

*La Libertà*, evidence of production and cultural mediation  
of a catholic newspaper  
(Caxias, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil, 1909-1910)<sup>1</sup>

di Terciane Ângela Luchese

*1. Introduction*

«La stampa è per le anime come il cibo per i corpi»<sup>2</sup>  
«Newspapers are to souls what food is to bodies»

The first edition of the newspaper *La Libertà* circulated in Caxias on Saturday, February 13, 1909. The Catholic periodical, printed and published in Italian, came out after a few months of negotiations and, as stated in the epigraph at the beginning of this chapter, the newspaper was seen as essential for feeding the souls of the faithful. Printed on the cover and under the title *La Stampa* [The Press], the text signed by C. Marini summarized what had been published in the newspaper *La Vera Roma* on October 20, 1908 and in some other Catholic periodicals on the subject. The meaning and value of the press at that time is recorded from the appropriation of what had been said by other Italian Catholic newspapers, evidence of the transnational circulation of the writings. The idea that the «newspaper is to souls what food is to bodies» was accompanied by the explanation that good food fostered life, while bad food led to death. Thus, they claimed that newspapers also represented life and death. Attacking the anti-Catholic press, affirming the position of Pope Pius X and exulting that the good faithful should only read what represented 'good food' for the soul, expressed the tone they wanted to spread with the new newspaper. The project to create and maintain a hebdomadario to support and disseminate the news and information considered important by the Church had been underway for some time. It is on this materiality and

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<sup>2</sup> «La Libertà», people's weekly newspaper. Caxias, February 13, 1909. Year 1, no. 1, cover.

its content, understanding the newspaper as a transnational cultural asset, since it follows the directives of the Holy See, that I take it as an object and source. The main empirical corpus<sup>3</sup> analyzes this Catholic newspaper published in Italian between 1909 and 1910, with a total of 53 editions.

On the upper slopes of the northeast of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil, from 1875 onwards, the first colonies set up by the imperial government, Conde d’Eu, Dona Isabel and Caxias, began to receive successive and numerous waves of immigrants, mostly from the Italian peninsula. The occupation of small properties led to the creation of centers to supply agricultural products and livestock, where surpluses were exchanged for other goods with local merchants. The emergence of manufacturing initiatives and small industries was solidified within a few years. As a cultural marker, Catholicism was one of the most significant practices among immigrants from Italy who settled in the colonies, now known as the Italian Colonial Region (ICR) of Rio Grande do Sul. In a way, the Catholic Church acted as a catalyst for cultural processes and practices in the ICR. With the advent of the Republic and the growth of the colonies, municipalities were created, as shown in Table 1:

Table 1. The first colonies of the ICR and their municipalities

Colony	Year established	Municipality	Year of emancipation
Dona Isabel <sup>4</sup>	1870	Bento Gonçalves	1890
		Monte Belo do Sul	1992
		Santa Teresa	1992
		Pinto Bandeira	1996
Conde D’Eu	1870	Garibaldi	1900 <sup>5</sup>
		Carlos Barbosa	1959
		Coronel Pilar	1996
		Boa Vista do Sul	1995

<sup>3</sup> The copies that make up the empirical corpus of the research are part of the collection of the João Spadari Adami Municipal Historical Archive in Caxias do Sul. The copies can be accessed at <http://liquid.camaracaxias.rs.gov.br/>

<sup>4</sup> Dona Isabel and Conde d’Eu were elevated to the status of municipalities in the same year of 1890, on October 11, by Act 474, under the name of Bento Gonçalves, with the administration remaining in the former seat of Dona Isabel. Conde d’Eu’s status as a district prompted political movements to seek emancipation, which came in 1900, by Decree 327 of October 31, signed by Antônio Augusto Borges de Medeiros. The new municipality was named Garibaldi.

<sup>5</sup> The Dona Isabel and Conde d’Eu colonies were made municipalities in 1890 under the name Bento Gonçalves. In 1900, Garibaldi (Conde d’Eu) was emancipated.

Caxias (Fundos de Nova Palmira) <sup>6</sup>	1875	Caxias do Sul <sup>7</sup>	1890
		Farroupilha	1934 <sup>8</sup>
		São Marcos	1963

Source: organized by the author.

In these first municipalities – Caxias, Garibaldi and Bento Gonçalves – the first four Catholic newspapers published in Italian were produced between 1898 and 1927<sup>9</sup>. It is true that their circulation reached many other neighboring towns. Despite being Catholic newspapers printed in Italian, each of them had specific characteristics in their production, circulation and content. There are points of contact and similarity, but also dissent. Crossing contributions from the Cultural History of the Press and the History of Migration, the empirical corpus is made up of a collection of copies

<sup>6</sup> After the Proclamation of the Republic, considering the pressure and dissatisfaction of merchants and industrialists from the Italian Colonial Region, General Cândido José da Costa, President of the Province, elevated the parish of Santa Tereza de Caxias to a municipality with the name of Caxias by Act 257 of June 20, 1890. The news was very well received by the inhabitants, who celebrated the event for three days. During the festivities, the bells of the parish church were baptized and the third agro-industrial exhibition of Caxias was inaugurated, with the presence of the Governor of the State, General Cândido José da Costa. According to Maria Abel Machado, *Construindo uma cidade. História de Caxias do Sul, 1875-1950*, Maneco Livraria & Editora, Caxias do Sul (RS) 2001, p. 84.

<sup>7</sup> In 1890 it was elevated to the status of a municipality under the name Caxias. Another name change took place in 1944 when it was renamed Caxias do Sul (Decree no. 720 of December 29, 1944).

<sup>8</sup> The territorial constitution included part of Bento Gonçalves and part of Montenegro as well.

<sup>9</sup> The first Catholic newspaper published in the ICR was the monthly bulletin *Il Colono Italiano*, in Caxias, which ran from January 1, 1898 until August 21, 1898, with a total of seven editions. Then, between 1909 and 1910, *La Libertà* was published. Between 1910 and 1917, *Il Colono Italiano* was published in Garibaldi. It was then renamed Staffetta Riograndense (until 1941). Between 1913 and 1927, *Il Corriere D'Italia* was published in Bento Gonçalves, then sold to Staffetta, which became the only Catholic newspaper in the ICR for many years. For more information, see Terciane Ângela Luchese, *Catolicidade e Italianidade no Jornal Il Corriere D'Italia, RS, Brasil (1913-1927)*, in Antonio de Ruggiero, Vania Beatriz Merlotti Herédia, Alberto Barausse (orgs.), *História e narrativas transculturais entre a Europa Mediterrânea e a América Latina*, EdIPUCRS, Porto Alegre 2017, v. 1, pp. 277-300; Terciane Ângela Luchese, *Educating for Catholicity and Italianness: the newspaper Il Corriere D'Itália, RS, Brazil (1913-1927)*, in Tania Regina de Luca, Valéria dos Santos Guimarães (orgs.), *Imprensa estrangeira publicada no Brasil. Priemiras incursões*, Rafael Copetti Editor, São Paulo, 2017, v. 1, pp. 283-329; Terciane Ângela Luchese, *Ethnical catholic press in the RS Italian colonial regional: clashes and consensus on behalf of education (1898-1927)*, «History of Education & Children's Literature», 2019, XIV, pp. 389-424.

of *La Libertà*, interspersed with correspondence and reports from consular agents. Historical documentary analysis was carried out, looking at the production of the newspaper and the cultural mediators of *La Libertà* between 1909 and 1910.

The main category of analysis, intellectuals as cultural mediators, allows us to think that the priests who took over the editorship of the newspaper were intellectuals in that context and at that time. As Gomes and Santos state, «the intellectual who acts as a cultural mediator himself produces new meanings by appropriating texts, ideas, knowledge and know-how that are recognized as pre-existing»<sup>10</sup> and this mediation creates, produces «another product: a singular cultural good»<sup>11</sup>. In this way, I seek to understand the cultural exchanges between Italy and Brazil through the production of *La Libertà*, between the Holy See and the priests (including the congregations) printed on the pages and in the news that circulated in the ICR and beyond. I intend to scrutinize the ways in which Catholicity was thought of and disseminated as an educational and cultural practice by intellectuals. To think about how they translated news, themes and debates, mediating and highlighting what they wanted to legitimize and propagandize through *La Libertà*.

The article is organized in two parts: in the first, I outline some evidence of the production of the newspaper and its circulation by the ICR. In the second, I look at the cultural mediators who participated in the making of the newspaper, especially priests, but also teachers and correspondents who composed the news and other texts published in *La Libertà*.

## 2. The newspaper *La Libertà*

«Ubi autem Spiritus Domini, ibi libertas» (2<sup>o</sup> Cor., III, 17)  
«And where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom» (2<sup>o</sup> Cor., 3, 17)  
«Instaurare omnia in Christo» (Your Excellency Pius X's Program)  
«Establishing everyone in Christ» (Program of Your Holiness Pius X)

The two epigraphs were chosen by Fr. Carmine Fasulo and appeared on the masthead of the first to the last issue of *La Libertà*. In a way, they indicated the label they wanted to disseminate with the publication: a Catholic newspaper that would publish news, texts, prescriptions and recom-

<sup>10</sup> Angela de Castro Gomes, Patrícia Santos Hansen (orgs.), *Intelectuais Mediadores. Práticas culturais e Ação Política*, Civilização Brasileira, Rio de Janeiro 2016.

<sup>11</sup> Ivi, p. 18.

mended reading for 'good Catholics'. The title – *La Libertà* – signaled that true freedom lay in faith, in the word of God and in the witness of a life that followed the precepts of Catholicism.

When it came to the press in Caxias and the ICR, the excerpt from the report by professor and consular agent Umberto Ancarani, dated 1905, reported on the instability and difficulties in maintaining the publication of newspapers over the long term:

Caxias is one of the few colonial towns to have a printing press and a local newspaper. Italian or Brazilian periodicals were published several times, but they were short-lived due to the lack of a sufficient number of subscribers. Thus, in 1897 a small weekly newspaper, *O Caxiense*, was published and in 1898 a bi-monthly clerical newspaper, written in Italian and entitled *Il Colono Italiano*. In 1902 a Brazilian newspaper appeared, July 14, the organ of the local Republican party, but it only lasted two years. It then changed its political color, without changing its owner-director, and took on the title *O Cosmopolita*. This still continues to be published – it comes out once a week on Saturdays – and is partly written in Italian. Among the periodicals and newspapers that arrived in this municipality, I would mention *La Tribuna* and *La Patria di Roma*, *Il Secolo XX*, *La Tribuna Illustrata*, *Il Corriere della Domenica*, *La Tribuna Italiana* and *Il Fanfulla* from São Paulo<sup>12</sup>.

The circulation of newspapers from the capital of Rio Grande do Sul, São Paulo and even Italy highlights the interest of many families in following and accessing news from Italy and even what was happening in Brazil. Despite the inconstancy of the titles and the length of the newspapers, the initiatives multiplied.

<sup>12</sup> In the original: «Caxias è uno dei pochi municipi coloniali che hanno una tipografia ed un giornale locale. Più volte si iniziò la pubblicazione di periodici italiani o brasiliani, ma ebbero tutti breve durata, per mancanza di un numero sufficiente di abbonati. Così avvenne nel 1897 per un piccolo giornale settimanale, *O Caxiense* e nel 1898 per un giornale clericale bimensile, scritto in italiano e intitolato *Il Colono Italiano*. Nel 1902 vide la luce un giornale brasiliano, *14 de Julho*, organo del partito repubblicano locale; ma ebbe due soli anni di vita. In seguito mutò di colore politico, pur non cambiando il proprietario-direttore e assunse il titolo di *O Cosmopolita*. Esso continua ancora le sue pubblicazioni – esce una volta la settimana, il sabato – ed è scritto in parte in lingua italiana. Tra i periodici e giornali italiani che arrivano in questo municipio ricorderò *La Tribuna* e *La Patria di Roma*, *Il Secolo XX*, *La Tribuna Illustrata*, *Il Corriere della Domenica*, *La Tribuna Italiana* ed *Il Fanfulla* di San Paolo». Umberto Ancarani, *La colonia italiana di Caxias (Rio Grande del Sul), Brasile*, «Bollettino dell'Emigrazione», 1905, 19, pp. 28-29, ora anche in Vania Beatriz Merlotti Herécia, Giampaolo Romanato (a cura di), *L'emigrazione italiana nel Rio Grande do Sul Brasiliano (1875-1914)*. *Fonti diplomatiche*, Consiglio Regionale del Veneto-Longo Editore, Ravenna 2018, pp. 608-609.

On November 21, 1908, *Gazeta Colonial* reported that Caxias was the municipality in Rio Grande do Sul with the largest number of newspapers apart from the capital, and announced that a new newspaper would be published: *La Libertà*. The preparations that preceded the publication of *La Libertà* were announced in other newspapers published in Caxias. In January 1909, *Gazeta Colonial* reported on the arrival of the new newspaper's printing machinery. The note was in full:

Caxias is making progress. We can assure our readers that the complete equipment of a new printing press has just arrived in this town, where another regular newspaper will be printed, which will be called *La Libertà* and which, reportedly owned by the Rev. D. Carmine Fasulo, the worthy vicar of this parish, will be edited by Mr. Leonel Vargas, who is already well known in this region for his intelligent collaborative articles in the *Gazeta Colonial*. [...] <sup>13</sup>

The circulation of different periodicals in Caxias is seen as a factor of development and progress. The years 1909 and 1910 saw important achievements for Caxias. The telephone had been available since 1895 and the telegraph arrived in 1906. The total population of Caxias in 1910 was 23,965, of which 3,742 lived in the urban area. So a total of 15.6%. One of the biggest drivers of local development was the arrival of the train and, as Giron and Bergamaschi state, «until 1910 Dante was just a village, which was then elevated to city status. That same year the railroad was inaugurated, linking it to the state capital» <sup>14</sup>. The train helped to overcome distances, putting an end to the isolation of the mountains from the capital of Rio Grande do Sul, boosting trade and expanding the movement of people. When Caxias became a city in 1910, it had, according to information from the Intendencia, 9,000 buildings. Of these, 7,500 were made of wood and another 1,500 of brick or stone. In the urban area, there were a total of 632 buildings, 468 of which were single-storey, 110 semi-detached and 40 townhouses. In September 1910, a branch of the Banco da Província do Rio Grande do Sul opened. Different newspapers circulated in 1910, including *La Libertà*, *O Brazil*, *Cidade de Caxias* and *O Tagarella*. Residents could enjoy two cinemas, the Juvenil and the América, several cafés, pastry shops, confectioners, hotels and bookstores. There were five charitable societies. A good number of commercial, manufacturing

<sup>13</sup> "Gazeta Colonial", 23/01/1909, year IV, n. 162, p. 2.

<sup>14</sup> Loraine Slomp Giron, Heloísa Eberle Bergamaschi, *Terra e Homens. Colônias e colonos no Brasil*, EDUCS, Caxias do Sul-RS 2004, p. 198.

and industrial establishments drove the economy and promoted urban growth. According to the Intendencia's data, in 1910 there were around 186 commercial establishments selling fabrics, offal, hardware and crockery, food and a total of 235 industries, according to Machado (2001). Public lighting continued to be provided by kerosene lamps installed on iron poles, a total of 65 in 1910<sup>15</sup>.

On February 18, 1909, the *Correio do Município* announced the publication of *La Libertà* and wished it success. The *Gazeta Colonial* also reported the news, stating:

LA LIBERTÀ. On Saturday the 13th, as expected, *La Libertà* appeared in this town. It's a regular newspaper, well written, well looked after and well printed. A Catholic newspaper written in Italian, it nevertheless has a beautiful section in Portuguese, making it accessible to anyone who knows either language. We greet you with abundance of heart, wishing you prosperity and long life<sup>16</sup>.

The publication of *La Libertà* began on February 13, 1909 and continued until March 1910. Despite the short period of time, through its pages it is possible to glimpse the difficulties, changes and tensions it faced. There were 44 editions published in Caxias, then a lapse of time without publication and, finally, the last editions 45 to 52 came out in Garibaldi.

On Saturday, February 13, 1909, under the leadership of Father Carmine Fasulo, the newspaper *La Libertà, Giornale Settimanale del Popolo* began to circulate. In its first issue, it stated that it had agents and correspondents in the smallest towns in the state. With four pages, the newspaper circulated on Saturdays. The newspaper was printed in-house, using a Marinoni machine<sup>17</sup> and Phoenix, from G. Schelter & Giesecke, Leipzig,

<sup>15</sup> Lamps were replaced by metal filament lamps in 1913, according to Machado (2001).

<sup>16</sup> "Gazeta Colonial", 20/02/1909, year IV, n 166, p. 2.

<sup>17</sup> Orestes Zoppas testified that the newspaper took an average of three days to be ready. «The machine took a long time to print 1,000 an hour. [...] The Marinoni machine, manual, small, went up to 8,000. After that, it wasn't enough [...]. The Marinoni was Italian. They bought it in Porto Alegre». Testimony by Orestes Zoppas in Liliana Alberti Henrichs, *Histórias da imprensa em Caxias do Sul*, Arquivo Histórico Municipal, Caxias do Sul (RS) 1988, pp. 59-60). Marinoni was French. Hippolyte Auguste Marinoni (1823-1904), a Frenchman, was the head of the press, a manufacturer of printing machines and one of those responsible for perfecting the rotary printing press. There are differences with the American Richard March Hoe, who invented, perfected and patented the rotary drum press. Adapted from the biographical note available at [https://data.bnf.fr/fr/10739042/hippolyteauguste\\_marinoni/](https://data.bnf.fr/fr/10739042/hippolyteauguste_marinoni/) (1 March 2023).

powered by an Otto engine, as reported. They also provided printing services for the community: business cards, invoices, labels, memos, school or poetry books and other printing services, advertised throughout various editions.

The printing services served the region and along with the issues of the newspaper they also sent out printed matter such as cards for the tombola, posters and invitations, as recorded in some of the editions. In another advertisement, with more complete information about the printing services provided and the conditions in which they were carried out, they stated that the Catholic printing house of *Libertà*

This printing house of ours prepares any work related to the art of typography with perfection and care, and has an abundance of new and modern typographic material. It has a Marinoni large-format machine, a very modern Phoenix machine from the famous G. Schelter & Giesecke factory in Leipzig, and other machines. They produce artistic works in color, a wide variety of business cards and everything else required in the art of typography. Fine stationery, envelopes, etc. All at low prices. PRICES One column line For the 1st time R\$200 For the 2nd time R\$100 For the 3rd time R\$50 Ongoing R\$50 (at least twelve times) For ads published for at least 3 months, 20% discount. For a year, a 40% discount and for 3 years a 50% discount on the price of 100 réis per column line. These printing machines are powered by the Otto steam engine. Printing of school books, poetry and for all other purposes<sup>18</sup>.

In this way, it's possible to see the cost of the ads, and throughout the editions analyzed, it's clear that there are few of them compared to other newspapers. Most were published on the back page, but there were also a few on the third page. Advertisements for companies such as Alessandro de Antoni's Oficina Mecânico-Agrícola (Mechanical-Agricultural Workshop) is one of those that remains in practically every issue, with the highlight being Otto Engines (Bromberg and Company) from Porto Alegre, whose representative in Caxias was Caetano Finco. It's interesting to note that the newspaper reports that an Otto engine with 4 horsepower was working in the newspaper's printing shop. The hydraulic turbines of Bromberg and Company<sup>19</sup>, of Porto Alegre keeps the ad in almost every issue. It publishes testimonials from buyers such as Davide Andreazza and Sante

<sup>18</sup> "La Libertà", 11/12/1909, p. 3.

<sup>19</sup> Bromberg & Company had a partnership with Abramo Eberle in the machinery trade.

Meneghetti, who praise the products they buy. The provision of medical services with Enrico Fracasso's medical and surgical practice and A. Fontoura Trindade's surgical and dental clinic. The teaching of bookkeeping by Professor Agostino Dal Cortivo. Another business advertised was the Zanella bakery and pasta factory. Francesco Meneguzzi, sculptor and decorator. The production and sale of beverages such as the Tuico Vittore wine industry, Julio Altmann's liqueur factory and Fernet-Branca, an advertisement for an aperitif tonic by Azevedo, Hermínio and Cia. I also found advertisements for the sale of land and rural plots and, most frequently, a notice from Empresa Colonizadora Castro e Cia. which was based in Porto Alegre, but in Caxias was represented by Giovanni Morganti.

Regarding the first issue, on the cover it presented its program<sup>20</sup> stating that it came out with the authorization of the ecclesiastical authority and reiterated its link with Catholicism. *La Libertà*, however, as well as dealing with religious issues, proposed to address topics that could interest readers in their material aspects and gave examples: agriculture, industry, hygiene and practical medicine. News from around the world, Italy and Rio Grande do Sul would also be part of the publication. And it ended the program by stating that «with love for Religion, we intend to

<sup>20</sup> I transcribe a part of the text that stated: «La Libertà, auspice della suprema autorità ecclesiastica diocesana, scende oggi per la prima volta nell'arena giornalistica. Attenendosi alle norme seguite da coloro che ci han preceduto, adempiamo al grato dovere di manifestare fin da questo primo numero quale sia il programma che ci proponiamo di svolgere, e lo diciamo subito in poche parole. Il nostro giornale sarà settimanale e d'indole prettamente ed essenzialmente cattolico, apostolico, romano: sarà papale nel più stretto senso della parola. Noi non sappiamo concepire un giornale cattolico, senza che sia papale. Per un vero cattolico, dopo Dio, il Papa è tutto. Ci si spezza la penna fra le dita..., se un giorno dovessimo allontanarci di una linea da questo nobile e santo ideale. Perciò La Libertà farà suoi non solo i comandi, ma gli stessi desiderii del Romano Pontefice, ed in ciò che potrà intuire, si farà un dovere di prevenirli. Noi non intendiamo, né vogliamo illudere nessuno. La Libertà nasce cattolica e vivrà cattolica; e se un giorno dovesse morire, l'ultimo suo anelito sarà consacrato all'augusto Vegliardo del Vaticano, luogo tenente di Gesù Cristo in terra. La Libertà potrà morire, ma Iddio non muore. Con ciò non si deve credere che il nostro giornale tratterà esclusivamente di assunti religiosi. Noi somministreremo ai nostri egregi lettori tutte quelle nozioni che potranno interessarli anche dal lato materiale. Quindi tratteremo di agricoltura, industria, igiene, ed anche un pò di medicina pratica, cose tutte che consideriamo non solo utili, ma anche necessarie allo svolgimento della vita sociale. La Libertà sarà anche ricca di notizie mondiali, e più specialmente d'Italia e di questo Stato di Rio Grande del Sud. Coll'amore alla Religione, intendiamo consolidare nel cuore dei nostri lettori l'amore alla patria d'origine ed a quella d'adozione, convinti come siamo che un buon cattolico sarà sempre un'ottimo cittadino. Non ci ha forse insegnato lo stesso Gesù Cristo di dare a Cesare quel che è di Cesare, ed a Dio quel che è di Dio?» ("*La Libertà*", 13/02/1909, Year I, n. 1, p. 1).

consolidate love for the homeland of origin and adoption in the hearts of our readers, because we are convinced that a good Catholic will always be a very good citizen»<sup>21</sup>. In its first edition, thanks were given to the three newspapers that had announced the creation of *La Libertà* in advance: *Gazeta Colonial*, *Correio do Município* and *O Brazil*. Also noteworthy was the appeal for readers to spread the word about the new newspaper with the repeatedly published assertion: «Spread *La Libertà*, the only openly Catholic Italian newspaper in the entire state of Rio Grande do Sul»<sup>22</sup>.

The sections, despite the short duration of the periodical, are not fixed. I've noticed some changes, but I've listed in the table below what I've been able to identify as a certain regularity in the distribution of themes in each of the pages.

Table 2. Structure of the newspaper and its sections

Page	Sections / Content
Page 1	The cover contains an initial text, which serves the function of an editorial. This is followed by various texts dealing with religious themes, as well as news of events related to Catholicism, the Pope and other religious events. In some issues, it publishes letters from bishops or transcribes sermons. In the center, a poem is highlighted.
Page 2	It begins with a passage from the Gospel and then a reflection on it. The layout of this part of the text is in smaller characters. A section entitled Religious Calendar. Religious news – of feasts, commemorations, canonizations, about the Pope. Settlers' section. Correspondence.
Page 3	Most editions have a section in Portuguese. This is followed by news from Italy and then <i>Per il mondo</i> [Around the world], with summaries of some of the world's events. There's also <i>Posta economica</i> [Economic Mail]. At the bottom of the page, chronicles and selections of literary texts – for example: <i>Dalle spine, la rosa</i> [From the thorns, the rose].
Page 4	Commercial section with product price list. Exchange rate – with the Italian lira. Necrology. Advertisements. Wireless telegraph section.

Source: organized by the author.

An analysis of the periodical's issues shows the emphasis on religious news and texts, but also the circulation of news from Italy, Rio Grande do Sul, texts on agriculture, instruction and education, medicine and religious festivals. On the third page, there is a section written in Portuguese.

<sup>21</sup> «Coll'amore alla Religione, intendiamo consolidare nel cuore dei nostri lettori l'amore alla patria d'origine ed a questa di adozione, convinti come siamo che un buon cattolico sarà sempre un'ottimo cittadino». people's weekly newspaper. Caxias, February 13, 1909. Year 1, no. 1, cover.

<sup>22</sup> «Diffondette *La Libertà* unico giornale italiano francamente cattolico in tutto lo stato di Rio Grande del Sud» (*"La Libertà"*, 3/04/1909, p. 2).

Texts related to domestic economy, food preservation and cleaning, agriculture, growing grapes, combating alcoholism and tobacco... Poetry was published in several newspapers. At the end of the third page, literary texts and even some historical summaries.

In order to present the changes and instabilities faced a little better, the following figures show the masthead of five different moments during the period in which *La Libertà* was published. Figure 4 shows the masthead of the newspaper's first issue. In addition to the name, there are the two epigraphs already mentioned and the information that the administrative headquarters were in Piazza Dante, no. 28, i.e. in the Casa Canonica. The printing house, in turn, was in Rua Visconde de Pelotas, no. 12. It also has a short text called 'Avvertenze', meaning 'Warning'. It is possible to see that the content of the first to the last issue of the 'Warning' remained the same, even though it was placed differently on the masthead. It stated that writings contrary to the spirit of the newspaper or personal polemics were not accepted, and that manuscripts, even those that were not published, would not be returned. It also stated that unsealed letters would be rejected and anonymous data would not be considered.

Another interesting point to consider is the cost – which remained the same throughout the period in which *La Libertà* was published: 6\$000 réis per year and 4\$000 per semester for subscribers. As an example, the *Gazeta Colonial*, which also circulated in Caxias in 1909, had a subscription cost of 10\$000 réis per year or 6\$000 réis per semester. The cost of a single issue was 300 réis. Another newspaper produced in Caxias and distributed there was *O Brazil*, which cost 8\$000 per year for subscribers or 5\$000 per semester. *La Libertà* therefore cost less than the others and had the same number of pages.

I found that newspapers were sent to various municipalities in Rio Grande do Sul, exchanged and some issues sent to Italy. Shipments were sent by post. Going through the editions of *La Libertà* that have come to light shows that it continued to publish religious texts, as well as other information about various events in various towns and cities in Rio Grande do Sul, as well as in Italy itself. The network of sociability and the support of countless priests in the production of news, as well as in ensuring circulation and distribution, can also be seen as I leaf through the pages of the different editions. But the common ground of Catholicism that unites them does not prevent the disputes, negotiations and many tensions that marked the production of *La Libertà* from coming to light and which resulted in the transfer of the entire printing house from Caxias to Garibaldi and a new direction, with the printing of *Il Colono Italiano*.

### 3. *La Libertà and cultural mediators*

«Ma che ocorre per essere um bravo giornalista?  
Ocorre una buona preparazione di coltura,  
un gran amore alla verità, uma straordinaria  
facilità di assimilazione e di apprensione  
e uma curiosità tutta speciale»<sup>23</sup>

cultural preparation, a great love of the truth,  
an extraordinary facility for assimilation  
and apprehension and a special curiosity»

With the epigraph above, I shed some light on the narrative about the cultural mediators who made up the texts that appeared in the pages of the newspaper *La Libertà*. Written by Father Carmine Fasulo, other characteristics of a good journalist are listed following the article: the good journalist is a voracious reader of other newspapers and texts, needs a universal curiosity, intuition to see first hand, think and consider what interests the readers, be attentive to what happens, know a bit about everything, as well as write well so that he can be understood by the readers. With these characteristics enunciated for the good journalist by Carmine Fasulo, I set out to think about the mediation action put into play for the making of *La Libertà*.

Even before it began to be published, *La Libertà* made the headlines through mailings and generated mobilization on the part of a network of priests from various municipalities to support the proposal and help both in spreading the word among the faithful and in sending mailings with news and texts. Carmine Fasulo was aware of the importance of a Catholic newspaper and his concern for the press can be seen in his first record in the pages of the first issue of *Il Colono Italiano, Bollettino Cattolico mensile*, dated January 1, 1898. In the description of the meeting of the Caxiense Catholic Federation, one of the speeches made was by Father Carmine Fasulo, who highlighted the importance of the Catholic press and was acclaimed by those present. The periodical *Il Colono Italiano* printed in its pages many of the disagreements and rivalries present on the Italian peninsula, was combative with the anti-clericals and sought to organize – through the Caxiense Catholic Federation and its committees – responses to maintain and spread Catholicism, defending the Pope. And

<sup>23</sup> “La Libertà”, 12/11/1909, Year I, n. 44, cover

<sup>24</sup> Paulo César Possamai, *Church and Italianness: Rio Grande do Sul (1875-1945)*, in Kênia Maria Pozenato, Loraine Slomp Giron, *100 anos de imprensa regional (1897-1997)*, EDUCS, Caxias do Sul-RS 2004, p. 81.

another Catholic periodical would be published in Caxias ten years later, *La Libertà*, on Fasulo's initiative.

It is clear that the religious culture of immigrants and their descendants can be found in many dimensions of daily sociability, and the priest was a catalyst for these processes. I recognize that «Catholicism was [...] the force that cemented the unity of the Italian communities in Rio Grande do Sul»<sup>24</sup>. It was constituted in a «climate of Christianity, where the massive participation of the faithful in the ceremonies of religious life, the frequency of the sacraments and the internalization of a code of Catholic ethics»<sup>25</sup> governed daily life and shaped ways of being and living. The Holy See<sup>26</sup> took a few decades to understand the importance of undertaking pastoral accompaniment of immigrants, however, in the ICR several religious congregations were established at the end of the 19th century, as well as numerous secular priests<sup>27</sup>. Among the initiatives of these religious was the press, which was an important strategy for spreading and maintaining the faith and Catholicism. In a report to Bishop Scalabrini, who was visiting Garibaldi in October 1904, Friar Bruno Gillonay stated that:

We are working to establish a small, simple printing press in the center of the Italian colony, which will periodically bring a page of the Holy Gospel, explained and commented on, an edifying story, some agricultural advice, and a few brochures adapted to the needs of the settlers, to the families in their mother tongue...<sup>28</sup>.

In 1904, when Bishop Scalabrini visited Caxias, the local parish priest was Father Carmine Fasulo, founder of *La Libertà*, and in their contacts, the exchange of ideas and impressions may have strengthened the ideal of promoting confessional schools and the press. It is worth remembering that Carmine contributed to the founding of the Colégio São José in Antônio Prado and the Colégio do Carmo by the Lasallians in Caxias. More

<sup>25</sup> Luís Antônio De Boni, *Immigration Catholicism: from triumph to crisis*, in José H. Dacanal (org.), *RS: Imigração e Colonização*, Mercado Aberto, Porto Alegre 1980, pp. 234-255, p. 242.

<sup>26</sup> See, for example: Matteo Sanfilippo, *Chiesa, ordini religiosi ed emigrazione*, in Piero Bevilacqua, Andreina De Clementi, Emilio Franzina (eds.), *Storia dell'emigrazione italiana. I. Partenze*, Donzelli, Roma 2009, pp. 127-142 e Roberto Sani, *Tra esigenze pastorali e impegno per la preservazione dell'identità nazionale: la Santa Sede e l'emigrazione italiana all'estero tra otto e novecento*, «Revista de História da Educação», 2017, 51, XXI, pp. 143-185.

<sup>27</sup> Between 1875 and 1930, 132 priests from the secular clergy arrived in Rio Grande do Sul.

<sup>28</sup> Bruno Gillonay, *Bruno's report to Bishop Scalabrini of Piacenza*, in Bernardin D'Aprémont, Bruno Gillonay, *Comunidades Indígenas, Brasileiras, Polonesas e Italianas no Rio Grande do Sul*, EST Edições e UCS, Porto Alegre- Caxias do Sul 1976, p. 247.

than preaching masses, celebrating popular missions, religious festivals, saying the rosary, celebrating the sacraments and practicing confession, the newspaper was an important means of 'feeding souls', as already mentioned. For Beneduzi, «the press can be seen as a strong instrument for disseminating Catholicism, its ideas and norms in the immigrant milieu»<sup>29</sup>. And Catholicism also educated and imprinted ways of being and living through the newspapers at ICR. For example, in its first few issues, *La Libertà* devoted the front page to discussing "Education". There were five continuous issues on the subject. It noted that there was a lot of talk about education, but that the results were few, scarce and with many difficulties. And he argued that much was done for instruction, but little for education. Simply instructing was like working on sand, it didn't take shape, it was useless. He urged them to recognize that with so much progress, the formation of the moral man was absent. Education in Christian morality could regenerate people. He recognized that all social classes should have access to education. But without a Christian education, attentive to the formation of souls, it would do no good. These arguments were recurrent in the pages of the newspaper, and in other issues they also exemplified, through short stories and reflections, the understanding of the sacred, moral standards, the condemnation of dances, sexuality, certain clothing, excesses such as drunkenness, and some practices such as benzeduras. They condemned behavior such as cursing, blasphemy – 'bestemmie', everyday imprecations, ways of living that were not in line with what was expected of a good Catholic.

In the first edition, we found a text in Italian and in the Portuguese section with the same content in which the call is made:

To correspondents and agents. The management of *La Libertà* would like to ask its agents and correspondents to inform us of noteworthy events in their respective localities, and to send us articles that may be of interest to readers. The agents are also asked to inform us as soon as possible of the exact number of subscribers, since the first three issues will be sent out with the number of copies calculated to be distributed by each one<sup>30</sup>.

And in this first issue of the newspaper, readers were also urged to support the spread of the newspaper, as it would mean spreading good, mo-

<sup>29</sup> Luis Fernando Beneduzi, *Imigração italiana e Catolicismo. Entrecruzando olhares. Discutindo mitos*, EDIPUCRS, Porto Alegre 2008, p. 114.

<sup>30</sup> "La Libertà", 13/09/1909, Year I, n. 1, p. 1 [italian] and p. 3.

bilizing the words of the Supreme Pontiff Pius IX and reaffirming that he was born to do good and that he was the best of all friends:

To our readers we recommend that you generously welcome our agents and support them in order to achieve the widest possible circulation of *Libertà*, the only sincerely and openly Catholic Italian newspaper in all the dioceses of RS.

To the good we say: if the sad strive to spread a perverse press in order to corrupt society, you good Christians should strive to spread the good press, in the certainty that you will do your brothers and sisters a great deal of good – and you will have merit before God.

By doing your best to spread our newspaper more widely, you share in all the good it will do among the people.

Haven't you ever considered, haven't you ever thought about what and how many benefits a society gains from a newspaper inspired by Christian sentiments?

If you've never considered it, if you've never known about it, listen to the words of the great Pontiff Pius IX: "A good Catholic newspaper is worth more than a sermon". [...] *La Libertà* is not born if not to do good for everyone.

It doesn't move in the spirit of self-interest, much less ambition; we know our smallness, yet we hope that we can be of some benefit. [...] Read, read our newspaper, it is your best friend<sup>31</sup>.

The first edition reached different municipalities in Rio Grande do Sul, but the spread went further, because as can be seen in the April 17, 1909 edition (and in other editions as well), on the cover there were several letters congratulating the publication of the new newspaper, praising its content and its aims. One of the letters was from Massimo Rinaldi, a missionary from São Carlos, who was one of the contributors. But the correspondence received (and published) from other newspapers is noteworthy: *L'Hebdomadario Catholico* from Rio de Janeiro, which *La Libertà* called the «prince of Catholic newspapers» and which was directed by Bishop Felício dos Santos; *Estrela Polar* newspaper from Diamantina, Minas Gerais; *La Squilla*, the Catholic newspaper of the Carlists in São Paulo; *A Federação de Ytu* from São Paulo; *Il Bolletino Ecclesiástico Revista Sacerdotal* from Porto Alegre; *La Beaux Imprensa* from São Paulo, a Catholic newspaper. The transit between newspapers doesn't end with those published in Brazil. The traces in the printed matter show that newspapers from Italy were received, especially Catholic ones such as *Osservatore Romano* and

<sup>31</sup> "La Libertà", 13/02/1909, Year I, n. 1, p. 02.

*Civiltà Catholica*, which were the basis for many of the mediations produced by the editors. The exchange between newspapers is evident, as is the receipt of news by telegram.

In July 1909, the cover of *La Libertà* presented a small balance sheet in which it stated that «our newspaper is currently distributed to 1,300 readers not only in Brazil but also in Italy and 1,200 are actual subscribers, 100 issues are sent to ecclesiastical authorities and the high magistral power of the State» and that «the largest number is for the direction of various newspapers and magazines that exchange with ours»<sup>32</sup>. With regard to the newspapers in which the swaps took place, he continues:

The newspapers that exchange with ours are: *Stella d'Italia*, A Federação de Porto Alegre, the official state newspaper, A Tribuna de Santa Maria da Boca do Monte, O Apostolo do Estado do Piauí, Correio Católico do Estado de Minas Gerais, Federação de São Paulo, A Fé Cristã de Alagoas, Hebdomadario Católico do Rio de Janeiro, La Squilla de São Paulo, A Verdade de São Paulo, a Cruz de São Paulo, A Tribuna Religiosa de Sergipe, Estrela Polar de Minas, O Sol do Ceará, L'Amico de Santa Catarina, Luz d' Aparecida de São Paulo, O Dia de Santa Catarina, O Cruzeiro do Rio de Janeiro, O lidados de Goiás, O Mundo Novo de Taquara N. E., A Verdade de Minas, O Comércio de Cachoeira N. E., A Vida Mineira de Minas, the bulletins Vozes de Petrópolis, Ave Maria de São Paulo, Revista Sacerdotal, Pão de Santo Antônio and others. In addition to these, we have the two local newspapers and La Croce from Naples in Italy, which we exchange, and many other newspapers to which we subscribe for a certain sum and from which we infer all the most important news that may be of interest to our readers<sup>33</sup>.

*La Libertà* printed information in every issue, with agents and correspondents in the smallest centers of the state. The aim was to demonstrate and differentiate the paper, affirming its quality, its ability to articulate news and its well-placed position. It also evoked the relationship with Italy, publishing correspondence and texts produced there and disseminated here. For example, letters from bishops such as Bishop Giacinto Longhin of Treviso, published in another Catholic newspaper and transcribed for *La Libertà*. Likewise, the newspaper acknowledged the contributions of a considerable number of people and listed some of them by name.

<sup>32</sup> "La Libertà", 10/07/1909, Year I, n. 22, p. 1.

<sup>33</sup> "La Libertà", 10/07/1909, Year I, n. 22, p. 1.

We cannot omit or fail to mention the truly admirable activity of our reverend parish priests and other zealous people. Special praise is due to Rev. Carlo Porrini, Rev. Giovanni Costanzo, Rev. Massimo Rinaldi, Rev. Eugenio Medicheschi, Rev. Michele Evangelisti, Rev. Guglielmo Miller, Rev. Giovanni Fronchetti, Rev. Carlos Rech, Rev. Nicolao Knob, the tireless Jesuit priests who help care for the souls of our Italians Rev. Marcellino Antonio, Rev. Luigi Segale, Rev. Francesco Schuster, Rev. Federico Schwerin, Rev. Francisco Burmann, Rev. Giovanni Barbisan, Rev. Stefano Gazzarra, Rev. Enrico Poggi, Rev. Domenico Nostro, Rev. Giovanni Meneguzzi, Rev. Giuseppe Ben, Rev. Raffaeli Giovanni, Rev. Stanislaw Golomboschi, Rev. Angelo Bartelli, Rev. Cordeiro Joao, Rev. Stefano Noce, Rev. Zamboni Giuseppe, Rev. Antonio Cuber, the very zealous Capuchins Rev. Antonio Rymar, Rev. Giuseppe Junges. Not only the priests who dedicate themselves to spreading the newspaper, but also a large number of lay people echo its work. Among these, the most zealous are Luigi Michelin, Colombo Dionisio, Luigi Casanova, Dr. Adolfo Moreau, Luigi Mandelli, Isidoro Bortolo, Amadore Pergentino Rossi, Isaia Fiorini, Innocenzio Tissot, Felice Laner, Struzzer Giuseppe, Francesco Lazzari, Giacinto Ceratto, Da Pieve Aniceto, Proti Giovanni, Cesare Piccinini. These are the main people who give the newspaper and us the most valid support and an effective and stimulating stimulus to continue the triumphant march<sup>34</sup>.

Correspondents were responsible for sending news and/or texts. The agents were responsible for receiving the newspaper packages and distributing them to the localities. But some agents were more active and also sent news and correspondence that was published in different editions. From this perspective, we can think of the multiple circuits covered by the newspaper and how the news from correspondence and other newspapers was adapted by the editor's pen. It is «by excavating the intricacies of the texts, against the intentions of those who produced them, that we can bring out uncontrolled voices»<sup>35</sup> and which made the pages of *La Libertà*.

Since the priests who ran *La Libertà* defined which texts, with what content and where on the page, in other words, they thought up the production of the newspaper and adapted its message to the public they were addressing, I consider them to be cultural mediators. They effectively become cultural mediators through a series of cultural cleavages that make sense in a given society, and these cleavages suggest sets of power relations. It is important to recognize that the priests occupied a prestigious

<sup>34</sup> "La Libertà", 10/07/1909, Year I, n. 22, 7/10/1909, p. 1 and p. 2.

<sup>35</sup> Carlo Ginzburg, *A micro-história e outros ensaios*, Difel, Lisboa 1989, p. 11.

social position in local society. They were able to move around, some had spatial mobility, returning to Italy, circulating around the region and the capital, as well as maintaining contacts and sending letters. They took part in transnational sociability networks. And in producing *La Libertà*, as cultural mediators they played an active role, adapting, simplifying and creatively producing the texts in print.

In the following table, based on the mapping carried out in the editions of *La Libertà*, I present the names that recurred in the pages of the newspaper, in an attempt to identify the main cultural mediators:

Table 3. Survey of some *La Libertà* mediators

Name	Pseudonyms or abbreviations	Occupation	Location <sup>36</sup>	Note
Carmine Fasulo <sup>37</sup>	Niripo	Priest	Santa Teresa de Caxias Parish, then Caravaggio Parish (still in Caxias).	Editor from February to May 1909. He became editor again at the end of November and December 1909. Wrote editorials, some religious texts and short stories. Publishes poetry under the pseudonym Niripo.
Francesco Baldassare <sup>38</sup>	-	Priest	St. Teresa Parish, Caxias	Editor between May and November 1909. He publishes religious texts and directs the general composition of the texts to be inserted in the newspaper.
Antonio Marcellino <sup>39</sup>	A. M.	Priest	Saint Mark's Curate, Caxias	He regularly published religious and moral texts.

<sup>36</sup> The names of the towns have been preserved according to their ownership in 1909/1910.

<sup>37</sup> Father Carmine Fasulo was born on February 11, 1865 in Monte Falcione, in the province of Avelino. He was ordained in Rome on May 22, 1890. He was a Pallottine and then a secular. In Brazil, he was curate in Caxias, in Caravaggio. Later, he was the first parish priest in Antônio Prado. He supported the opening of the Colégio São José in Antônio Prado. There he faced difficulties and strong tensions with the local Freemasonry, resulting in his departure. He was parish priest in Caxias and invited the Lasallians to set up a school, which has continued to this day. He later worked in Caravaggio, Farrouilha, Bento Gonçalves, Triunfo and Gramado. He returned to Italy in 1920. He died in Terni on January 23, 1935, at the age of 69, according to Bishop J. Baréa. According to Rubert, «after 30 years of hard work and memorable struggles, Fr. Carmine Fasulo returned to Italy in September 1920» (Arlindo Rupert, *Clero secular italiano no Rio Grande do Sul (1815-1930). Padres dos imigrantes*, Pallotti, Santa Maria RS 1977, p. 89).

<sup>38</sup> As a biographical note, Father Francesco Baldassare was a native of the Province of Avelino, Italy, born on January 29, 1872. He worked in various municipalities and died in Nova Prata/RS on October 15, 1920. (Dom José Baréa. *A vida espiritual nas colônias italianas do Estado do Rio Grande do Sul*, EST, Porto Alegre 1995, p. 103).

<sup>39</sup> Father Antonio Marcellino was responsible for various editorials and texts in *La Libertà*. He wrote religious texts and between 1909 and 1910 he was parish priest at São Marcos de Caxias. He also published texts in other newspapers and even a poem in the periodical *O Brazil* (capa, em 17/01/1911).

Giovanni Battista Fronchetti <sup>40</sup>	-	Priest	Parish priest of Garibaldi	Austrian consular announcements, news and correspondence. Responsible for producing the last issues of <i>La Libertà</i> in 1910.
Francesco Barcarollo	-	-	Marquis of Herval	Correspondence and local news.
Massimo Rinaldi	-	Carlist priest	Encantado	Letters and news of festivities.
Michele Evangelisti <sup>41</sup>	-	Camaldolese priest	Ana Rech, Caxias	Correspondence, notices and local news.
Dr. Domenico Tattoli	-	Theologian	-	Religious texts.
Antônio Ruzzarin	-	Teacher	Caxias	Religious texts, short stories with moral lessons (envy, jealousy...). He died on September 26, 1909, at the age of 60, according to an obituary published in <i>La Libertà</i> .
Enrico Domenico Poggi	-	Priest	Sananduva from Lagoa Vermelha	Religious news and local events.
Francesco Saverio Acierno	-	Priest	Bento Gonçalves	Religious news and local events.
Giosuè Bardin <sup>42</sup>	-	Priest	Coadjutor, St. Teresa Parish, Caxias.	Does not sign texts. Supports and helps in the selection and organization of newspaper production.

<sup>40</sup> Father Giovanni Battista Fronchetti «was born in Torra, deanery of Taio, Val di Non, diocese of Trent, on September 15, 1863. Thanks to the financial help left to him by a great-uncle of the same name, who was Dean of the Cathedral of Trent, he was able to study at the diocesan seminary and was ordained a priest on December 26, 1887. By provision of July 20, 1888, he held the post of Vicar Cooperator of Volano in the diocese. However, wishing to provide spiritual assistance to emigrants, he asked and obtained permission from his prelate, and left for Rio Grande do Sul in 1889». He became curate in Garibaldi and was appointed Chapter Vicar of São Lourenço de Vilas Boas on January 2, 1890, «a colony made up of some 70 families of emigrants from the provinces of Trento, Cremona, Vicenza, Milan and Bergamo. In September 1896, he was transferred to Garibaldi, where he stayed for thirty years. He died on February 22, 1927» (A. Rupert, *Clero secular italiano no Rio Grande do Sul*, cit., p. 80). He was a consular agent for Austria.

<sup>41</sup> Italian. He came to Brazil at the end of 1899, at the age of 26, with two other priests at the invitation of Bishop Claudio de Ponce Leão of Rio Grande do Sul. Between 1901 and 1902 they were granted the constitution of a canonical house and permission to receive adolescents for education. On July 18, 1902 they received Pope Pius X's blessing for the religious and the new foundation. In 1903 Evangelisti took over as treasurer. In 1906 he was appointed Prior of Nova Camaldoli (the name given to the new headquarters in the interior of Caxias). He lived in Brazil until April 1926 when he left with the last priests of the congregation for Italy. Evangelisti died on 17/05/1965 in the hermitage of Fonte Avellana, Italy.

<sup>42</sup> Biographical note: «Father Giosuè Bardin was born in Santa Justina (Feltre-BL), 1-8-1859; curate of Caxias, 1886; Santa Teresa de Bento Gonçalves, 1888-91; Antônio Prado and Alfredo Chaves, 1892; Capoeiras, 1893-5; Castro Alves, 1896; Santa Teresa, 1898 - 1902; São Luís das Missões and Guarani, 1903; Santa Teresa, 1904-5; Pedras Brancas and Mariana Pi-

Luigi Segale <sup>43</sup>	Demofilo	Priest	Nova Pompéia [Pinto Bandeira], Bento Gonçalves	Religious news and local events. He writes and publishes poetry under the pseudonym Demofilo.
Giuseppe Vigolo	-	-	Monte Bérico, Jansen Line, Bento Gonçalves	Sending correspondence, local news.
Leonel Vargas	Teofilo Alentino Theophilo Alenthino Teofico Teofilo Nasciturus	Lawyer and teacher	Caxias	Head of the Portuguese Section between February and March 1909. Publishes poetry under the pseudonym Nasciturus.
Luigi Casanova	-	Teacher	Santa Teresa, Bento Gonçalves	Correspondence with local news.
Lodovico Maestri	-	Teacher	Barracão, Linha Palmeiro, Bento Gonçalves	Correspondence with local news.
Luigi Michelini	-	-	Antônio Prado	Local news.

Source: organized by the author.

A much larger number of contributors were mentioned in the pages of the various editions. The table above shows some of the most frequent. But the names of Felice Laner (Caxias), Pergentino Rossi, Antonello (Nova Vicenza), Virgilio Biondi, Pietro Breda (Nova Veneto) as agents are also frequent. Among the agents, I found that several were local businessmen with a certain prestige. I also note correspondence from Giuseppe Ben (Canguçu), Alberto Lazzari (São Luiz das Missões), as well as Fathers Carlo Porrini, Enrico Pretti, Roberto Meyer and Theologian Gazzera, who were some of the other priests who collaborated with the distribution of newspapers and some news.

mentel, 1906; Caxias, 1907-10; São Marcos de Cima da Serra, 1911; São Feliciano, 1913; Caxias, 1914; Santa Teresa, 1921; São Domingos de Guaporé, 1925» (D.J. Baréa, *A vida espiritual nas colônias italianas*, cit., p. 85). Father Bardin was the son of Lorenzo Bardin and Paola Cassol. He was born on August 1, 1859 in Santa Giustina, Province of Feltre, Italy, where he began his seminary studies. He emigrated to Brazil with his family and continued his studies at the São Leopoldo school and the Episcopal Seminary. He was ordained by Bishop Sebastião on November 28, 1885. He was a missionary and vicar of several parishes in Rio Grande do Sul and became known as the 'Apostle to the Poles' for his work with Polish communities in different municipalities. He died on August 3, 1944 at the age of 86 (A. Rupert, *Clero secular italiano no Rio Grande do Sul*, cit.).

<sup>43</sup> Biographical note: Fr. Luigi Segale «was born on September 8, 1859 in Monteghirfo, today the diocese of Chiavari, in the Province of Genoa. He did his ecclesiastical studies at the Genoa Seminary and was ordained to the priesthood by Bishop Salvatore Magnabosco in 1883. [...] His desire, however, was to come to Brazil and minister among the immigrants. Having obtained his license, he embarked in 1897, arriving in October» (A. Rupert,

#### 4. Conclusion

«Quale è la missione del giornale?  
Oggi intende che il giornale si stampa  
per erudire le menti, istruire, tessere  
la storia contemporanea  
degnà d'essere tramandata ai posteri»<sup>44</sup>

«What is the newspaper's mission?  
Today it is understood that the newspaper is printed  
to educate minds, to instruct, to weave  
contemporary history  
worthy of being passed on to posterity»

The text written by Father Francisco Baldassare argues about the important contributions of the newspaper, as indicated in the previous epigraph. He mentions the value of the *hebdomadario* in defending the rights of the citizen and making known the duties to religion and the homeland. It is concerned with the tranquillity and happiness of the people, encouraging good reading. But not all the press, in Fr. Baldassare's words, fulfilled their mission and many fostered discord, insults, fights and personal interests. These assertions resonate with the tensions that arose between the Porto Alegre newspaper *Stella d'Italia* and *La Libertà* in 1909.

In the pages of *La Libertà* between late April and early May 1909 we read successive accusations exchanged between the two Italian newspapers<sup>45</sup>. In *Stella d'Italia*, accusations were published against Father Carmine Fasulo. The *Stella d'Italia* correspondent went on the defensive, sending a letter that was published in *La Libertà*, reaffirming his status as an apostolic Roman Catholic, a friend of Father Fasulo and whom he recognized as dedicated, exemplary and faithful to his sacro-ministry. Cristoforo Luzzato, who was the Caravaggio correspondent for *Stella d'Italia*, accused the editor Colnaghi of acting in bad faith and making accusations that made no sense. Both newspapers were published in Italian, but with very different editorial lines and defenses of interests.

*Clero secular italiano no Rio Grande do Sul*, cit., p. 93). He was curate of Nova Pompéia (Pinto Bandeira/RS) between 1897 and 1915. He spent some time in Farroupilha and then in Muçum, where he died on February 14, 1936.

<sup>44</sup> "La Libertà", 5/01/1909, Year 1, n. 12, cover.

<sup>45</sup> The disputes over ideas and proposals published in the two Italian newspapers and the oppositions created deserve a specific analysis that will not be possible in the length of these pages.

I believe that by closing this chapter, several «opaque zones emerge [which] are some of the traces that a text (any text) leaves behind»<sup>46</sup>. The internal disputes and tensions over the production of *La Libertà*, the disagreements with *Stella d'Italia*, a more accurate and detailed look at the various topics covered in the editions of *La Libertà*, the authors and their pseudonyms correlated with their writings. In addition, we could deepen our analysis of the relationship with the bishopric of Porto Alegre and the transition of the printing house and the newspaper itself to Garibaldi. These are some of the research possibilities that remain.

The priests, as editors and producers of content for the press, sought to organize practical life, intervene in the way of existing, instruct and educate, directing the faithful through this means. The press, thought of as a strategy, as a vehicle for spreading ideas, was central, because in the case of *La Libertà* it was aligned with the Pope's official directives and the Church's social doctrine.

The desire to form a cohesive community, which shared national values, perceived itself and felt Italian, valuing and exalting feelings for the "Motherland" on the one hand, and on the other tried to produce a collective imaginary of Catholic identity. Maintaining the language and the perception of common belonging were considered important for maintaining Catholicism. The narrative made it possible to see the connections between Catholic newspapers in other Brazilian states and the exchanges with *La Libertà*, the circulation of correspondence and telegrams, the transit of Catholic newspapers from Italy, the contributions of an extensive network of priests, but also teachers and some merchants, either as correspondents or agents. The various cultural exchanges, the composition of production and some of its conditions. Traces of initiatives to broaden the market of buyers and encourage Catholics to limit their reading to what the priests recommended.

Between conflicts, consensuses and negotiations, the actions of the cultural mediators mobilized by the newspaper during its short life allow us to understand the nuances of the production and circulation of *La Libertà*, the interdictions fixed in its pages, the transnational dialogue with other Catholic newspapers and the flows of its distribution.

Finally, as Ginzburg says, «historians [...] have as their job something that is part of everyone's life: to unravel the interweaving of true, false and fictitious that is the fabric of our being in the world»<sup>47</sup>. The pages of

<sup>46</sup> Carlo Ginzburg, *The thread and the traces. True, false, fictitious*, Companhia das Letras, São Paulo 2007, p. 12.

<sup>47</sup> *Ivi*, p. 14.

*La Libertà* plot the lives of those who participated in it as mediating intellectuals producing texts and news, but they gain meaning when we think of their readers and critics. Unraveling this story has been part of the craft presented here.

