



## **The Samuel Graham Institute junior high school: rites of passage<sup>1</sup>**

O curso secundário ginásial do Instituto Samuel  
Graham: ritos de passagem

El curso secundario ginásial del Instituto Samuel  
Graham: ritos de paso

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### **Abstract**

This paper aims to study the aspects that may help us to discover the scholastic practices experienced at the Instituto Samuel Graham, an institution founded in 1942, in the city of Jataí, Goiás, Brazil. Our main goal is to analyse how the junior course was implemented, explaining the general organization of the subjects that participated in this segment of education; the curriculum; the entrance exams and the evaluation. Thus, we opted for the qualitative research, of documental approach, anchored in the analysis of sources that delineated the historical research.

**Keywords:** Secondary Education. Jataí. Goiás.

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## Resumo

Essa comunicação tem como meta abordar aspectos que possam ajudar a descortinar as práticas escolares vivenciadas no Instituto Samuel Graham, uma instituição fundada em 1942, no município de Jataí, Goiás, em especial as relativas ao ensino secundário – ginásio, a fim de analisar como o curso ginasial foi implantado, explicitando traços gerais de sua organização, os sujeitos que participaram desse segmento de ensino, o currículo, os exames admissionais e a avaliação. Dessa maneira, optou-se pela pesquisa qualitativa, de cunho documental, ancorada na análise de fontes que delinearão a pesquisa histórica.

**Palavras-chave:** Ensino secundário. Jataí. Goiás.

## Resumen

Esta comunicación tiene como objetivo abordar aspectos que pueden ayudar a descortinar las prácticas escolares relativas a la enseñanza secundaria, vivenciadas en el Instituto Samuel Graham, una institución fundada en el año 1942, en el municipio de Jataí, Goiás. Se analizó el proceso de implementación de la escuela, explicitando las características generales de su organización, los sujetos que participaron de este segmento de enseñanza, el currículo, los exámenes admissionales y los procesos de evaluación utilizados. Por lo tanto, se optó por la investigación cualitativa, sobre todo en pruebas documentales, anclado en el análisis de las fuentes que describen la investigación histórica.

**Palabras clave:** Enseñanza Secundaria; Jataí. Goiás.

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## Introduction

Secondary Education in Brazil has undergone several tensions and strains in the face of educational reforms implemented until the enactment of Law No. 4.024/1961 – LDB (Lei de Diretrizes e Bases da Educação/Law of Basic Tenets and Guidelines of Brazilian Education), and, later, of Law No. 5.692/1971, which reformed the teaching of primary and secondary schools. From this perspective, this study aims to address aspects that may help unveil the scholastic practices experienced at Instituto Samuel Graham, especially those related to secondary education – junior high school, in order to analyze how it was implemented in this institution, explaining general traits of their organization, the subjects that participated in this segment of education, the curriculum, the entrance exams, and the evaluation.

We will use some of Souza's (2012, p. 59) determinants to legitimize our reflection before the questions: "... to what extent did the curricular changes affect the organization of schools, classroom teaching practices...", with the intention of seeking answers that are explicit within the national context.

The junior high school course started at the institute in 1859 and was authorized by Act No. 9, of November 27, 1958, under Ordinance No. 302, of August 30, 1957, which granted Instituto Samuel Graham authorization to function conditionally for a period of four years, under federal inspection.

In view of this, it is important to emphasize that the implementation of the junior high school at ISG was involved in the debates chained by the Brazilian educational reforms implemented by Gustavo Capanema<sup>4</sup>, altering the last reform in effect, that of 1931; the Francisco Campos<sup>5</sup> reform, under Decree No. 19.890, of April 18, 1931; and the promulgation of Law No. 4.024, of December 20, 1961, that of LDB.

We have also located another request for the regularization of the 1963 ISG's junior high school, which was authorized for a period of four more years.

We will use documentary sources, such as the enrollment books, partial and final exams, and entrance exams, as well as oral exams, such as the testimonies of the subjects who have experienced this daily life. The results of analysis will be an in-depth subject of reflection: how have these practices been inserted and constructed in this educational institution?

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<sup>4</sup> Born in Pitangui, Minas Gerais, on August 10, 1900. In the presidential elections held in March 1930, he supported the candidacy of Getúlio Vargas and was appointed by the president to head the Ministry of Education and Health. Appointed in July 1934, he remained in office until the end of Estado Novo in October 1945. In 1937, he sent the national education plan to Congress. In 1942, under the auspices of the Estado Novo and on the initiative of Capanema, the reforms of education by levels (primary and secondary) and by modalities (professional technical education: industrial, commercial, normal and agricultural), translated in the so-called "Organic Laws of Education," which run until 1946. He was the head of the Ministry of Education and Health under the Vargas government for 11 years (1934-1945). He died in Rio de Janeiro on March 10, 1985. Retrieved from: <[http://cpdoc.fgv.br/producao/dossies/AEraVargas1/biografias/gustavo\\_capanema](http://cpdoc.fgv.br/producao/dossies/AEraVargas1/biografias/gustavo_capanema)>. Accessed October 20 2015.

<sup>5</sup> Born on November 18, 1891, in Dores do Indaiá, he was a teacher, jurist, lawyer and politician. He died in Belo Horizonte on November 1, 1968. In 1931, then Minister of Education and Health, established the first educational reform of national character. This reform gave an organic structure to secondary, commercial and higher education. It established definitively the serial curriculum, compulsory attendance, teaching in two cycles: one basic, lasting five years, and another complementary, lasting two years, and the requirement of qualification in them for entry to higher education. In addition, it equated all official secondary schools with Dom Pedro II College through federal inspection and gave the same opportunity to private schools to organize themselves according to the decree and to submit to the same inspection. Retrieved from: <[http://cpdoc.fgv.br/producao/dossies/AEraVargas1/biografias/francisco\\_campos](http://cpdoc.fgv.br/producao/dossies/AEraVargas1/biografias/francisco_campos)>. Accessed October 20 2015.

## Implementation of junior high school

We consider Decree-law No. 4.244, of April 9, 1942, the Organic Law of Secondary Education, the guiding principle of this study, and this is justified by the year of implementation of junior high school at Instituto Samuel Graham. This law was in force at the national level at a given historical moment, and, aware that Goiás was governed by federal legislation, both for public and private institutions that offered secondary education, we will initially go under that aegis. This statement does not ignore the importance of the Francisco Campos reform in 1931, resulting in an organic structure of secondary, commercial, and higher education. Secondary education, according to Romanelli (2013), should be:

[...] a patriotic teaching par excellence, and patriotic in the highest sense of the word, that is, teaching capable of giving the adolescent an understanding of the problems and the needs, the mission, and the ideals of the nation, as well as of the dangers that accompany, besiege or threaten, a teaching capable, moreover, of creating, in the spirit of the new generations, an awareness of the responsibility towards the greatest values of the country, its independence, its order, and its destiny. (translation of ROMANELLI, 2013, p. 160).

In this way, secondary education had the purpose:

Article 1. Secondary education has the following purpose:

1. To train, in continuation of the educational work of primary education, the integral personality of adolescents.
2. To accentuate, in the spiritual formation of the adolescents, the patriotic conscience and humanistic conscience.
3. To provide general intellectual preparation that can serve as a basis for higher studies of special training. (translation of BRASIL, 1942).

According to Articles 2, 3, and 4 of the Organic Law 1942, secondary education was structured and organized in cycles:

Article 2. Secondary education will be given in two cycles. The first will comprise a single course: the junior high school. The second will comprise two parallel courses: the classic course and the scientific course.

Article 3. Junior high school, which will last four years, will be aimed at giving adolescents the fundamental elements of secondary education.

Article 4. The classic course and the scientific course, each lasting three years, will aim to consolidate the education given in junior high school and to further develop and deepen it. In the classic course, to contribute to the intellectual formation, besides a greater knowledge of Philosophy, there will be an accentuated study of the ancient letters; in the scientific course, this training will be marked by a larger study of Sciences. (translation of BRASIL, 1942).

Instituto Samuel Graham offered the first cycle of secondary education and junior high school for four years. In the Article 23, this Law lists some essential elements of morality that should be developed in adolescents as “the spirit of discipline, dedication to ideals, and awareness of responsibility.” (translation of BRASIL, 1942) Thus:

Those responsible for the moral and civic education of adolescence will also have in mind that it is the purpose of secondary education to educate the conducting individualities, so it is necessary to develop in students the capacity for initiative and decision and all strong attributes of the will. (translation of BRASIL, 1942).

Secondary education was aimed at a narrow social group: young people from wealthy families and children of industrialists and elite merchants. Parents sought a cultural distinction for the formation of their children, with a very specific purpose: to prepare them for admission to higher education (SOUZA, 2008).

To that end, secondary schools willing to offer it would have to obey Article 5 of the Organic Law 1942:

Article 5. There will be two types of secondary school, junior high school and high school.

§ 1 Junior high school will be the secondary school to teach the first cycle course.

§ 2 High school will be the secondary education institution designed to give, besides the same course of junior high school, both the courses of the second cycle. High school may not waive any of the courses mentioned in this paragraph. (translation of BRASIL, 1942).

The curriculum was not diversified; disciplines were almost always the same in all grades. As a result, “it could exist as a class education. It was, therefore, constituting itself in the noble branch of education, that really directed towards the formation of ‘conductive individualities.’” (translation of ROMANELLI, 2013, p. 162)

Thus, the Capanema reform divided the secondary education into cycles, the junior high school lasting four years and the high school lasting three, comprising the classic and the scientific courses<sup>6</sup>. The curricula were given a formative character for general culture and humanistic culture, without detaching itself from the patriotic function. To meet this requirement, the curriculum becomes “essential” for the training of adolescents who wish to pursue higher education. In Forquin's (1993, p. 16) conception, “school education can never incorporate into its programs and courses but a narrow spectrum of socially mobilizing knowledge, skills, forms of expression, myths and symbols.” Even the curriculum being the focus of these reforms, it also presented ruptures and a disconnection with primary education.

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<sup>6</sup> This section does not have as objective to deepen in information referring to the second cycle, since ISG did not offer it.

Souza (2008) calls attention to humanist culture, which for decades was a symbol cultivated in denominational schools: Catholics and Protestants. Chervel and Compère (1997), quoted by Souza (2008, p. 93), defend the humanist culture of colleges founded on the humanities.

To the formation of the spirit, preparing the young to reach the highest levels of human thought and creation. It also provided them with a moral education, values of virtue, justice, moderation, self-denial, drawn from the classical texts of Cicero, Ovid, Horace, Virgil, Homer, Livy, read and memorized. (translation of CHERVEL; COMPÈRE, 1997 apud SOUZA, 2008, p. 93).

We notice this aspect with the implementation of the Latin, Greek, and Philosophy disciplines in the curricula. These disciplines present a “learned culture”. In this perspective, “humanism was opposed to any kind of specialization and therefore rejected the conception of purely scientific or essentially literary studies.” (translation of SOUSA, 2008, p. 215).

Romanelli (2013) states that reforms named Organic Laws of Education were made in 1942, covering the branches of primary and secondary education. Some laws had to be complemented by others, decreed between the years of 1942 and 1946, namely:

- a) Decree-law No. 4.073, of January 30, 1942 (Organic Law of Industrial Education);
- b) Decree-law No. 4.048, of January 22, 1942 (creation of SENAI - National Service of Industrial Learning);
- c) Decree-law No. 4.244, of April 9, 1942 (Organic Law of Secondary Education);
- d) Decree-law n° 6.141, of December 28, 1943 (Organic Law of Commercial Education);
- e) Decree-law No. 8.529, of January 2, 1946 (Organic Law of Primary Education);
- f) Decree-law No. 8.530, of January 2, 1946 (Organic Law of Normal Education);
- g) Decree-law n ° 8.621, of January 10, 1946 (creation of SENAC - National Service of Commercial Learning);
- h) Decree-law No. 9.613, of August 20, 1946 (Organic Law of Agricultural Education). (translation of ROMANELLI, 2013, p. 157).

These laws set the organizational structure of teaching under the triad of organicity, rationality, and standardization; secondary education acquires a new identity in Brazil, it gains expansion in numbers of students attended, but it does not fail to present peculiarities, such as the elitist and highly selective character, and a formation directed to the general culture (SOUZA, 2008).

It should be noted that Capanema had as objectives, for secondary education, the formation of the personality of the adolescent and the selection by the cultivation of ancient and modern humanities, building in the young the patriotic and the humanistic conscience (BONATO, 2010). In addition, the Capanema reform had as intention to put the education at the service of the authoritarian and nationalistic project of President Vargas (SOUZA, 2008).

The enrollment of students in secondary education was done under the aegis of Articles 31, 32, and 33 of the Organic Law 1942, which deal with admission and enrollment conditions:

Article 31. Applicants to the first grade of any of the courses dealt with in this law must present proof that they are not infected with a contagious disease and are vaccinated.

Article 32. Applicants for enrollment in junior high school must also meet the following conditions:

- a) be at least eleven years old, complete or yet to be completed, by June 30;
- b) have received satisfactory primary education;
- c) have revealed, in entrance exams, intellectual aptitude for secondary studies.

Article 33. Applicants for enrollment in the classic course or in the scientific course must have completed junior high school. (translation of BRASIL, 1942).

Thus, to meet the expectations of the respective legislation, the Goiás government, guided by the guidelines emanating from the reforms, "took care of activating and remodeling its institutions of higher and secondary education, as well as, at the same time, a series of measures that contemplated the other educational sectors." (translation of NEPOMUCENO, 1994, p. 63).

In the city of Jataí, until the 1930s, "... there were no schools that regularly maintained secondary education. Young schoolchildren, in addition to the primary level, had to gradually find other centers, usually in Minas Gerais or São Paulo..." (translation of PIRES, 1994, p. 64). This created some disruption for a part of the population of Jataí: those who had financial conditions could send their children to study in other states. In the case of daughters, the problem became even more evident because few families let them search for junior high school.

Aware of the difficulties that it would face, with the community in need of effective secondary education, the population decided, in the late 1930s, to assemble with the objective of obtaining for Jataí a school that would provide secondary education. The possibility is glimpsed by the population together with the Catholic Church, for the creation of a College of Nuns... (translation of PIRES, 1997, p. 65).

When Instituto Samuel Graham settled in the city, it caused concern for Colégio Nossa Senhora do Bom Conselho, a private institution of Catholic denominational order that received subsidies from the state and the municipality and was in operation since 1941.

In the period of Law No. 4.024/1961, private education advocates gathered to argue that the State should not be the only school provider; they defended the right of families to choose the education they wished to give to their children (PIRES, 1997).

With the implementation of the Estado Novo (1937-1946), education came to be considered a preponderant factor for the development of the country. It was with Capanema's proposal to reform some of its branches that education underwent significant changes. (ROMANELLI, 2013).

Both reforms implemented during the Getúlio Vargas administration (the Francisco Campos reform in 1931 and the Organic Law of Secondary Education in 1942) were responsible for giving the secondary education a more rational and organic organization establishing the regular course, compulsory attendance, the course divided into two cycles, entrance exams to the first grade of the first cycle and a rigid system of evaluation of learning. (translation of SOUZA, 2012, p. 61).

Still in the wake of Souza's (2008) thinking, the contributions of the Capanema reform, faced with the most humanistic and scientific curriculum, caused indignation, as expressed by Fernando de Azevedo, when he questioned: "... could there be a more efficient and powerful vehicle than science for the transmission of humanism which is always a universal point of view?" (translation of AZEVEDO, 1952 apud SOUZA, 2008, p. 215).

Conflicts emerged among advocates who sought a "comprehensive" education reform; the pioneers of the New Education, based on a modern pedagogy, organized the Manifesto dos Pioneiros<sup>7</sup>. There was at this historic moment an agreement between the Getulista dictatorship and the Catholic Church. In the curricula prescribed for the two cycles of secondary, junior and high school, "there was a reevaluation of the classical and modern humanities" (translation of SOUZA, 2008, p. 171).

However, the most significant achievements for secondary education came from the implementation of LDB No. 4.024/1961, which can be deduced in the words of Dallabrida and Souza (2014):

The first LDBEN – Law 4.024, of December 20, 1961 -, considered by Anísio Teixeira as a "half victory, but a victory", presented considerable advances for secondary education. In opposition to the Capanema reform, LDBEN 1961 stipulated the curriculum at the state level, giving scope for defining disciplines to the nascent state education councils, as well as to educational establishments. However, we believe that the greatest gain has been the effective matching of secondary and technical/normal courses through the creation of "high school", formally overcoming the school dualism of courses between primary and higher education. (translation of DALLABRIDA; SOUZA, 2014, p. 18).

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<sup>7</sup> The Manifesto dos Pioneiros ("Manifesto of Pioneers") was a document prepared by Fernando de Azevedo and signed by 26 Brazilian educators, leaders of the "educational renewal" movement. It begins by establishing the dialectic relationship that must exist between education and development. The document aims to give a firmer direction to the renovating movement and to define it more objectively. The Manifesto emerges as an openly defined belief in the need to build and implement a nationwide educational reconstruction program. (ROMANELLI, 2013, pp. 147-8).



Female secondary education also had special prescriptions, as attested by Article 25 of the Organic Law of Secondary Education 1942:

Article 25. The following special prescriptions in female secondary education shall be observed:

1. It is recommended that women's secondary education be carried out in schools exclusively attended by women.
2. In the secondary schools attended by both men and women, it will be the latter's education in exclusively female classes. This provision will only cease to be valid for a relevant reason and given special authorization from the Ministry of Education.
3. The discipline of Home Economics shall be included in the third and fourth grades of junior high school and in all grades of the classic and scientific courses.
4. The methodological orientation of the programs will focus on the nature of the female personality and on the role of women within the household. (translation of BRASIL, 1942).

In this way, the institutions that served this public were governed by the same law. On the other hand, Instituto Samuel Graham offered junior high school for a mixed public with a coeducational pedagogy, as we previously mentioned.

With the shift to a humanistic culture in disfavor to scientific culture, the ISG curriculum, in 1964, added some disciplines in junior high school, depicted in Chart 1.

**Chart 1** - Disciplines of Junior High School, 1964.

<b>Junior High School</b>			
<b>1st grade</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> grade</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> grade</b>	<b>4<sup>th</sup> grade</b>
Portuguese	Portuguese	Portuguese	Portuguese
Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics
History of Brazil	History of America	General History	History of Brazil
General Geography	General Geography	Natural Science	Geography
Latin	Latin	Latin	Science
French	French	French	English
Orpheonic Singing	Orpheonic Singing	Orpheonic Singing	Brazilian Social and Political Organization (OSPB)
Drawing	Drawing	Drawing	-
Handicraft*	Handicraft*	Home Economics**	-

\*For all students.

\*\*Only for women.

**Source:** ISG's Results Book

In analyzing the disciplines of the ISG's junior high school in 1964, we can see that even with the enactment of Law No. 4.024/1961, the lived practices were still determined by the Organic Law of Secondary Education 1942. What we can perceive is that the legitimation of the law had not yet materialized at the institute, even after three years of enactment of the LDB. Such fact can be verified by the disciplines implemented by said Law No. 4.244/1942:

First grade: 1) Portuguese. 2) Latin. 3) French. 4) Mathematics. 5) General History. 6) General Geography. 7) Handicraft. 8) Drawing. 9) Orpheonic Singing.

Second grade: 1) Portuguese. 2) Latin. 3) French. 4) English. 5) Mathematics. 6) General History. 7) General Geography. 8) Handicraft. 9) Drawing. 10) Orpheonic Singing.

Third grade: 1) Portuguese. 2) Latin. 3) French. 4) English. 5) Mathematics. 6) Natural Science. 7) History of Brazil. 8) Geography of Brazil. 9) Drawing. 10) Orpheonic Singing.

Fourth grade: 1) Portuguese. 2) Latin. 3) French. 4) English. 5) Mathematics. 6) Natural Science. 7) History of Brazil. 8) Geography of Brazil 9) Drawing. 10) Orpheonic Singing. (translation of BRASIL, 1942).

Regarding the offer of the disciplines in the junior high school grades and those presented in Chart 1, we can see that, in the last two grades, there was a difference in some disciplines. The curriculum set forth in the Organic Law of Secondary Education provided, for the first grade, General History and ISG offered History of Brazil; in the second grade, it was General History and English, and ISG offered History of America, while English was not a part of the curriculum; in the third grade, it included the discipline of Home Economics, only for the girls.

The discipline of Home Economics, not by chance, was implemented in the curricula of junior high schools: "specific contents for female education were included in the curriculum at a time of redefinition of the role of women in Brazilian society... It was therefore necessary to restore women's values and the traditional social place of women..." (translation of SOUZA, 2008, p. 180).

The difference in the number of disciplines offered in the fourth grade caught our attention: there were not Orpheonic Singing, Drawing, French and Latin, and OSPB was inserted. This is justified by the determination of LDB No. 4.024/1961.

Article 35. In each cycle there will be compulsory and optional educational disciplines and practices.

§1 The Federal Council of Education is responsible for indicating, for all secondary education systems, up to five compulsory disciplines, it being incumbent upon the state education councils to complete their number and list the optional ones that can be adopted by educational institutions.

§2 The Federal Council and the state councils, in relating the compulsory disciplines, in the form of the previous paragraph, will define the amplitude and the development of its programs in each cycle.

§3 The curriculum of the first two grades of the first cycle will be common to all high school courses in relation to compulsory disciplines. (translation of BRASIL, 1961).

Another aspect that invites us to reflection is the fact that a Protestant denominational school does not include in its curriculum references to Religious education. This is evidenced by Article 34 of the ISG School's Regiment: "There will be no denominational religious education, but classes of Sacred History will be taught for which the Bible is the textbook, since the institute considers that knowledge of the Christian faith is indispensable to every educated man." (translation of REGIMENTO INTERNO DO ISG, 1963, p. 10)

Even though there is not a Bible History discipline, testimony of former students and former junior high school teachers reveals that the practice of daily worship was systematic, as Gomes (2015) states:

[...] As for religious formation, in my junior school time it was every day. Every day we would arrive, there would be a quick devotion and we would go to the classroom, and, as time went by, it started to be three times a week, and we would gather the whole school in the great hall. Then there was the worship, it was once a week, but in those periods all the students were required to attend. It's like a class, all students went to the worship, right... (translation of GOMES, 2015).

It is important to emphasize that, as a category of analysis, the school culture inserted by the New Cultural History allows us to contextualize several aspects, such as the field of school disciplines. From this context, Chervel (1990, p. 180) emphasizes the idea that:

Provided that the notion of discipline is fully understood, as long as it is recognized that a school discipline involves not only the teaching practices of the class, but also the great purposes that presided over its constitution and the phenomenon of mass acculturation that it determines, then the history of school disciplines can play an important role not only in the history of education but in cultural history. If it can attribute a "structuring" role to the educational function of the school in the history of teaching, it is due to a property of the school disciplines... (translation of CHERVEL, 1990, p. 180).

When analyzing the documentary sources that deal with the junior school curriculum, we can verify that ISG has complied since 1965 with the norms established by LDB No. 4.024/1961. The Regulations of the Institute that we have analyzed as a source date from 1963 and Article 43 stipulates that: "The curricula of the various courses, as well as the weekly number of classes, shall follow the rules of the Federal Council of Education and of the State Board of Education and always in accordance with the Legislation that regulates the subject..." (translation of REGIMENTO INTERNO DO ISG, 1963, p. 11).

Another documentary source we are dealing with is the enrollment books, according to which the number of annual registrations was very expressive. We can also verify that junior high school, as we mentioned before, began in 1959 and lasted until 1973<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> With the implementation of Law No. 5.692, of August 11, 1971, there were changes in the organizational structure of national education, establishing guidelines for primary and secondary education.

**Table 1** - Junior High School Enrollments from 1959 to 1971\* at Instituto Samuel Graham

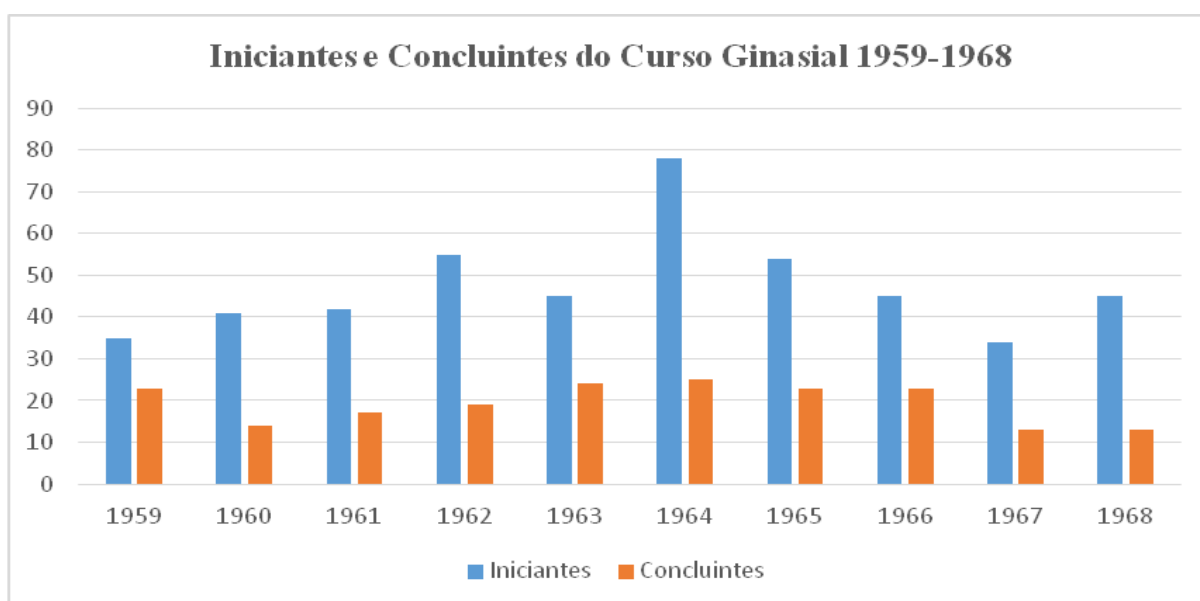
Period	School Grade				
	1 <sup>st</sup> grade	2 <sup>nd</sup> grade	3 <sup>rd</sup> grade	4 <sup>th</sup> grade	Grand total
1959	35	-	-	-	35
1960	41	31	-	-	72
1961	42	18	22	-	82
1962	55	31	11	23	120
1963	45	26	16	14	101
1964	78	41	19	17	155
1965	54	52	18	19	143
1966	60	48	30	24	162
1967	34	36	41	25	136
1968	45	22	28	23	118
1969	78	30	22	23	153
1970	69	64	15	13	161
1971**	301	225	34	13	573

\*Documentary sources referring to 1972 and 1973 enrollments were not located in the archives of the institution.

\*\*Since 1971, ISG has offered the first grade of junior high school on day shift (two classes) and night shift (five classes) due to the great demand of students.

**Source:** Elaborated by the author. Instituto Samuel Graham Archive (Jataí, GO).

By analyzing the data in Table 1, it is noticed an expressive number of initial enrollments referring to the first grade of junior high school; on the other hand, in the years of the respective graduations, the number is greatly decreased.

**Figure 1** - Beginners and graduates of Junior High School (1959-1968).

**Source:** Elaborated by the author. Instituto Samuel Graham Enrollment Books (Jataí, GO). Beginners are represented in blue and graduates in orange.

We can take as an example the years of 1964, when the number of students enrolled was higher (78 students), and 1967, when only 25 of those students graduated from school. These data intrigue us and raise some concerns: What is the real reason of the disparity between beginners and graduates? Was there an evident reason, e.g., transfers, withdrawals, very rigid evaluations, or lack of financial conditions to finish school?

According to the ISG Internal Regulation 1963, the Article 65 determined the issue of scholarships, which “will be offered at the disposal of school organizations and civilians of Jataí... In a never-greater total of 2% of the enrollment in secondary courses for each one.” (translation of REGIMENTO INTERNO DO ISG, 1963, p. 18)

Analyzing the enrollment applications referring to the years highlighted in Table 1, it is noticed that there were transfers due to city changes, withdrawals due to health problems, and some withdrawals due to financial difficulties. Would these be the factors that justify the disparity between the numbers of beginners and graduates?

Observing Gomes' (2015) testimony, we found that many of the scholarships offered to junior high students were through "service exchanges". He reports that he studied in the morning and would return to school in the afternoon to clean up and help with whatever was needed. “School was too big, we had a lot of work to do: clean up the classroom, sweep the yard, carry out the trash.” In this way, we understand that the scholarships offered to these students were not always paid in cash, but with their work, especially of those more financially needy.

The evaluation process (partial, oral, and final terms) would result in high numbers of withdrawal, along with entrance exams, which would have them give up before even being admitted to the first grade of junior high school.

### **Analyzing entrance exams to junior high school**

Entrance exams to junior high school were initially implanted in the country through Decree No. 19.890, of April 18, 1931, as a part of the Francisco Campos reform. In the Article 18, entrance exams become mandatory in every institution of secondary education – elementary and complementary<sup>9</sup>. The exams were only abolished under Law No. 5.692/1971 and marked a historic period of expansion in access to primary education and restriction to secondary education (AKSENUM; MIGUEL, 2013, p. 2).

Thus, exams were a barrier to access secondary education. They were widely applied, went through some structural changes (regimentations), however, they were a device for control and power due to its extremely selective character.

The Organic Law of Secondary Education 1942, in its Chapter VI, Article 34, referred specifically to entrance exams, keeping two periods to its execution: one in December and another in February. In the meantime, it is important to understand the dissimilarity between educational supply and demand. Based on Romanelli's (2013, p. 26, translated) thinking, under a social perspective, “school education can be considered a need that creates a demand which determines a supply.” To the same author, “the problem with demand, commanding the

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<sup>9</sup> With LDB 4.024/1961, entrance exams became a requirement for high school admission, as stated in the Article 34 of the law, "secondary school will be taught in two cycles, junior and high school, and will cover, among others, secondary, technical and teacher training courses for primary and pre-primary education." (translation of BRASIL, 1961).

expansion of education, is that it creates contradiction and serious obstacles to the development, and it can be well evidenced when society, being aware of the discrepancy, intends to reform its educational system.” (translation of ROMANELLI, 2013, p. 29).

For the second period exams, candidates who did not or had not passed the first period could register. The candidate who did not pass the exam at any secondary school could not repeat it in another one at the same time. “From 1952, the exams consisted of tests of Portuguese, Mathematics, Geography and History of Brazil, the first two with an eliminatory character. The overall mark of approval should be five, and the individual mark of each discipline, four.” (translation of BASTOS, ERMEL, 2014, p. 122). According to the ISG Internal Regulation 1963, the Article 44 elucidates:

Exams for admission to the first grade of junior high school will be held in two periods: 1<sup>st</sup> – In the first half of December; 2<sup>nd</sup> – In the second half of February of the following year, candidates can be enrolled at 11 (eleven) years old, complete or to be completed during the year in which they will be attending this grade. (translation of REGIMENTO INTERNO DO ISG, 1963, p. 12).

By means of Ministerial Ordinance No. 325, of October 13, 1959, the oral tests of entrance exams gain new requirements. Paragraph 1 stated that: “for the other disciplines, the oral test could be optional, at the discretion of each institution.” (translation of BASTOS; ERMEL, 2014, p. 123). The requirement for oral tests extended only to Portuguese and Mathematics; were optional for Geography and History of Brazil. At ISG, this requirement, regarding the subjects of Portuguese and Mathematics, was only fulfilled between the years of 1958 and 1960; later, the records point to oral tests for Mathematics, History and Geography. Between the years of 1962 and 1971, there was no record of the disciplines and their respective marks of the tests in the field determined for “oral tests.”

Article 44 of ISG Internal Regulation 1963, in Paragraph 3, stated that: “entrance exams shall consist of written tests of Portuguese, Mathematics, Geography and History of Brazil, and an oral test of Portuguese.” (translation of REGIMENTO INTERNO DO ISG, 1963, p. 12) For this purpose, in the minute book on entrance exams for 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> periods of ISG, referring to the period from 1958 to 1971, in the segment of averages for passing the exams, it was stated: “Article 44, Paragraph 4, points: “a) Mark five in the written test of Portuguese and Mathematics, that will be eliminatory; b) Overall average six;” (translation of REGIMENTO INTERNO DO ISG, 1963, p. 13).

The number of eliminations in some of the years was exorbitant and drew our attention. We also observed that, in some years, the number of approvals progressed satisfactorily.

In this window of investigation, we questioned such disparity: Did ISG develop activities such as a preparatory course for the entrance exams? In searching for answers to our concerns, we looked at the sources, that, for Sthephanou and Bastos (2011, p. 417), are “clues, marks, fragments that do not have an inherent truth, ready to be unveiled.” They need, however, to be interpreted and confronted.

Thus, we have found an informative report of the institute in the documentary sources, from 1961, stating:

#### HOLIDAY COURSE FOR ADMISSION TO JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

There will be an intensive holiday preparatory course to junior high school during January and February. Candidates must report to Ms. Noheme Alves Faria from 7 to 10 a.m., at INSTITUTO SAMUEL GRAHAM, from the first day of December. The cost for each student is of CR\$900. (translation of BOLETIM DE INFORMAÇÕES DO INSTITUTO SAMUEL GRAHAM, 1961, p. 2).

It is important to note that we have also found, in the testimony of a former primary school student, hints that there was student preparation for the entrance exams:

... we were in the fourth grade at that time, the teacher would teach for the fourth and fifth grades in the same classroom... So, since fifth grade was for people who, like, people who hadn't reached the average mark to move on to first grade of junior high school, there was a preparation of those students for the entrance exams. It was just a few people, and she managed to teach for both classes together... Students who were preparing for the entrance exams would be on the same row. Then she would teach the subject for the fourth grade, then she would move on to the fifth grade. This way, she would help all the students... (translation of GOMES, 2015).

We can state that the sources present hints that there was preparation of the students for the entrance exams, according to Gomes's testimony (2015) and the ISG informative report.

Seeking for other sources who could give us those answers, we have located preparatory courses textbooks for entrance exams in ISG's library, Biblioteca Jaime Buyers. Eager to unveil the rites of passage to junior high school, we found testimony of former teachers, who said to have had used preparatory textbooks for the submission of written and oral tests of the entrance exams.

LDB No. 4.024/1961 guided the States to organize their educational systems according to its precepts and would keep the entrance exams. Article 36 dealt with the entrance to the first grade of the first cycle of high school courses, depending on the approval on an entrance exam, in which a satisfactory primary education would be proved, since the student would be eleven years old or would be during the school year (BRASIL, 1961). According to Article 37 of the same law, "For the first grade of high school enrollment, the conclusion of junior high school or equivalent will be required." (translation of BRASIL, 1961)

The first initiative of change in the entrance exams were presented after the promulgation of LDB 1961, with the Opinion of the National Council on Education No. 121<sup>10</sup>, passed on April 5, 1963 (AKSENEN, 2013).

<sup>10</sup> See this opinion in the work of Aksenén (2013, pp. 51-52).

Through this Opinion, we perceived the biases and gaps left by the regulations on the evaluation process of entrance exams, such as the Constitution of 1937, in which there is no mention of the entrance exams to junior high school. With this, "emerging ideas announced a new reform that would come in 1971." (translation of AKNESEN, 2013, p. 52)

Still about the gaps left, we have observed that, with the secondary education division determined by Capanema in 1942, through the Organic Law, it was established in two cycles, as previously mentioned. About that, the Minister would consider the limitation to four years of junior high school a way of making it more "accessible" to all population in junior high school age, what we could consider impracticable.

Table 2 expresses the appointments of the minute book on ISG's entrance exams; the data recorded are of plausible analysis and served as incentive to enter the everyday of this ritual of passage that represented the access to junior high school.

**Table 2** - Instituto Samuel Graham's entrance exams (1958-1970).

Period		Total of students	Eliminated in Portuguese and Mathematics	Admissions	%	Rejections	%
1958	1 <sup>st</sup> period	40*	07	18	45	14	55
	2 <sup>nd</sup> period	16*	05	03	18.7	07	43.7
1959	1st period	37	05	29	78.3	03	8.1
	2 <sup>nd</sup> period	19	12	03	15.7	04	21
1960	1st period	55	16	31	56.3	08	14.5
	2 <sup>nd</sup> period	16	04	07	43.7	05	31.2
1961	1st period	56	21	10	17.8	25	44.6
	2 <sup>nd</sup> period	28	05	04	14.2	19	67.8
1962	1st period	54	17	29	53.7	08	14.8
	2 <sup>nd</sup> period	20	07	10	50	03	15
1963	1st period	68	15	53	77.9	-	-
	2 <sup>nd</sup> period	20	11	09	45	-	-
1964	1st period	81	16	63	77.7	02	2.4
	2 <sup>nd</sup> period	12	04	07	58.3	01	8.3
1965	1st period	70	25	43	61.4	02	2.8
	2 <sup>nd</sup> period	36	14	20	55.5	02	5.5
1966	1st period	79	55	20	25.3	04	5
	2 <sup>nd</sup> period	73*	56	16	21.9	-	-
1967	1st period	78	40	36	46.1	02	2.5
	2 <sup>nd</sup> period	23	13	05	21.7	05	21.7
1968	1st period	77	20	54	70.1	03	3.8
	2 <sup>nd</sup> period	30	20	08	26.6	02	6.6
1969	1st period	37	03	34	91.8	-	-
	2 <sup>nd</sup> period	11	08	03	27.2	-	-
1970	1st period	42*	13	24	57.1	04	9.5
	2 <sup>nd</sup> period	08*	01	07	87.5	-	-
1971	1st period	112*	89	22	19.6	13	11.6

\*One student did not attend.

**Source:** Elaborated by the author. Minute book on entrance exams (Instituto Samuel Graham Archive).



Numbers on Table 2 show that, in the highlighted period (1958-1970), Instituto Samuel Graham offered fourteen first period exams and thirteen second period exams. Data also hint that the percentage of rejections was higher than that of admissions in 1958, 1959, and 1961. Could we relate the increase in the admission numbers, in the following years, to the preparatory courses offered by ISG? Did such preparatory exams in fact exist?

Analyzing and confronting the selected sources, we noticed some hints that there were “extra” preparatory classes for the entrance exams, thus justifying the rates of admission presented on Table 2.

It is up to us to reflect whether the entrance exams were meant to deny the access of a large part of the population to junior high school or were really a way of checking the necessary knowledge to continue education.

To Capanema, in junior high school, Mathematics and Natural Science would be studied in an elementary way, becoming more complex in the second cycle. At ISG, the issue of Science and Mathematics education, opposing to what Capanema defended, was intensive since the first cycle of junior high school.

We noticed this appreciation for Science and Mathematics education through interview with former junior high school students, whose testimony confirmed the great importance given to Science education. Teacher Izaltino Guimarães<sup>11</sup> would perform, in an adequate laboratory, scientific experiments that made the classes much more attractive and meaningful.

In the light of current legislation, entrance exams to junior high school were highly selective, reduced and with serious restrictions on access to and continuation of education. The period of Brazilian education in which the exams were inserted was marked by the elitist and encyclopedic character, rigidly controlled by a system of tests (AKSENEN, 2013).

During the vast period during which the entrance exams to junior high school were performed, there were many changes, legitimized by decrees, ordinances, circulars, and opinions. Thereby, the main changes cover the extension compulsory schooling and the attempt of duality of the educational system by implementing primary and secondary schools. Souza (2008, p. 267) mentions that “primary school started to last eight years, being mandatory from 7 to 14-year-old students... formally eliminating the conception of elementary and junior high school, replacing it for an integrated school of basic education.”

Thus, a new orientation has been impressed to the country’s educational teaching, deconstructing the whole existing structure and demanding a public and private network restructuring to meet the new demands, with a view to an articulation of the curriculum, school environment and clientele.

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<sup>11</sup>Izaltino Guimarães was born in Bahia, studied at Instituto José Manuel da Conceição, in Jandira, São Paulo, a Protestant school. There he attended Agronomy but was very passionate about teaching Science. He came to Jataí at the invitation of Mrs. Ruth Graham. In Jataí, Mr. Izaltino married Ms. Wandir Sousa Guimarães, who had also studied at the same institute. They had three children and together they taught at the ISG. Izaltino was also principal from 1967 to 1968. He devised a laboratory for science classes, which he taught with great dedication. He designed the drawing of the floor of the Handicraft room, a discipline which he also ministered with excellent reverence (BOLETIM DE INFORMAÇÕES DO INSTITUTO SAMUEL GRAHAM, 1965, p. 2).

## Final considerations

Facing reality, it is believed that entrance exams, performed within the walls of the institute, even though excluding and selective, have had their contribution, although we have found gaps in their process of legitimation.

The educational reforms that subsidized the process of implementation of secondary education caused some strains; however, the legitimized practices were not always worthwhile, as a rule of thumb, as we noticed with the oral testimony of the subjects involved in this research.

Secondary school – junior high school of ISG, study object in this paper, focused on bringing awareness to young people through an education aimed to patriotism. Such fact makes us realize that the educational scenario that covers our temporal delimitation was the fruit of an educational model portrayed in all scopes of basic education in the country. Thus, the establishment of junior high school was developing from the perspective that this course would guarantee the modernization and social progress of the city of Jataí, GO.

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