


THE INTELLECTUAL AND POLITICAL PROTAGONISM OF ANTONIETA DE BARROS

 <https://doi.org/10.56238/sevened2024.021-008>

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ABSTRACT

This article, whose research is of a bibliographic nature, aims to present the contributions of the professor, director and deputy Antonieta de Barros in the formation of Santa Catarina society, from the perspective of the universalization of the right to education and, through the conquest of this right, access to the set of political rights of the population, analyzed based on the reflections of historians such as Michel de Certeau (2020) and Sidney Chalhoub (2010). In a context of frank consolidation of racist, classist and sexist structures, Antonieta was formed and affirmed herself as a great intellectual; columnist, director and contributor to periodicals; competent teacher and school principal; in addition to being respected by parliament, and reformulated relevant elements of the educational legislation of this state such as the change in the contents of women's professional schools, including the contents of instruction; the creation and regulation of the positions of School Group Director and School Inspector, and also that access to these positions occurred through competitive examinations; the creation of Teacher's Day, as a school holiday; in addition to fighting for the universalization of education and secondary education. Among the main conclusions, it argues that their protagonism and example contributed to the affirmation of the right to education, intellectual production and political participation of subalternized groups; in that context, women, the black population and the poor population, in Santa Catarina and in Brazil.

Keywords: Antonieta de Barros. History of Education. Education of Black People. Democratization of Education.

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INTRODUCTION

Antonieta de Barros, the first black state deputy in Brazil and the first woman deputy in the Santa Catarina state parliament, was born on June 11, 1901 in Florianópolis, Santa Catarina and stood out as one of the greatest militants, intellectually and politically, for the universalization of public and quality education in the context of post-abolition in the South of Brazil, a context strongly marked by classist, sexist and racist structures that were strengthened. Even though she did not declare herself a feminist or anti-racist, her work, achievements and actions in education were and are emblematic in the affirmation of political, civil and human rights, especially of women, the black population and the working and impoverished classes, especially transforming the bases and functioning of education in this state.

This text, consisting of bibliographic research, aims to present the contributions of the teacher, director and deputy Antonieta de Barros in the formation of Santa Catarina society, in the perspective of the universalization of the right to education and, through the conquest of this right, access to the set of political rights of the population. It analyzes the protagonism of this emblematic intellectual based on elements of the socio-historical context configured by the first decades of the twentieth century in the state of Santa Catarina, which tried to consolidate itself materially and discursively as a state of European culture, white and conservative population.

By bringing written texts of the time, we chose to keep the original writing, as we consider it a loyal and respectful conduct. We also highlight that many of the struggles waged by Antonieta at the beginning of the twentieth century are not yet fully assured as achievements, such as free, compulsory, public and universal education and the recognition of the right and capacity for intellectual formation, as well as participation in decision-making processes for all in our society.

Antonieta de Barros



Source: ALESC's political memory

FORMATION AS STRUGGLE

As was common to the black population, in the first decades of the twentieth century, Antonieta began her education at home, and later, at the private school of Professor Maria Meira Lima. She entered public school at the age of nine, officially enrolled in the fourth year of primary school, where she studied until she completed high school, attended the first year of Complementary Education and then prepared for the entrance exam of the Normal School of Santa Catarina where she remained until she entered the Normal School and graduated in Teaching.

It is important to highlight the family's efforts and sacrifices to carry out their education. Her mother, Catharina Waltrich³, was a freed slave, a maid and when she moved from Porto União to Florianópolis (both cities in Santa Catarina), she became a washerwoman. His father was Rodolfo de Barros; gardener, musician and foreman of the extinct Banda Recreio Josephense (Band known as Farrapos), as well as an agent of the Post Office and in 1904, Commander in the Security Corps of the Public Force (Romão, 2021, pp. 53, 54).

In the first decades of the twentieth century in Florianópolis, marked by hygienist action, Arcipreste Paiva Street, where Antonieta lived with her family, suffered "the demolition of the "tenements" from 1903 onwards, culminating in the expulsion of the poorest and blackest population from the central area of the city" (Romão, 2021, p. 45, 48). The processes of social hierarchies and the consolidations of subjectivations in this perspective were frank and aggressive. Since the previous century (XIX), the state of Santa

³ Catharina used the surname Waltrich, from the family she worked for, and began to adopt Barros, after her union with Rodolpho de Barros, her partner and Antonieta's father.



Catharina has instituted policies of invisibility and whitening in order to serve as an example for the rest of the nation. In this sense, in addition to all the material and symbolic obstacles to the affirmation and achievement of rights for the black population, there were also discursive productions, which to this day need to be faced, affirming that it is a state of white population, whose contributions to social and historical construction are due to the European population (Gaya and Laffin 2023, Leite, 1991).

Catharina survived and supported her family at that time by working as a cook, maid and laundress. Like the other washerwomen, poor black and white women, she used the public spaces of springs in the lower part of the city. In 1914, Deputy Fulvio Aducci launched a Bill that proposed an increase in registration and enrollment fees to attend the Normal School and the Complementary Schools, under the allegation of preventing the daughters of washerwomen from becoming teachers of the children of the elites. The Bill was approved and became Law number 1,024 of December 1914. According to the *Jornal Oriente* of November 1 of that year, in an article entitled "For Instruction":

The aforementioned project, today Law No. 1,024, harms the interests of the middle or poor classes, making it impossible for them to acquire the elements of secondary or complementary education, because the rates referred to are in disharmony with the scholarship of these same classes. Law 1.024 of the current law is one of those that cannot deserve public sympathies, because it directly hurts the disadvantaged classes, the only ones who will suffer the consequences of the aforementioned law. [...]

We recognize that your Excellency. The Governor of the State, upright, enlightened and progressive spirit, needs a lot of money to carry out his "desideratum", but what we do not recognize is the usefulness of raising these rates for an increase in income, which, because it is so small, will not influence the budget balance, to make it impossible for only a large part of our population to enroll their children in the aforementioned schools. how to hinder many of the normalist acts from continuing their studies because they do not have the required amounts.

Education, we think, should be accessible to all classes and, as my colleague rightly said, "... The people need education and the future of our country depends on it." [...] The State has done nothing for secondary education, so that the classes we defend can share the same instruction. And the poor, because they are poor, should not be content only with what they learned in primary schools; he has aspirations, like all other classes, to complete his preliminary knowledge, so that he can become useful to the Homeland and the Family.

In our State, it can be said, the disadvantaged classes do not have the right to acquire the knowledge of secondary education, in view of the present *Gymnasio de Santa Catharina*, which the State subsidizes with the not small sum of fifteen contos annuaes, so that only half a dozen poor children can drink there the lights of secondary education. to the detriment of the majority of our population, who, because they are well-off or poor, cannot give their children that instruction, because the registration and tuition fees charged there are not within their reach.

On the other hand, we have never asked Your Excellency. Dr. Governor to order the provision of clothes and shoes to poor children so that they could attend schools, unless this is determined by the public authorities. We ask Your Excellency. yes, so that he could make the complete complementary and secondary education, accessible to all classes, so that we do not have the displeasure of seeing, in the future, lucid intelligences that many services could provide to the State or even to the country, revealing on the road of vice and crime, simply because protective hands did not welcome them. (*Jornal Oriente*, 1914, p. 2).



The response to Law 1.024 of December 1914 presented in the newspaper Oriente provided significant information about the discriminatory distribution of resources for education in Santa Catarina and its implications for the reproduction of social inequalities, as well as about the price of these constructions of inequalities individually and socially. The text criticized the prohibition of education and, especially, access to Secondary Education, which should be the right of people of all socioeconomic classes, and the approval of visibly classist legislation.

A little more than a year later, on August 15, 1915, the Jornal Oriente commented on the aforementioned legislation and its consequences, informing that due to the increase in fees, enrollments fell from 35 to 20. Responding to an article entitled "The Washerwomen", he criticized the speech, made in defense of Law 1.024 of December 1914, in which "an unidentified congressman" stated: "I understand that the fees created for enrollment and exams at the Normal School should be high, because I do not want to see the daughters of a washerwoman, for example, as teachers of my daughters" (Oriente, 1915, p. 1). The text continued, arguing:

Do the honest daughters of honest washerwomen be inferior to others, no matter what class they belong to!

The washerwoman, who suffers sun and rain, who works honorably all day long, in order to have a daughter educated and guarantee her a dignified future with the greatest sacrifices, certainly does not deserve the contempt of those words, but the respect and consideration of all who know how to think.

[...] Let us, therefore, allow the poor, the daughters of washerwomen, to educate, educate themselves and conquer with their honorable work a shield for their future life.

The daughter of a washerwoman is as good and should be as respected as the daughter of any rich man. (Oriente, 2015, p. 1).

Jornal Oriente was a Masonic periodical, positioned at the time under the liberal banner, opposing the conservative wing installed in power. He advocated for the education of the popular classes, who saw in education the possibility of guaranteeing a "dignified future". Teaching training was one of the very few possibilities for social mobility, secondary schooling and (relative) participation in decision-making processes for women, and even more so for poor and black women.

The perspective assumed by the liberal wing was still welfare, as it was strengthened in the following decades. However, he acted in defense of groups that had been fighting for many decades to educate themselves and their companions, thus ensuring access and participation in the set of political and civil rights that were only possible through the appropriation of school knowledge.



INTELLECTUAL, PROFESSIONAL AND POLITICAL AFFIRMATION

In addition to the fees, which became higher in 1915, another important filter for access to the Normal Schools was the difficulty of passing the exams. In 1918, Antonieta was approved and entered the course. His sister, Leonor de Barros, joined the following year. During the course, Antonieta directed the production of the "Buliçosa" magazine, a magazine of news of the students of that institution. She was also "co-founder and president of the first board of directors of the Civic Center of the Normalists, becoming the first black student to direct a student entity in Santa Catarina," and valedictorian of the class at the conclusion of the course in 1921 (Romão, 2021, p. 93).

Upon graduating, in 1922, she offered courses at home to prepare for the entrance exams at the Normal School and founded with her sister Leonor, the "Antonieta de Barros Primary Course". The opening of schools, extremely necessary due to the scarcity of public supply, was allowed by the State, as long as it complied with a set of legal and bureaucratic requirements, including a certificate of moral suitability of the principal, a certificate of health and hygiene, a teaching program, reports and installation in a building with the necessary hygiene conditions with free access by the education authorities and respecting the official calendar (Romão, 2021, p. 91).

The Antonieta de Barros Primary Course offered vacancies to girls and boys and trained in the four years of elementary school. It was attended by children from the wealthiest families and also by children from the working classes who attended it through scholarships. The former governor of Santa Catarina Luiz Henrique da Silveira, a former student of the school, wrote years later, in 2009, "for a newspaper in the city of Brusque, with the title "Antonieta de Barros", that classes took place from Monday to Saturday (Romão, 2021):

[on Saturdays] literature and civics classes, when we sang the anthems of the State, Brazil and the Flag. And we learned to be citizens. It was the Primary School Professor Antonieta de Barros, directed by herself, whose teacher was her sister, Dna Leonor (or Dona Nonô as we affectionately called her). Two black women taught at that time (!), to children from the most traditional families in Florianópolis. Everything I learned later, I owe to them. So much so that on the day I passed the Law entrance exam, I went to the Fernando Machado School to give the news. Mrs. Nonô, who had that sweet and gray-haired body of a Mama Dolores, excessive in affection and tenderness, hugged me and cried her joy. (Romão, 2021, p. 97).

The Antonieta Primary School with the sisters Antonieta and Leonor de Barros



Fonte: site: ondeestadesterro.com.br/a_politica.html

In the same decade of the 1920s, newly graduated, the teacher and school principal actively participated in cultural and educational actions; together with black intellectuals such as Ildefonso Juvenal and Trajano Margarida, she taught in the evening Adult Literacy Course at the José Boiteux Civic Center, participated in the Catharinense Center of Letters, founded in 1925, at the facilities of the Beneficent and Recreational Workers' Union – UBRO, a representative cultural and intellectual space that included women and blacks, since the Catharinense Academy of Letters did not welcome these intellectuals.

The Centro Catharinense de Letras was a literary institution in which poets, politicians, journalists and teachers participated, such as Isaura Vieira de Faria, Jovita Lisboa, Maura de Senna Pereira and Beatriz de Sousa Brito and journalists such as Anfilóquio Nunes Pires, Araújo Figueiredo and Oscar Ramos. It was founded in the capital in response to the interdiction attitudes of the Catharinense Academy of Letters, which had restrictions on the fact that the poor and blacks attended it (Espindola, 2015, p. 58). The racism made explicit in the refusal to accept these members can be illustrated in the literary review by Altino Flores, director of the Catharinense Academy of Letters, entitled "In the shadow of Cruz e Sousa", published in the magazine Terra, when referring to Cruz e Sousa and Ildefonso Juvenal (Reibnitz, 2016, p. 106, 107):

Cruz e Sousa was a good and a bad for Santa Catarina letters: it was a good because, giving us admirable verses, he made the name of our State well known among the others; it was a bad thing because, because he was black, he awakened



in all the blacks of Santa Catarina, who follow the literary evolution of Brazil through the text of the Almanacs, the desire of poets. Ildefonso, for example, is one of these (...). Ildefonso is dull, illiterate, vain, although he covers himself with the varnish of modesty, he has not the slightest feeling of what poetic rhythm is and ignores all the conditions of artistic prose. Unaware of the technique of verse and the syntactic laws that condition the structural integrity of the period in Portuguese prose, he has not been able, therefore, to this day, to do anything worthwhile. And it will never be able to. (Terra, 1920, p. 9).

Antonieta maintained the zeal for her career in teaching, intense intellectual production and political activism throughout her life, with class, race and gender consciousness, she remained attentive to every detail of the challenges of the material and professional life of the working classes, and more especially of her work in teaching. In 1935, already elected deputy, she recalled this period of struggles and commitments to the values of dignified survival for the class of workers in education, when she began to fight for public exams as a way of access to teaching, in addition to working and career conditions that would ensure stability for such professionals. Its initial trajectory is described by the author herself in the newspaper "República" of 1935:

In my life as a young girl, I have always been excited by a dream: to work to be able to rest my holy mother, who formed my spirit and strengthened it, by the example of a courageous combatant, within the struggle, for the conquest of daily bread, and the instruction of her children, the greatest concern of her great soul, who, less than a year ago, rests in God. (...)

Graduated in 1921, I began my life in private teaching. I am not saying that I was not seduced, in the beginning, by public teaching. But, in the times when there was the "discretionary power of the gunman", how would I, without the intermediary of the "wedge", achieve a teacher's chair? It was necessary to face life, and I did it, with great happiness, believe me. I founded a course and started giving private lessons. And it was here, in this work of mine, that, after the popular conquests of 1930, they came to seek me, to collaborate in the Public Magisterium, as a substitute lecturer in Portuguese and literature at the Secondary Normal School, and a teacher at the Primary Normal School of the Institute of Education of the Capital. (República, 1935, p.1).

With attention to her own history and the political complexities of her time, Antonieta commented on the urgent need to work at the beginning of her career, to give her mother better living conditions, a situation read in the political panorama in which the indications for the exercise of teaching depended on the "discretionary power of the gunman". This power that foisted various forms of violence on women, from the denial of the right to work to sexual harassment to conquer it and which underwent changes through the "popular achievements" of the 1934 Constitution, as well as labor rights and the right to vote for women made possible by Decree-Law No. 21,076 of February 1932.

Her political journey began suddenly and when she was still very young, making her victorious in two legislatures, the 1st between 1935 and 1937 and the 2nd between 1947-



1951: In 1933, some women from Santa Catarina requested the right to suffrage, in a climate of tensions, negotiations and exposures on the part of the applicants, some were denied this right.

Antonieta, one of the first to apply in the state, was granted her right to vote. The Santa Catarina Liberal Party (PLC) offered a vacancy to the female candidacy. Nominated, Antonieta accepted. Despite not having "economic and ethnic ancestry that would give her prestige in a society with such distances defined by the hierarchy of class and race", Antonieta had: a) a history of political militancy; b) suitability for their professional and social performance; c) renown and skills in written productions; c) political-party affiliation, d) proximity to the leaders of the PLC; and, finally, e) the fact that she was the only woman nominated who "demonstrated that she was ready for the challenge" (Gaya, 2022, p. 166).

As a deputy, she worked on the construction of the State Constitution of Santa Catarina in 1935; and in the construction of the Education, Culture chapters, as president of the Commission. He participated in the drafting of the Civil Service Statute. In his first known speech, reported by the Jornal República on June 23, 1935, he expressed himself in defense of education:

There is, Mr. President, in the life of civilized peoples, a right that runs parallel to the right and duty of work – it is the right to education. And this right, which belongs to all, has been, among us, until our days, unfortunately, in general, the privilege of some, of those to whom fortune smiles, of those who have monetary happiness. (República, 1935, p. 1).

He always defended education, in addition to literacy, as "a right for all!" and criticized the fact that among the people of Santa Catarina, although education was limited to primary education, such a condition was insufficient. "It's not enough anymore! Everything evolves and primary education alone no longer satisfies popular aspirations". Thus, the state should open secondary education "to all who desire it" (República, 1935, p. 1). A month later, in an interview with the newspaper "A Gazeta", Antonieta commented:

A few days ago, speaking in the Assembly, I stressed the need for Secondary Courses accessible to all. It is because I consider education as a right and not something to beg for, when within us, the desire to ascend is stronger than anything. Although I heard opinions contrary to the visibility of the idea, the committee approved this part of my work. I was satisfied (A Gazeta, 1935, p. 1).

Still in 1932, in relation to Decree Number 21.417 A - of May 17, 1932, which established equal pay for men and women, Antonieta wrote in her column "Farrapo de Ideias" for the newspaper A República (1932):

The newspapers give us the new good news that the government has just signed the decree regulating women's work. Anyway, it was about time.



It was necessary for idealistic Brazil to rise up in a movement of cataclysm, so that the individual woman would have, in law, the guarantee of her effort. We do not want to know whether this measure is part of the communist programmes, as the cables tell us. For us, it is within the sanest and noblest principle of equity. If the work is the same, why depreciate the female effort, or exploit it, paying less? (República, 1932, p. 1)

Decree Number 21,417 also ensured other rights, such as maternity leave; breastfeeding conditions; and protective measures for the physical integrity of working women (Brasil, 1932). However, it still needed (perhaps still needs) to be consolidated on the ideological level, in order to be implemented. Defending legislation accused of being "part of communist programs" possibly needed a more accurate explanation within conservative groups such as Catholics (to which Antonieta belonged), refractory to innovations and, above all, to the dissemination of practices and ideas potentially originating from the programs of communist governments.

In the first phase of the Soviet Revolution, in the 1920s, a series of women's rights were ensured, including the right to divorce, remuneration for domestic work, the encouragement of female instruction and education, and the offer of dignified and properly paid jobs, in capitalist countries and, especially in Brazil, some legislation was enacted in the 1930s in response to social demands. of the working classes (Goldman, 2014).

In addition to the Private School in which she worked with her sister Leonor, in 1933, Antonieta was appointed teacher at the Complementary School, becoming in the same year full professor of Portuguese and Literature at the same institution, a position from which she left for the electoral campaign of the following year when in 1934 she was elected state deputy.

She returned to teaching at the end of her term in 1937, being hired to teach Portuguese, Literature and Psychology at Colégio Coração de Jesus and appointed teacher of Portuguese and Literature at the State Institute of Education, both of which stand out among the largest schools in the state. In 1938, he participated in the National Education Crusade (CNE) in Santa Catarina. She was a class paranymp on several occasions: 1939, 1943 and 1945 at Colégio Coração de Jesus and 1939, 1947, 1949 and 1950 at the Institute of Education (Romão, 2021, p. 115). In 1945, the students of the State Institute of Education founded the Grêmio Professora Antonieta de Barros and, with it, the newspaper "O idealist". (Romão, 2021, p. 119).

In education, in addition to the Private School, she taught the subjects of Portuguese and Psychology at the Colégio Coração de Jesus between 1936 and 1945 and was Director of the Dias Velho Institute of Education between 1937 and 1945. He published



intensely between 1927 and 1951 for the main newspapers of the State, starting with the "Folha Acadêmica", followed by: "A Semana", "A Pátria", "Correio do Estado", "O Idealista", "A República" and "O Estado", in addition to the publication of the book 'Farrapos de ideias', in 1937, a work that had the profits from sales destined to the construction of the Preventório that was intended to house the children of lepers in the Santa Tereza Colony" (Silva, 1991).

He defended the "Bill" that institutes Teacher's Day and makes it a school holiday; the creation and regulation of the positions of School Group Director and School Inspector; and even that access to these positions occurred through competitions, which took into account merit, title and experience, in addition to grades in the pedagogical and administrative knowledge tests.

He also proposed a legislative indication for the change of contents offered at the Women's Professional School, created in Florianópolis in 1935, which, despite accepting students who did not have primary education or complete literacy, did not teach the contents of primary education, focusing only on the teaching of professional practices. The proposed nomination was published by the newspaper "O Estado" on August 31, 1948 in an article entitled: "Important nomination of Prof. Antonieta de Barros - PSD - in the Legislative Assembly", in which the deputy justified:

[...] The indication that I have the honor to justify and present. In this capital, we have a Women's Professional School whose services are invaluable, within the very limited, narrow radius of action that has been traced to it.

In a school of female professions, in our view, domestic education courses are indispensable to train housewives; secretary; painting; and, also, of general culture, for those who do not hold diplomas. No technical and professional education will be complete and will bear the fruits that are hoped for, and could give, if it is not supported, by a cultural basis capable of facilitating that knowledge. Thus, the general culture course will serve to enhance the value of the profession. We feel, Mr. President, the need to raise the feminine cultural level. There is in our way of thinking, the certainty of the high role that Women, as educators, by nature, play in the life of collectivities. The more cultured they are, the more we will have to expect from the generations they educated.

All humanity is the work of the heart of the Woman. It does not matter, Mr. President, that foolish prides try to deny this unmistakable truth, denying the influence and responsibility of Mothers in the psychic formation of each one of us. We feel, Mr. President, the need for a better society, where the ideals of solidarity and understanding among men are not empty and meaningless words, but tangible realities.

And the key to this great problem lies in the education of man. And because it is Woman who is the educator, we must expand its cultural possibilities so that, consciously, and with ever greater efficiency, its great social work may be carried out. On the other hand, Mr. President, we understand that it is the duty of each creature to have his profession. Work is the best and most honorable of moral supports. Therefore, we extend the possibilities of the School, suggesting courses that aim to enable Women to conquer their daily bread when the circumstances of life require it. And all this, Mr. President, without forgetting that "man does not live by bread alone".



These are the reasons that led us to formulate the suggestion to the Government, the content of which I will read before sending it to the Bureau for the proper purposes. (O Estado, 1948, p. 3).

In this emblematic speech, she centered on the "high role that women, as educators, by nature, play in the life of collectivities" and defended the importance of public investments to ensure the fundamental processes of primary socialization, including the expansion of "cultural possibilities" "consciously, and on whose efficiency" the realization of the "great social work" performed by women, who, educators, significantly influence the course of "the generations they educated".

It also defended the quality of the professionalization of the students of the Women's Professional School mobilized "within the very limited, narrow radius of action that was traced to it", proposing as a reformulation of contents in its Indication:

Art. 1 - The purpose of the Women's Professional School is the training of craftsmen, through the acquisition of technical-professional knowledge, based on a propaedeutic culture capable of enabling the exact social understanding of the professions.

Art. 2 - There will be in the Women's Professional School, with a duration of two years, the following courses:

I TECHNICAL-PROFESSIONAL, with the sections of:

- a) Cutting and clothing;
- b) Embroidery and lace;
- c) Flowers;
- d) Hats and applied gear;
- e) Secretary (stenography, typing and business correspondence);
- f) Painting;
- g) Domestic education {culinary art and domestic arts}.

II - GENERAL CULTURE, with the following chairs:

- a) Portuguese;
- b) Arithmetic;
- c) History of Brazil;
- d) Geography of Brazil and the State;
- e) Design;
- f) Notions of Sciences.

III - SPECIALIZED CULTURE, with the chairs of

- a) Hygiene;
- (b) Childcare;
- c) Economics and Domestic Accounting;
- d) Social Education.

Art. 3 - The GENERAL CULTURE course will be mandatory for students who have only completed primary school.

Art. 4 - The DOMESTIC EDUCATION course, as well as the SPECIALIZED CULTURE course will be mandatory for all students and will aim at the training of housewives.

Art. 5 - The culinary arts shall comprise the making of savory and sweet foods and dietary food for early childhood and adults.

Article 6 - The domestic arts comprise sewing, ironing, home arrangement, horticulture, breeding and gardening.

Art. 7 - The technical and practical courses will be developed concomitantly with the culture courses.

Article 8 - The number of classes of each subject and sections and their arrangement by days of the week shall be included in the respective regulation.

Article 9 – Provisions to the contrary are hereby revoked". (O Estado, 1948, p.3).



Its legislative indication, number 66, was accepted and became Law No. 235 of December 10, 1948, bringing significant transformations to the education of students and their families, especially the generations influenced by them.

In 1951, already hospitalized, with health problems, Antonieta expressed her protest against the act of Governor Irineu Bornhausen to annul the Competition for Admission and Removal to Teaching, writing in the newspaper "O Estado" on March 13, 1951:

In our wonderful times of Peace and Harmony preached and concretized, I read, in one of the pages of the earth, the news of the cancellation of the Competition for Admission and Removal to the Teaching Profession. Inside me, a fog of sadness and sorrow grew, grew and thickened, until it completely dominated my entire inner world. It was the sympathy due to the teacher who has not yet died in me, to the colleagues, whose path a government decree closed. We do not discuss the right or wrong of the measure. Of the legality or illegality of the act can only speak the JUSTICE, which perhaps, because it has its eyes closed, knows human rights better.

I do not dispute the fact, for the crudeness. What terrified and saddened me were the psychic consequences of this brutal blow of Fate in the inexperienced soul of the young teachers; He thought of the bitter moments of discouragement, the aridity of disenchantment, because a handful of young men had just passed by, when they were trying to fulfill a beautiful dream, cherished, affectionately, for seven long years. (O Estado, 1951, p. 01.).

The sensitive evaluation expressed bitterness and indignation about the "closed paths" to young teachers due to a "government decree" that would bring "bitter moments of discouragement", "aridity of disenchantment" to workers, who, because they had no political indication, could be left without work; despite training, willingness and need to work. Political actions were read from a human perspective.

However, standing in defense of the criticized governor, "the doctor, journalist, historian and at the time state deputy, Oswaldo Rodrigues Cabral, accused the teacher, in the plenary of the Legislative Assembly, of, through the newspapers, "making cheap intrigue from slave quarters"" (O Estado, May 6, 1951), to which Antonieta replied:

Cheap senzala intrigue

(words of Deputy Oswaldo R. Cabral, commenting on our editorial last Sunday, in the Legislative Assembly)

[...] We do not know, in the intrigue, the speech with which the irritated and noble deputy of the position punished us for the incredible audacity of finding unfair the concepts with which the Government points the Magisterium to the State and the country.

[...] And, thinking far away, we asked our friends: But where was this? In Hitler's Germany, or in the United States?

Disagreeing with our considerations is the right of everyone and, especially, of those who militate in the situation, although there are certain facts, whose crystallinity and transparency impose silence, to prevent them from being more focused. This is the case of the desolate situation of public education, which the Message deals with. Why does the Deputy come down to pick up our tattered ideas? What was our crime? That of having said in the press what is said in a small mouth? Were we, by any chance, the ones who created that shocking statement that the situation of public education is bleak? No.



[...] Where does the intrigue go? It didn't exist. This type of behavior is not in our style. We are loyal. Loyal and grateful. We always have been. And it is one of the characteristics of blacks.
We made the Magisterium our path, and we always acted respecting the teacher who has not died in us, yet, thank God. How, then, can we descend into intrigue?
[...] We understand that the delicate sensitivity of the noble Deputy has not suffered in the face of that sentence. His Excellency, for the happiness of all those who are Aryans – despite holding a Diploma of Journalism – does not militate in public education. We say happiness because, to his Excellency, he lacks one of the qualities of a teacher: not distinguishing races, castes, or classes (O Estado, May 6, 1951).

With assertiveness and elegance, Antonieta frankly defined her class position and her banners of struggle. She positioned herself as black, affirming loyalty and gratitude as characteristics of black people; and as a teacher, stating that she "does not distinguish races, or classes, unlike the Aryans, or spokespersons for "Hitler's Germany, or the United States"; it positioned itself as a people by expressing itself as a subject of rights among those who comment "in small mouths" and dare to "find unfair the concepts with which the Government points the Magisterium to the State and the country"; Finally, he signed as a militant of public education.

CONCLUSIONS

The position of Antonieta de Barros as a protagonist in the magisterium, in parliament and in the main instruments of the press of Santa Catarina in the first half of the twentieth century was emblematic, in the struggle for representativeness and rights of hierarchical social groups in this context. He defended with objectivity and class consciousness the universalization of education and the political and intellectual participation, especially of those who did not have them; the poor, the blacks, the women.

While the racist, classist and sexist structure in the state was consolidated, agents like Antonieta articulated education, schooling and intellectual expression with the intention of circumventing institutional barriers and situating women and men, poor and blacks as producers (not just consumers) of ideologies, of viable novelties and of radical transformations in society. Certeau (2020, p. 204), defines writing as a "concrete activity that consists, on a space of its own, the page, in constructing a text that has power over the exteriority from which it was previously isolated". "This practice, in the process of Eurocentric expansion, was a powerful instrument of modernity to erase the histories, epistemologies, and worldviews of colonized peoples, treated as a blank page" (Gaya, 2022, p. 143).

Fluency in writing and oratory was also an instrument of class division in Brazil and in Santa Catarina. Aware of this condition, the elites not only interdicted, prohibited and



stopped offering vacancies to subalternized groups, but also defined this social division to the maximum by prohibiting the votes of the illiterate population, through Decree No. 3,029, of January 9, 1881, known as the Saraiva Law. This legislation, approved on the eve of the abolition of slavery, managed to deprive the black population of political rights, which had been waiting for decades for the right to education and, from the abolition of the right to citizenship (Chalhoub, 2010, p. 42). The struggle for quality, universal, public and compulsory education was a struggle for survival, for rights, for citizenship and for dignity. This was an expensive and constant struggle embraced by Antonieta de Barros and transformed the history of education in Santa Catarina.

Finally, it is worth considering that some of the principles defended by Antonieta and that were her banners of struggle, although currently contained in the Federal Constitution of 1988 regarding the provision of formal education, are still threatened, as is the case of the mandatory provision of free, public, secular basic education with the objective of training in the ontological perspective, citizen and participation for work. The universalization of Brazilian basic education, promoted in the 1990s by international organizations such as the World Bank and UNESCO, occurred concomitantly with the intensification of neoliberal policies that made the conditions of public basic school provision precarious. Since then, intellectual training and citizenship as functions of the school have been undervalued and attacked, with training for work being in a perspective of adaptation to the needs of the market, unlike omnilateral training, initially designed for legislation.



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