



## Night Schools of Santa Catarina in the last decades of the 19th Century<sup>1</sup>

*As Escolas Noturnas de Santa Catarina nas últimas décadas do século XIX*

*Las escuelas nocturnas de Santa Catarina en las últimas décadas del siglo XIX*

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### Abstract

The article presents information and analysis on the few the Night Schools in the state of Santa Catarina, Brazil, established in the last decades of the 19th Century, within an elitist and racist society. From the perspective of data systematization, it takes into account the difficulty of obtaining historical records about this subject in the selected context. The investigations take as theoretical references the studies carried out by Sidney Chalhoub, Pierre Bourdieu and Michel de Certeau, and consider the importance of these schools as tactics in the instruction processes and, therefore, the construction of the right to citizenship by the poor and black population of this state.

**Keywords:** History of Education. Night Schools. Education for young people and adults.

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## Resumo

O artigo apresenta informações e análises sobre as poucas Escolas Noturnas, no estado de Santa Catarina, Brasil, instituídas nas últimas décadas do Século XIX, no seio de uma sociedade elitista e racista. Na perspectiva de sistematização de dados, leva em conta a dificuldade de se obter registros históricos a respeito desta temática no contexto selecionado. As investigações tomam como referenciais teóricos os estudos de Sidney Chalhoub, Pierre Bourdieu e Michel de Certeau, e consideram a importância destas escolas como táticas nos processos de instrução e, portanto, construção de direito à cidadania por parte da população pobre e negra deste estado.

**Palavras-chave:** História da Educação. Escolas Noturnas. Educação de jovens e de adultos.

## Resumen

El artículo presenta información y análisis sobre las pocas Escuelas Nocturnas, en el estado de Santa Catarina, Brasil, instituidas en las últimas décadas del siglo XIX, en el ámbito de una sociedad elitista y racista. Desde la perspectiva de la sistematización de datos, se toma en cuenta la dificultad de obtener registros históricos sobre este tema en el contexto seleccionado. Las investigaciones toman como referentes teóricos los estudios de Sidney Chalhoub, Pierre Bourdieu y Michel de Certeau y consideran la importancia de estas escuelas como tácticas en los procesos de instrucción y, por lo tanto, construcción del derecho a la ciudadanía por parte de la población pobre y negra de este estado.

**Palabras-Clave:** Historia de la Educación. Escuelas nocturnas. Educación de jóvenes y adultos.

## Introduction

Research on the participation of the lower classes, especially the black population, in the history of education in Santa Catarina, Brazil, considering the protagonism and struggle of these groups for education as a right and possibility, gained momentum in the 1990s. Professor Ilka Boaventura Leite (1991, 2008) identifies this silencing process as part of a racist strategy to invisibilize the black population, particularly in the state of Santa Catarina. The forms of restriction on education imposed on poor and black populations were not the same in all states of the country, and the historiographic productions that record these processes were also different.

Since the 1990s, publications by authors such as Paulino de Jesus Cardoso (2008), Jeruse Romão (2003, 2021), Velôr Pereira da Silva (2002), Graciane Daniela Sebrão (2010, 2015), as well as researchers from the Center for Afro-Brazilian Studies (NEAB) of the State University of Santa Catarina (UDESC), which since 2003 has been supporting and producing studies and research with the mission of "producing and disseminating knowledge related to ethnic-racial, gender, sexuality, and intersectionality issues aiming to combat inequalities" (NEAB, 2021), have been investigating and socializing studies that record the valuable experiences of the fight for education, especially by the poor and black population in this state, in the troubled contexts of the last decades of the 19th century.

This historiographic construction aims to contribute to reducing the still existing racist and classist perspectives in Santa Catarina, offering points of reference, elements of dialogue, and perspectives for the construction of a more democratic and fair historical process that effectively includes layers of the population whose stories have traditionally been silenced and invisibilized.

The study of Night Schools of Santa Catarina in the 1870s is situated at the intersection of different and contradictory aspirations of the various factions of the elites and the lower classes. The population growth that demanded control and discipline for the lower classes, the strengthening of the press that reinforced and formed opinions, the electoral reform that limited rights to the illiterate, and the crisis of the slavery system that demanded actions of guidance or containment of the no-longer-enslaved population, as well as new workers, including immigrants, who would start circulating in societies, and, on the other hand, workers and their families who aspired to educate themselves in ways that were possible for them, enrolling and attending the few night schools available.

In this social space, where the education of the population was not yet a right but a gift, and the prejudice against the uneducated was strengthened, night schools, spaces of instruction and construction of rights for workers, blacks and whites, slaves, freedmen, and free, became a locus of resistance, population engagement and fight for social rights.

In this article, the national context is presented to describe the social elements within which the night schools were created. The province of Santa Catarina is presented with its peculiarities concerning the population, especially the black population, which in this state suffered greater restrictions on the right to education, as well as on the set of rights associated with education, mainly from the Electoral Reform of 1881. Finally, the night schools of Santa Catarina are presented through facts and analysis of the history of this event in the province in the last decades of the 19th century, with the intention of better understanding this process and contributing to the systematization and record of data, since there is little historiographic production on this subject.

## The national context

Written by Rui Barbosa, Decree No. 3,029, of January 9, 1881, known as the Saraiva Law, inspired by Enlightenment ideals, prohibited illiterate individuals from voting; adopted direct elections for senators, deputies to the General Assembly, members of the Provincial Legislative Assemblies, councilors, and justices of the peace; and allowed non-Catholics, ingenuous individuals, freed slaves, naturalized citizens, as well as foreign immigrants who were not Catholics to be elected as long as they possessed a certain income. (PAIVA, 1987, p. 82-84). According to Chalhoub, this legislation, also known as the Electoral Reform of 1881, restricted the formal political rights of black people, as in addition to adopting "more stringent income criteria, there was the novelty of the requirement for literacy, which did not previously exist" in a "country where black people attending school was even a matter for the police" (CHALHOUB, 2010, p. 42). Despite all the discussion in this historical context about the expansion of public education, there were very few results beyond:

an electoral legislation that, in one fell swoop, excluded the from political citizenship generations of black people who were living in those years of the final crisis of slavery with hope for a better future. The exclusion of illiterate individuals continued well into the republic for many decades, with the Afro-descendant population waiting for primary education to expand at a snail's pace (CHALHOUB, 2010, p. 43).

Chalhoub argues that the Electoral Reform of 1881 was built on the impasse that the Brazilian elite found itself in at the beginning of the 1880s, between English pressure for the abolition of slavery and compliance with the Law of November 7, 1831, which declared "free all slaves brought from outside the Empire" and imposed "penalties on those who imported them". The slaveholding resistance hardened and established objective and symbolic limits for the achievement of citizenship by the black population in a new configuration of "social and political redefinitions of the precariousness of freedom" for these subjects. The eugenicist discourses considered scientific at the time, the inaccessibility of primary education, the need for legal authorizations "to create associations based on ethnic and racial ties" and "the diffusion of new ideologies of work" that stretched the concept of idleness and restricted the possible freedom of ex-slaves and their descendants, making them the preferred targets of police suspicion in the cities" became instruments of racism (CHALHOUB, 2010, pp. 57, 58).

Therefore, although Rui Barbosa argued that the legal orientation would serve as a stimulus for the search and pressure of lower classes for primary education, there was no corresponding expansion of schooling or literacy during the period. Rural populations, women and blacks remained in the same place of interdiction, while the association between illiteracy and the incapacity for political participation, self-determination, and citizenship was ideologically consolidated.

This debate drew significant attention to adult education, so that night schools multiplied in the provinces in the 1880s, although there had already been mention of this educational modality since 1854, in imperial legislation expressed in Decree No. 1,331-A of February 17, 1854, which in Article 69, paragraph 3 determined the prohibition of enrollment and attendance "to slaves", and in Article 71, determined:

When a secondary school has two teachers, they will be required alternately, by month or by year, to teach primary school subjects twice a week, during the hours that are free, even on Sundays and holidays, to adults who present themselves for this purpose. The government may assign this task, with a gratification that will be marked for each student, to the parish priest or his assistant in parishes where secondary education is not established. In case of refusal on their part, or if it cannot be verified by any circumstance, the teaching may be assigned, on Sundays and holidays, to the first grade teacher or some private teacher who is willing to take charge of it with the aforementioned gratification<sup>3</sup>. (BRAZIL, 1854).

The conditions for offering these schools were replicated in a proposition with "maximum savings for the public treasury", as illustrated in the speech of Carlos Leôncio de Carvalho, the Empire Affairs Minister, presented as a justification for his Decree 7031-A, 1878, which determined the creation of night courses for adults "in public schools of primary education for males in the municipality of the Court":

Within free peoples there is nothing more deserving of compassion than the illiterate adult, that is, the man who, advanced in physical life, but ignorant of the evolutions of moral life, is separated from social communion by the dark abyss of ignorance.

How can we guarantee a right to someone who doesn't know how to exercise it and impose an obligation on someone who can't fulfill it? It was with these considerations in mind that I undertook and carried out the creation of the aforementioned courses. The measure was carried out with the utmost savings for the public treasury since the courses, as I have already explained, take place in the houses occupied by public schools, and the teaching is provided by the teachers of these schools, through reasonable compensation for the extra work (BRAZIL, 1878).

The minister's emblematic speech reaffirmed the impossibility of guaranteeing rights "to those who do not know how to exercise them", based on the knowledge of literate culture to the detriment of the knowledge of experience for men who, uneducated, were situated as strangers "to the evolutions of moral life", separated "from social communion by the black abyss of ignorance". To these men, the illiterate adults, compassion was due, however, moderate (non-existent for the majority), since the public investment to educate them was carried out based on maximum savings for public treasury. The conception that the illiterate would be politically incapacitated and undeserving of secured rights merged with the determination of appropriate conduct norms to deal with this social problem: control, compassion, and low-cost actions.

### **Notes on the Province of Santa Catarina in the nineteenth century**

The province of Santa Catarina did not participate in the major export activities, such as plantation or mining, which limited the number of enslaved individuals compared to other provinces. However, it maintained a high "degree of dependence on slave labor", and therefore, despite sociological or historiographical productions, the province was not constituted by the absence or lack of presence and workforce of the black population. Nonetheless, the production

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<sup>3</sup> Out of respect for the integrity of the historical documents, we maintained the original spelling in all quotes, nomenclatures, and references from these documents.

of the image of the territory "as empty of people and economic impulses capable of projecting it on the national stage" is of interest in constructing the "invisibility" of black people, as part of the racist strategies that intend to project the state as a success of the policy of whitening and denial of the histories and experiences of the black population (LEITE, 1991, pp. 17, 18).

Alongside the production of discourses about the little presence of black people in the province's population, the policy of whitening continued. According to Hofbauer (2003), the ideology of whitening "has acted" as an "ideological support" for power relations of patrimonial type that have been established and consolidated since the colonial period". This ideology, since the end of the 19th century, constituted an "important argument for the discourse of that part of the Brazilian elite (politicians and scientists) who wanted economic changes but, at the same time, were concerned with maintaining the old power structure in the country". Thus, "it served as an ideological way out for this critical moment of transformations in politics and economics" and legitimized the promotion, by the political elite, "of the great campaign to import" white European labor - which would have as a side effect the marginalization (non-integration) of blacks in the new class society that was emerging in the urban centers of the country" (HOFBAUER, 2003, pp. 67, 68). Assumed as a state policy, the aforementioned importation of white labor caused "in less than 25 years (from 1890 to 1914) 2.5 million Europeans to arrive in Brazil; almost one million of them (987,000) had their ship journeys financed by the state" (HOFBAUER, 2007, p. 2). The idea of, on the one hand, providing racial improvement through possible interracial marriages with the quantitative predominance of whites in society and, on the other hand, exterminating or expelling blacks, denying their fundamental rights such as the right to work, access to land, mobility, and education, seemed to offer a solution to the imminent problem of the abolition of slavery and, therefore, what to do with the large population of blacks in the society.

In the province, German immigrants arrived in the 1820s and 1880s, the first Italians from 1875, and the Polish from 1882 (PAULILO, 1998). The encouragement of European colonization was justified by the possibility of acquiring abundant and cheap labor as well as the possibility of whitening the population. According to Professor Ilka Boaventura Leite, "the colonization of the southern region" with the intention of making the country "racially whiter" provided favorable conditions for immigrants and, with them, the reproduction of the inequalities established in the slave period, thus confirming the prevailing racial theories" (LEITE, 2008, p. 966).

Understanding the processual structuring of racism in Santa Catarina is fundamental, which directly involved aspects such as the exploitation of labor, land expropriation, denial of rights, devaluation of cosmologies and epistemologies, exercise of violence, among others. However, insertion in modernity also fundamentally included the need for the education of the people, including "Africans" and "*caboclos*" (people of mixed Indigenous and European ancestry), as Romão and Carvalho explain:

We observe the call of the elites for the children of less privileged families to attend school. This "concern" to lead the people towards education would be the desire to standardize, order, and homogenize the masses through means of social control, among which the school presented itself as the most effective and direct. In this new context, black people are considered citizens. Apparently, they will be "diluted" within the most significant layer of the population - the poor. That is, they will share spaces with non-black people who are equally poor (ROMÃO and CARVALHO, 2003, p. 50).

In this context, the mission of instructing and civilizing such a heterogeneous society to build a solid political body needed, above all, to extend its efforts to the segments of the population that needed to be sanitized, instructed, and civilized, that is, for the elite to organize, control and consolidate the civilization of the lower classes through education. Thus, the public school, "even though it was installed under very precarious conditions and therefore did not constitute a social alternative", was an essential instrument for blacks, *caboclos* and the poor, since, "in general, children from wealthy white families sought their own means of educating their children, while the discourse of civilization was aimed at those who, in the perception of the elites, lacked civilization". The context of its implementation included "the repeated presence of the discourse of the civilizing mission of the school by government elites; the precarious conditions of public schools in general; and the high rate of illiteracy at the end of the 19th century" (VEIGA, 2008, p. 503, 504). Thus, the imperial period of the 19th century presented "projects and educational practices specifically aimed at young and adult workers... such as evening primary courses, Sunday schools, popular conferences, and vocational training courses" (COSTA, 2007, p. 48).

In the province of Santa Catarina, with regard to the racist structure applied in the schooling process, according to Sebrão (2010), the first prohibition on enrolling slaves appeared in Law No. 382 of July 1, 1854, which in Article 35 prohibited public instruction for "slaves and those affected by serious illnesses". Subsequently, the Regulation for Primary Instruction in Santa Catarina of May 5, 1859, maintained the prohibition, and the Regulation for Secondary Instruction of June 30, 1859, in Article 27, decreed that slaves, those suffering from contagious diseases, and those who had been expelled from classes for bad behavior at the President of the Province's direction should not be admitted to enrollment. With the same terms, the Regulation of April 29, 1868, approved by Law No. 620 of June 4, 1869, ensured the prohibition of enrollment in §1 for boys suffering from contagious diseases, and in §2 for slaves. According to the author:

The prohibition for slaves to attend schools was provided for in regulations of public education in various provinces, such as Maranhão (Regulation of 1855), São Paulo (Regulation of 1869), Minas Gerais (Regulation of 1835), and Rio de Janeiro (Regulation of 1887), the latter of which had a distinction: in addition to slaves, "African blacks", even if freed or free, were also prohibited from attending school (SEBRÃO, 2010, p. 65).

Regarding the education of young and adult individuals who did not have prior education, there were educational opportunities in Santa Catarina such as the Apprentice Sailor Schools of Santa Catarina (*Escolas de Aprendizagem de Marinheiros de Santa Catarina -EAMSC*) in the 1850s, which provided education for boys aged 10 to 17, and the Night Schools for individuals over the age of 15 in the 1870s. Later on, starting in 1910, the "Schools for Apprentice Craftsmen" (*Escolas de Aprendizagem de Artífices*) were established, initially for students between the ages of 10 and 13, and later for those between 10 and 16 years old. It is worth emphasizing that the provincial reports of Santa Catarina in the 1800s had a specific section dedicated to "Primary Education", which, in most cases, did not include information about the "Night Schools" or the "Schools for Apprentice Craftsmen" that already existed in other provinces at the time.

## Night schools in Santa Catarina

According to the Report of the Department of Imperial Affairs of 1871, the creation of night schools for the education of adults was being carried out that year in the provinces of “Pernambuco, where it was initiated, Alagoas, Bahia, Pará, Rio Grande do Norte, Sergipe, Rio de Janeiro, Amazonas, Maranhão and São Paulo, the first six by public administration, and the last three by the efforts of citizens” (BRASIL, 1871, p. 25). In 1872, the same report recommended that night schools be exercised based on “salutary inspection of public power”, and for that, they should have a “special purpose” to provide education to adult individuals who could not attend public or private schools; that they should only accept those over the age of 15; that they should be established based on the lack of public schools and with lesson schedules appropriate to the conditions of students and their families; and that the opening of establishments should be preceded by certain formalities and proof of qualifications that would guarantee the morality of the school regime, both for public and private schools (BRASIL, 1888, p. 92). In the same period, the General Directorate of Statistics released the balance of the number of enslaved people who were literate in the provinces.

**Table 1** – Percentage of literate enslaved persons by Province in 1872

Province	Total of Slaves	Total of Literate	Percentage
Amazonas	979	0	0,000%
Pará	27.458	89	0,324%
Maranhão	74.939	72	0,096%
Pihauy	23.795	6	0,025%
Ceará	31.913	47	0,147%
Rio Grande do Norte	13.020	7	0,054%
Parayba	21.526	61	0,283%
Alagoas	35.741	53	0,148%
Sergipe	22.623	0	0,000%
Bahia	167.824	64	0,038%
Espírito Santo	22.659	1	0,004%
Município Neutro	48.939	329	0,672%
Rio de Janeiro	292.637	107	0,037%
São Paulo	156.612	104	0,066%
Paraná	10.560	8	0,076%
Santa Catharina	14.984	46	0,307%
Rio Grande do Sul	67.791	100	0,148%
Minas Geraes	370.459	145	0,039%
Goyas	10.652	7	0,066%
Mato Grosso	6.667	0	0,000%

**Source:** Elaborated based on: BRAZIL. General Directory of Statistics – 1872

Note: Names of the provinces are spelled as they used to be in that time.

Regarding table 1, it is very evident that there was a very low spread of literacy among the registered enslaved population. All provinces had less than 1%. However, in absolute numbers, Município Neutro (nowadays Rio de Janeiro) stands out, where the researcher Ana Luiza Jesus da Costa (2007) investigated and found a series of actions and mobilizations by popular groups that ensured them possibilities for education. In this sense, not only were these actions significant, but also those that occurred during and after the events to safeguard sources that could build this history. It is also worth noting here the condition of statistical productions as consonant with the strategies, in this case, strategies of locating the black population,



especially the enslaved, as almost entirely illiterate. Such data, when collected, treated and publicized, constitute a “picture of reality”; they not only do not take into account the experiences of the participants and subjects studied but also, when produced by the elites, tend to serve the interests of these very own elites.

It is important to reflect on the fact that, in addition to schools as places of production of racist and classist social hierarchies, statistical productions were also “rationalized, expansionist, centralized, noisy, spectacular” productions that inscribed in history the almost total impossibility of education or literacy for the enslaved, ranging from 0 to, exceptionally, 1%. Within this history were individuals absolutely occupied with survival tactics, since “aspirations and demands are defined in their form and content by objective conditions that exclude the possibility of desiring the impossible” (BOURDIEU, 1998, p. 47). Moreover, such efforts did not empirically ensure better living conditions. However, various productions were inscribed in the course of history, resulting from statistical and discursive productions, demonstrating that the ways of consuming these discursive productions were often made in “astute and dispersed” ways, “ubiquitously insinuated”, “silent and almost invisible,” constituting “other ways of employing the products imposed by the dominant economic order” (CERTEAU, 2020).

In this perspective, the offer of education in Night Schools in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, in the province of Santa Catarina, constituted a locus of diverse experiences. Located at the intersection of the affirmation of education as an instrument of access to citizenship (legitimized by the Electoral Reform), and having material and symbolic interdictions for the black and poor population to attend school, these Night Schools presented themselves as spaces of reception for the lower classes, poor workers, adults without primary education, blacks and whites, freed and enslaved, all welcomed under the premise that they can learn to read, write, calculate mathematically, learn history and geography, among other knowledge, and assert themselves socially on new bases.

According to the newspaper “*A Regeneração*”, the province of Santa Catarina had its first Night School created by the young franciscan Mr. Benjamim Carvalho d’Oliveira, an effective public teacher in Camboriú, on July 16, 1871, attended by 60 students. Also in that year, the province’s president described the following act:

The president of the province reads in the official newspaper “*O Conciliador*” a request signed by the chief of the section F..., a request full of extremely gross errors, and decides to dismiss him and appoint him as a teacher at the Night School. (*A REGENERAÇÃO*, 1871).

From the information that an employee was dismissed and appointed as a teacher in a Night School because he wrote a request with “very gross errors”, it can be inferred that such a position was considered inferior and could be filled by someone with greater difficulties in writing. We can also infer that there is the denial of official resources and the pejorative consolidation of this educational modality.

Contradictorily, the official letter of the Directorate of Public Instruction to the President of the Province, in February 1872, in response to the Court’s question about the need to send reading materials to the Night Schools of the Province of Santa Catarina, reports that there are no such schools in the province. In the same year, in October, also through an official letter, the creation of the first school of this modality was announced in Freguezia de Camboriu, with 21 frequent adult students, directed by Professor Benjamin Carvalho d’Oliveira (SEBRÃO, 2010, p. 89).

The report of the President of the Province, Antônio de Almeida e Oliveira, in 1879, mentioned the subsidy to the Night School of Drawing, to function in the Capital. It is worth mentioning the registered continuity of this school, especially in the newspaper "*A Regeneração*", which presented its functioning, with annual exhibitions, for over a decade. In 1882, President Antonio Gonçalves Chaves "suggested that the drawing class of the capital be annexed to the Normal School, for the teaching of Drawing and Geometry, offering a small increase in the salary of the said teacher" (SEBRÃO, 2010, p. 89, 90).

Regarding the conditions of primary instruction and, in this context, also of Night Schools, the report of the President of the Province of Santa Catarina, Theodoro Carlos de Faria Souto, of 1883, says:

"It is said that there are no school buildings or libraries, **no night classes for adults**, no kindergartens, no nursery classrooms, no secondary education institutions, and no vocational schools. It is said that there are no Sunday schools, no educational meetings, no itinerant teachers, no school and pedagogical museums, and no school savings banks. It is said that the teaching methods and processes are bad, the plans are imperfect, and the programs are narrow and anachronistic". (Report of the President of the Province of Santa Catarina, Theodoro Carlos de Faria Souto, 1883, pp. 49-50; author's emphasis).

According to the newspaper *A Regeneração*, there were Night Schools in Santa Catarina in 1883, however, unlike other provinces, they were not maintained by the government. Thus, Faria Souto's statement can mean either denial or ignorance of such actions by civil society, as well as a complaint about the absence of the State in providing the right to free instruction to young and adult workers in the province.

Among the provincial reports of Santa Catarina from the period of Imperial Brazil analyzed, the report of another provincial president who mentioned adult education stands out: João Thomé da Silva, who governed from 1873 to 1875. In his report of 1874, he states that "Making primary education a legal obligation is a necessity." (Report of the President of the Province of Santa Catarina, Thomé da Silva, 1874, p. 38). And, about Night Schools:

"Of the two that exist in the Province, according to the Head of Public Instruction, the one in the Capital has shown great development in drawing education, being attended by 60 students of all ages. The one in Camboriú is becoming less and less attended without any plausible reason for it. I lack the necessary data to provide detailed information about this school" (Report of the President of the Province of Santa Catarina, Thomé da Silva, 1874, p. 42, 43).

In his 1875 report, Thomé da Silva notes that the 11 municipalities and 163,500 people in the province have 104 public schools and 32 private schools. Of the 104 public schools, 65 are filled and 39 are vacant. "Dividing the schools that provinces have by their population, each one has 1,202 inhabitants", and he concludes that by the end of 1874, "all the schools in the province were attended by 3,974<sup>4</sup> students, 2,798 in public schools and 1,101 in private schools". Regarding night schools, he reports:

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<sup>4</sup> Although there is a difference in the total number of students in public and private schools compared to the total reported, we keep here the data as it appears in the 1875 report, even though it does not identify the reason for this difference.

There are four Free Night Classes for in the Province: two in the Capital, one in the city of São Francisco, and another in Freguesia de Camboriú. Of the two in the Capital, one is for Primary Education and the other for Drawing. In São Francisco, Latin, French, History and Geography, Mercantile Writing, vocal and instrumental Music are taught in addition to Primary Education. The one in Camboriú is only for Primary Education. The one in São Francisco was established on September 7th by the initiative of citizens Reverend Vicar Antônio Francisco Nóbrega and Hermelino Jorge de Linhares, and already has 70 students enrolled. The one in Camboriú, initiated by public teacher Benjamim Carvalho de Oliveira, was established on December 19th. Both this one and the two in the Capital have regular attendance. (Report of the President of the Province of Santa Catarina, Thomé da Silva, 1875, p. 62, 63).

In 1876, the town of Itajahy inaugurated its first Night School, having 24 students, under the guidance of public school teacher Justiniano José de Souza e Silva. In the same year, in Freguesia of Santo Antonio, teacher Lucio Francisco da Costa opened the school "*Propagadora da Instrução*" having 12 students, and in the district of São José there were two schools: "*Escola da Conceição*", for women, directed by teacher Maria Adelaide da Gama de Camargo; and "*Escola de São João*", for men, directed by public school teacher Lucio Hyppolito de Camargo. There was also a school for men directed by citizen Manoel Ignacio Pereira. Finally, in 1876, the "*Propagadora da Instrução*" society was founded in Laguna with the goal of building "a school to instruct youth in primary and secondary education, as well as a public library to 'foster their interest in arts'". Without the support of the government, this foundation was directed by Municipal Judge Dr. Augusto Gurgel (SEBRÃO, 2010, p. 90, 91).

The analysis of the provincial reports of the state of Santa Catarina in the 1870s and 1880s presents few documents mentioning adult education in the perspective of Night Schools, which were aimed at people who needed to work to support themselves and their families while also receiving primary education. It is important to note that vocational courses for girls and women, including those who didn't have primary education, which had been offered in other provinces since the late 19th century, would only begin to function as Women's Vocational Schools in Santa Catarina, in 1935.

It is also notable that the school *Escola de São Francisco*, founded by Vicar Antônio Francisco Nóbrega and Hermelino Jorge de Linhares, as previously mentioned, defined in the 8th Article the possibility of enrolling slaves who had their masters' permission. In addition, the Night School *Luz do Povo*, founded by the Masonic Society in the Capital, in 1873, having 60 students over the age of 16, also accepted slaves who had authorization from their masters. Classes were held in the Masonic Lodge, taught by Masons, and were criticized by the religious periodical "*O Apóstolo*," which, according to Silva (2018), defined it as different from other Masonic night schools because it aimed to "form materialistic citizens, enemies of the religion and the country, who will one day be the scourge of the Brazilian society". Finally, it warned that "Masonic schools slowly poison the youth, perverting them with teachings condemned by the Church" (SILVA, 2018, p. 120, 121). At the time, the Masons expressed their support for the State in universalizing education as a way to combat the "barriers" imposed by "inequalities of fortune", as stated in its Bulletin, in 1871 (*BOLETIM DO GRANDE ORIENTE DO BRASIL*, 1871, p. 4).

Regarding the school *Escola de São Francisco*, according to the *Memória Política da ALESC* (2019), Deputy Hermelino Jorge de Linhares founded the school and also directed it during two parliamentary terms (1874 and 1875), teaching the primary education discipline as well.

The newspaper of the liberal faction, "*A Regeneração*: Newspaper of the Province of Santa Catharina", was the only one that regularly presented important information about the Night Schools in Santa Catarina. It was founded in 1868 by the Liberal political faction, which was then opposed to the Conservatives, an eminently Catholic party in power. Joana Maria Pedro (1995) comments that this was one of the newspapers that exceptionally survived in opposition and one that had a longer circulation time. However, such opposition was not only fought on the discursive level in the municipality of Desterro (the capital of the province of Santa Catarina in that time), as in 1870, in a sign of protest, the doors of the newspaper "*A Regeneração*" were found painted with human excrement, which was also dumped on its front sidewalks (PEDRO, 1995, p. 57).

The announcement registered in the edition of 1873 allows us to infer that the classes offered in Desterro at the *Loja Regeneração*, are led by the Masonic Society. Entitled "Night School of Free Primary Instruction", it is presented:

The undersigned teacher of the evening primary instruction class created by the *Loja Regeneração Catarinense* warns all people who want to enroll in said class that they can find me at my residence on Senado Street or at the house of classes on Imperador Street, next to the Loja, from 5 to 8 pm; and those who are slaves must present a permit from their masters. Desterro, February 4, 1873. Candido Melchiades de Souza (*A REGENERAÇÃO*, 1871).

In 1873, the newspaper featured a section about night classes, which were aimed at "workers" and "captives" who were "abandoned to the most criminal neglect" and "victims of the contempt of the wealthy classes". They were kept in ignorance "so that they would not be aware of their own degradation". The newspaper offered them "open classes, at the hours when the daily work leaves artists and industrious people unoccupied, and offering them, in addition to the indispensable primary education, the arts and the general principles that guide the arts and industries, become extraordinarily advantageous and worthy of support and encouragement". In the same year, another issue reports that the *Loja Regeneração Catarinense* serves more than 55 students (*A REGENERAÇÃO*, 1873).

The 1874 edition announces the "Invitation to the distribution of prizes for the completion of the annual drawing course of the night classes" by Professor Manoel de Oliveira (Desterro, February 15, 1874). The next edition reports that 23 students were awarded prizes (*A REGENERAÇÃO*, 1874). In the same year, information is provided about the teachers and the program of the *Loja de São Francisco*. With Vicar Antonio Francisco Nóbrega as director, and Hermelino Jorge de Linhares as vice-director and founder, the classes offer the disciplines of Latin; French and History, Geography; Arithmetic, Metrology and Grammar of the National Language; Mercantile Writing; Vocal and Instrumental Music; and Primary Instruction, and take place from Monday to Friday, from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm (*A REGENERAÇÃO*, 1874).

The 1881 edition, which presented the Bill number 20 to budget the provincial revenue and establish the expenses for the years 1881 and 1882, informed the salaries allocated to public education (*A REGENERAÇÃO*, 1881):

**Table 2** – Expenses with Public Education in Santa Catarina, in 1881.

Service	Expenses
Director of Lens of the Secondary Institution	7:800\$000
Gratuity to the Athenaeum's Porter	600\$000
Teachers of the Primary Education	70\$000
General Director of Public Education	2:700\$000
Secretary of the Public Education	1:400\$000
Library Doorman	900\$000
Drawing Teacher of the Night class	300\$000
Assistance to the Provincial Museum	300\$000
Supplies for Schools and Athenaeum's Office, Library, and Public Education	1:800\$000

Source: *A Regeneração*, 1881.

From table 2, it can be inferred that in 1881 only one teacher from the Night School was paid by the province, and his salary, 300\$000 (three hundred Réis), was lower than that of the Athenaeum's doorman, who earned 600\$000 (six hundred Réis), and much lower than that of the Secretary of Public Education, who earned 1:400\$000 (one thousand four hundred Réis). (*A REGENERAÇÃO*, 1883).

Table 3 possibly shows an increase in the salary of the Night School drawing teacher, which reinforces the information published in the 1882 newspaper that the province's president, Antonio Gonçalves Chaves, had suggested an increase in the teacher's salary.

**Table 3** – Expenses with Public Education in Santa Catarina in 1883.

Service	Expenses
Primary Education Staff	69:600\$000
Rental of houses for schools	8:000\$000
Secretaries, books and utensils for schools	4:900\$000
Drawing Teacher of the Night class	600\$000
Extraordinary gratuities	700\$000
Writing supplies	1:700\$000
Subsidized teachers	2:160\$000

Source: *A Regeneração*, 1883.

The celebrations and tributes for another year of existence of the Drawing School are mentioned in several editions until they appear for the last time in 1888, praising the 16 years of the Drawing School, whose director was Mr. Manoel Francisco das Oliveiras. About the school, this issue also mentions:

During this time, this class made some brilliant exhibitions of its students, and some young men have regularly qualified from it, having even given one to the Academy of Fine Arts, Sebastião Fernandes, where he became a good artist and whose work in the Imperial Capital, where he resides, has been greatly admired (*A REGENERAÇÃO*, 1888).

Although the Night School of Drawing achieved some successes, such as the remuneration of the teacher and its increase, as well as its survival for 16 years and the recognized social mobility of at least one of its students, its references deserved to be better and more recorded. We also reflect on the fact that the achievements of this school did not serve to garner greater support for the other night schools that were operating, as well as the creation of

other much-needed schools in the province. However, the solidity and longevity of this pedagogical and political action, practiced on more democratic bases, are recorded, which allows for the construction of other matrices of creating beliefs and social architecture tactics.

### **Final Considerations**

Unfortunately, despite our efforts, we could not obtain more information about the individuals who attended these schools, for how long and what implications it had on their lives, which are crucial components for the composition of a database and for a better understanding of these schools as a tool for the appropriation and certification of primary education knowledge, intended for even more vulnerable layers of the population of Santa Catarina, namely young and adult workers and afro-descendants.

Although the fact that the Night Schools and some public schools in the imperial period in Santa Catarina accepted black students demonstrated a relatively counterpoint to the discriminatory legislation of the time, it is important to emphasize that the subjects taught were fundamentally of a civilizing nature and preparation for work, in accordance with the hygienist proposition and the fact that:

The elites drew up the latest educational theories. Among the most progressive, hygienism preached salvation through education, discipline, and control. According to prevailing theories, the children of the elite had a natural tendency towards virtue, while the children of the majority, the "dangerous classes", were prone to idleness, crime, alcoholism and ignorance. These theories stated that it was not convenient to give the destitute childhood a cultivated education, a "culture of spirit superior to their social position", because it could arouse aspirations "that could not be fulfilled". It was necessary to instill in boys and girls [and in the case of night schools, in young adults] "habits of work" and a "true moral education". [...] Therefore, it is within these ideas that the scientific discourse of hygiene emerges, along with which, consequently, the concern about the repression of idleness arises, and the fear of finding difficulty in ensuring the organization of the world of work without the recourse and domination policies characteristic of captivity (RAMOS, 2008, p. 116).

In this sense, firing an employee for writing with gross errors and appointing him as a Night School teacher, the non-remuneration of the majority of teachers in these schools, and the precarious study conditions for students after a tiring day of work, in addition to denying the majority of the population who could benefit from them, corroborated the assertion of the subaltern position of these subjects in the society of Santa Catarina in the second half of the 19th century.

The majority of the provincial reports also complained, in other terms, of the difficulties denounced by President Faria Souto (1883) in primary education: the absence of school buildings and educational and pedagogical libraries, night courses for adults, kindergartens, secondary education institutions, vocational schools, pedagogical meetings, itinerant teachers, school and pedagogical museums, school savings banks, in addition to the precariousness of the teaching methods, plans, programs and processes. While repeatedly complaining that the province allocated a third of its budget to education, they did not mention that the province's financial revenue was one of the smallest in the Empire. However, it was in these conditions described in the reports as precarious that a small part of the poor and afro-descendant

population had access to education, since, as reported, wealthy families enrolled their children in private schools or hired private teachers.

There are few records of the Night Schools of Santa Catarina that existed in this small historical period. They were the tip of the iceberg of their co-author's dissatisfaction with the exclusion of the lower's classes from the distribution of the right to schooling or education. In this sense, the agents who participated in the Night Schools, such as teachers, students, supporting family members, and other contributors to the process, made both the socialization of school knowledge possible - which, in turn, instrumentalized the fight for other rights- and the construction of another possible conduct based on the right to attend school, to experience the world, and to express oneself through the technologies of writing and reading, enabling the self-construction of their own image as subjects of rights in a highly elitist and racist society.

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