



***‘Amiamo molto l’Italia, quantunque lontani’:*
an italian syllabary printed in Pelotas/RS, the professor Malan’s contribution**

‘Amiamo molto l’ Italia, quantunque lontani’:
um silabário italiano impresso em Pelotas/RS, a contribuição do professor Malan

‘Amiamo molto l’ Italia, quantunque lontani’:
un silabario italiano impresso en Pelotas/RS, la aportación del profesor Malan

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Abstract

The objective of this article is to analyze the production, circulation and consumption of an almost unknown work, a syllabary in Italian written by the Italian professor and consular agent Giovanni Pietro Malan and published in Pelotas, Rio Grande do Sul. It is the *Sillabario ad uso dei figli dei coloni italiani della provincia di Rio Grande del Sul per imparare contemporaneamente a leggere ed a scrivere*. The small work, with 49 pages and divided into 33 lessons, was published by one of the most important publishers of the period in Rio Grande do Sul, Livraria Americana, by Carlos Pinto & C. Succs. Through the historical documentary analysis of the syllabary, intersected with consular reports, correspondence, newspapers and with the analytical categories of production, circulation and consumption, I scrutinize and situate historical aspects of the school book, its author and publisher, in the context of the period, in a transnational view.

Keywords: History of Education and Literacy; Syllabary ; Italian immigrants.

Resumo

O objetivo desse artigo é analisar produção, circulação e consumo de uma obra quase desconhecida, um silabário em italiano escrito pelo professor e agente consular italiano Gian Pietro Malan e publicado em Pelotas, Rio Grande do Sul. Trata-se *do Sillabario ad uso dei figli dei coloni italiani della provincia di Rio Grande del Sul per imparare contemporaneamente a leggere ed a scrivere*. A pequena obra, com 49 páginas e dividido em 33 lições, veio a lume por uma das mais importantes editoras gaúchas do período, a Livraria Americana, de Carlos Pinto & C. Succs. Por meio da análise documental histórica do silabário, entrecruzado com relatórios consulares, correspondências, jornais e com as categorias analíticas de produção, circulação e consumo, prescrito e situado aspectos históricos do livro escolar, seu autor e editora, no contexto do período, num olhar transnacional.

Palavras-chave: História da Educação e Alfabetização; Silabário; Imigrantes italianos.

Resumen

El objetivo de este artículo es analizar la producción, circulación y consumo de una obra casi desconocida, un silabario en italiano escrito por el profesor y agente consular italiano Giovanni Pietro Malan y publicado en Pelotas, Rio Grande do Sul. Es el *Sillabario ad Uso Dei figli dei coloni italiani della provincia di Rio Grande del per imparare contemporaneamente a leggere y a scrivere*. La pequeña obra, de 49 páginas y dividida en 33 lecciones, fue publicada por una de las editoriales más importantes de Rio Grande do Sul de la época, la Livraria Americana, de Carlos Pinto & C. Succs. A través del análisis documental histórico del silabario, entrelazado con informes consulares, correspondencia, periódicos y las categorías analíticas de producción, circulación y consumo, escrito y situado aspectos históricos del libro escolar, su autor y editor, en el contexto del período, en una mirada transnacional.

Palabras clave: Historia de la Educación y la Alfabetización; Silabario; Inmigrantes italianos.

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Initial Considerations

“L’istruzione è il bastone della vita” [Education is the staff of life] (Malan, s/d, p. 36).

The historical research based on documents, many of which are preserved in archives, holds interesting surprises for the researcher. Late in the afternoon, and as I was almost saying goodbye to the documentary research with the well-kept documents of the *Arquivo Histórico Municipal João Spadari Adami* (AHMJSA)¹, I asked the archivist a question about the collection of old books in Italian and received an answer that every historian wants to hear. Yes, we have some materials that you haven’t seen yet. I have been researching at AHMJSA for years and I had already seen the existing schoolbooks. Some ‘new’ books had recently been donated and after cleaning and classification, were available for consultation. I asked to see them and among them was a small, really small book that immediately caught my attention. The work entitled *Sillabario² ad uso dei figli dei coloni italiani della provincia di Rio Grande del Sud per imparare contemporaneamente a leggere ed a scrivere* (Syllabary for the use of the Italian colonists’ children in the province of Rio Grande do Sul to learn to read and write in a contemporary way) by Professor Malan is a small, rare, very rare work. I had already read about Malan as a teacher and consular agent, and I knew that he had written a book for school use. But until then, after so many years of research on the subject of immigrants and descendants and the history of schools, I had not had access to the work produced by Malan.

A small, rare book that aroused a mix of feelings that every historian has probably experienced - among enthusiasm, joy and curiosity - to learn more. As Albuquerque Júnior (2019, p. 83) writes, researchers relate to documents and, beyond the rational order, “documents move, they stir the sensitivity of the researcher” who works with them through a craft that involves selection, collection, recording, analysis, questioning, reflection, combination with other documents and contextualization. In the work of the historian of education we perceive the layers and the many possible meanings that reside in documents, being “remnants of a time, they were remains experiences, emotions, thoughts, laments and torments” (Albuquerque Júnior, 2019, p. 91). These are documents that we choose for this purpose and we inquire about them, analyze them and order them in order to give them a meaning in time and in the narrative that we produce.

This article then brings to light the analysis of this school book – a syllabary – which at the end of the 19th century and the first decade of the 20th century was used to teach reading and writing in some of the so-called Italian schools in Rio Grande do Sul. Thus, the objective of the article is precisely to analyze the production, circulation and

¹ The *Arquivo Histórico Municipal João Spadari Adami* is located in the municipality of Caxias do Sul and holds a precious collection of diverse documents organized into public archives, private archives, oral memory banks and special collections.

² As Frade (2010, p. 276) states, “the word ‘syllabary’ can have more than one meaning, designating: (i) a type of book; (ii) a table or a set of tables with varied syllabic series, presented within the pages of a book; (iii) a method for teaching literacy”. In this article, I use it in the sense of a type of book.

consumption of this almost unknown work, the syllabary in Italian written by Professor Malan and printed and sold by one of the most important bookstores and publishers in Rio Grande do Sul at the time, *Livraria Americana*. The book circulated in Rio Grande do Sul and we have records of its use in different locations. And as stated in the opening epigraph of the text, if “Education is the staff of life” as the author, Professor Malan, wrote, books are cultural objects and analyzing them allows us to glimpse a little more of the material culture and possible practices of teaching and learning.

Through historical documentary analysis of the syllabary, intertwined with consular reports, correspondence, newspapers and the analytical categories of production, circulation and consumption, I scrutinize and situate an analysis of the book, its author and publisher, in the context of the period, from a transnational perspective.

The transnational perspective went beyond national borders in the analysis of an object, considering it in its interconnections and interfaces, points of contact and cultural exchanges. Thus, the transnational attention to the object – a teacher who immigrated and took on the role of teaching in the host country, as in the case of Professor Malan and who lived in hybrid conditions, produced cultural transfers (Espagne, 2017), that is, a dynamic of resemantization of the culture experienced in Italy for the new experiences in Brazil. In the baggage of this teacher, a diversity of cultural practices was transported and confronted with the different ways of living in the places where he settled. Chartier taught that

the fundamental object of a history that aims to recognize the way in which social actors give meaning to their practices and their discourses seems to reside in the tension between the inventive capacities of individuals or communities and, on the other hand, the restrictions, norms, and conventions that limit – more or less strongly according to their position in relations of domination – what they are able to think, enunciate, and do (Chartier, 2002, p. 91).

The inventive capacities of Professor Malan through his assumption as a teacher in an Italian school in Pelotas and certainly the difficulties faced in obtaining school supplies available in the classroom encouraged him to produce this small schoolbook. On the other hand, Pelotas had the *Livraria Americana* with its own printing press, which provided the conditions for printing. As Anne-Marie Chartier explains, “A textbook is a ‘guide to be followed’, in the classroom or at home, usually under the direction of a teacher. This makes it a unique, ephemeral and, therefore, particularly fragile editorial product” (Chartier, 2018, p. 5).

Therefore, in this analytical path of organizing the narrative, I first introduce the author and the publisher, situating them historically in the analysis of the production and circulation of the work. Next, in a second analytical movement, the work is scrutinized, presenting evidence of its consumption in different Italian schools in Rio Grande do Sul, seeking a “writing split from the historical narrative [... with the] triple task of introducing the past into a discourse of the present, demonstrating the competence of the historian, master of sources, and convincing the reader” (Chartier, 2022, p. 57).

Contextualizing the author and the publisher

“Dimmi con chi vai e ti dirò chi sei” [Tell me who you go with and I will tell you who you are] (Malan, s/d, p. 29).

With this popular adage taken from the Silabário written by Prof. Malan, who frequently used proverbs to teach reading and writing in Italian, in this subitem I present the framework that situates the author and the publisher, contextualizing the production of the work and its distribution.

In the context of international migrations at the end of the 19th century and the first decade of the 20th century, thousands of immigrants arrived in Brazil in search of work, land ownership and better living conditions. Settling in rural and urban areas, as well as in colonial centers, families gradually established the conditions to live in these places and in many of them initiatives to open schools with ethnic characteristics were common (Luchese, 2015; Luchese et al., 2021). The scarcity of teaching materials, especially books, was the subject of much debate and requisition in both the Brazilian and Italian contexts. Despite the numerous but inconsistent shipments of books printed in Italy and sent to Brazil (and other countries with a presence of Italian immigrants), there were also initiatives for the production, publication, distribution and consumption of school works in Italian in Brazil³. This is the case of the small syllabary produced by professor Gian Pietro Malan, who worked in Pelotas for a short period of time and published the syllabary.

In 33 brief lessons, with 49 pages, the small and rare syllabary was printed by one of the most important publishers and bookstores in Rio Grande do Sul at the end of the 19th century, the *Livraria Americana* de Carlos Pinto & C. Succs.. According to studies by Castro and Barausse (2020), in Pelotas in 1885 there were two mutual aid associations, *Unione e Filantropia* and *Circolo Garibaldi*, which joined forces to found the *Società Italiane Riunite*. According to the authors, “It was on this occasion that the project of creating an Italian school for the children of Italian immigrants was resumed” and, further, that the school of the Italian community “was inaugurated, in the building of the combined Italian society *Unione e Filantrophia* and *Circolo Garibaldi*, the free school for the education of the children of Italian subjects residing in Pelotas”. They also report that the school was visited by Ernesto Martuscelli and was granted an annual subsidy of 500 lire (Castro; Barausse, 2020, p. 12).

Gian Pietro Malan was a teacher and affiliated with the *Liga Nacional Protetora dos Imigrantes de Genova*. In 1884, he traveled aboard the steamship *Orione da Società Florio-Rubattino* to Montevideo, later continuing on to Brazil. According to the report published the following year, in 1885, the captain was Captain V. E. Lavarello. After 21 days of sailing and four days of quarantine, he got to know a little of Uruguay and continued on to Brazil, recounting his travel report in a book. He describes Rio Grande do Sul and São Paulo, in particular. He presents data on how colonial centers such as Caxias, Dona Isabel and Conde D’Eu developed, places he called ‘agricultural colonies’. The immigrant communities are described and presented, and the work of immigrants in Brazil is highlighted as important. At

³ Another work produced, published and circulated in RS was an Italian Grammar analyzed by Luchese, Vendramin and Ghellere (2022).

the end of the book, the pages are dedicated to the statutes of the *Liga Nacional Protetora dos Imigrantes de Genova*, for which it was not possible to find further information. The following image shows the second cover of the book:

Figure 1 – Second cover of the book *Un Viaggio Al Brasile* de Malan, 1885.



Source: Malan, 1885, cover.

Malan returned to Brazil in 1885, probably after publishing the book. He produced a pamphlet for his compatriots, praising Brazil and encouraging emigration. This pamphlet was praised by the Brazilian authorities, who used it to distribute it in Italy, guiding and encouraging emigration through the pen of a fellow citizen. It was not possible to find further details of the negotiations, but in 1886, G. B. Malan was appointed consular agent in Pelotas, where he also began to work as a teacher.

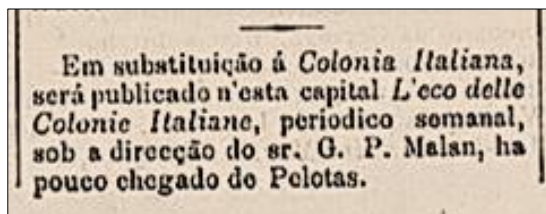
From what was found⁴, Malan was married to Magdalena Malan and they were from the Angrogna Valley, in Piedmont. Their eldest son, Alfredo Malan, was born in Genoa in 1873. The family was Waldensian⁵. In Pelotas, as a teacher, Malan wrote the

⁴ The data provided were consulted at <https://ensaioesenotas.com/2017/02/17/valdenses-no-brasil/> accessed on 01/07/2025.

⁵ As Dalla Chiesa's study (2024, p. 17) clearly explains, "The Waldensian movement emerged in the mid-12th century in southwestern France, around the city of Lyon. Its name derives from the person around whom this movement was catalyzed, the merchant Peter Waldo. The Waldensians were part of the tradition of popular movements of the Late Middle Ages that advocated a return to what they considered the purity and values of primitive Christianity. Despite being harshly fought against, as they were considered heretical, they spread throughout Italy and the South of France, and in the 16th century they adhered to the theses of the Calvinist-inspired Reformation. Involved in the religious struggles that engulfed much of Europe, the "people-church," in Giorgio Tourn's expression, ended up essentially confined to a few valleys between France and Italy throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, until they were granted equal civil rights and freedom of movement during the Unification process. Italian. The Waldensian Church was the Protestant denomination that had the greatest presence among the native populations of the peninsula at the time of the great flow of immigration to Rio Grande do Sul in the last quarter of the 19th century."

work analyzed in this article. Also, as reported by the *Jornal A Federação*, on the cover of February 5, 1886, under the direction of G. P. Malan, the publication of the newspaper *L'Eco delle Colonie Italiane* (*Jornal A Federação*, 02/05/1886, cover) would begin, as shown in the figure below.

Figure 2 – Excerpt from the *Jornal A Federação* of 02/05/1886.



Source: *Jornal A Federação*, 05/02/1886, cover.

Malan was involved in tensions and disputes, clashing with Consul Pascoale Corte and some leaders of the local Italian community. According to Castro (2024, p. 173), Italian schools in Pelotas were present in both urban and rural areas “However, through the sources found and selected, a greater movement can be seen in Italian schools in the urban area, which were linked to local *Mútuo Socorro* societies”. In the specific case of the urban area of Pelotas, he also reports that

The first Italian school in Pelotas was founded in 1872 by the *Sociedade Italiana Unione e Filantropia*, even before the large flow of immigrants to RS. That year, the Italian Society created a school without any form of financial support from the Italian consular authorities. It was directed by Professor Ettore Gori Mazzoleni and operated until 1880, the year of the professor's death (Castro, 2024, p.176).

Between 1880 and 1885 the school was closed and in 1885 it was reopened, according to Castro's study:

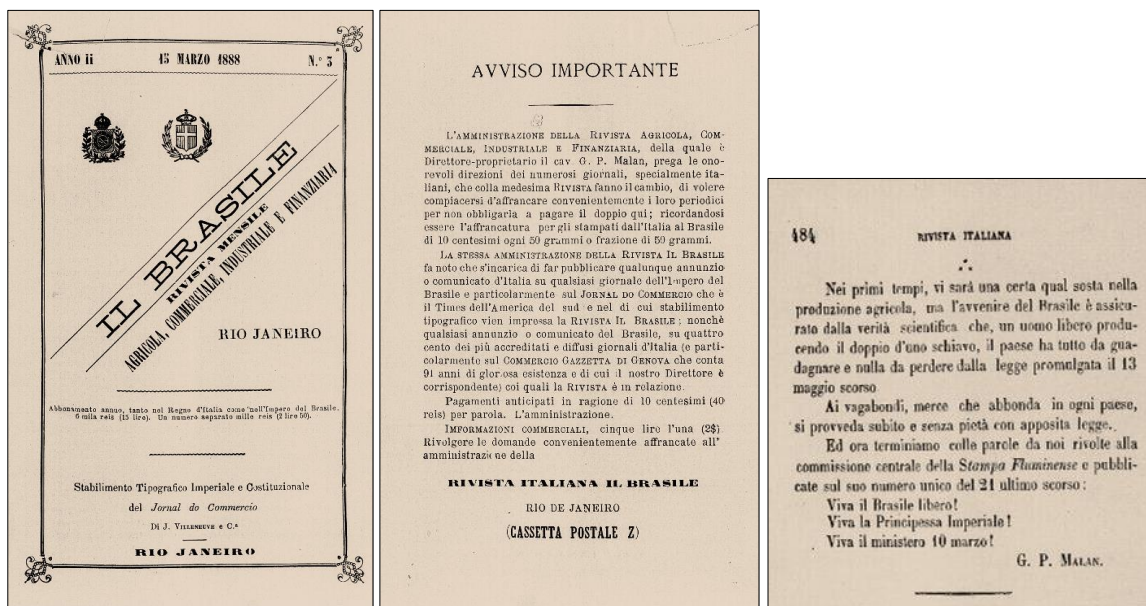
In 1885, the two existing associations: *Unione e Filantropia* and *Circolo Garibaldi* joined forces to found the *Società Italiane Riunite* and, on that occasion, the project of creating a school for the children of Italian immigrants was resumed: “in 1885, another society (*Circolo Garibaldi*) joined forces with *Unione e Filantropia* and the school, to everyone's satisfaction, was reestablished to educate the children of our Italian compatriots, members and non-members” (Castro, 2024, p. 177).

Castro does not detail Malan's teaching activities between 1885 and 1886, a brief period, in Pelotas. But it was during this period in which he was in charge of the school in Pelotas that he produced and published the Syllabary. It is worth mentioning that he was named *Cavaleiro da Ordem da Rosa*, as reported on the cover of the newspaper *A Evolução*, a conservative publication, on March 16, 1886. The tensions experienced in Pelotas between the consular agent/professor Malan, the consul Corte and other people

from the local Italian community led to his dismissal. The cover of the *Jornal A Federação* on October 23 announced that professor Malan had been dismissed from his position as consular agent in Pelotas (*Jornal A Federação*, 10/23/1886, cover). As identified, Malan boarded the steamer *Victória* in 1886, heading to Rio de Janeiro, where he lived with his family.

In the capital, Rio de Janeiro, Malan took on the role of director-owner of a monthly magazine that covered news about Brazil in general and more specifically about economic development issues, as shown in figure 3. The magazine directed by Malan had 80 pages in its first issue, which varied in successive issues.

Figure 3 - Il Brasile. Rivista Mensile: Agricola, Commerciale, Industriale e Finanziaria (RJ) - 1888 to 1889.



Source: Il Brasile, 1888.

In 1889, the last news found was that the teacher had been struck down by yellow fever, but managed to recover shortly after (Newspaper *La Voce Del Popolo*, undated, 1889, p. 3). It was not possible to determine whether Malan remained in Brazil or returned to Italy. However, his son Alfredo pursued a military career in Brazil and his descendants remain in Brazil.

Malan negotiated the publication of his schoolbook with a publisher that published educational works and that had a reach beyond Pelotas. The *Livraria Americana* of Carlos Pinto & C. Succs. was one of the most important in Rio Grande do Sul. According to the *Dicionário de História de Pelotas* (2017):

In the specific branch of the publishing industry, two companies dominated the Pelotas market — and, practically, the Rio Grande do Sul market — during the last quarter of the 19th century: *Livraria Americana* and *Livraria Universal*. The first, owned by Carlos Pinto & Cia., was founded in 1875, establishing branches in Porto Alegre (1879) and Rio Grande (1885). The second was owned by *Echenique & Cia.* and was founded in 1887, also expanding its

business to Rio Grande and Porto Alegre. [...] Among the books they published, works of fiction predominate, by universal, national and regional authors; but their collection of textbooks is still surprising (Magalhães, 2017, p. 185 and 186).

Hallewell (2012, p. 433) states that in Brazil and especially in Rio Grande do Sul, at the end of the 19th century and the first years of the 20th, “Rio Grande do Sul publishers, protected by a positivist constitution, printed all sorts of books without authorization from legitimate publishers and without paying royalties”. ‘Piracy’, that is, the lack of payment of royalties and authorization from publishers, was a widespread practice. In order to popularize and expand the range of works available to the public, the practice of publishing without prior authorization from authors and publishers was recurrent. For Hallewell (2012, p. 433), “the main culprit was the most important publisher in Rio Grande do Sul at the time, *Livraria Americana*, owned by Carlos Pinto, established since the 1880s in Pelotas, in the extreme south of the state”. He mentions the *Biblioteca Econômica* series, which sold pocket-sized books at low prices, with numerous translations.

Arriada and Valle (2015, p. 164) in a study about postcards highlight the importance of *Livraria Americana* as

having been one of the strongest publishing houses in Rio Grande do Sul in the production of postcards (in addition to books). It was established in the city of Pelotas in 1871 and initially operated at *Rua Andrades Neves*, 603. Later, it moved its store to *Rua 15 de Novembro* and opened branches in Porto Alegre (1879) and Rio Grande (1885), where its commercial establishment was located at *Rua Marechal Floriano*.

Torresini (2010, p. 245) expands the analysis by mentioning that

The *Livraria Americana* offered a complete stock of books of all categories. In addition to extensive and varied advertisements in several newspapers, it published the *Catálogo de livros da Livraria Americana*, sending it free of charge to those who requested it. In a few years, it expanded its business, opening a branch in the city of Rio Grande. From 1889 to 1917, it published the *Almanaque literário e estatístico do Rio Grande do Sul*, directed by Alfredo Ferreira Rodrigues.

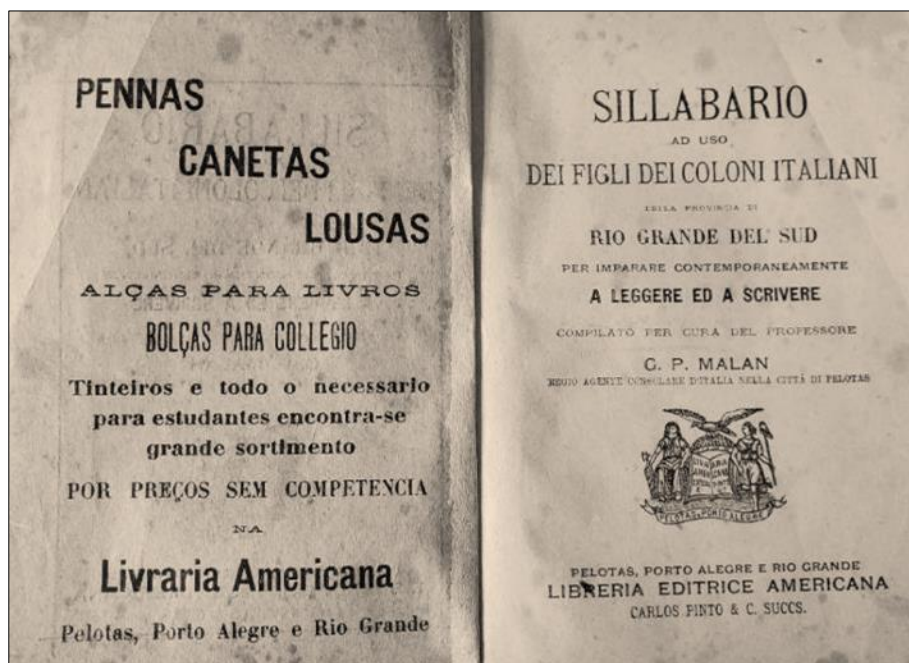
The production of its own catalog and the recurring advertisements in newspapers positioned *Livraria Americana*, projecting it with the distribution of books in different municipalities of RS. In addition, the initiative to produce books at lower costs and popular was also relevant, with “a prominent role in the dissemination of the practice of reading and in the formation of book stocks for schools and higher education courses in the late 19th and early 20th centuries” (Torresini, 2010, p. 246). The figure below shows clippings from advertisements in the main newspaper of Rio Grande do Sul, *A Federação*. In this newspaper,

The bookstore also sold imported books and magazines, as advertised in newspapers of the time. The *Livraria Americana* printing shop provided services by printing several newspapers, in addition to publishing reports by provincial presidents and mayors of several municipalities in Rio Grande do Sul. It supplied office supplies and stationery to the public and private sectors. Therefore, its presence and activity were important, especially because it sent products by mail to interested parties, expanding its network of commerce and distribution of products. Carlos Thomaz Pinto was traveling to Europe in search of new products, as reported by the *Jornal A Federação*

“Mr. Carlos Thomaz Pinto, one of the owners of *Livraria Americana*, arrived in the capital yesterday after his trip to Europe” (JORNAL A Federação, 10/08/1886, p. 2).

In Malan’s own work, on the back cover there is information about *Livraria Americana* indicating the sale of quills, pens, slates, book straps, as well as school ‘bags’, inkwells and other supplies needed by schoolchildren. *Livraria Americana*, as mentioned, also stood out for its branches in Porto Alegre and Rio Grande. The back cover and the penultimate page of the work also contain information about the sale of other school books, as well as advertising the sale of musical instruments.

Figure 5 – Second cover highlighting *Livraria Americana*.



Source: Malan, undated, p. second cover and p. 03.

With a growing bookstore, translations of novels, publishing of schoolbooks, as well as a wide range of school supplies, stationery and letterheads in general, the bookstore's strong presence in Porto Alegre, Pelotas and Rio Grande was guaranteed. In 1910, the *Livraria Americana* was sold. In Pelotas and Rio Grande, it was sold to *Livraria Universal* of *Irmãos Echenique*, and in Porto Alegre, the brand was maintained, but it came to belong to João Oswaldo Rentzsch and Raphael Vieira da Cunha⁶.

⁶ In another reference I found additional information: “In 1871, José Pereira de Souza Pinto and his brother-in-law Carlos Thomaz Pinto founded a “small book and paper shop” (Rodrigues, 1905, p. 06), naming it *Livraria Americana*. It was founded that year, therefore, as a bookstore, and soon after, it established itself as a publishing house. [...] *Livraria Americana*, whose corporate name was Carlos Pinto e Cia., ceased its commercial activities in 1916, when it was acquired by *Livraria Universal Echenique*. However, at the beginning of its activities it operated on one of the central streets of Pelotas, *Andrade Neves* (almost on the corner of *Floriano Peixoto*, in the central area of the city [Pelotas], in a magnificent two-story house. Later, the owner acquired a building on the also central *XV de Novembro* Street, nº 195, a grand building with red columns and beautiful and artistic statues on top of the building, almost opposite another important and busy establishment in the city, the *Hotel Aliança*. [...] The *Livraria Americana* was dedicated to the most diverse activities, far transcending the specificity of a publishing house. It had machinery that could perform different printing arts, thus publishing notebooks, books, pamphlets, postcards, etc.” (Arriada; Nogueira, 2018, p. 61- 63).


The syllabary: the work and its consumption

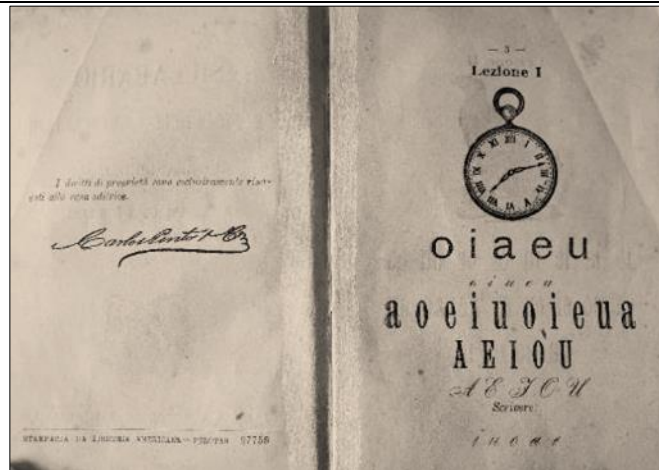
“Amiamo molto l’ Italia, quantunque lontani”
(Malan, s/d, p. 33)

“Amiamo molto l’ Italia, quantunque lontani, poiché dessa è nostra patria diletta, che già comandò un giorno al mondo intero e fu maestra di civiltà e sapere” [We love Italy very much, even from afar, because it is our beloved homeland, which once ruled the entire world and was a teacher of civility and knowledge] (Malan, n.d., p. 33). I chose part of this phrase to title this article, drawing attention to the sense of homeland presented to the young immigrants and descendants who used the Syllabary by the teacher and consular agent Gian Pietro Malan in the classroom, or beyond.

Printed on newsprint and in a small format, the *Sillabario* was intended to be an initial support for learning to read and write. Considered a cultural artifact, it is “a manufactured, disseminated and consumed product” (Chopin, 2000, p. 110). With a relatively simple structure of 49 pages and 33 lessons, the author, with the help of typographic work, starts with the presentation of the letters, and organizes the page between what is expected to be read and what should be copied. Sentences and short texts make up the end of the book. For visualization and analysis, I present the following chart:

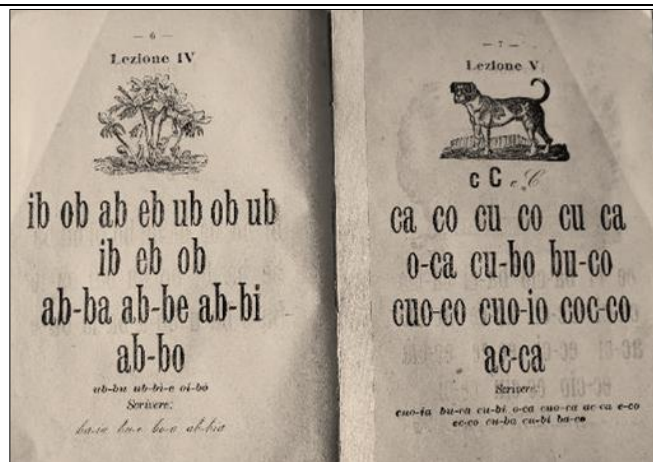
Chart1 – Composition and analysis of Malan's syllabary.

Work page	Analysis
 <p>The image shows the front cover of a small, aged book. The title 'SILLABARIO' is at the top in a large, bold, serif font. Below it, in smaller text, is 'AD USO DEI FIGLI DEI COLONI ITALIANI'. Further down, it says 'NELLA PROVINCIA DI RIO GRANDE DEL SUD. PER IMPARARE CONTEMPORANEAMENTE A LEGGERE ED A SCRIVERE'. The author's name 'G. P. MALAN' is printed below that, followed by 'BRIGIO AGENTE CONSOLARE ITALIANO NELLA CITTÀ DI PELOTAS'. At the bottom, there is a small illustration of two figures, possibly representing education or industry, and the publisher's information: 'PELOTAS, PONTO ALEGRE E RIO-GRANDE. LIBRERIA EDITRICE AMERICANA. CARLOS PINTO & C. SUCCS.'.</p>	<p>I will begin by drawing attention to the cover. The title indicates who the book is intended for and its use, the author and the role he or she played, as well as the publisher and its location. A popular work, low cost, few pages. It was not possible to identify the print run and the exact year of its publication, but the evidence points to 1885/1886.</p>

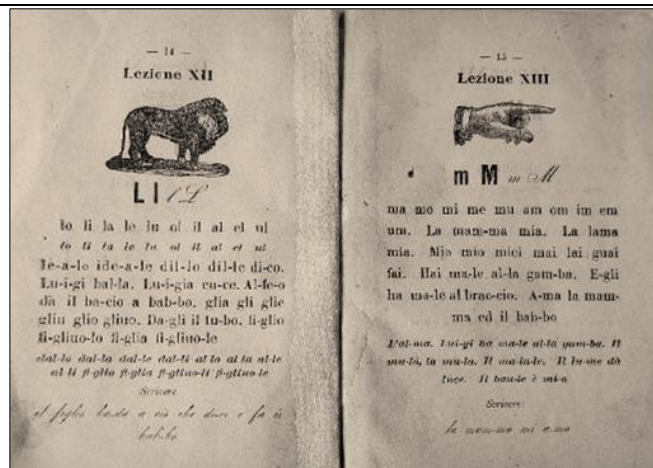


The copyright belongs to the publisher, as can be seen from the image.

Lesson I presents a clock and below it, vowels in different fonts, also highlighting the lowercase and uppercase letters. It organizes an initial part that encourages reading and separates at the end of the page what is expected to be written by the student. The copy, repeated. The reading rehearsed, sung, memorized.



The even-numbered lessons on the left-hand page present combinations of the consonant present on the previous page, in this case the letter B in combination with all the vowels. The lessons on the right-hand page present a new consonant, in this case C, and the work is organized in alphabetical order.



As the lessons progress, the number of words presented for reading increases. Sentences are formed. The writing exercise also becomes more complex, composing short sentences.

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Lezione XXIV

An-so-nia è ap-pe-na sui sei an-ni
e già si la-va le-mo-da se lo ma-ni
e il vi-so. Ra-gaz-zini se vo-le-to es-
se-re a-ma-ti, te-ne-te-vi sem-pre pu-
li-ti. La be-fa-na e i fol-let-ti so-no ub-
bie. A-in-tià-mo-ci gli u-ni gli al-tri.
Il Qui-ri-na-le è la di-mo-ra del no-stro
a-ma-to re in Ro-ma

Storico:

Le-na vi-de sul-la via sed-uta la po-
ve-ra Te-re-sa ma-la-ta. Le do-nò su-
bi-to pa-ne e tre mo-ne-te. La-na è buo-na.

— 25 —

Lezione XXV

ra chu chi co cu, ce ci cio cia eu,
ortica, che-to, in-chi-no, ma-ni-cot-
to, oc-chio, la-chi, chie-sa, zuc-ca,
bec-co, fac-chi-no, mac-chia, o-rec-
chie, oc-chia-li, sec-chia. Il cie-lo è
se-re-no. Dà un bac-cio a pa-pà. Il
ra-cio mi pia-ce. Sue-chia-re o sue-
cia-re. La fac-cia-ta del-la casa.

**Ec-co fat-to il bec-co al-l'o-
ca. Mio fra-tel-lo ha buon
cuo-re. La ciur-ma.**

Storico:

A-iu-ta-te i po-ve-ri. Bo-lo-gna è u-na
città d'i-ta-li-a. Cice-ro-ne fu un gran-
de o-ra-to-re ro-ma-no. Dim-mi con chi-
cui e ti di-rò chi sei.

From lesson XIX onwards, drawings are no longer shown on each page. The space on the page is taken up by reading and writing exercises. Different fonts are used and the words and phrases are longer. Bold and italics are used. Italian cities, names of authorities, and short lessons on patriotic and civilizing meaning are inserted to be read and also transcribed.

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Lezione XXVIII

Contare e scrivere fino a 10

1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10

1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10

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Lezione XXIX

L'Italia, per le sue bellezze natu-
rali ed artistiche, vien denominata
il giardino d'Europa. Amiamo mol-
to l'Italia quantunque lontani, poi-
ché dessa è nostra patria diletta, che
già comandò un giorno al mondo
intero e fu maestra di civiltà e sa-
pere. Umberto primo è il nostro Re
valeroso e galantuomo e la virtuosa
Margherita di Savoia, la nostra gra-
ziosa Regina. E' indispensabile che

Lesson XXVIII presents the numerals and the quantity of each number. Two types of fonts are used to represent them. And lesson XXIX presents a text.

In the text, one can observe the issue of exalting Italy as the homeland of all Italians, including those who live far from it. It mentions that Italy is recognized as the garden of Europe for its natural and artistic beauty. It exalts kings and concludes the text by affirming the importance of learning the Italian language, "the sweetest and most harmonious language known" (p. 34).

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Lezione XXXIII

*Perdonate ai vostri nemici e fate
del bene a chi v'ha offeso, tal è il gran-
dioso precetto insegnato coll'esem-
pio dal sommo Maestro.*

Carlino aveva ricevuto una sas-
sata nella schiena da Luigi, il quale
tosto se n'era fuggito. Carlino vole-
va vendicarsi dell'offesa ricevuta ;
ma un giorno, passando egli lungo
un fiume, vide Luigi, che era an-
dato a prendere un bagno, in pro-
cinto ad annegare. Non dando as-
colto che al generoso impulso del suo
cuore, Carlino afferrò tosto una per-

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tica che per caso trovavasi là vic-
no e la porse al suo nemico medi-
ante la quale questi poté trarsi a
salvamento.

Luigi versò lacrime di sentimen-
to, domandò scusa al suo salvatore
della cattiva azione antecedentemente
fattagli, e da giovanetto perverso ch'
egli era — ad un simile esempio di
generosità — si ravvide e divenne un
giovane virtuoso e dabbene.

Seminate dei benefizi e ne na-
sceranno dei dolci ricordi.

The last lesson, XXXIII, does not separate what should be read and what should be written. It is a text. It highlights, as in the other final lessons, feelings of patriotism, civility with moral and hygiene guidelines through the mobilization of children's characters and everyday situations, such as Carlino and Luigi. Forgiving enemies and doing good to those who have offended us is how the text begins. Luigi had been mean to Carlino by throwing a stone at him and hitting him in the back. Some time later, Carlino saw Luigi in a river taking a bath, but with Luigi in danger, almost drowning. He was saved by Carlino. Luigi recognized that he had been mean and asked for forgiveness from Carlino, who is mentioned as a savior and an example of generosity. This and other texts and even phrases from the short work are moralizing and civilizing lessons that accompany the reading and writing of the syllabary.

Source: Organized by the author based on Malan, n/d.

Based on the above and in line with Frade's statement (2010, p. 276), in Prof. Malan's *Sillabário*,

One learns the names of the letters of the alphabet, recognizes each letter out of order, spells its name, memorizes some syllable charts and then tries to rediscover them in words or texts. In words and texts, there is a separation by hyphens or spaces that guide orality. We can assume that a person who has learned through this procedure at school can transmit this “technology of use” to others, in school and non-school environments. Always repeating the same procedures can give an idea of stability and simplicity, encouraging readers to use this type of printed material more autonomously. Perhaps this is why this material extends beyond the time and space of the school.

The *Sillabário* as part of the school material culture allows, in a certain way, a glimpse of Italian schools and their functioning in Rio Grande do Sul. In summary, having presented the work, I consider it relevant – and beyond the use that the author himself made of the work he produced in his classroom – other teachers from Italian schools in Rio Grande do Sul used the book. For the analysis, even if partial and that possible through the available documents, I think about the consumption and circulation based on the reports of teachers. I located and present in the chart below three indications of the consumption of Professor Malan's *Sillabário* in reports from teachers sent to the consul based in Porto Alegre, Mario Marefoschi, in 1890:

Chart 2 – Evidence of consumption of Professor Malan's *Sillabário*, 1890.

Teacher's name, school name and date	Excerpt from the document	English version based on the author's free translation into Portuguese
Abdon Santini <i>Escola Mista da Sociedade de Mútuo Socorro Stella de Itália</i> (Garibaldi) 06/07/1890	<i>“Nella classe 1^a s’insegnò e si fece conoscere e leggere tutte le 21 lettere del nostro Alfabeto Italiano sia per la stampa che per la scrittura secondo il metodo Sillabico ed il Sillabario del Professore G.P. Malan”</i>	“In the first class, all 21 letters of our Italian Alphabet were taught and made known and read, either by printing or by writing, according to the syllabic method of Professor G. P. Malan’s Syllabary”

<p>Agostino Brun⁷ Escola Social da Zemith (Bento Gonçalves) 26/12/1890</p>	<p><i>“E coi libri scolastici? Ecco il tema importantissimo da sciogliere. Senza buoni libri certo è non avremo mai buone scuole. I libri del Malan che siamo costretti di adoperare sono incompatibili, e poi non abbiamo che il Sillabario e 1° Libro di lettura; orridi che sono e sempre quelli, i fanciulli ed anche i genitori finiscono con annoiarsi e perdere l'amore alla scuola”.</i></p>	<p>“And what about school books? Here is a very important question to be resolved. Without good books, we will never have good schools. The Malan books that we are forced to use are incompatible and so we only have the Syllabary and the First Reading Book; horrible as they are and always so, children and also parents end up getting bored and losing their love for school.”</p>
<p>Angelo Trevisan Escola Elementar Italiana Mista (linha Garibaldi, Garibaldi) 24/12/1890</p>	<p><i>“Lettura Alla 1ª classe, si fece conoscere e leggere le 22 lettere dal nostro alfabeto, secondo il Sillabario del professore G.P. Malan. Ed alla seconda classe si fece leggere e spiegare, il secondo Libro del prof. Pietro Darzzi, spiegando e insegnando le tre regole principali per legger bene”.</i></p>	<p>“Reading The 1st grade class was presented and read the 22 letters of our alphabet, according to Professor G.P. Malan's syllabary. And the 2nd grade class was led to read and explain Professor Pietro Darzzi's Second Book, explaining and teaching the three main rules for good reading.</p>

Source: RELATÓRIO... in ASMAE, AS 1889-1910, Pos III B, b. 339, f. Scuole al Brasile fino al 1898 G 183 PG, sf. Parte Antica -Donna Isabella.

The three teachers mentioned in Table 2 worked in Italian schools in *Serra Gaúcha* and were subsidized by the Italian Government. In 1890, in the headquarters of Conde d'Eu (Garibaldi), teacher Abdon Santini was responsible for the mixed elementary school of the *Sociedade de Mútuo Socorro Stella de Italia* which received boys and girls. Agostino Brun worked in a school in a more rural area and in his report questions the quality of the books, stating that they were discouraging for both students and parents. In addition, he mentions the lack of materials such as books for a good class. In that year of 1890, the patented teacher Agostino Brun, who had a class of 28 students aged 7 to 13, registered with the Consul the protest about the lack of books, but especially the need to have them of quality. Teacher Angelo Trevisan, for his part, only reports that he mobilized the syllabary with the 1st Class for reading.

Other teachers may have used Professor Malan's small syllabary in previous or later years. It was not possible to identify or present other traces. However, those that were found have been criticized and their limitations recognized, since the syllabary only served students in the initial process of learning to read and write.

⁷ According to a study by Luchese (2015), teacher Agostino Brun arrived in 1882, at the age of 38. A Catholic, he had a primary school teacher's degree obtained in Italy. He was married to Marina, who immigrated at the age of 31. They brought their children Roza, aged 11, Vittoria, aged 7 (daughters from his first marriage) and Giudite, aged 1. Born in Brazil: Romano, Dorina, Ema, Mario and Adolfo. Initially settled on lot 109 of Linha Jansen, he later moved to Santa Bárbara where he taught as a private teacher (first 8 years) and, later, as a state public teacher until his death in 1913.

Final Considerations

The teacher and consular agent Gian Pietro Malan immigrated from Italy to Brazil in 1885. He had experience as a writer of a schoolbook, the syllabary analyzed here, as well as a travelogue to Brazil. He worked as a periodical editor and his small schoolbook was one of the initiatives carried out by teachers from Italian schools in Brazil who produced material to support their classes, as well as by other teachers.

The work was printed at *Livraria Americana*, which had its own printing press and was one of the most important in Rio Grande do Sul at the time, with wide circulation and branches in Pelotas, Porto Alegre and Rio Grande. It sent products by mail and invested in a wide range of its own books, imported books, as well as school, office and printing materials. It was sold in 1910.

The 49-page syllabary is organized in a similar way to others produced and circulated from Italy to Brazil at the time. Pocket-sized, on newsprint, low-cost and therefore more accessible, it circulated and was used by teachers at Italian schools in Serra Gaúcha. In addition to teaching reading and writing, its pages feature proverbs and encourage students – through short stories and characters such as Carlino, Luigi, Pierino and Emilio – to respect their parents and the Italian homeland, in other words, moralizing lessons with civilizing purposes. As a cultural asset, the syllabary is also a commodity with manufacturing and printing techniques, a distribution network and, as it was printed in Italian and written by an immigrant teacher, it is also the result of transnational cultural exchange. We lack details about their uses and consumption processes, the cunning techniques used in the relations between teachers and students in the classrooms, but the exercise of analysis results in yet another small trail that is concretized to help us understand the stories of education that inhabited past classrooms. I conclude by agreeing with Anne-Marie Chartier (2018) when she states that the schoolbook – such as the syllabary – was sometimes considered banal and that little attention was paid to its complexity, but as historians of education, today we understand the historical richness of such an object.

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