



Expanding schools, increasing attendance, valuing agriculture: Celeste Gobbato and municipal education (Caxias do Sul, RS, 1924-1928)¹

Expandir as escolas, aumentar a frequência, valorizar a agricultura: Celeste Gobbato e a educação municipal (Caxias do Sul, RS, 1924-1928)

Expandir las escuelas, aumentar la frecuencia, valorar la agricultura: Celeste Gobbato y la educación municipal (Caxias do Sul, RS, 1924-1928)

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Abstract

The present article analyses the administration of Celeste Gobbato in the municipality of Caxias from the year of 1924 to 1928. Gobbato immigrated from Italy hired by the State government to work in the Engineering School of Porto Alegre as a professor. With superior education and P.H.D. in Agrarian Sciences, besides his consistent performance in the field of viticulture and teaching, he was nominated and took over Caxias intendency in the 1920 decade. He came to power in the name of political conciliation and elected education as one of the priority targets. His administration was remarkable either for the expansion of municipal schools and investments in rural education, either for the construction and opening of the Agricultural Patronage. This article seeks to evidence the strategies put into play for the promotion of education in the period of his administration, which sought to expand school offer, increase attendance and improve rural education.

Keywords: Municipal Education, Rural Teaching, Agricultural Patronage

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Resumo

O presente artigo analisa a administração de Celeste Gobbato no município de Caxias nos anos de 1924 a 1928. Gobbato imigrou da Itália contratado pelo governo estadual para atuar na Escola de Engenharia de Porto Alegre como professor. Com formação superior e doutorado em Ciências Agrárias, para além de sua atuação marcante no campo da vitivinicultura e da docência, foi indicado e assumiu a intendência de Caxias na década de 1920. Chegou ao poder em nome da conciliação política e elegeu como um dos pontos prioritários a escolarização. Sua gestão foi marcante seja pela expansão das escolas municipais e investimento no ensino rural, seja pela construção e abertura do Patronato Agrícola. O artigo procura evidenciar as estratégias colocadas em jogo para a promoção da escolarização no período de sua gestão que intentou expandir a oferta, aumentar a frequência e melhorar o ensino rural.

Palavras-chave: Educação municipal. Ensino rural. Patronato agrícola.

Resumen

El presente artículo analiza la gestión de Celeste Gobbato en el municipio de Caxias entre los años 1924 a 1928. Gobbato inmigró de Italia contratado por el gobierno estadual para actuar en la Escuela de Ingeniería de Porto Alegre como profesor. Con formación superior y doctorado en Ciencias Agrarias, más allá de su actuación marchante en el campo de la vitivinicultura y de la docencia, fue indicado y asumió la intendencia de Caxias en la década de 1920. Llegó al poder en nombre de la conciliación política y eligió como uno de los puntos prioritarios la escolarización. Su gestión fue marcante sea por la expansión de las escuelas municipales e inversión en la educación rural, sea por la construcción y apertura del Patronato Agrícola. El artículo procura evidenciar las estrategias puestas en juego para la promoción de la escolarización en el período de su gestión que intentó expandir la oferta, aumentar la frecuencia y mejorar la educación rural.

Palabras clave: Educación municipal. Educación rural. Patronato agrícola.

the city, however, does not tell its past, but contains it as the lines of a hand, written in the corners of the streets, the gratings of the windows, the banisters of the steps, the antennae of the lighting rods, the poles of the flags, every segment marked in turn with scratches, indentations, scrolls.

(CALVINO, 2003, p. 16).

Initial considerations

Scrutinize, at the time we live in, the past inscribed in the materiality of the cities, as Calvino (2003) inspires in his opening epigraph, means paying attention to the “scratches, sawdust, indentations, scrolls” that signalize the time gone, what was lived inscribed in the marks of the present, the details, or even the past debris and waste (Ginzburg, 1989). The present article analyzes the administrative period of the Italian intendant of Caxias³, Celeste Gobbato⁴. He emigrated from Italy hired by the gaucho government to work as a professor at the Porto Alegre Engineering School. With superior education and doctorate in Agrarian Sciences, in addition to his remarkable performance in the field of viticulture and teaching, he was nominated and took over the intendency of Caxias in the 1920 decade as a name of conciliation.

Caxias, colonized by a majority of emigrants coming from the Italian peninsula in the second quarter of the XIX century, was elevated to the condition of a municipality in 1890. Having as intendants, nominated or elected, representatives from the *Riograndense* Republican Party (PRR), many times as unique candidates, but who faced while assuming the local political power many tensions and conflicts in different conflicting moments. These conflicts were much more tensioned with the 1923 Revolution⁵, as “with the support of the local clergy, Gobbato would represent the element of interception capable of attenuate the advance of *Assisistas*’ opposition and the disrupt with the local Portuguese power. The sphere of civil society and political-administrative power would speak the same language” (RELA, 2004, P. 75).

³ The addition of the geographical position “of the South” (do Sul) to the current denomination Caxias do Sul was established by Decree No. 720 of 29 of December of 1944.

⁴ Celeste Gobbato’s biography was the theme of Katani Monteiro’s thesis published in 2016 under the title of *Between wine and politics: a biography of Celeste Gobbato (1890 – 1958)*. According to the author “The year was 1912, and Celeste Gobbato was 22 years old when he boarded the French ship *Plata* to make a trip that would last 29 days until its final destiny: Lake Guaíba, in Porto Alegre. The departure was from Genoa [...] He was born in Volpago del Montello, a city typically agricultural, in 1890. [...] As far as is known, his parents Pedro Gobbato and Anna Agnoletti were rural smallholders in Volpago, and the production of their lands supplied the local market and kept the family who was formed by other three children. From all them, only Celeste left the country. [...] Gobbato became oenologist-viticulturist in the Reale Scuola di Viticoltura ed Enologia di Conegliano at 17 years old and at 21 obtained his agronomist diploma at the Università di Pisa, where he did his doctorate in Agrarian Sciences” (MONTEIRO, 2016, p. 25 – 27). Celeste Gobbato and Berta Schwemmer met themselves in the ship while he returned to Italy in 1920. They “got married in Porto Alegre and had four children: Mario Pedro Angelo who died in 1982 was born in the gaucho capital and graduated in Medicine; Tito Alberto chose industrial chemistry as profession; Lydia Anna opted for the magisterium in Natural Sciences and today is a retired teacher, and Piero Ludovico followed the military career. The last three were born in Caxias and, since 1937, when their father left the direction of the Oenology and Viticulture Experimental Station and returned to Porto Alegre [...]” (MONTEIRO, 2016, p. 32).

⁵ It is important to remember that in 1923, Rio Grande do Sul went through a Revolution, from one side to the other, that involved the Republican partisans allied to the president of the State, Antônio Augusto Borges de Medeiros, who supported the federalist Joaquim Francisco de Assis Brasil. The revolution ended with the signature of the Agreement of Pedras Altas, which established the permanence of Borges de Medeiros until the end of his term, but with no reelection. The rebels were amnestied, and the election for vice-president should also be by vote. According to the Rela statute (2004), the tensions originated by the Revolution of 1923 agitated Caxias, bringing much more pressure than to the rest of Rio Grande do Sul in reason of the local force of the Catholic Church. For this reason, the name of Celeste Gobbato was a name of political conciliation.

Gobbato came to power in the name of political conciliation, and he elected education as one of the priority targets of his administration. His administrative period was remarkable for the expansion of municipal schools and investment in rural education, as well as for the construction and opening of the Agricultural Patronage. The present article seeks to evidence the strategies put into play for the promotion of education in the period of his administration, which sought to expand school offer, to increase attendance and to improve rural teaching. The documents mobilized were books of minutes, from the Municipal Council inclusive, pictures, newspapers, intendants' reports, mailing, school documents and interviews taken from historical documents analysis. The look on the municipality had also the objective of playing the game of scales, as Revel thinks (1998, p.13), considering "scraps of information" and trying to "understand in which manner this individual details, those patchworks of experiences give access to symbolic and social logics which are the logic of the group or even of the major assemblies". The text is organized in two movements: the first one analyzes Gobbato's administration and his action in behalf of education and the second one observes the foundation of the Agricultural Patronage.

1. Municipal schools: offer expansion and attendance increase

The 1920's decade signalized significant transformations to Caxias and region. Families grew, and part of them looked forward to new migrations to the northeast of the State of Rio Grande do Sul, as well as to the West of Santa Catarina and Paraná, searching for new lands and new fronts of occupation. The migration from the rural to the urban area also intensified with the growth of industrialization stimulated by the First War. See table 1 and note the growth percentage of the urban population of Caxias:

Table 1 – Caxias' urban population

Year	Total Population	Urban Population	%
1900	24.997	2.500	10,1
1910	23.965	3.742	15,6
1920	33.773	7.500	22,2
1930	32.622	9.975	30,57
1940	39.500	20.123	50,9
1950	59.533	36.742	61,7

Source: Machado, 2001, p. 211.

The urban growth recorded in the 1920ies, in the post-First World War, is associated with the advance of industrialization and commercial activity. The financial condition assumed by Gobbato as Intendant of Caxias wasn't any flattering in 1924 as, according to Machado (2001, p. 211), the new Intendant found Caxias with a deficient infrastructure of roads, water, and electric power supply, among other necessities, such as those in the areas of health and education". Though, this did not curb his initiatives.

One of the first actions with the taking office in 12 of October of 1924 was the creation of the Pro-Caxias foundation in end of November of that year which lasted until the end of his administration. "The form of work, was centered around studies promoted in each of the subcommittees, followed then by the great Pro-Caxias commission meeting that, in open session, discussed their results" (RELA, 2004, p. 81), and this conjunction joined forces of support for the newly elected intendant which legitimized and endorsed him through his administration. Gobbato did not simply administrate with the PRR as usually occurred but was backed by the Catholic Church who wielded a considerable local power, by representatives of

lay Catholic associations, by great industrialists as Aristides Germani and Abramo Eberle who was vice-intendant. It is also in his administration that the valorization of Italian and enhancement of the “settler” gained force in the representation of the regional identity process, in particular with the milestone of the celebrations of the Fifty Anniversary of Italian Immigration to RS. He demarcated as well an approach to the Italian political power, represented by its consuls and the fascism⁶.

Within the set of changes that Caxias experienced during the administrative period of Gobbato, we have: (1) new installations of municipal waterworks that expanded and improvement of the potable water distribution; (2) improvements of the public slaughterhouse; (3) remodeling of roads with sidewalks and macadam implementation in the urban area; (5) expansion of the garbage and chamber pots collection which became daily in the central area; (6) creation of the Agricultural Inspectorate with the end of fomenting the agriculture; (7) reform of the Public Cleaning Inspectorate and hiring of street sweepers; (8) improvements on public lighting, which had 121 lamps and 12.500 candles in 1927; (9) public transportation concern, with the “autobus”. He also created the Municipal Popular Savings Fund, where residents would deposit their savings, and used it in the local development. Gobbato was represented by local newspapers as tireless, as a ‘great intendant and administrator’, who gave attention, as an expert in viticulture and agricultural matters, by his profession and education, to instruction and rural areas of the municipality.

With regards to public education, one of the first measures was the creation of the School Inspectorate whose finality was the organization, preparation of the administrative staff and supervision of municipal teachers, being the School Inspector, textually, according to Act # 7, of 1 of July of 1925, in charge of:

Act nº 27

Chapter IV.

Art. 16 – It competes to the School Inspector:

- a) Visiting public schools with the possible assiduity and writing the minutes of inspection in their respective books.
- b) Making the teaching program to be accomplished, and pointing out books to be adopted.
- c) Observing everything that could interest the municipal instruction, informing the intendant about it.
- d) Organizing the students’ books of enrollments of all schools of the municipality.
- e) Holding on his own and through municipal teachers, lectures at school, primarily in national dates.
- f) Seeking by all appropriate means to instigate the primary instruction, mainly in the rural zone.
- g) Monthly organizing the payroll of the Municipal Public Instruction staff.
- h) Inspecting private lessons endowed by the intendency. [...] (Records of Acts... 1924 – 1930

Articulated with the State government of Borges de Medeiros, Gobbato printed significant changes in municipal schools. As Carvalho and Carvalho state, (2010, p. 20), Gobbato shows in his actions a “believe in the regenerative power of education and in the diffusion of school systems”, being a central part of “local elites [who] makes use of this process in the definition of a municipal identity and in the defense of private objectives”. Regarding public education, many different strategies were put into action, primarily the concern with

⁶ About this theme, see Giron (2017).

school attendance, localization and material conditions in schools, as well as the expansion of offer. At the beginning of March of 1925, under the title, 'I lavori della nuova amministrazione di Caxias' [The work of the new administration in Caxias], the 'Correio Colonial' journal declared about the 'advances' in education that:

Figure 1 – Newspaper clipping about Caxias' schools, 1925.⁷



Source: Journal 'Correio Colonial', 07/03/1925, p. 05.

What was already announced in March of 1925 as 'solved' would still demand adjustments and attention from the side of the municipal public power. It was a period where the municipality received from local communities many transfers of lands with school buildings and their furniture (Luchese 2012, 2015), which shows the appreciation that Gobbato had in rural areas. Besides, Gobbato visited the rural communities, checking the necessities and mapping the best locations for installing schools. In this aspect, he received unnumbered demands of families who justified the value, importance, and advantages they would obtain with the opening of a school. As an example, see below one of the petitions sent to the intendant:

Dear Mr. Dr. Celeste Gobatto
Municipal Intendant, of Caxias,
The undersigned residents of the indent Portugal, São Valentim, 3th District of this municipality, parents of several children with no instruction, come to request you to favor them in this respect. Expecting you to support them and aware that you never spared any effort to protect education, they remain.
In these terms, they wait for approval.
Caxias, 27 of August of 1927 (CORRESPONDENCES, codex 06.01.02)

⁷ Transcription: Schools, which have been deserving special attention by the new administration, have been considerably increased and one could say that they are near to relatively satisfying the municipality necessities. In 13 of October of 1924, their number was 21 but working with great irregularity. Today we reached the nice cipher of 81! For the instruction, Dr. Gobbato found necessary to create the position of School Inspector, who must carefully provide the regularity of classes, transmit the agrarian instruction in each school, and for such end he will have his school field. Also, this is a problem one can say solved.

The petition signed by 14 parents, presented the number of 34 children to be benefited. As an answer, there is a record of School Inspector Salvador Petrucci at the petition, made in 8 of October of 1927, declaring the following: “I think that, although the petitioners’ request concerning the installation of the school is justified, this matter is for the next school year”. By the other hand, Intendant Gobbato at the same date registered that “Petitioners building a house and donating it together with the plot to the Municipality, the requested class will be available”. The Intendant’s position encouraging the communities to participate with the construction of the building for a school and its donation to the municipality, together with the plot, was a recurrent strategy that allowed the expansion of the public school net. Anyway, the record of the local classes of 1928 informs that the community received the school and the nominated teacher was Sister Roglio (REPORT, 1928B, p. 92).

One of the usual concerns was the school attendance, and the debate intended to establish the more promisor line of action to solve the problem in the municipality. Which strategy they should implement in order school attendance could be increased? In his report, Gobbato considered that it was necessary some flexibility in the school calendar once “if the minor withdrawn from school during the periods of work at the colony suffers harm for lack of letters instruction, he temporarily takes advantage of the healthy work in the farm, not being completely away from it and improving himself” (REPORT, 1926, p. 53). To Gobbato the agricultural work that children did was also understood as educative and necessary, although it should not harm the school attendance. In a publication of the journal ‘O Regional’ of March of 1927, Inspector Salvador Petrucci communicates to municipal teachers the necessary classes interruption on account of the vintage:

Municipal Classes. I remind Municipal Teachers that during March and beginning of April a 15 days vacation will be conceded for the occasion of the vintage works. This vacation has in view the use of students in the grape harvest, being conceded only for schools at the vine-growing areas, according to the stakeholders’ opinion about proper time. Salvador Petrucci. School Inspector. (‘O Regional’ JOURNAL, 27/03/1927, cover).

In this manner, he oriented teachers to have common sense in organizing the calendar. However, the primary measure to ensure the maintenance of school attendance was the creation of an income transfer program to support families that would send their children to school. By Law No. 61, article 3, in its Paragraph 20, it was authorized a stipend payment in the value of “5\$000 for each child enrolled in municipal school, within the regulatory conditions [...] what occasioned a considerable increase of school attendance, being 589 head of families benefited, with 5:870.000, corresponding to 1174 students”, informed the Intendant (REPORT, 1928, p. 47). Not all the data could be earned to realize the practical impact of this law, but the increase was relevant, reaching 80% of children in school age who attended school with regularity, according to table 2:

Table 2 – School attendance in Caxias

1925		1926		1927	
Records	Attendants	Records	Attendants	Records	Attendants
5350	4014	5427	5602	4351	-

Source: REPORT, 1926, 1928, 1928a, 1928b.

Paying attention for the data, separately, by different typologies of school institutions, as in table 3, note that the significant attendance and number of schools are in those isolated schools maintained in rural areas of the municipality. If the year of 1925 is taken as reference, since the data are complete, the relation between enrolled and frequent students reaches an average of 78%, being lower in the Elementary Schools (69,85%):

Table 3 – Record and attendance in Caxias

Year	Municipal School ⁸		Isolate State Schools		Parish and Religious Schools		Elementary Schools ⁹		Private Schools	
	Enrollments	Attendance	Enrollments	Attendance	Enrollments	Attendance	Enrollments	Attendance	Enrollments	Attendance
1925	2896	2258	495	357	1422	1107	355	248	152	120
1926	2901	2257	617	457	1553	1406	356	265	-	-
1927	3002	2171	536	346	1576	1434	425	351	-	-

Source: REPORT, 1926, 1928, 1928a, 1928b.

In 1927, some rural schools started to work in two turns, which reduced the size of classes, increased the gains of teachers and improved teaching conditions, informed Gobbato. Access expansion, decreasing distances traveled on the way to school, was substantial in this period. According to information on table 4, the number of schools increased considerably in the 1920 decade being constant on the reports the information that all of them were in operation:

Table 4 – Schools in Caxias

Year	Municipal Schools	Isolate State Schools	Parish and Religious Schools	Elementary Schools ¹⁰	Private Schools
1923	21	43	4	1	No data
1925	78	11	15	1	5
1926	86	13	15	1	5
1927	88	11	12	2	5
1928	79	10	12	2	6

Source: REPORT, 1924, 1926, 1928, 1928a, 1928b.

Another initiative was the opening of new classes in the Intendance building to teach ‘neglected children’ and ‘shoeshine boys’ and, in a particular time, guards of the Municipal Guard. As mentioned in Report (1926), the prisoners in jail could attend these classes too. Another school also opened in 1925, named ‘Municipal Council’¹¹ School, was maintained with

⁸ The schools subsidized by the State are accounted.

⁹ From 1927 on, a Rural School Group was created and installed in Nova Vicenza (today is known as Farroupilha municipality).

¹⁰ From 1927 on, a Rural School Group was created and installed in Nova Vicenza (today is known as Farroupilha municipality). About this school, see FERNANDES (2015).

¹¹ Dear Dr. Celeste Gobbato, Intendant of Caxias. The undersigned requestor, aware of the humanitarian feelings that you have, come to submit to your kindness the project of a night class for primary and secondary courses to be held in one of the Colégio N. S. do Carmo schools. Due to the low remuneration of the students, as this courses view the workers' world, the requestor begs for a subvention from the charitable Municipal Intendance. With high esteem, Caxias, 11 of Jun of 1924. Vico P. Thompson.” The result of the request appears as: “Petition accepted. The subvention fixed amount is of 120\$000 per month, and the school shall be named “Caxias Municipal Council Class25/7/1924. Celeste Gobbato.” (CORRESPONDENCE, codex 06.01.03).

the donation of stipends from the municipal councilors and destined to the commercial practices teaching, operating at night. According to the 1926 Report (1928, p. 47), it was destined to propitiate the free teaching of Portuguese, arithmetic, bookkeeping, and business correspondence for workers and adults of both sexes.

Within other measures of the municipal administration, was the standardization of books used in municipal schools, with the use of ‘João de Deus Maternal Primer’ and ‘G.N. Notions of Arithmetic’ books, mentioning that the program mainly characteristic was the ‘simplicity’, “being banned showy programs with abstract, boring, sibylline compendiums for an age where the concrete, short and simple notions are the only ones possible (Afrânio Peixoto, Pestalozzi)” (REPORT, 1926, p. 52). In order to facilitate the purchase of books by parents, the Intendance acquired a considerable number of books directly from editors, to be resold to families at cost price. Still, concerning improvements, “municipal classes are all served by geographic maps of Brazil, Rio Grande do Sul, a National Flag frame and small frames containing hygienic notions” (REPORT, 1928a, p. 103).

In March of 1925 teachers’ certification tests were held, as noticed in ‘Correio Colonial’ Journal.

Certification tests for municipal teacher candidates. By order of Intendant, Dr. Celeste Gobbato, it is informed to whom it may interest that entries for the municipal teachers’ certification tests to be held next April are open. Further information, will be furnished by this Municipal Intendance during working hours. Caxias, 11 of March of 1925. Salvador Petrucci. Agricultural and School Inspector (JOURNAL ‘Correio Colonial, 03/14/1925, p. 02).

Certification tests were held then, but only in July of that year the standardization of the municipal services created by Act 27 of 01 July of 1925 would establish in its Chapter XIV that “Art. 35 The position of municipal teacher will be provided by certification tests, and preference will be given to the Intendance employees that show skills to exercise it. Art. 36 No candidate will be enrolled in the certification tests without self-submitting to previous health inspection”. [...] (RECORDS of Acts... 1924 – 1930). During his term of office, by the increase of municipal schools, different certification tests were held, as well as teacher improvement courses offered at vacation periods. Dealing with this subject in his Report, Gobbato stated that the “the teaching staff, by improved salaries, by the laudable stimulus of being paid besides salary with a gratification proportional to attendance, feels well in its attributions, and has corresponded to the expectations.” He still affirmed that “the selection made on principles of our administration and that consisted of a general exam for the control of skills and competence” was fundamental to the qualification of the teaching staff.

Teacher Paulina Soldatelli Moreto¹² told in an interview the conditions in which she attended the certification tests to municipal teachers in Caxias, remembering that she initially studied with professor João Fontana and then with João Chemello. Later then, with the arriving of Sisters in São Marcos she attended the Sisters' school for six years as in the seventh year "I would go to school only on Sundays. On weekdays I would work at home, I would go to the farm if I had a little rest, I would study, and prepare the themes. On Sundays, I would go to mass and then to school. Sisters, until midday, would give me a little assistance, attendance, they would receive my themes, and this corresponded to a year of class" (MORETTO, 1983). While being asked about how she became a teacher¹³, she told that it was by the necessity of the own community and by the Sisters' indication and, in her words:

With 14 years old I started to teach as a municipal teacher in the Zambicária Line of S. Marcos. I was a teacher that knew very little. But as the school was closed by lack of teachers, the residents of that Line asked the vice mayor of S. Marcos how they could find a teacher. He said that they did not have anyone that was a teacher, who could teach, but they suggested them to go to the Sisters' School as they could indicate someone. The more reputed person, who knew more, the more advanced one at that time. And the sisters pointed me. They went to talk to my father, and he agreed. I started teaching at the Zambecaria Line with uncompleted 14 years old. I taught for 8 years. Then I interrupted it as I got married and moved to Caxias, in the city. I married Domingos Moretto.

Paulina stopped teaching after the marriage, but told in details the daily school routine at the rural area over the eight years of her performance:

When I was a teacher, I used to walk two hours by day, on foot, as I gave classes in the morning and in the afternoon. Where I used to walk in the morning, the road was better so I could do some crochet while walking. Many times, while returning home I prayed the Rosary. In the other part, where I gave classes in the afternoon, the road was too bad, because it was where the wood logs were dragged to the mill, a dirt road. Down there, no way to be distracted, to do crochet. I taught in the morning, in the afternoon and, in the evening I gave classes for adults in Pedras Brancas. I used to stay in a family house in Pedras Brancas and never paid any pension, as in that family, which I lived with, the owner was illiterate. He had a feeling for being uneducated, and used to say that he wanted a teacher to give classes here at our community: I want to host her in my house and not charge for it at all. Since I have a teacher to my children to study to not being an illiterate like me. [...] I stayed for 7 years in his house and never paid for anything. His children learned to read, write. They were brilliant. Besides, the boys from the neighborhood used to come at night, because all them were literate and taught by me at school and were not able to continue, as they had to work at the farms. So, they would come at night. I would give classes

¹² Paulina Soldatelli was born in 03 of June of 1913, in São Marcos, Caxias, daughter of immigrants José Soldatelli (native of Mantova) and Rosa Pelizzer Soldatelli (native of Treviso).

¹³ In a letter to Intendant Gobbato, teacher Paulina presented herself in the following terms: "Dear Dr. Celeste Gobbato, Municipal Intendant of Caxias. By the present letter, I come to you to inform that in this date I started to exercise the job of a teacher in the class localized in the Zambecari Line, nominated by the Ordinance of the 16 of the current month. It is unnecessary to say that I will do everything in my power to perform the duties inherent to the position, sparing no efforts in the sense of instilling in youth the fear of God, source of all knowledge, and the love to our homeland – Brazil, and the respect and obedience to the constituted authorities. Being very grateful to you, I ask you to accept my protests of great respect. Sincerely Yours, Paulina Soldatelli. São Marcos, the 19th of May of 1928" (CORRESPONDENCE, codex 01.06.03).

there. I did not charge them, did not receive anything and also did not pay for anything. But we had to provide candles, as there was no light. It would be unfair Mr. Sandri to pay for the kerosene. So, we used to make the candles with bamboo pipes. Each one would do a little, and like this, we had the candles to use at night, in the classes at home. We were a chaplain, catechist, taught to embroider, civility, good manners; we were families' counselor, all that was what a teacher had to do in the countryside. Including assisting those who were dying. I ever remember of this burial of a child that I did. There was no priest. I did not know what to say, but accompanied the body and prayed what I knew while he was taken to the cemetery (MORETTO, 1983).

The host of teachers by local families, the valorization of their knowledge, the exercise of a specific leadership in the community, much above all the activity in class, with tasks related to catechism, to counseling and the care with the chapel itself, are representations of the 'good teacher'. Even if she turned into a teacher in an improvised way, Paulina represented the 'good teacher' as state Luchese and Grazziotin (2015, p. 354) and for that, it was necessary

To be an example of life; to accomplish duties by respecting class time, keeping discipline, teaching the essential notions of literature in a convenient form, writing, fundamental operations, to be capable of organizing the students with order, respect and cleanliness, to participate of moments of socialization, festivities and all other events of the community; to have a good character, to not have any vice and to preserve the *proper costumes*.

Also sometimes for that end, previous time of study or quality of education to the exercise of teaching did not count. In the rural areas, the communities legitimated the teacher performance by this set of representations. So those that would not find correspondence of what was desirable in the nominate teacher would make, in general, petitions complaining about the teacher and would not send children to school.

Concerning the municipal administration in the Intendant Gobbato's period, another relevant event was the Intendants Congress of the municipalities of the State colonial region. Held between 03 and 04 May of 1925, the proposal raised from "a lecture occurred among Italian administrators of colonial municipalities and the idea was applauded by our benefactor chief Dr. Borges de Medeiros, president of the State", as announced the Journal 'A Federação' (06/05/1925, p. 03). The points previously established for studies were the following:

- a) Possible unification of the budget legislation.
- b) Possible substitution of the statistics and expedient tax by another equivalent taxation.
- c) The rural and intercity coach issue.
- d) Elementary and professional school.
- e) Eventual unification of municipal posture codes.
- f) Creation of an intercity nursery and means to foment the rational colonial agriculture.
- g) Many other subjects of common interest.

It is noteworthy that school – in special the elementary and professional ones, were in the center of the debate. Intendants were convinced that they could manage better their municipalities if they build collective solutions and strengthen joint studies and projects. Invited municipalities had total accession with the presence of their respective Intendant and Municipal Counselor, according to table 5:

Table 5 – Municipalities and their representatives in the Congress

Municipality	Intendant	Municipal Representative
Caxias	Celeste Gobbato	Orestes Manfro
Nova Trento	Joaquim Mascarello	Anselmo Carpeggiani
Antônio Prado	Caetano Reginatto	Francesco Marcantonio
Bento Gonçalves	João Baptista Pianca	Amadeu Arioli
Encantado	Antonio de Conto	Victorio Costa
Alfredo Chaves	Segismundo Reschke	Vitorio Dal Pai
Garibaldi	Antonio Paganelli (representante)	Arduino D' Arrigo
Guaporé	Manoel Francisco Guerreiro	Alberto Morassutti
Prata	Felix Engel Filho	Adolpho Schneider
São Sebastião do Caf	Ernesto Noll	Carlos Oderich
São Francisco de Paula de cima da Serra	Alfredo Lucena (representante)	

Source: author's organization from data of the Journal 'A Federação', 06/05/1925, p. 02 e 03.

Joined the group, too, the government representative, Renato Costa, who was the general director at the State Treasure. On 04 of May, the discussions and debates started, and in what concerns education, the referrals, according to a notice in the Journal 'A Federação', were the following:

Elementary and professional teaching was the point approached next, being Dr. Celeste Gobbato, Dr. Felix Engel Filho and Mr. Manoel Francisco Guerreiro nominated to organize a teaching program and regulation for the public and subsidized classes. Then, it was approved Dr. Gobbato's proposal that will request from the State Government the printing or acquisition of geographic maps and other necessary teaching materials to supply the municipalities by the lower price as possible. Still, Dr. Gobbato's proposal about the annexation to the schools of the agricultural fields where practical lessons will take place, competing thus to the development of production in this zone, was approved. All the present representatives agreed to settle in their municipalities the agricultural fields, and Dr. Gobbato shall provide the models and program to be officially adopted (JOURNAL 'A Federação', 05/06/1925, p. 03).

The Journal 'Correio Colonial' announced almost the same in relation to the referrals for education, but adding that "it was given to Dr. Pianca¹⁴ the charge of making the project of a rural school model that observes the hygiene, light and comfort precepts" (JOURNAL

¹⁴ Engineer Dr. João Baptista Pianca, Municipal Intendant of Bento Gonçalves in the 1924 – 1928 quadrennium, was born in Porto Alegre on 14 of July of 1893, son of José Pianca (native of Treviso - Italy) and Mrs. Stella Facco de Padova. [...] In 1915 obtained the title of civil engineer and in 1916 presented the final project that gave him the title of engineer. [...] in 1918, the Government of the State of Rio Grande do Sul opened a certification test for the position of Public Works conductor. Nine were the competitors, and all competently provided with the documents. Among them was Dr. Pianca who managed to reach the first place and for that was classified, which opened him from pair to pair the public life doors. At the same time that he started to work at the Works Direction, he projected and directed many vital works and took part in critical official missions. In 1919 he was nominated a professor of Architecture [...] was elected Bento Gonçalves Municipal Intendant in 20 of September of 1924, taking power in the 15th of following November. In consequence, due to his new functions, was licensed from Public Works and the Engineering School seats. Once in charge of the position, Dr. Pianca learned with careful and precise examination the more urgent needs of the municipality, organizing a large, complex and daring plan of renovations and new works, whose execution was voted [...]" (In: I Municipi della colonia italiana nello stato di Rio Grande do Sul (Brasile) - Bento Gonçalves - 1924 to 1928).).

‘Correio Colonial’, 05/09/1925, p. 02). Still, according to this newspaper, the intendants decided to follow the state regulation for schools in their municipalities. It is worth to mention that the rural school project was made and built by Pianca, but was reserved to Bento Gonçalves only, according to a study of Luchese and Kreutz (2012).

Municipal actions in favor of Caxias’s education undertook different measures besides those mentioned here. With Gobbato, the support for private schools from the side of the municipality, by providing an annual subsidy, was a constant one. Parish schools opened under the care of the parson Mons. Meneguzzi were important centers of education diffusion and Catholicism affirmation, and all of them counted on some financial support of the Intendance. A synthesis of the municipal public instruction was published by Journal ‘Correio Colonial’ in July of 1925 and thus referred to:

Municipal Instruction. One of the essential issues that are being solved by Mr. Dr. Celeste Gobatto, Intendant of this municipality and, that was well known since it consisted of his master platform, is the municipal public school. The state of affairs and financial difficulties in which he found the municipality demanded great efforts allied with dedication in order to carry it out and take it to proper term, solving this so worth and essential problem. *Acting with knowledge of the cause, he traveled through the municipality in all its extension to get to know their most urgent necessities and to identify classes in particular points that could satisfy the needs of teaching.* Later, he ordered a ‘train’ in order that teachers could learn about the current regulation, *submitting them, at the same time, to a supplementary exam.* By this, with his administrative sense and competence, he was able to route this critical question, which is today one of the main contributions to the Municipality progressive economic-social development. At present, the Municipality has 79 municipal classes, *besides those that are subsidized by the municipal treasure and distributed as following: 7 parish classes, Colégion Nossa Senhora de Pompéia, in Ana Rech, Colégio Nossa Senhora de Lourdes, in Nova Vicenza, Colégio Juvenato São Carlos in Milanês and the one in S. Miguel.* For their maintenance, the Municipal Council voted the annual amount of 41:300\$000 that added to the aid of Rs. 9:600\$000 that the State Government destined to education in this Municipality reached a total of 50:900\$000. Being our income estimated in Rs. 576:546\$948 per year, it ends up that near 14,5% was destined for instruction. Another instruction issue that deserved special attention of our Alderman and that by his initiative was treated in the Intendants’ Congress held last May in this city is the school agricultural field [...] (JOURNAL ‘Correio Colonial’, 25/07/1925, p. 02) [my emphasis].

The following year, another synthesis was published emphasizing the ‘advances’ and needs that still worried the municipal administration regarding education.

Municipal issues – Public Instruction. [...] today we are dealing with public instruction, one of the main points that our Municipality takes care. Classes already reopened in all municipal public schools and the enrollment books accused *a higher number of registrations than last*

year. This fact, really comforting, meets the efforts of the Municipality current administration, which has been dedicating with care our children illiteracy issue. The School Inspectorate, created specially to assist the large school movement of the municipality, directed by our friend Salvador Petrucci, has been tireless in the control of classes, taking the correct measures to assist them conveniently. This year, *the number of teachers increased to a hundred against 76 of the last exercise.* In this way, many points of the municipality, whose hardworking and peaceful populations used to see their children growing without the essential theoretical knowledge for their future life, were provided with classes. *The School Inspectorate spared no efforts in order all schools can have the necessary material and, to not neglect the patriotic instruction too.* About this subject, all classes received national flags, and their respective teachers held lectures to their students about the date under commemoration and the homeland flag on vacation days. In order *to increment enrollments, the budgetary law for the current exercise establishes a five thousand réis prize for students that, besides good attendance, show real achievement at the end of the school year.* Such measure will reinforce the attendance, so, at least in part, it will contribute next to parents that do not send their children to school in order to not miss their help in crop times and, besides this, to raise the stimulus within the students that accepted to receive the prize for their duties good accomplishment. Through their assistants, the municipality maintains permanent and vigorous supervision of the classes regarding students' proper hygiene and accommodation. Lately, some colonial centers have donated to the Intendance the plots and buildings to enable teaching, being the agricultural fields under organization, where students will receive practical notions of agriculture, learning in this way our methods of cultivation which will take them to leave behind the system until now followed. Municipal Counselors, in a commendable gesture of love to Instruction, donated the subsidy that competed to them to give, destined to the diffusion of teaching. We know that Dr. Intendant will invest this money in the subvention of a practical commerce school that will be in operation next to the mimeograph and typing class. Besides, the renowned Casa Pratt of Porto Alegre is opening the school in this city soon, under the competent direction of a teacher certificated by a course that the referred house keeps in that Capital. In these conditions just the goodwill of our family chiefs, especially in the rural districts, will be enough for instruction to be given conveniently in our Caxias municipality. (JOURNAL 'O Regional', 30/01/1926, cover) [my emphasis].

Despite the propaganda and evident journal position as a defender of policies undertaken by Gobbato's administration, the main strategies were highlighted, as well as the advances obtained by municipal schools, in special the rural ones. It is noteworthy too, the creation of agricultural fields next to rural schools, which aimed to teach and encourage more modern practices of cultivation. Thinking of Gobbato's education and regional economic characteristics, it made much sense to stimulate that enterprise.

Another recurrent evidence was the valorization of the catechesis teaching at the municipal public school, as well as civic education, in particular in the commemorative dates as the Independence and Proclamation of the Republic days. The realization of final exams occurred through an external examination committee under the Inspector's responsibility. Below, a record of the final exams day at the Municipal Classroom 'Louro' Core, with teacher Maria Busa Job, who had 29 enrolled students in 1926, being 13 males and 16 females. For the record, the attendance was of 27 students, being 12 males and 15 females.

Figure 2 - Exams realized in the 'Núcleo Louro' Municipal Class, 1926



Source: REPORT, 1928, p. 52.

The final exams would gather students' relatives. Most schools' photos are from this day. Traditionally, after the exams, moments of socialization with poetry, singing, theater and handmade work were promoted, and followed by a lunch or dinner at one of the families' places that lived next to the school. Figure 2 presents the rural class of teacher Maria Busa Job, and it is noteworthy the way children are arranged, separated by sex. Adults appearing in the background are their relatives, in addition to the examination committee members. The school building, in wood, has on its door Caxias' municipal coat of arms, which was created and distributed during Gobbato's administration.

As a form of balance of the work done through the year of 1926 and in commemoration of the second year of his government, Celeste Gobbato presented a synthesis of the municipality conditions, affirming that in school domains the advances were evident and flattering:

Always coherent with our voluntary administrative program, public instruction still deserves our best attention. The statistics department seeking for clarifications that would bring advantage to public instruction, patented the proper localization of schools, revealing a fact of great importance that, in the places of significant children agglomeration a school is there ready to diffuse the teaching of first letters. In a total of 6.383 children of second childhood where 5.586 enrolled in different schools represents a percentage much superior to the one verified in the totality of the State. From these 5.586 enrolled students, 2.825 are from municipal schools. [...] will offer, in a close future, the indispensable means for citizens to exercise

their mission with dignity, dedicating their existence to the service of the family, homeland and humanity. If from the total population, 87.5 percent are in different schools, we admit those private, lay and religious organizations, in a worthy competition, to compete for literacy too, thanks to the free education system, primarily guaranteed by our constitutional charter. Shall be licit to us to remind with no selfish concerns that being a Rio-grandense from the heart I am proud of seeing this great State at the forefront of the most literate ones of the Brazilian Federation. (JOURNAL 'O Regional', 16/10/1926, cover).

As an education project, besides the commitment in promoting the municipal schools – by expanding offer, improving attendance and ensuring better exploitation – at the rural areas, Gobbato's concern was the opening of a gymnasium. So, for such end, he asked for the help of Mussolini through a correspondence sent on 12/06/1927 in which he looked for gaining support for Silesians to install the gymnasium in Caxias in a plot donated by the municipality. The desire was “to remind the virtues of Italian people and conserve the parents' language for that youth that, Brazilian by birth, does not disdain, but, on the contrary, is proud of descending from the Italian strain” (RECH and LUCHESE, 2018). The referral did not provoke the desired effect, and in 1928, the Municipality destined the plot to the Congregazione di San Giuseppe, who installed the Murialdo School. Another project considered as a priority to Gobbato in his administration was the Agricultural Patronage.

2. Agricultural education to ‘neglected minors’: the Agricultural Patronage¹⁵

The genesis of agricultural patronages in the Brazilian context refers, in regard to its legal landmark, to Decree No. 12.893 of 28 of February of 1918, which authorized the creation of agricultural patronages by the Ministry of Agriculture¹⁶, and to Decree No. 13.706 of 25 of July of 1919, which established the new organization of agricultural patronages¹⁷. Both of them affirmed that the purpose of these institutions was to exclusively assist “poor classes, [who] have in view the moral, civic, physical and professional education of neglected minors and those that by insufficiency of capacity of their families were put, by whom is the right, at the disposition of the Ministry of Agriculture, Industry, and Commerce”. And besides, affirmed that they were institutions oriented to the “assistance, protection and moral guardianship”, promoting the “agricultural work without any other purpose than the one of using its regenerative and educative action with the end of conducting and orienting them until they are incorporate to the rural environment” (DECREE No. 13.706 of 07/25/1919). Education for the poor, making them utile and productive, “the modeling of the workforce, in other words, to prepare the farm worker to know how to obey and to produce from practices based in the agricultural modernity” analyses Vicente (2010, p. 32).

In the case of Caxias, the first experience in organizing the agricultural patronage was on the one opened next to the Elementary Industrial School, created in 1918, by the association of the municipality and the Engineer Faculty of Porto Alegre. According to a Tisott (2017, p. 130) study, the Elementary Industrial School “incorporated in its duties the

¹⁵ This subject deserves more profound research that is about to be written. This article extension only presents some elements of its historical process.

¹⁶ DECREE No. 12.893 of 28 of February of 1918, “Authorizes the Ministry of Agriculture to create agricultural patronages for the education of neglected minors in the zoo-technical stations, breeding model-farms, colonial centers and other facilities of the Ministry”. (available in <<http://www2.camara.leg.br/legin/fed/decret/1910-1919/decreto-12893-28-fevereiro-1918-507076-publicacaooriginal-1-pe.html>> viewed on 02/02/2018)

¹⁷ DECREE No. 13.706 of 25 of July of 1919 “Have given new organization to the Agricultural Patronages”. (available in <<http://www2.camara.leg.br/legin/fed/decret/1910-1919/decreto-13706-25-julho-1919-521010-republicacao-95833-pe.html>> viewed in 02/02/2018).

agricultural teaching and practices of social assistance oriented to children who had not guaranteed conditions of life that would allow them to take advantage of the benefits of modernity”. Under the title “Agricultural Patronage”, the ‘O Brasil’ journal announced in its cover, on 10 of April of 1920, that:

The Porto Alegre Engineering School shall inaugurate by these days next to the Industrial School of this city, a patronage school for twenty neglected minors. This patronage will minister the primary and agricultural education and will receive, besides the inmate minors, a certain number of external students. For the development of this new installation, the School asked to the Intendance the concession of the rest of the plot where the construction of the building is under work for the final installation of the Industrial School (JOURNAL ‘O BRASIL’, 04/10/1920, cover).

The experience proliferated the number of students, so those connected to agriculture became superior to the ones professionalized to the industry. According to Tissot (2017, p. 131) “after 1921, when the patronage already had around one tier of the 72 students of the school, the enrolments suffered a big reduction. In 1922, only 41 children and young people appeared in the records, being 20 of them, inmates at the patronage. The same quantity of inmates was registered in 1923 when the total number of enrolments was 35 students”. The activities were closed in 1924, months before Gobbato taking office.

While taking office, Gobbato mentioned the importance of initiatives that would valorize the agriculture and, in particular, the teaching of modern technics of cultivation. After all, this was his expertise that, in a certain way, encountered an echo in regional characteristics. So, the idea of creating an Agriculture Patronage was fomented and gained force. However, the biggest challenge was the financial investment to enable the intention. The way was to mobilize families and leadership, as

The Agriculture pro-Patronage tax is reaching great results. The population is interested in the accomplishment of this desideratum, as you probably noted, by the festivals organized with the end of raising resources for the building. The project is ready, and the construction is for the next exercise if the part of the income and expense of the 1928 budget that I had the honor of presenting to you during your meetings, is approved.

In the continuity of the report, the Intendant thanked the members of the Pro-Patronage Commission affirming “my best thanks to the distinct people who formed the Agricultural Pro-Patronage Commission, constituted by Mr. Presidente Demetrio Niederauer, members Ms. Sylvia Braghirolli, Ms. Umbelina Faccioli¹⁸ and Ms. Egyde Spinato, who save no time neither efforts to work in favor of this Institute”.

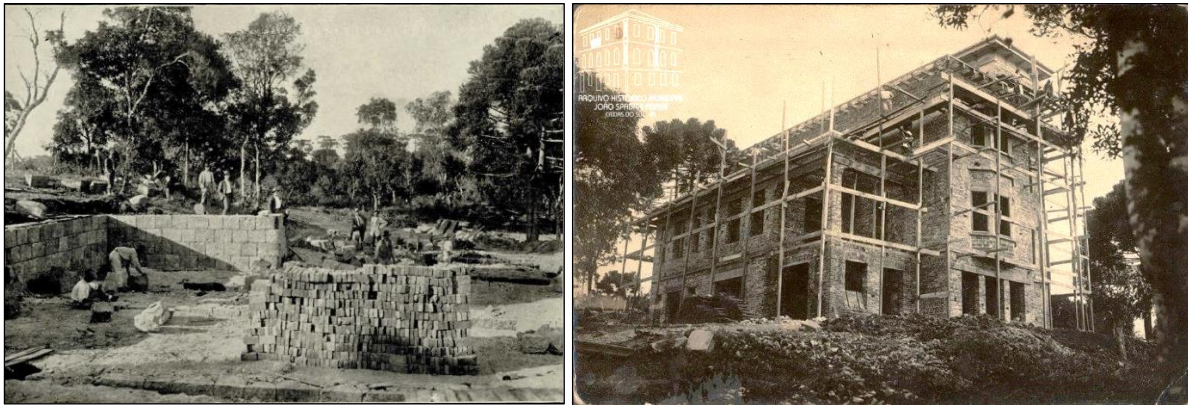
To sensitize the residents, reports, calls, and notes informing the objectives of the patronage, and the advance that the Pro-Patronage obtained were diffused. Recurrent is the argument that education to ‘save’ the neglected minors and turn them ‘utile’ to the society as in the newspaper clipping below, extracted from the cover report of ‘O Regional’ journal:

¹⁸ Umbelina Faccioli married in 1930 to the Italian Carlos Arpini with whom she had two sons: Sérgio Fernando and Ivan Bento Arpini. She was a member of the Nossa Senhora do Carmo sisterhood. She died in 22 of May of 1956 (JOURNAL PIONEIRO, 02/18/1960, p. 11).

Minors under school age instead of answering for the first calls to vice that would take them quickly to prison or suicide will spend their time in that institute of protection. Besides rudimentary principles of moral and intellectual education, they will receive the practical and theoretical teaching of agricultural life, by learning to abandon the old methods and to follow the new and advanced processes of land cultivation (JOURNAL 'O Regional', 04/16/1927, cover).

The joining of efforts resulted in the construction. In a plot of the municipality, the building that would house the Patronage was projected by the Italian Luigi Valiera¹⁹ and inaugurated by Getúlio Vargas at the 22 of April of 1928. It initialized its activities in August of that year. Observe in the images below two moments of the building under construction between the years of 1927 and 1928 and, after, the finished building (image 4):

Figure 3 – Two stages of the Agricultural Patronage construction, Caxias, 1927/1928



Source: REPORT, 1928a, p. 111; STJA3017, unidentified author, Municipal Historical Archives collection

Figure 4 – View of the Agricultural Patronage 'Celeste Gobbato' in two moments: at the work conclusion (1928) and in a day of snow (1942)



Source: The Agricultural Patronage after the project completion. REPORT, 1928, p. 76; The Agricultural Patronage on a snowy day. JSA1022, by an unidentified author, João Spadari Adami's Municipal Historical Files.

¹⁹ Luigi Valiera was an architect. In March of 1918, he moved with his family to Caxias, where he took up residence.

In figure 4, the first image registers the building as ready, a little before its inauguration, named Agriculture Patronage Celeste Gobbato at the occasion, and the other the view from the Patronage building in 1942 when it was already disabled. It is worth to highlight that the building exists until today.

By Act 122, of 5 of October of 1928, few days before the end of his term, Celeste Gobatto signed the Agricultural Patronage regulation that followed the federal legislation. Textually, its chapter I establishes that:

Chapter I – Its ends

Art. 1º. – The Municipal Agriculture Patronage will be exclusively destined for poor classes and seeks to the moral, physical, civic and professional education of neglected minors enrolled as inmates.

Art. 2º. – The Agriculture Patronage consists in its totality of an aid, protection and moral guardianship institute, appealing for this purpose to farm work with no other intention than to use its educative action as the end of directing and orienting them until they integrated into the rural environment (BOOK OF MINUTES of the Municipal Council. Book 06, 1928).

Now, the second chapter prescribed that the ministration of classes would be “intuitive, practical and limited to the condition of a farmer or rural worker, consisting of rudimentary notions of agriculture, in their different branches” (BOOK OF MINUTES of the Municipal Counselor. Book 06, 1928). The financial sustainability of the institution, by the other way, was one of the controversial points that caused the most significant concern. In the extraordinary session of 16 of April of 1928, Law 84 was approved, and then sanctioned by intendant Celest Gobbato. The legislation provided that:

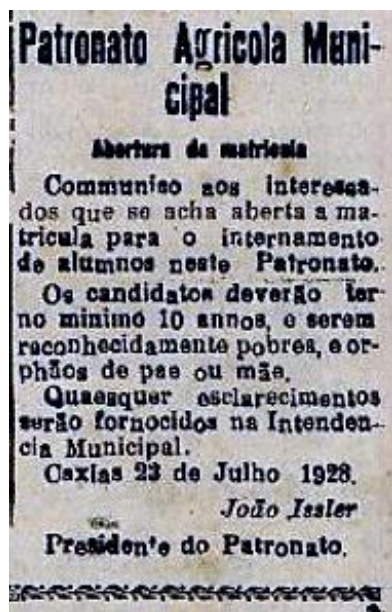
The Municipal Council of Caxias, in the use of the attributions conferred by the Organic Law, decrees Art. 1) It is conceded for a period of ten years from the financial exercise of 1929 an annual 5% help equivalent to the quantitative of the annual collection of the special Municipal Agricultural Pro-Patronage tax, already in force and approved in the budgetary law of 1928, to the Agricultural Patronage of this city which is destined to the free education of poor boys. Single paragraph: Remains guaranteed this help even if the mentioned tax is reduced or discontinued. Art. 2) The annual collection quantitative will be, without any discount, delivered, monthly, as soon as collected, to the direction of the Agriculture Patronage. Art. 3) An especial regulation will determine the way the Patronage will report the expenses to the Municipality and as well as their relations, which will have, administratively, an autonomous character. Art. 4) The Agricultural Patronage tax will be applied: a) to proceed with the constructions demanded for the development of the referred Institute; b) to complement and improve the installations; c) to settle the contracted and future responsibilities supported by the Municipal Government; d) for the Patronage costs, which will be an Agricultural Practice School for 30 students to be capable within 3 years, consisting of free education and boarding school. Art. 5) Enrollments will be under the responsibility of the Municipal Intendant, and students will be under the subordination of specific Regulation when issued. All the boys must have at least ten years residence in the municipality. Art 6) The Patronage staff, diarists, technicians, etc. will be nominated by the Municipal Intendant, with the indication of the Patronage direction. [...]” (BOOK OF MINUTES of the Municipal Council, Book 6, p. 107 e 108).

Another ruling, Law 89 of 07/02/1928, addressed the Patronage accountability for the period provided by Law 84, i.e., ten years. The accountability commission would be formed by the president of the School Council and by another of its two members, being – the president, and the vice-president of the Patronage while existing one, responsible for reporting it, with incomes and expenses. The account commission would check the presented report and would approve it, or not. The Patronage president had a three years term of office, with the possibility of being reappointed. At the end of the term, he could indicate a substitute. It addressed too that the intendant would nominate the first President who, together with the Director, would sign the bank drafts and other payments and receipts of the Patronage (BOOK OF MINUTES of the Municipal Council, Book 6, p. 122 and 123).

João Issler was the president of the Patronage by nomination, and so was the agronomist Salvador Petrucci as director, who also occupied the position of School Inspector of the municipality. Professor Firmino Bonett was nominated auxiliary. The Patronage work was defended as a patriotic one by the municipal administration since the objective of the agriculture professionalizing education in addition to the expansion of knowledge on the more modern cultivation technics fascinated Gobbato and many of his supporters.

After diffused the call to the Agricultural Patronage enrolments, critics already spoke about its high cost to the municipality with benefits reduced to some young people effectively assisted. In this way, the call for students' enrolments published at the end of 1928, affirmed:

Figure 5 – Clipping of the enrolment call to the Agricultural Patronage, 1928.²⁰



Source: JOURNAL 'O Regional', 23/07/1928, p. 02.

The first inmates of the Patronage enrolled in 1928, a total of 12, consisting of boys, some orphans of mother and father, and some of only one parent. In table 6, according to information presented in the Report of Intendant Gobbato (1928b), the following students were enrolled:

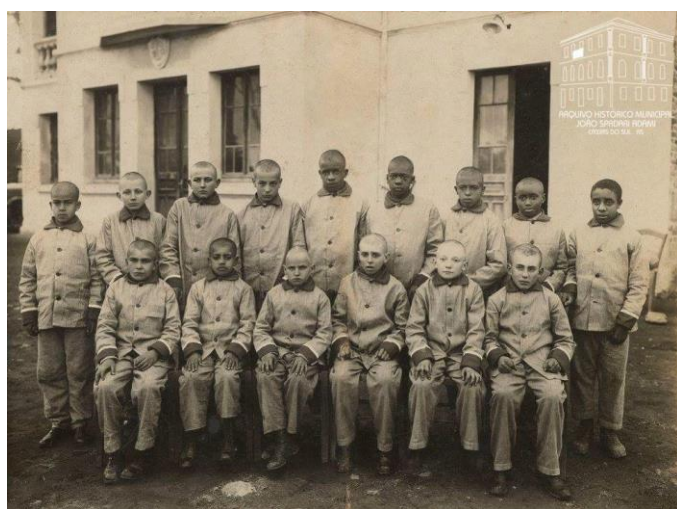
²⁰ Municipal Agricultural Patronage. Enrolment Opening. I inform to whom it may concern that the enrolment to the Patronage boarding school is open. Candidates shall be at least ten years old and be known as destitute and orphans of mother or father. For further clarification, please contact the Municipal Intendance. Caxias 23 of July of 1928. João Issler. Patronage President

Table 6 – Agricultural Patronage first students, 1928.

Minor	Filiation
Noé Barbosa Blum ²¹	Leon Blum (falecido) e Benta Barboza Blum
Demetrio Luiz Damaciano	Maximiliano José (falecido) e Maria B. Fogaça
Francellino da Silva Miranda	Adão Alves de Miranda (falecido) e Gasparina Nunes de Miranda
Mauro Mendes Totta	Valdevino Mendes Totta (falecido) e Ritta de A. Totta
Danillo C. Fabbris	Adolpho Fabbris (falecido) e Thereza Chiumenti Fabbris
Waldomiro Pereira	Miguel Pereira (falecido) e Amelia Vieira Lima
Constantino X. Oliveira	João Alves de Oliveira e Alzira Soares de Oliveira (ambos falecidos)
Clemente Camillo Silva	Francisco Silva e Amalia Silva (ambos falecidos)
Adelmar Scotti	Angelo Scorri e Henriqueta Scotti (falecida)
Arthur Pergher	Adolpho Pergher e Dantina Boccardi Pergher
Eugenio Dal Ri Crippa	Filho de Arquinto Dal Ri Crippa (falecido) e Rosa Dal Ri Crippa
João Canuto Settin	Angelo Settin (falecido) e Amelia Canuto Settin

Source: REPORT, 1928b, p. 9 7 e 98.

It was not possible to scrutinize the paths of the inmates and the time of their permanence in the Patronage. But activities were initiated in 1 of August of 1928 and, by what was diffused only 10 students were housed and were “optimally accommodated, with large and ventilated rooms, excellent clothes and supplies, beyond receiving all the comfort necessary to the success in the study ministered in that municipal property” (JOURNAL ‘O Regional’, 08/13/1928, cover). At least, it was possible to know that classes were divided into theoretical and practical classes, being the last ones realized next to nurseries of the own Patronage. The practical emphasis was on the learning of “modern methods of cultivation, preparing the crop and drawing essential basic lessons to the hardships of life.” (JOURNAL ‘O Regional, 08/13/1928, cover). However, it is necessary to recognize that the Patronage’s opening was a target for critic’s reviews against the expenses that the municipality had with its maintenance. Besides, the Intendant Thomás Beltrão, who replaced Gobbato at the municipal power, had already in the first months evaluated that it was unsustainable to keep the Patronage. The number of inmates within the years 1928 and 1934, which was the last year of operation, varied between ten to fifteen students. On image 6 a photograph of one of the Patronage inmates’ classes:

Figure 6 – Agricultural Patronage inmate boys, 1930 decade.

Source: STJB0046, unidentified author, João Spadari Adami Municipal Historical Archives collection.

²¹ Became a police officer in Caxias as published “returned from São Paulo, in a trip of industrial interests, Mr. Noé Blum, senior officer of the local police” (JOURNAL Pioneiro, 03/03/1951, p. 04).

Uniformed, rigidly put and positioned, the look of most of these boys makes us think they are sad. Which was the culture lived in the interior of this institution? How were they instructed? Which practices and knowledge were privileged? Did they have any contact with their relatives and at which moments? Many questions emerge about the subject, and an investigative look to the interior of the institution and its school subjects is a theme of research to be realized. In a report of 'Journal Pioneiro' in 1990, it was published a brief clue of this quotidian, with the memories of one of the ex-students of the Patronage, Arthur Scalabrin Filho who remained an inmate of the school.

As part of one of the first classes that studied in the old Agriculture Patronage, we found Mr. Arthur Scalabrin, son of the Italian José Scalabrin and Romilda Radaelli, a native of Encantado, RS. Arthur was born in 27 of November of 1907. As brothers, he had José Scalabrin Filho, Vitorio Scalabrin, Constantino and Ida. They had a two years difference of age. His father came from Italy with his grandparents and uncles. He succeeded in buying a plot [...] (part of the current 18 of the Fort) between Marechal Floriano and Guia Lopes. Born in 18 of December of 1883, José died in 7 of July of 1918, in a railway accident. In 1928, Romilda died. After this fact, Arthur Scalabrin joined the Agricultural Patronage of Caxias do Sul, where he stayed for two years. His daily routine consisted of having breakfast and joining his classmates to go the farm where they would plant wheat and would work in the garden. In the afternoon he attended the classes given by the director of the institution. Only the oldest students would attend the carpentry. Many inmates would run from the Patronage. When they would come back, after rescued, they would suffer some punishments that included paddling and isolation from the others. Only at the weekends, when they visited their relatives, they were allowed to use the uniform. All of them, indistinctively, had their hair shaved to avoid lice outbreak. Arthur still tells that in the last days of the Patronage's existence there was a lack of food and only beans were available. For this reason, the inmates were forced to go out to the woods to search for food (nuts, fruits...) (JOURNAL 'Pioneiro', 02/03/1990 and 04, p. 06).

It is possible that inmates had represented the experience they lived in the Patronage in different ways, but the function assumed by the institution and the role of 'saving' the neglected minors deserves further deepening.

Final Considerations

Gobbato assumed the Municipal Intendance of Caxias as a PRR candidate but obtained the support of the Catholic Church and other significant local groups. As an intendant of conciliation, the education project was part of his actions. It is necessary to remember that the municipal administration of Caxias applied 10% of its collection in education, which distinguishes his administration by being one with the highest indexes invested by municipalities at that time.

Gobbato invested in the expansion of the number of schools, teaching conditions growth and improvement, school essential materials provision, teachers' selection regulation, and qualification courses offer. Some rural classes started to work in two turns, which decreased the number of children and improved teaching conditions. Organized by the School Inspector, the municipality made adjustments at the school calendar, incentives for parents to send children to school, which improved the attendance and, fields for the agricultural practice in

different schools. As a skilled negotiator, Gobbato obtained one of the two rural groups constituted in RS at that time and expanded the number of schools subsidized by the state at the municipality. Besides, he invested in the construction of a building for the Agricultural Patronage, which started to operate at the end of this term. The critics of Gobbato considered it a very high investment for the municipality, contrasting with the low return obtained in the face of the number of beneficiaries.

While investigating Gobbato's strategies and of his supporters' in favor of education, it was possible to note nuances. Of how they "projected, realized, and implemented education and instruction programs, in a framework that complemented the action of the State, but that also frequently took its autonomy until the creation of an educative offer that included the school net, teachers and professionalizing courses" (MAGALHÃES 2015, p. 45), as in the case of the Agricultural Patronage and the Municipal Counselor School."

Gobbato cannot be thought as an isolated administrator in his historical moment, once others committed themselves in reaching similar goals, but maybe they did not count with the support he obtained. He could count with the Municipal Council and Pro-Caxias commissions, but also with the rural communities who manifested satisfaction with the way he administered, besides the Church and other local leadership (merchants, businesspeople...). The concern in expanding school, improving the attendance and promoting among students knowledge of modern technics of agriculture, such as the planting of selected seeds, consisted in a differential that, as affirmed Gonçalves Neto (2015, p. 32), was "establishing an own identity to teaching in each city, in accordance to singular prescriptions of each place.

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