in the ethnic school processes in Paraná, such as the action of the Italian and Polish Consulates in supporting school experiences, subsidizing teachers, and ethnic schools in Brazil, which represented an institution that was interested in the perpetuation of cultural identity.

The research revealed indications of the teaching activity based on hybridization processes in different social and cultural contexts, generating other structures, objects, and practices. It is worth mentioning that the teacher was also (depending on the context) a member of the community, a settler who divided his time and worked in agriculture, a religious man or woman who was involved in ecclesial and missionary activities, but was also a teacher, a catechist, an intellectual, a member of the community, formed youth groups, wrote textbooks, was a newspaper editor and active in cultural associations.

The teaching profession was configured in the construction of uses and cultural models, in a constant process of re-elaboration of practices, which sometimes aimed to meet the social and cultural demands of the communities, sometimes clashed with the legal requirements of nationalization, and sometimes had the support and trust of the communities or the consulate. Other times they were alone in their endeavor. In this hybrid process, new arrangements and school cultural practices were being built, and new relations of power and resistance were also being outlined.

It is also worth investing in research on the continuity of the profession as an inheritance, considering the performance of many descendants of immigrants who assumed the teaching in place or as an example of their predecessors, as was the case of the Italian family of the immigrant Francisco Zardo from the Italian colony of Santa Felicidade. After his father's death, his daughter Margarida Zardo took over the classes, studying at the Normal School of Curitiba and working in public teaching (MASCHIO, 2012).

The researcher's craft in understanding or 'reading' and 'interpreting' the signs and traces left behind allows us to identify similarities in the pedagogical practices of the schools, such as maintaining ethnic identity and teaching in the mother tongue. However, the proposition of a research agenda becomes necessary. There is still a lot to unveil about the production of textbooks and didactic materials by these teachers; the

existence, absence, performance, tensions, and conflicts of the teachers' associations; the gender issue and the representations about immigrant women and teachers; the memories and autobiographies that shape the 'writing of the self' of these teachers.

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