

# CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION IN SOUTHERN BRAZIL (1897-1930): THE ETHNIC GERMAN SCHOOLS

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Our investigations about the history of the school institutions focus on the elementary schools opened up by immigrants who arrived in Brazil in the XIX century. In this article, we present the results of the research about the German schools established in Santa Catarina in 1897 as an initiative of the Hanseatic Colonization Company (*Hanseatischen Kolonisations-Gesellschaft*).<sup>1</sup> We seek to characterize them as nuclei for the production of social relations parameterized by ethnic issues, since it is constituted as a historical experience engendered in the relationship between foreign and Brazilian cultural perspectives. The research is based on documentary research using primary sources: data on the activity of schools in Santa Catarina colonies incorporated into the reports of the directors of that settlement enterprise.

The objective is to analyze the foundation and subsequent operation of those schools with reference to the ethnic indicators. The aforementioned results are intended to contribute to the debate about the educational phenomenon that were German schools through the analysis of educational practices built at that time.

## The ethnic issue as a constituent of indicators for the research

In order to start the approaches based on the ethnic factor, we selected two works by Giralda Seyferth among the various surveys addressing the immigration issue in Brazil. In "Immigration and Culture in Brazil" (1990), based on an anthropological perspective, this author approaches the relationship between immigration and ethnicity, evidencing presence among immigrants of ethnic social relations related to culture and social organization of origin, among them the preservation of the mother tongue is regarded as essential to their identity. One aspect highlighted is also the action of the various community based institutions in the preservation and dissemination of these ethnic values, the context in which stands the activity of schools:

In fact, it was in the late nineteenth century that some community based institutions [...] appeared as disseminators of ethnic values, preserved by immigrants and transmitted from one generation to another. The native language and national culture would be preserved through school, church, associations, but above all through the written practice, to differentiate one group from the others. These formal institutions served as carriers and perpetrators of ethnicity. (Seyferth, 1990, p.82).<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The research documentation, in part containing unpublished data on the German colonies in Brazil in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, was located in the State Archives of Hamburg (*Hamburg Staatsarchiv*) in the northern Germany. The port of Hamburg was one of the main points of departure of ships with immigrants whose destination was Brazil. The original texts are printed in gothic German, with translations of our responsibility.

<sup>2</sup> Free translation of this and other citations that are in Portuguese in the originals.

Similarly, in "The conflictive history of the constitution of the German-Brazilian ethnicity" (2003), Seyferth related social, economic, political and cultural aspects of German colonization in ethnicity. She states that since the arrival of several groups of German immigrants during the nineteenth century to the years of nationalization campaign in New State, many conflicts have been marked by ethnic perspectives. This is how appears the so-called ethnocentrism, what is considered as a view of the facts that leads people to consider their own group as the center of everything, comparing and evaluating all the others with reference to it. And also situates the German school as the social institution essential to the maintenance of ethnic features, especially as responsible for the preservation of the foreign language.

The inclusion of ethnic factors in the analysis of immigration marks the approach of Willems, dedicated primarily to the study of the German presence in Brazil. In his opinion, the contacts between societies culturally different configured phenomena of acculturation and assimilation. At the beginning of "The acculturation of the Germans in Brazil" (1980), he rescues a fundamental theory linked to ethnicity, advocating a critical treatment of ethnocentric perspective as necessary to understand the historical aspects associated with Germanic immigration.

The ethnic issue is also considered as fundamental in Kreutz's work:

The choice of ethnicity as a category of analysis in education does not preclude or supersede the categories of class, gender and others. But it helps, on the other hand, to broaden the perspective of analysis, with the potential to detect aspects of the plot and the actions of human relations from experiences and symbols. Means an advance in methodological effort to help understand how the school and the educational process have developed in relation to cultural differentiation. (Kreutz, 1999, p.80).

Exploring the production of these three authors we identify theoretical and methodological connections, among which we highlight the close relationship between the concepts and approaches of the triad ethnicity, culture and identity. According to Seyferth, the relations between German immigrants and Brazilian population resulted in social, political and cultural expressions of "Germanity" (*Deutschtum*) and the German-Brazilian Germanity (*Deutschbrasilianertum*), manifestations of ethnicity configured so quarrelsome during the historical process. For Willems, it is possible to link the ongoing contacts between different cultures or different ethnic origins and the possibilities for conservation of cultural identity. And according to Kreutz, the multiplicity of cultures in the relational process establishes the ethnic element as a constitutive element of social dynamics around an axis which is the cultural dimension, with an ethnic-cultural identity "source of meaning and construction of reality, even if it is marginalized "(1999, p.80).

We have built a set of ethnic indicators, initially based on references cited, but later adding theoretical and methodological parameters related to our own research in this field. According to this perspective, addressing aspects of ethnicity means: a) paying attention to the perspective of relations between individuals and social groups considering their language, their usages and traditions, their religion, their social institutions; b) combining, simultaneously, multiple relational database of social practices to feelings of belonging to the same people or nation, when this kind of relation is defined by inbreeding, by the fact of living in a same geographical place and by a constitutive or historical process of relations on the economic, social and political levels; c) sharing symbolic and material data elements that

express meanings on relational processes within the culture d) analyze the gendering of cultural production and reproduction considering the same dynamics of its operation, taking into account the interferences constraints and interests of individuals and social groups.

Given the assumptions presented, we pass to the description and analysis of an experience of implementation and performance of elementary schools in the context of German settlement in Santa Catarina.

### **Colonization as birthplace of German schools**

German immigration imposed colonization scenarios in southern Brazil where the relationships between different cultures took place. In 1897 the Hanseatic Colonization Company negotiated plots of land situated in the north and northeast of Santa Catarina. The 650 000 hectares geographically delimited Colony Hansa (*Kolonie Hansa*) consisted of four distinct regions: Itajai-Hercílio (or Itajahy-Hercílio, which included Hammonia and Neu-Bremen), Itapocu (including the Humboldt district), Hinterland of São Bento and Piraí (Pirahy) (*Die Kolonie Hansa...* 1911, p.3-4).

The geographical configuration considered existing today, comprise pieces of land currently belonging to the territory of the municipalities of Itajaí, Blumenau, Ibirama, Jaraguá do Sul, Corupá, São Bento do Sul, Presidente Getúlio, Dona Ema and Joinville. Colony Hansa was destined essentially to German immigration and in the first five years, 2085 persons reached the lands reserved for occupancy (PROSPEKT, 1902). In this sense, the experience of colonization fits models already ratified:

But if there was in Brazil an immigrant ethnicity associated with the scheme of colonization with small properties, this was German. [...] The Germans mostly settled in the country through colonization system and concentrated in some regions of the South. [...] At the beginning, the colonization process was sponsored by the State and only later stepped in private companies. (Seyferth, 2003, p.24).

The founding conditions for the colonial life may be associated with the construction of relations among foreign immigrants and Brazilian leaders. For example, the characterization of the colonies the state policy influenced in its wider social organization, while generating a distinctive cultural element for individuals and groups of immigrants, by positioning them as rural workers, marking a constitutive and historical element for their ethnic identity: the condition of settler (*colono*, in Portuguese).

One way or another, creating colonies by decree or by allowing private companies to do so, Brazilian government had some control over the process and determined all its rules, and a new identity for immigrants who were directed to settlement areas where they became settlers, later incorporated as an official category synonymous with peasant and assumed, in the South, as the defining identity of farmers of European origin. (Seyferth, 2003, p.26).

Indeed, from Brazilian elites point of view, both in the Imperial period and the first decades of the Republican era, the guidelines of the colonizers projects were oriented by prospects of an ethnic nature, and why not say racial, which were enrolled to justify the choice of the German immigrant as the ideal element for the occupation of the national

territory, since both met a biologically based human characteristic desired at the time - was European, white or white race - as well as had desirable moral attributes such as obedience and love for hard working (cf. Moog, 1961; Ianni, 1972; Roquette Pinto, 1978; Seyferth, 2003)<sup>3</sup>.

There are many studies about this area, including that of Diégues Junior, which is emblematic, stating that immigration and foreign colonization "contributed to break up the unity, or the monotony of the cultural landscape of Lusitanian origin. The cultural framework of Portuguese base was enriched with other aspects; added to them elements originating of other cultures" (1960, p.351); going further it's argued that the immigration movement was responsible for setting in southern Brazil what was called a "cultural region" distinct also from other parts of the country.

In the colonization movement, the school can be understood as an institution necessary for the progress of business and commerce. But at the same time, it was expected to exercise an explicit social function to attend needs of school for children of German immigrants, who had cultural roots in mainland Europe, which was transplanted. Therefore, we observe that the created schools represented both an initiative of the families in the communities as an investment of commercial character made with financial subsidization by the colonizing company.

In fact, one aspect observed in the Teutonic colonization was the preoccupation with the schools founding up in various regions. Moreover, the priority given to school is considered one of the typical characteristics of communities of German immigrants (cf. Müller, 1994; Rambo, 1994a; Seyferth, 1990).

It's possible to verify in the various reports submitted by the local direction of Colony Hansa that in 1904, what is, within a period of six years after the establishment, there were four schools in Humboldt: the "downtown" (*Stadtplatz*), the Road Isabel (*Isabella-Strasse*), the Road Paul (*Paul-Strasse*) and on the Road Bonpland and Humboldt (*Humboldt und Bonpland Strasse*). In another district, Itajaí-Hercílio, five schools were also working: Hammonia, Sellin, Rafael, Bremen and Neu-Zürich. There was one in São Bento and another in Pirai (*Bericht kolonie der-Direktion HAMMONIA...*, 1905, p. 13).

The initiatives for the establishment of schools by the settlers themselves showed the absence of public educational institutions for elementary or primary education in the context of the Empire and the Old Republic (cf. Nagle, 1974; Schneider, 1983; Werebe, 1995; Willems, 1980). We agree with Seyferth (2003, p.28-9) and his proposal, as impetus for the establishment of schools and other institutions of ethnic background, factors related to the absence of Government conditions in those times, either for the provision of infrastructure in areas of deployment of immigrants or either towards the provision of a school system that could meet the Brazilian population:

Also, due to the State default, which had a large colonization project with immigrants but, not the resources to run it effectively, the organization of the communities was left to the colonists themselves. This is how the German schools arose with their supporting organizations, associations of character and charity care,

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<sup>3</sup> It's not my objective here to allude in depth the debate on the issues of economic and political order that nourished the selection criteria that would support the policies of colonization, arguing that immigrants should be more appropriate to the purposes of the Brazilian elite. It's important to remember, however, that the racial issue in vogue in the nineteenth century, as well as discussions on slavery parameters, was employed in various discourses of ideological base.

the initial organization (both Lutheran and Catholic) religious assistance in community fashion, cultural and recreational associations (such as the chorus, shooting, and gymnastics groups, etc.), newspapers and other publications in the German language, especially in emerging urban centers in colonial areas, but also in the lines and roads inside the colonies.

Willems point of view (1980, p. 279) meets this same perspective: "Frustrated in their expectation of receiving, as in the country of origin, public schools, German immigrants were left alone for solving the problem of schooling".

Concerning to schools opened up in the setting of German colonization in Brazil, Egon Schaden produced analyzes that help us understand their nature. We emphasize his text titled *Historical and Sociological Aspects of German-Brazilian Rural School*, proposing a typology considering the multiplicity of cultural relations in colonial areas and simultaneously alert to a certain generalization of the approach "German schools":

The German-Brazilian school system was established in a very complex form. Its remarkable internal differentiation has been often concealed by the current designation of "German school". Given the multiple forms of transition is not easy, in fact, give a satisfactory typology of "German schools" in Brazil. Anyway, there should be at least a distinction between: 1. properly spoken German schools, arising mainly in urban centers and maintained mostly by school corporations; 2. community based or colonial schools, characteristics of the areas of low population density, and, 3. German schools maintained by religious congregations. (SCHADEN, 1966, p.65).

We use his propositions to align the institutions from Colony Hansa to the second category, "corresponding to the genuine German-Brazilian school. Are or were schools generally only primary, initiative founded by the settlers themselves in rural or at most areas of incipient urbanization" (Schaden, p.65-6). In this sense, however, it's accepted and understood that to the desires of the colonists by a community school it was added the support of the Hanseatic Colonization Company, in an environment where the public school was a nonexistent element.

Also studies by Rambo (1996, 1994a) deal with the historical process of the genesis of German-Brazilian community schools, carefully analyzing their nature. The documentation that nourished their investigation focuses on the opening up and evolution of these institutions in Rio Grande do Sul, bringing together elements that are essential for configuring the broader theoretical framework with the German immigration in Brazil's southern regions. Further, it makes possible to identify both similarities and distinctions, which emerge from the analytical comparative process between schools in the scenario of Rio Grande do Sul and those created in Santa Catarina, object of this study. Rambo (1994a, p.9) evokes the ancient roots of the historical process of cultural formation in European regions from where the settlers came, remembering that these "heirs of a rich and vast array of cultural, social, political, artistic and religious, economic traditions, were hard drawn, for centuries." And from this perspective, it was destined to the schools the vital role in the preservation of cultural heritage of immigrants:

And the way that appeared most efficient to them, they have found in the cultural baggage brought from beyond the ocean: the school. It was a school that served not only to the core of literacy, but represented the effective

antidote to a possible cultural degeneracy. With this gigantic mission in the root, the school of community (*Gemeindeschule*) should be understood and placed in proper parameters of both faiths and which brought so much good to the Teutonic peasants in the first 120 years, and then, after 1940, it is an absence. (Rambo, 1994a, p.14).

The documents analyzed allow us to state that the open up of elementary schools in the Colony Hansa met the theoretical assumptions exposed. Some of them were established by private school associations or societies (*Schulverein* or *Schulgemeinde*), which had as members the local families; others were related to the Lutheran Evangelical Church. But the reports also show that these community based schools received financial support from the Hanseatic Colonization Company. The balance of spending and investment in the colonies presents grants to schools (*Subvention für Schule*), as stated in the annual report of 1901 where the spending of 440 mil-réis (440 thousand-réis) are recorded under this heading. To estimate what represented this investment in schools in total accounted, we analyzed a part of a text that deals with the expenses for specific purposes (*Ausgaben für besondere Zwecke auf der Kolonie*), describing five items. The first one is the school subvention, the following refers to the payment of travel expenses of the clergy of both confessions, recording 328 000 réis, and the third refers to the spends with the cure of settlers illnesses, medicines and medical fees, which totals 182 mil e duzentos mil-réis (182 thousand and two hundred thousand-réis); rates aimed at lawyers in Joinville and São Bento make up the last two items, totaling one million eight hundred thousand-réis. So, expenses totaling two million, seven hundred fifty thousand and two hundred thousand réis were reported. In relation to the total, investment in schools meant 16% (JAHRESBERICHT..., [sd], p.5)<sup>4</sup>.

The initiatives of local communities to open up their own schools were favored by the Company, which may explain the flowering of several units spread throughout the colony, which constituted a primitive system of schooling to care for children. The financial grant was certainly crucial in that moment, when community schools were kept and paid by members of the communal school association that founded them, an issue that in many cases required a financial sacrifice of the colonists (cf. Willems, 1980, p. 282-3).

The school was an absolutely necessary institution in the lives of immigrant communities once the demand of child population increased over the years. The issue of Lutheran religion can be associated to this data, because in some areas the percentage of Protestant immigrants was higher than that of Catholics. And for Lutherans, there was a need to teach early reading and writing for children because they needed to know by themselves the contents of the Bible and participate in communal rites. In the report for the year 1904, for example, it is showed that in the district Itajaí-Hercílio, the five existing schools were attended by a total of 86 children, 68 Protestant and 18 Catholic (*Bericht kolonie der Direktion HAMMONIA...*, 1905, p. 10). According to the same source, the school attendance then provided amounted to a total of 61 families (*Schul-familien*) that appear among the 82 counted as members of the school associations. It is estimated, based on a proportionality analysis permitted by the relation between the numerical data, that the majority of local children had access to basic initial training school, composing a social environment of little

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<sup>4</sup> And so that the reader can an idea of the costs with other infrastructure investments in that context, allowing a possible comparison between the amounts of money spent in Colony with different purposes, yet we cite data in the report that evidence the construction of five bridges in São Bento, with recorded expenditures of approximately one million, eighty three thousand nine hundred and fifty thousand réis. (JAHRESBERICHT..., [s.d], p.5).

illiteracy among immigrants. Other studies show that the value given to education by immigrants and the consequent composition of a network of schools linked to communities helped to eliminate illiteracy in the areas of colonization: "Due to these schools, when the nationalization campaign was triggered, illiteracy was eradicated in these communities, while in the rest of the country, it was over eighty percent" (RAMBO, 1994b, p.75).

The Hammonia school, whose teachers were Doctor Aldinger and *Fraulein* Lüderwaldt, was the only one who had two classes and three different sections; the other four schools - Sellin, Rafael, Bremen and Neu-Zürich - had only one class with three or four divisions concerning the students level, being conducted respectively by teachers Krämer, Heuer, Genné and Grage (*Bericht kolonie der Direktion HAMMONIA...*, 1905, p. 10). Therefore, all schools of that district were one-room schoolhouse type. And once in that small region there were at least six faculty members acting spreaded across the five institutions mentioned, we can only speculate whether existed domestic schools (*Hausschulen*), since there is no mention of them in the reports analyzed.

The close association between school (education) and the church (religion) was a characteristic data of some communities. In these, the entity responsible for founding the school was the evangelical community. This kind of collaboration was possible, in some cases, when the first pastors who arrived from Europe started to actuating as religious leaders and could act as teachers, since they were more literate than most of the population.

It is also interesting to note that there was a pedagogical concern of the direction of the colony with the functioning of educational institutions, showing that open up and maintain schools for the benefit of local people was, at the same level, the scope of Hanseatic Colonization Company and the settlers themselves. For this reason, it was created *Schulverband* Hansa, an association linked to the Company, at the same time as Doctor Aldinger was indicated by the community members as the first inspector (*Schulinspektor*). He also served as a teacher in a school district of Itajaí-Hercílio which served 32 children. Despite this finding, we did not find in the document body available, information about associationism in Colony Hansa, which could allow us to discuss common aspects to its collective school or even a possible organization of the faculty, as Rambo (1996) has shown the occurrence in Rio Grande do Sul from the foundation in 1898, the Association of Catholic Teachers<sup>5</sup>, with activity until 1938, which meant the pursuit of pedagogical and didactic unit for the German Catholic schools.

### **Pedagogical practices in ethnic perspective: the classrooms**

In the analytical-descriptive treatment of this type of institution - German or German-Brazilian school, as some people prefer saying – we will show certain characteristics of their nature.

The school organization was particularly important in the case of German immigrants. Even when attached to churches - Catholic or Lutheran - the German-Brazilian schools were organized in school societies (the *Schulvereine*), having common curriculum and common textbooks, and many teachers came from Germany. The largest number was primary schools, providing literacy in German... (Seyferth, 1990, p.53).

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<sup>5</sup> According to Rambo (1996, p.20-1), legalization and formalization of association was found with the record of its statutes in 1907.

In this research we highlight aspects of school activities in some reports presented by the teacher himself. These primary sources bring elements of the organization of school times and spaces, information about the curriculum, the teaching practices and student activities, even minutely describing didactic aspects. All this constitutes the central object for analysis, since they are rare historical records that detailed particulars of the pedagogical relations inside the classrooms of those institutions.

We start talking about the buildings that sheltered schools in those early days. Private buildings to house them were gradually built combining community efforts and the contributions offered by Hanseatic Colonization Company, since the reports mention its role in the financial subsidy. The process was temporary occupation of some other alternative spaces, and after the classes were transferred to headquarters built and designed to the school. For example, on the Road Paulo, the school society was founded in November of 1903 and classes were held in private homes until September 1904, when the school building was opened; the classes of school Road Isabel happened in a hut, though they had been intended four hundred thousand réis for a building that in 1904 had not been done yet, because the money was insufficient (*Bericht kolonie der Direktion HAMMONIA...*, 1905, p.21-2). This process coincides with the data provided by other research: "... the first step was probably a kind of "home school" where the family more interested in the education of their children took them and perhaps a few more kids in the neighborhood for lessons given in their own house" (Willems, 1980, p.280).

Due to the need to meet both, boys' and girls' needs, these schools were called simultaneous (*Simultan-Schule*). Generally the lessons were in one room and had one or two classes in turn divided up into 4 sections. Referring to the number of students and teachers, the annual report of the district Itajaí-Hercílio presents to its five schools, a total of 86 students attended for 6 teachers (*JAHRESBERICHT 1904...*, 1905, p.16). On the other hand, the school Hammonia, which began operating in 1902, had two classes and, therefore, was attended by two teachers. His school was also the largest association in the district to which it belonged, and the number of members of the school society was 25. The quantity of children attending was varied. In 1904, the school of Road Isabel was attended by 16 students; Road Paulo, 12; on the Road Bonpland and Humboldt 18 children were assisted (*AUSZUG...*, 1905, p 21-2.).

The number of students in schools was considerable when we take into account the statistics of arrival of immigrants to the Colony Hansa. According to the Company data, 103 people came in 1898; in 1899, other 331; in 1900, over 278 immigrants arrived; in 1901, they were 428; in 1902, there was a large increase, 945 immigrants are accounted (*PROSPEKT*, 1902, p.1). In seeking to establish a ratio of the total local population, the number of schools set up and the amount of children who attended after the first six years starting with the founding of the colony, we see that it is significant, especially when compared to attendance in public elementary school existing in other parts of Brazil. It is interesting to note that the German immigration was a transit of families and therefore had both the children brought from abroad as those that would be born here.<sup>6</sup>

In some reports there is a transcription of texts written by the teachers themselves, with descriptions somewhat cursory. In the extract report on school activities in district Itapocu - *Auszug aus den Schulberichten im Bezirk Itapocu pro 1904*, the text lets us know,

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<sup>6</sup> Birth rates at that time were considerable. Children accounted for the increase in production capacity of the family to face the hard rural work.



for example, how was the school week organized (AUSZUG..., 1905). It brings a curricular schedule for the school of the central area of Humboldt (*Humboldt Stadplatz*), which began operating in April 1899 and served 25 children in care of teacher Paul Behrens. Classes were held from Monday to Saturday between 8 to 12 p.m., to two classes. The table shows the time distribution of lessons each day during a week and then details the contents which were dealt with in the current language that correspond to the subjects of each school day. They were: Religion, Calculus (Mathematics), Reading, Dictation, Writing, World History, Portuguese, Natural History, Song, Hand Craft and Geography.

The curriculum arrangement allows some analysis. The Writing (in German) has been to teach four times. The proverbs and singing activities, which can also be seen as linked to the German language teaching strategies, happened twice in the weekly period. This way, schools contributed in forming an identity of immigrant groups, through a strategic function: "Leading role was played by the school, once primary school during the first generations of immigrants was given (of course with exceptions) in private schools, communitarian or not, in the language of origin" (Seyferth, 1990, p.82). In this sense, the school of immigrants met with an ethnic function through the socialization of children in their own language, which showed their belonging to an ethnic group.

In his report, Professor Moritz Haselhorst, from the school located on Road Isabel explains that teaching was in German and this was the main object of learning to read and write. He further states that used "easy reading" for Dictation. A reading book and the writing of letters were teaching resources used in the setting of linguistic content, as well as a grammar. And every morning there was a reserved time for the reading practice: at first, it was the teacher who read and then demanded a reading to each child; in the end, the reading was in chorus

In the second section the teacher also proposed read easily understandable texts, which were also explored in the Dictation. Then he used to write questions on blackboard and the students wrote down in the individual hand boards, where they should answer the questions in writing, but keeping the books closed<sup>7</sup>. At this stage, according to the professor, most children already wrote with pencil and blackboard paint. And a beautiful writing was required, once children exercised calligraphy. In the third section they counted with the help of a workbook ("cartilha", in Portuguese, a kind of primer or ABC-book), in which they should practice reading, writing and calculation. In the singing moment, they sang German folk songs (AUSZUG..., 1905, p 21-2).

In the description that Professor Richard Schulze made to report his school on Road Paulo, signaled a really different curricular organization: the requirement of written in Latin on the side of German written. In this case, first the children had to copy on their individual hand boards and after deemed suitable, went on to write on paper. According to the analyzed

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<sup>7</sup> The single hand board, called *Tafel* was a small board generally made of slate, on whose surface a kind of pencil, chalk or coal could write. The written text was easily erased. While other teachers of the time like Paul Behrens, Moritz Haselhorst and Wilhelm Herrmann have described aspects of school activity involving writing and reading, the mention that Professor Richard Schulze does about writing on different media content is unique in the document body examined: "*Schreiben und wird im deutsche Schrift Inteirische geübt, im ersten Schuljahr und auf der Tafel später auf Papier*". For this reason, we cannot make precise statements about the existence and movement of individual hand boards inside the communities. However, in another study we conducted on the basis of oral memory of elderly people in that region of Santa Catarina occurred speeches referring to the use of *Tafel* remaining schools in the former colony during the 1930s. The paper was a scarce commodity in those circumstances. And indeed, in the documentation reviewed, there are no references to notebooks (school exercise books), only the primer (*Fibel*), the atlas and the Reading Book (*Lesebuch*), which are clearly printed on paper.

text, both the first and the second session the students practiced reading with the help of a particular book (*AUSZUG...*, 1905, p 22).

Several teachers' reports bring the same details of activities in each school, in the classes and sections that were subdivided. In the report the direction of Hammonia 1904, we find another detailed description of the subjects and their curriculum distribution. Reading, item considered essential, was present in four sections. The object was to study the German language, but in the second and third sections they also learned Latin. Learning to read was made with the use of primers and texts of letters. Students should read aloud, which was an exigency (*JAHRESBERICHT 1904...*, 1905, p. 18).

In the Writing subject children learned the German language. A common methodological strategy was that children from different schools wrote and exchanged small letters among them. So, they learned to elaborate small sentences. There are several references to syllabification as a methodological resource associated with the desired learning. But it was not enough just write correctly: you had to write beautiful, presenting a harmonious manner (*Schönschreiben*). The handwriting – calligraphy - was a key requirement from the first section.

Even with reading and writing, there was the German Language Teaching (*Sprachlehre*) as a separated subject for all students in the four sections. In this lesson, in the first grade the teacher should follow the instructions in the primer. In the second section, it was explained the singular and plural of the terms, demanding copies and reading. The students in the third section learned to differentiate gender, hyphenation, intonation in reading (strong and weak syllables) and verb conjugation. There were several linguistic exercises. Some childhood readings that had titles like Dog and Cat, The Toad, The Lazy and the Sower, for example were cited. In this sense, we realize that the nature of the texts of the reading books was the same of children's school literature of the time, containing not only sought to fix the writing of the terms, but had certain moralizing content (*JAHRESBERICHT 1904...*, 1905, p. 19).

In the last year of school, children studied the principles of grammar and syntax of the German language, with verb conjugations considering the times and the person. Poetry was also used as a teaching resource. The readings were more complex and established relationships with general knowledge, as noted in the title *The Lion of Florence*. Singing was practiced in the upper three sections, comprising both popular songs and integrating the religious liturgy. Singing helped in idiomatic learning, but also served to instill cultural values and preserve ethnic identity grounded in the subject of German. Some song titles suggest so: I have a buddy (*Ich hatt' einen Kameraden*), Who will be among the soldiers (*Wer will unter die Soldaten*) and Then take my hand (*So nimm denn meine Hände*, proposed as a Christmas song) (*JAHRESBERICHT 1904...*, 1905, p. 19)<sup>8</sup>.

Reports on the use of the German language in those classrooms confirm its centrality as an element of communication between subjects and as an object of learning, emphasizing the linguistic factor of social relations as the main responsible for the characterization of the school as a social nucleus of ethnic relations production.

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<sup>8</sup> In the original text of the report it is written about the singing in two voices, listing some songs and words for Christmas: "Singing: Wie II; dazu: "Ich hab' mich ergeben" (zweistimmig or two voices); *Uwe Bögel* (zweistimmig); [...] *Weihnachtslieder*: "So nimm denn meine Hände", "Es Klappert die Mühle". In an evangelical hymnbook we found the song *So nimm denn meine Hände*, authored by Julie von Hausmann, in the division *Geistliche Volkslieder* (Popular Spiritual Songs), subdivision *Das Leben christliche* (Christian Life) under the number 369. (cf. *Evangelisches Gesangbuch Sao Leopoldo*: Rottermund & Co., [nd].).

By highlighting the issue of ethnicity in relation to language, Appel and Muysken (1996) discuss different studies with the same focus. One of the statements that we rescued is the one in which the ethnic aspect is associated with language and group identity:

All that differentiates one group from another is the group identity. Although there are no fixed criteria, a group is considered a specific ethnic group with ethnic identity when it is sufficiently different from other groups. [...] All the Spanish speakers living in the U.S. and, moreover, come from Mexico (often called Chicanos) clearly constitute an ethnic group. They have their own language and that makes them an ethno linguistic group. "(Appel and Muysken, 1996, p.24).

Among the studies that show the relationship between language and ethnicity, it is cited the work of Fishman, for whom "...language is the symbol par excellence of ethnicity" (Ibid., p.26). Appel and Muysken present language as the mainstay of a whole range of social relations of ethno-cultural background:

The importance of language is amplified by the fact that is used to hold other ethnic experiences. We talk about all kinds of cultural or ethnic issues and activities, and, therefore, the language has to do with them. A kind of associative loop is created. Relevant cultural elements, types of costumes, ritual aspects of weddings, etc., find expression in the language, and sometimes even believed that could not be expressed in another language. (Ibid., p.26).

Such kind of analyzes confirm our assertions about language as an ethnic indicator: it permeated the educational practices and remembered the sense of belonging to the same historic heritage, so much important in sharing the elements of foreign culture in its material and symbolic bases. Under this point of view, the German school served concurrently to the dynamics of cultural production and reproduction that were associated with the construction of identity processes in relations between the "aliens" and Brazilian society groups. According to Kreutz (1999, p.80): "This means that the process of ethnicity, or ethnic group, competes in the constitution of subjects and groups. It is a constituent element of social practices and at the same time, the social practices will constitute ethnic reconfiguration."

The conflicting aspects associated with social relations that immigration has generated found a place in primary school organization of German schools. In support of this argument, we bring an ethnic data based on the language issue for debate: the presence of only foreign cultural content based curriculum, put in check by the fact that there is a preoccupation with dominium of the Portuguese language among immigrants. We emphasize, first, the existence of a subject destined for teaching Portuguese (*Portugiesisch*), which appears in two periods of time during the week in the syllabus of school *Stadplatz* Humboldt. This fact brings up the polemic about not using or even contempt for our language in German schools, pointed out in several studies as a characteristic of this type of institution. This aspect would later be attacked by the educational policies of nationalist background throughout the first decades of the twentieth century, especially in the New State (cf. Pandolfi, 1999; Santos, 2008). If the classes were taught in German, determining this typical characteristic of *Deutschen Schulen*, the arrangement of disciplines in that old colonial school nucleus called attention to the fact

that there were also institutions where the need to know the national language was taken into account from the beginning! That is, these schools teachers and students spoke German, a language that was also the object of learning reading and writing. The teaching of Portuguese could meet the needs of daily life. In spite of the existence of a possible obligatory legislation that, at the time, would compel the teaching of national languages in primary schools, we believe that due to the geographical isolation of the colonies hardly such a determination would be the factor that would lead to insertion of Portuguese among the subjects studied in these locations. However, the teaching of Portuguese faced the difficulty of the lack of teachers in the colonies that dominated the Brazilian national language. Rambo (2003, p.80) reminds us: "The biggest problem was composed by the teachers because they themselves, in most cases, poorly dominated the Portuguese."

Also on teacher report on school activities in Hammonia stated that last year there was a discipline Portuguese (*Portugiesisch*), which shows concern for their everyday use in children's education, because children were in the midst of Brazilian society (*Jahresbericht* 1904 ... , 1905, p.19). It is feasible; therefore, argue that there may be some generalization when he states that in German schools the curriculum was focused exclusively on content related to foreign cultures. The study of these schools located in this region of Santa Catarina in the late nineteenth century and the middle of the next century, explains the coexistence of cultural database of German or European) and Brazilian origin, at a time when the political and social pressures of nationalism and even the nationalist campaign focused on education did not acted yet. Our argumentation follows the direction indicated by the studies of Rambo (1994a, p.154-5), highlighting the inclusion of Portuguese in the curriculum of the "gaucho" communitarian schools, involving the pursuit of knowledge by the Portuguese language in immigrant communities to other data as motivators interest, patriotism and consciousness of the colonists themselves, the reasons of pragmatic nature that living with bureaucracy generated and the proved existence of a primer for the Portuguese (Portuguese talking know) learning. We understand that traverse the curricular organization of the German schools in the colony of Hansa necessarily involves the identification of an ethnic perspective, even when we focus on other matters. Next we deal with this aspect.

In the central school of Humboldt's Calculus was the most frequent activity, appearing 10 times in the week. It is noticeable, also, the value of reading, which was scheduled for six times weekly. The Natural History (equivalent to the modern science classes) appeared twice, while World History was only offered every Tuesday for an hour. The Hand Craft was a school activity held on Wednesdays and Saturdays. The quality of the proposed activities in this curriculum highlights the lack of treatment in Brazilian history.

Teacher's procedures described by Professor Moritz Haselhorst, from the school of Road Isabel reported that the first section he read excerpts on the Geography of South America and Brazil. In the Calculation lessons, the first section students practiced the four operations with decimals and accounts, what was required both in writing and orally. As for geography, the teacher explained that it was a discipline that still not intended special attention at this stage of schooling. In the second section the calculation using the four operations continued being trained. In Religion, the teacher would read a text first and then the students repeated all together. They studied the Ten Commandments and other passages of Holy Scripture, what was read in chorus and then they had to write them down in a small notebook. The biblical story began with the origin of life (*AUSZUG...*, 1905, p.21).

With the analysis of content and methodologies, we can realize in practice this German rural primary school emphasis on calculation and writing. These demands were associated with the presence of teaching materials like textbooks, grammars and reading

books. It's also seen that religious education had a great level of importance. The teaching methodology was grounded in activities requiring repetition and memory, being a teacher centered practice.

In the description that Professor Richard Schulze, on the Road Paulo, made to report his school, there aren't any details about what was taught in each section. The subjects presented to be studied were: Religion, Writing, Mathematics, Reading, Singing, Geography and Language of Brazilian Earth (*brasilischen Landesprache*). Again, the account of the teaching activity drew attention to the concern with learning Portuguese. On Calculus was required in all kinds of accounts. According to the master, Geography lessons were given with difficulty, because there was no globe or atlas. At this school, which served 17 students, there was an assistant professor (Ibid., p.22).

In one of the schools of Hammonia, the calculus was studied in all sections as well as the lessons of religion. Interestingly, in the first section appeared religious education as a discipline of Prays or Praying (*Gebet*), which indicates that praying was also seen as an exercise in linguistic improvement. The science studies were made using the atlas zoo Leutemanns. The Natural History (*Naturgeschichte*) was a curricular component only for the third and fourth grades, in which they studied the three kingdoms (animal, vegetable and mineral). Curiously, alien content were mingled to the typically Brazilian content. Teacher said that the unique specimens of fauna and flora of Brazil were listed, such as birds (Kolibri, referring to the hummingbird or Jakutinga to the "jacu" – a king of bird) and other animals (Mico, for this kind of small monkeys). Domestic animals like the horse and the dog were also studied. Important plant specimens in rural life, such as corn, were also mentioned in the lessons. Gymnastics (*Turnen*) was among the subjects only to the last section. The report explains that students did exercises occasionally. But there aren't any details on the type of physical activity. Another particular subject quoted is the National History (*Heimatkunde*) in the third year, addressing the very locality where the school was located, the Valley of Itajaí (*Das Tal des Itajahy*) (BERICHT... , 1905 , p.19 ).

This shows that, in many cases, German schools focused aspects of Brazilian reality, that is, such issues were not undervalued as proclaimed nationalist ideas of the early twentieth century. Thus, in the fourth section was the discipline of history by addressing the discovery of Brazil and the constitution of the colony itself. The same happened with Geography (*Erdkunde*) that addressed aspects of Vale do Itajaí, state of Santa Catarina, Paraná and Rio Grande, along with more comprehensive content such as the various parts of the world, the oceans, the Americas and South North and Europe (Ibid., p.19). Thus, I these community schools elements of content were included, according to an analysis prepared on existing curricula in similar institutions within the territory of Rio Grande do Sul, comprised a set called "*Realia*", which fits in the treatment of things or were included real facts: studies on elements of nature and ecological environment such as animals (domestic and wild) and plants, or the Natural History and Geography (Rambo, 1994a, p.138-9, 142).

As a contribution to the development of an analytical and comparative perspective between the various elements of school organization in the context of German immigration, we rescued other data on the care of the curriculum of the schools of the state territory, allowing the finding of disciplines similar to those institutions colony of Santa Catarina:

The Association of Teachers, directly responsible for didactic and pedagogical organization of schools, assumed primary responsibility in 1900, at its general assembly in Bom Princípio (Rio Grande do Sul) that approved and adopted a common basic curriculum for all its schools... The general guidelines that should guide the system were established in it; it was

drawn up a common line of educational and pedagogical procedures and introduced as a mandatory subject, besides the History and Geography of Brazil, also Portuguese. (RAMBO, 2003 p.80).

We agree with Kreutz (1999, p.80) when reiterates the conclusions of the schooling process and ethnicity:

The basis for the recognition of ethnic as a constituent element of social dynamics possibility is the perception of the multiplicity of cultures, being in constant relational process or installing itself more strongly in a specific culture, it has in its cultural dimension, the triggering shaft meetings and interactions that are reflected in their educational process.

Observed components of the didactic and pedagogical activities for German schools located in rural Santa Catarina Hansa colony from 1897, we can see the specifics of content and school activities. Although considering that training and way of acting of every teacher to put into action their personal skills and knowledge can be particularized the nature of educational action in each institution, we understand those educational activities as elements of social practice whose relational issues expose its ethnic content.

### **Final Thoughts**

In the opening speech of the First Colloquium of Teuto-Brazilian Studies, held at the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul, in 1963, Gilberto Freyre noted:

The German presence in Brazil would bring a new aspect to the Brazilian formation, [...] Giving new ethnic and cultural content to these forms, it is true, but interacting with what was already transregionally Brazilian in the sense of being forms of organization predominantly familial and even patriarchal of society or cohabitation ... (Freyre 1966, p.19).

Analysis of the reports of the Company management Hanseatic Colonization reveals the pedagogical activities in rural primary schools located in Hansa colony, founded in Santa Catarina in the late nineteenth century. The opening of communitarian schools to the care of the children of German immigrants, with the erection of buildings and the development of a differentiated curriculum, meant the insertion of new formative cultural elements in southern Brazil, as theorized Freyre. It also served to the historical constitution of an ethnic identity.

The proposal argumentation supports the peculiarity of these southern fringes schools. Converges with elements of analysis presented by Rambo (2003, 1996, 1994a), which, even if focusing gauchos scenarios help us ratify that similar and different historical circumstances existed when comparing the processes of creation and transformation of schools effected contemporaneously, in Santa Catarina and Rio Grande do Sul, during the German colonization.

One common character inspired the emergence of schools in immigrant communities from both southern states. However, in the case of the Colony Hansa, there is the need to consider its relationship with the Company Colonization and the role of management in the enterprise, factors that did emerge from other elements in the relations between the settlers

and the Brazilian government, according to commercial mediation in the process of occupation of those lands of Santa Catarina.

Investments in community schools, related in the reports, can be taken as peculiar on studies that showed the absence of government action in the field of school education. Reports on educational practices characterize them as "German schools" on the nature of the proposed elementary school that there were developed, parameterized in relational processes engendered ethnic nature of contacts between subjects and groups of immigrants and Brazilian society.

Implanted in an area of colonization in Santa Catarina occupied by German immigrants from 1897, under the tutelage of German commercial enterprise, in these schools was historically developed an educational activity whose peculiarities were teaching in a foreign language and a centralized curriculum proposal in language learning and of German culture through the disciplines of Reading, Writing, Poetry, Singing, Religion and even Latin. However, we found that there were other elements that addressed national curriculum, Brazilian aspects, such as the Portuguese and the National History. The calculation was also seen as an essential matter in the elementary education of children in these institutions. Regarding to the curricular aspects, the study allowed distinguishing commonalities between activities in Santa Catarina schools and those detailed by Rambo (1994a). Among others, for example, it was found that in the linguistic field there was an emphasis in the teaching of German language and in their school and everyday uses, which emphasized their ethnic character, beside the presence of the Portuguese language; singing was practiced, too. The calculation was a prominent and anticipated treatment of those contents grouped under the name of *Realia*, dedicated to the treatment of the elements of nature and the ecological environment, the Natural History and Geography.

Considering the educational practices housed by those rural primary schools in areas of Santa Catarina German immigration, we can confirm that, at least in its early years of operation, these institutions remained didactic and pedagogical aspects that characterized them as typical expressions of the phenomenon of German schools - *Deutschen Schulen*, a particular historical moment in the development of Brazilian education. In these immigrant communities, with the absence of public institutions, the German schools attended the specific social purpose of providing primary education, backed up by a set of educational practices that merged those foreign cultural aspects to the ones of the Brazilian context.

Investigations in the field of the history of educational institutions that focus on these historical experiences headquartered in Southern region of Brazil lead to uncover theoretical and methodological horizon through which these schools have shaped a scenario of development of social practices evidenced by historical activity as a nucleus generator of ethnic relations.

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