

Traduções/Translations

Monções revisited: heritage and material culture¹

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“Why is the LOOK of the true traveler sad? He knows like no one that the world began without him and will end without men. He perceives that all myths, style and language are constructions of meaning, always on the edge of emptiness. He feels that his trip will not necessarily have a full repay, his exploration will always be incomplete. Nevertheless, between the loneliness that reproduces the system of an inherited culture and the sadness of this kaleidoscopic chaos from a world that allows itself to be seen indistinctly, he chooses the second option, the one of a lonely voyager, faithful only to his own narrative, master of his stories and landscapes, beneath all thinking and beyond all society...”

[Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Tristes Trópicos*, São Paulo; Companhia das Letras, 2005.]

The objectives of this essay – which are much more of a suggestive nature than of a conclusive one – are to revisit the monções subject though the vestiges left and preserved along time, manifested in the material culture and in the archeological patrimony; also, to suggest possibilities of research and question some assumptions regarding those expeditions. The monções were the fluvial expeditions that, with

diverse intents, penetrated into the interior of the Capitánias of São Paulo and Mato Grosso during the XVIII and XIX centuries.

The colonial occupation in the central region of South America, the region that today is called “Central West”, constituted a long chapter (to a certain degree not finished) of the history of Portuguese America and of Brazil. Various colonizing processes, and movements primarily exploratory involving the Portuguese, the Spanish, and colonists (many of whom were mestizos and natives organized and re-organized into multiple and circumstantial coalitions that extend from the XVI to the beginning of the XX century and maybe even until today), took place in this region of the continent.

If, in the first instance, the colonial exploration of this region established itself on sporadic initiatives, private or with a little support or incentive from the Iberic States, slowly the scenery would have changed and become composed of different characters defending diverse positions regarding the territory’s occupation. Century by century, decade by decade, the Central West turned from an inhospitable region, from backcountry or “thick brush” (the translation to English of the words “Mato Grosso”) to a strategic area, defended inch by inch by both kingdoms and even by the ethnic groups present in the region.

Through the view of the Portuguese Crown and also of the Portuguese colonists, the occupation of the border between Portuguese and Spanish possessions in South America was related to a series of strategic interests. The Crown meant to defend its territories using

the principle of *Uti Possidetis* (especially after the Madrid Treaty of 1750) and create a contention barrier to stop the Spanish incursions in Portuguese land². This would guarantee the security of the mining areas more to the east of the continent (especially Minas Gerais). The colonists were determined to defend their properties, businesses (mining, trade, animal raising), and security while at the same time guarantying new possibilities of business in promising and little-explored territories. For the Spanish, the border dispute happened because they needed to hinder the access of the bandeirantes expeditions to the course of the *Potosí* gold mines as well as recover parts of a territory that, until the incursions of the colonists from São Vicente, belonged to the Spanish Crown. Finally, for the ethnic groups, the natives, it guaranteed the survival and possession of their traditional areas, sometimes though alliances with the colonists (from one kingdom or the other), sometimes through strife.

The last movement of the systematic traffic of colonists from *São Paulo* through the backcountry of the Central West took place primarily between 1720 and 1839³, in what we call the period of monções. These expeditions happened among these complex processes and disputes among the multiple groups mentioned above.

The colonial expansion from São Paulo and the Monções

In the beginning of the XVIII century, partly as a result of the conflicts over gold mining in the region of the Minas Gerais (that culminated in the Emboabas War, which ended in 1710

with the pacification of the region and the creation of the capitánias of São Paulo and Minas Gerais⁴) and partly as a continuation of the search for valuable mineral resources, Paulista bandeirantes discovered gold in the region of the *Coxipó* river - a tributary of the *Cuiabá* river. In 1718, while searching for natives, Pascoal Moreira Cabral found gold in the banks of the *Coxipó Mirim* river, another tributary of the *Cuiabá* river. The following year, 1719, the new mining center in the region of the *Cuiabá* river was established. Shortly after, in 1722, in addition to the mine in *Coxipó*, near which the village of *Bom Jesus do Cuiabá* (the original settlement center is located where the township of *São Gonçalo Beira Rio*, the old *São Gonçalo Velho*, in Cuiabá is today⁵), a second mining center was established in a place discovered by the sorocabano Miguel Sutil. It was known as *Minas ou Lavras do Sutil*. Not long after that, in 1727, another settlement of Paulista origin was established more to the east. From the Cuiabá nucleus, the Paulistas went in three different directions. The first was towards north, following the gold trail indicated by natives that came down towards the *Cuiabá*. Overcoming the scarped relief of the *Tapirapuã* mountain range, they came to the area occupied by the native groups of Nambikwara, Umutina and Irantxe; to the banks of the *Sacre*, *Juba* and *Papagaio* rivers; and also to the source of *Paraguai*. The second direction was west, towards the Spanish occupation area. It was in this course that they crossed the *Paraguai* river, now wide and strong, and *Jauri*, where later the village of *Nossa Senhora de Cárceres* was established. From there they took the direction of the *Guaporé* river and the shoulders of the mountain range today called *Ricardo Franco*. At this mountain range, years later in 1751, the Portuguese Crown determined the foundation of the *Vila Bela da Santíssima Trindade*, a border demarcation of the Portuguese Empire in America and sentinel of the eastern flank, thus assuring

the possession of the boundary with the Spanish Empire. The gold extraction was also established in this area, especially in the settlement of *São Francisco Xavier*. The third direction was taken towards the east by the Anhangueras who followed the information of the existence of gold in the land of the “crowned”⁷. So, they crossed the *São Vicente* mountain range and came to the *Vermelho*, *da Morte*, and *Araguaia* rivers. In the meantime, in the middle of the 1720’s, the region that is known today as *Chapada dos Guimarães* was also occupied by colonists of Paulista origin who started their own sugar production and production of other kinds of important goods for the region. This settlement was followed in 1751 by the creation of the Sant’Anna Mission, by recommendation of the governor Dom Antonio Rolim de Moura. Lastly, in a late period, they arrived at the foothills of the *Doirada* mountain range, in an expedition led by Anhanguera *filho*. Here was where *Vila Boa do Goiás* was founded, completing and extending the realm of Paulista influence to this region.

It’s important to mention that all this colonial advance achieved by the Vicentin colonists was carried out on foot through the appropriation of tactics and techniques learned from the natives and acquired through the countless alliances made primarily in the Paulista plateau⁸. The “ways of the backcountry”, as named by Sergio Buarque de Holanda⁹, had only become possible to the colonists through the acquisition of the native’s knowledge of the ways, the usable native species, the navigating, and the walking methods. Even in the exchange of the terrestrial ways for the fluvial ones, the Paulistas still appropriated the native techniques of navigation in their activities in the monções. They only abandoned these ways when communication techniques that originated in Europe and were based in denser and wider material colonial structures (villages and

populated roads that enabled traffic and transportation using beasts of burden) were imposed.

It was in the progress of the colonizing fronts to the Central West, during a specific timeframe, that the two main monções kinds were developed: those that targeted settlement and those that aimed at trading. The challenges proposed in the realm of the historical processes not only give shape to the social relationships, institutions, and mentalities, but also consolidate a whole new specific material universe. The monções, as a historical process, a set of challenges to the human groups, and a manifestation of a “provisory way of existence”¹⁰ of a mankind in transit, didn’t simply take part in the history understood as a process or a narrative. They also left a wide spectrum of relationships and marks on the landscape: appropriation of the natural resources and creative action in the cultural, material and immaterial aspects.

Even though the MONÇÕES brought with them diverse configurations and targets – settlement, trading, exploration, the military and even science – the element that unified them in movement and method was the systematic employment of the rivers from the catchment basins of the *Paraná* and *Paraguai* rivers as routes of transportation to the backcountry. The monções’ origins go back to the establishment of the colonial nucleus on the banks of the *Cuiabá* river and the activities that supplied it with goods, but it’s existence was prolonged until the end of the decade of 1830, when the execution of the last monção was registered¹¹.

In the same way, even though many fluvial routes have been tried and even used, with distinct destinies – like the fluvial route to the *Iguatemi* prison – one of these routes became, after time, not only the most ordinary and effective, but also the one which was usually associated with the monções. This route departed from *Porto Feliz* (at the

time called *Araritaguba*) and stretched to the *Vila do Bom Jesus do Cuiabá*, passing from the catchment basin of the *Paraná* to the *Paraguai's* and crossing exactly to the altitude of the *Maracajú* mountain range - the divider of waters from both catchment basins. This was the most systematically employed route and the one used by the scientific mission undertaken in 1825 by the Russian consul Grigory Ivanovitch Langsdorff, who was accompanied by the painters Adrien Aimée Taunay and Hercules Florence, the botanist Ludwig Riedel, and the astronomer Nester Rubtsov, among others¹².

In that year, the year that the Europeans passed along the monções route, Florence wrote in his journal that the mercantile navigation in those rivers was decaying rapidly, indicating how arduous the crossing of this fluvial system was, although the terrestrial way of trading with *Goiás* could be treaded with advantages for quite a while.

Departing from *Porto Feliz*, in the Capitania of São Paulo, the monções penetrated the backcountry very slowly, crossing few miles at a time (sometimes only three) and ending a day's journey in the surroundings of the last settlement. In 1826 Florence wrote that during the first stops of the expedition, he and Taunay could go back, on foot or horseback, to the estate of Francisco Álvares, their host¹³. Nevertheless, as the monções went away from *Porto Feliz*, the stops became farther apart (according, of course, to the navigability of each section of the river), and the colonial settlements gradually became more scattered.

Like the monções, the expedition of the Russian consul chose June 1826 through January 1827 to carry out their trip to *Cuiabá*, since the fuller the summer rain made the rivers, the more dangerous the rapids were, hiding rocks and submerged logs that could wreck the vessels which comprised the expedition. So, Langsdorff's group left *Porto*

Feliz on the 22th of June, 1826 and arrived in *Cuiabá* on the 30th of January, 1827, taking a lot more time than the monções generally required to cover the same route – a delay justified by the specific interest of the expedition. The monções usually took twenty-five to thirty days to navigate the route from *Porto Feliz* to *Cuiabá* without any major unexpected event¹⁴.

Going down the *Tietê* river, before called *Anhembi*, which, because of the big wall presented by the *do Mar* mountain range, runs towards the *Paraná* river and towards the interior of the country (unlike most rivers), the monções ran into the *Paraná* river. From then on, they navigated constantly against the current until they reached the *Coxim* river. From *Paraná* the monções came to *Pardo*, and then on towards its source. At the point where the streams *Sanguessuga* and *Vermelho* meet, forming then the *Pardo*, the monções left the latter to get into the narrow canal of the *Sanguessuga* (also called *Sanguexuga* and other variations). [image 1a]

It was exactly at this spot, between the *Sanguessuga* stream and the mouth of the *Coxim* river, when it meets the *Taquari*, that the section with the worst navigability in the whole trip began. This section wasn't actually longer than the others; however, the abundance of rapids, waterfalls, canyons, straits, favourable areas to ambushes by the Mbayá-Guaycuru, as well as the waterway of *Camapuã* itself, transformed this moment into a defining one for the expedition's success. To be able to cover it without damage meant, at times, the success of the expedition.

It was exactly in this segment of the itinerary of the monções that we focused on studying and understanding the challenges and logic of occupation as well as the cultural permanence: from the source of the *Pardo* river, in the junction of the *Sanguessuga* and *Vermelho* streams, today located in the *Camapuã* shire, to the meeting of the

Coxim river with the *Taquari*, today in the shire of *Coxim*.

Although many variants have been utilized¹⁵ and many other routes have been tried in the attempt to shorten the distance or avoid sections comprising rapids in *Coxim*¹⁶, the best route for fluvial navigation proved, after time, to be following the transposition from the catchment basin of the *Paraná* to the *Paraguai's* catchment basin, where the *Maracajú* mountain range presents a small imperfection. In this transposition of catchment basins, called “*varadouros*”, the canoes, loads and people were transported by wagons pulled by a yoke of oxen coming from either the *Sanguessuga* or the *Desembarque* stream (around 2.5 miles away and down to the *Camapuã* farm, six miles away). It was remarkable to Florence that in the 1590 miles that separated *Araritaguba* from *Vila do Bom Jesus de Cuiabá*, only one *varadouro* was necessary. On the side of the *Sanguessuga* stream, very narrow, full of tree trunks and covered in branches, the travelers walked on a vast hill which went up about one hundred and fifty feet on the side of the *Paraguai* catchment basin, and then down four hundred and fifty feet until it reached the locale where the *Camapuã* farm existed [image 3].

From this farm, originally property of two brothers whose last name was Leme¹⁷, the monções supplied themselves with fresh provisions, rested for a few days and then got back on course. Because of the farm's importance to the fluvial route, the government of the São Paulo Capitania encouraged, on more than one occasion, the occupation and structuring of this support place to the backcountry's navigation. However, at the time of Langsdorff's expedition, the farm was on the brink of collapse, with emaciated animals and slaves taken by “*papeiras*” (goiter). In Florence's opinion, no more than 300 souls inhabited *Camapuã* in 1826, all of them in the condition of complete abandonment and almost all of them mestizos.

With the effective abandonment of the monções from the 1830's onward, a vacuum was created in this spatial interregnum between *Porto Feliz* and *Cuiabá*, completing the process of the deactivation of the monções that had started at least five decades earlier. The depauperation of the *Cuiabá* mines and the shifting of the groups to different areas, in search for new mines, as well as the replacement of the provisioning routes, led *Camapuã* to a state of deep lethargy. It only came out of this lethargy in the second half of the XX century, when cattle ranching laid hold of the region. The establishment of a group of properties which produced provisions and fulfilled the demand not only from *Cuiabá* but also partially from *Goiás* from the decade of 1730 on (in the *Chapada dos Guimarães*, in *Matriz de Sant'Ana* just a few miles from *Vila do Bom Jesus do Cuiabá*), added to the reasons that led to the abandonment of the monções and, consequently, the economic decadence of *Camapuã*. There is nothing left from the images created by Florence describing the site of *Camapuã* and the original place of the edifications can only be identified through archeological proceedings.

Historical archeology in the valley of the Coxim river: watermarks of the monções

Before exploring the rivers or the available documents left, it is important to understand that, despite their morphological differences, the historical process and the physical space surround the documental universe that interests us. It is not only about searching for material references here and there or executing a material inventory, but also of understanding how much time and space appropriated by the human element - manifested in different ways - left traces through which we seek to go back to them. So, more than a waterfall, a boat, one inscription or a letter from the XVIII century, our focus is in time,

space and a process. Regarding space, we have not only a river but also all the elements that integrate it's catchment basin and supplied conditions for navigation, inhabitation and symbolical appropriation. Also, for the production and reproduction of a singular mankind. Because of that, the research doesn't attain itself to the spaces delimited by a legislation or political borders (when they are not related to this case of study) but by the spectrum of this process, which placed it in a time and space.

Some indications were obtained utilizing the documentation about *Camapuã* and the account of Hercules Florence. The main indication, the distance between the *Sanguessunga* stream and the farm (7.5 miles south from the monções disembarkation harbor), was of a more complex order. As Florence wrote in his journal, the *Sanguessuga* stream was a little larger than a channel. Other documents that mention the *Sanguessuga* don't even agree in naming it "stream", sometimes denominating it "brook" or "pond". In the period of almost two hundred years that separates us from the Langsdorff expedition, the *Sanguessuga* disappeared from the landscape. It is common that small watercourses cease their existence in relatively small periods of time, therefore, how would it be possible to find it's location?

In spite of the physical disappearance of the stream, the reference in the toponymy was maintained in *Camapuã*. Following information from the region's inhabitants, we identified a small depression skirted by long and sleek hills, which formed raised shore lines, today occupied by winter pastures. Following the hills length, in this depression the pasture grows higher. However, it is not visited by the animals that feed in this area. This specific depression is nothing more than the *Sanguessuga* stream silted up due to many decades of deforestation of its banks. The presence of water makes the pasture grow higher, but it's

unstable soil repels the animals from it's vicinities. This line, formed by the former *Sanguessuga* stream, culminates in a vast oval shaped area, surrounded by buritis trees and with the same configuration of the depression described previously. This determined configuration leads us to deduce that the *Sanguessuga* stream, or the *Sanguessuga* lagoon, were not only one and the same, but also have changed over time due to the waters' behavior. Or perhaps the head of the stream, before running towards the *Pardo* river, formed a lagoon, which would explain its baptism name.

In order to confirm this suspicion we still needed to acquire elements that matched the traveler's reports. After all, at this point there was no opposing into that the site was any other silted up stream, although the identified area corresponded geologically and toponymically. The first evidence was acquired by following the track of the stream. It's end, not further than 1.5 mile, was precisely at the place where it met the *Vermelho* river before forming the *Pardo*, as related by the travelers' reports. The second evidence lead to the location of another stream, the one called "*do Desembarque*", used for the same purposes as the *Sanguessuga*. This discovery demonstrates that, in the monções era, the navigability of the *Sanguessuga* was already being periodically jeopardized because of the lack of water. We also concluded that, because of the geographic and toponymic information afore-mentioned, the *Desembarque* stream should offer analog conditions to the *Sanguessuga*, with the exception of being wider. Tracking the *Vermelho* river we could finally identify the *Desembarque* stream that, for being wider and deeper, is still active, even though it has gone thorough the same silting up process that affected *Sanguessuga*. The third evidence that we could identify was the high plateau that is mentioned by Florence - the culminating point before the four hundred

and fifty foot descent towards the *Camapuã* farm. This high plateau, as well as the road that leads to the banks of the *Camapuã* brook, was preserved along time, in spite of its superficial transformations. From this point, we had a privileged view of both the *Camapuã* brook and the former *Sanguessuga* stream, confirming the plateau's strategic role in this passage of catchment basins' transposition. Therefore, the only left to do was to locate the site occupied by the old *Camapuã* farm.

A settlement of three hundred people definitively, by Portuguese America standards, wasn't disregarded or able to disappear without leaving vestiges of existence. However, the banks of the *Camapuã* brook, the present urban area of the city of *Camapuã*, are fully occupied by houses and small properties. These banks are also about 7.5 miles from the point where the monções probably disembarked in the *Sanguessuga* stream, even considering an error margin of 1.500 feet, since the channel was really short. Consequently, we suggest that the old *Camapuã* farm doesn't correspond with the present center of the city of *Camapuã*. The 7.5 miles, counted from the *Sanguessuga's* silted up channel, indicated an area on the *Camapuã* brook further down from the center. After walking on the banks, we determined that this area was located inside a particular property covered by bushy vegetation. However, no large trees grew again in the site, which now has the appearance of a dirty field. Fragments of hand-made tiles and traditional terracotta pieces are dusted like constellations over almost the whole area. In the center of it, some round and intercommunicant ditches have stone structures around them as well as remaining traces of small walls morphologically identical to the ditches' structures.

It is safe to say, having as a keystone the etching produced by Hercules Florence in 1826, that the group of edifications constituting the *Camapuã* farm

should stretch out towards the country, since the painter mentions the existence at the time of two two-storey houses besides the three hundred inhabitants and their houses (a farmyard, a slave house, a sugar mill set going by draft animals, an alembic, sugar cane, corn and bean fields, stables¹⁸). The houses were used as lodging for the militia's lieutenants that acted as of the officers of the place. According to Florence's journal, the structures associated with the heart of *Camapuã* branched to the other bank of the brook, a report that can only be verified with more accurate research aiming visually reconstructing all of the complex. It is curious, however, to perceive the diversity of impressions through different cultural parameters. D. Antonio Rolim de Moura, while traveling towards *Vila do Bom Jesus de Cuiabá* shortly after the establishment of the lodging of *Camapuã* in 1728, added that he found the accommodations very reasonable, taking into account the part of the world where they were¹⁹. He complimented (especially) the farmyard, which was wide enough for bullfights, and the chapel next to it - a positive opinion shared by Lacerda and Almeida. Florence, on the other hand, coming from a different cultural background, and about a century after the passage of D. Rolim de Moura, had a terrible impression of *Camapuã*, perceiving it as a portrait of decadence and abandonment of the backcountry.

Two factors contribute positively to the work in the *Camapuã* occupation area: the preservation of the original topography and the absence of a vertical and extreme urbanization. Even though the area has been quite impacted by agriculture and the growth of cattle ranching, the banks of the *Camapuã* brook have been occupied continuously through centuries but without continuity of its occupiers. Appealing to topographical observation from compiled information is a possible and very

necessary resource to the archeological study of the region. The growth of the city of *Camapuã* neither caused major soil displacements nor edified buildings that would jeopardize the comparison of the landscape with the iconography. The drawings from Florence of the old *Camapuã* site might be useful for upcoming work.

In the memory, traffic as well as the patrimony (and in this case the archeological patrimony) are pre-appropriated by societies. No Jesuit mission is recorded in the *Camapuã* region, but the support place in the so called *Ilha Grande*, in the *Pardo*²⁰ river, was used by the Jesuits, who went down in the *Iguatemi* direction, to *Santa Cruz de La Sierra*, to Paraguai, and to even more secluded regions in America. However the collective memory appropriated the sparse traces and information from everyday life and the fragmented reports transmitted in a more and more subtle manner that *Camapuã* had a Jesuitic past. Even though the Inacians have passed through *Camapuã*, the earliest decades of the settlement correspond with the start of the banishment of the Company of Jesus from the American lands that belonged to the Spanish crown. *Camapuã* was born too late to suffer any significant influence from the Jesuits. However, the *Camapuã* farm (the monções' stop) today lives in the collective dream as the Jesuitic settlement it never was; and in many places in the woods, wherever lays human evidence from the past, sporadic adventurous travelers dared incursions in search for lost gold and forgotten treasures. Today, as in the monções era, treasures belong to an even more remote and uncertain past²¹.

After the stop in the *Camapuã* farm, the travelers placed their vessels back into water of the *Camapuã* brook. This brook, today silted up, as were the other watercourses in the region (because of the agricultural and cattle ranching activities, handled without respect for the

legislation of environmental protection), already presented difficulties to navigation (in the XIX century). For example, the canoes from the monções were placed in the brook where it flanked the farm, but were carried by the brook only three miles down. Here there was enough water and the canoes wouldn't strike on sandbanks. When the expedition finally got into the *Coxim* river, 18 miles further down, it stopped at what they called the *Furado* harbor, in order to embark some extra travelers and more cargo. They were then ready for the second part of the journey, to *Vila do Bom Jesus do Cuiabá*.

The section right after the river meets the *Camapuã* brook is the one most referred to most often in the accounts and documents related to the monções. An section of difficult and dangerous navigation, it turned the *Coxim* into the most feared river in all the monções' route. In a few miles nothing, there are no less than four significant rapids (called waterfalls in the period's documents) that threatened the embarkations. Aside from these four big obstacles, the monções (as soon as they got into the *Coxim* river) also had to overcome the *Abaré* waterfall, the *Culapada*, the *Três Imãos* mouth, and the *Itaguaçava* shallow. After that there was the *Furnas* mouth, then the *Furnas* waterfall and then the *Anhumas* waterfall, where human risks were added to the natural risks. To travel from the *Camapuã* farm to this point, it took almost a whole week of navigation downstream.

The first problem the monções faced that demanded as much luck as skill was the section where the *Coxim* river was flanked by very high banks. This section was the edge of a higher plateau, "as high as the big mast of a ship", according Florence²². At this unevenness, the monções were very vulnerable to the attacks of the (Caiapós and Guaycurus) natives, according to both the available documents and Florence.

This was because on one side there was a natural wall totally inaccessible from the river and on the other a very dense jungle in which, under diverse circumstances, the expeditions were victims to the natives' ambushes. Sometimes, from the top of the high banks, the natives threw big rocks onto the canoes, obligating the pilots to take the embarkations away from the wall and close to the other shore, where they were within reach of groups hidden in the jungle [figure 2]. The slow speed of the expedition canoes made them quite easy targets, a risk mitigated by the constant presence of armed men in each one of the canoes. Because of the attacks, the governor of the Mato Grosso Capitania sent many expeditions to "pacify" the region.

In general, we don't know enough about the native groups that inhabited the region the monções crossed. Before reaching the source of the *Pardo* river, the trip was safe regarding the presence of natives. This is understandable, because it was the nearest region to São Paulo and its native hunters. *Camapuã*, the stop at the transposition of catchment basins, was attacked many times by invasions attributed to the Caiapós and Guaycurus. Nevertheless, it is certain that the area after the *Coxim* river, up to the *Taquari*, was occupied by the Mbayás-Guaycurus, natives that adopted the use of horses in their attacks. From the *São Lourenço* and *Paraguai* rivers onwards, the area was taken by the Paraguayás, an ethnic group unknown to the people of São Paulo until 1725²³, and practically annihilated by a Paulista expedition allied to the Bororós in 1734. Around six hundred Paraguayás were killed and almost three hundred enslaved at that time. Also around this, time the Bororós were associated with the Paulistas, thanks to Antonio Pired de Campos reaching the ethnic group's leader.

Around the beginning of the second half of the XVIII century, the attacks

from both the Paraguayás and Mbayás-Guaycurus, became less intense - especially from the Paraguayás. Almost a century later, in the Langsdorff expedition, Florence indicated that fear of Mbayá-Guaycuru's attacks still existed, especially in the *Coxim* canyon. The Guaná and Xamacoco, once subordinate to protection and collaboration with the Mbayá-Guaycuru, appeared randomly along the expedition routes or even in the *Vila do Bom Jesus do Cuiabá*. Also in the colonial contexts from the south, southeast and central west of the Portuguese America, the colonist's control of the regions demanded alliances and arrangements with certain native ethnic groups (as the Bororós). This also caused the annihilation of the hostile groups. On the other hand, not only the natives but also their techniques were appropriated by the colonizers in the monções universe. The Guató (excellent navigators that occupied the banks of the *São Lourenço* and high *Paraguai* rivers²⁴) were systematically employed as pilots and rowers in the monções. They were also acknowledged as the best guides from those regions for fluvial navigation²⁵. The choice of canoe shape for navigation in the kind of river found in the catchment basins of the *Paraná* and the *Paraguai* followed the techniques of the natives, with the log canoe being preferred. The navigation and canoe building techniques, as well as the choice of stop sites and the best routes were according the indications of the natives. When the colonists searched for alternatives outside of the natives' cultural universe, particularly in route choice, they always ended up going back to the former solutions.

With one extra day spent in overcoming the section of the high banks, the monções reached the sequence of the big rapids. According to Florence: *The rapids are numerous; among them there are some long and dangerous ones: the rocks, the abundant water, the foam form a true*

*chaos*²⁶. First there is the *Canela de André Alves* rapid, followed by *Jarurú*, *Embiracu* and *Avanbandava-guaçu*, a sequence overcome in a day of navigation.

A significant amount of time was spent on the complexity of navigating the rapids. The embarkations were unloaded at the banks and men carried the load little by little along the shores, where they waited beyond the rapids' section. The pilots and rowers of the canoes (when it was possible) then carefully maneuvered using long rows and long wood poles with iron extremities, called *zingas*, to escape the rugged rocks and visible stones [figure 4]. Many times the travelers that waited after the rapids almost lost sight of the canoes, disappeared in the middle of the droplet curtain formed by the water's turmoil. Under different circumstances, when human presence in the canoes was impossible during the navigation through the rapids, the embarkations were then carried along the shore, as in the case of *Travessão do Jaú*, which Florence calls *Jaurú*.

The navigation of this section, with either few or many men, is absolutely impossible. The *Coxim* river, at this section, carved a narrow passage between two hills of extremely rocky composition. The narrowness of the gap increased and made water stronger, increasing the risk offered by the water's velocity and strength. Besides, there is the great amount of rocks in the banks and course of the *Coxim* [figure 5]. Even today, after *Travessão do Jaú*, there is a small beach where the river begins to lose energy again. At this place, big piles of matter discarded by the river formed. This matter that looks like it was processed by a huge grinder, and it shows the energetic potential of this section as well as the consequences of a reckless crossing. If the passage was successful, the canoes were reloaded in the closest calm area of the river, a task that also demanded a lot of time. Still in the layers of the higher parts of

the hills that surrounded the vicinities of *Travessão do Jaú*, we located ceramic material in the surface, but we didn't dwell long. However, the continuity of the region's occupation up to this date by diverse groups, indicates the attractive as well as strategic aspects of this route to the country's interior. An interesting area, for both occupation and passage.

Continuing in the *Coxim's* course, the *monções* were obligated to unload everything from the canoes and carry the embarkations along the shore in the section today called *Quatro Pé* waterfall, (Florence called it *Avanbandava-guaçu*). At this waterfall the river narrows to pass through an exiguous opening in the rocks, forming a natural delivery canal. Again, the strength of the water forbids any attempt of navigation.

At this waterfall, there is a series of inscriptions carved in the rocky hills above the water course. These inscriptions were noticed by Florence during the Langsdorff's expedition and, at that time, some of them were already thirty years old. This means that they were produced in 1797 at least. The site, today a small private property that is also a stopping place for fishermen, must have been continuously used as a stop not only by the *monções*, but also by many expeditions. Because of the time in which we visited the waterfall (in the beginning of the monsoon period) some of the inscriptions were submerged, an understandable fact since the fluvial expeditions took place in the driest period of the year. Five of the recorded dates - 1804, 1815, 1820, 1832 and 1838 - are very close and oriented in the same direction, even though the chronological disorder and their arrangement on the rocks indicate that, from the beginning, they weren't placed with the intention to have other inscriptions following them. The writings, at this place of compulsory stopping, but not in any other, show some relevance of the site to the expeditions context. These expe-

ditions must have been exceptional in character and diverse in objective from the commercial *monções*, since some of the inscriptions are accompanied by the name of the writer and his rank (in general a military character) as well as the information "R. *Expedição*", that is "Royal Expedition". On those rocky walls, together some of those inscriptions from the expeditions, we find the names of the writers or even the components of the expeditions, like "Costa Chaves" or "I. W. Brandl", as well as the date on which they stayed at the place ("the 2nd of August, 1815"). [figure 6, figure 7a, figure 7b].

In 1826, as they went in the direction of *Camapuã*, the Langsdorff expedition crossed an official exploratory *monção* that went downward and followed it with the purpose of finding alternatives to the conventional way. During the conversation that followed among the members of the expedition, it was noted that other expeditions that came before tried the same thing. In the same way, during the time Morgado de Mateus governed the recently restored *Capitania de São Paulo*, many expeditions, primarily fluvial, were sent with the purpose of exploring, colonizing and defending the region of the *Iguatemi* prison²⁷. In 1750, particularly after the signature of the Madrid treaty, which defined the border of the Mato Grosso region in its 5th and 6th articles, the region became a constant target of incursions by the Portuguese colonial government. These incursions were for the purposes of guarantying the effective possession of the region and executing recognition and demarcation works. From the banks of the *Guaporé* river, where *Vila Bela da Santíssima Trindade* was established by order of the Portuguese crown, to the middle of *Paraguai*, the borders saw an intense, singular and unseen fluvial activity regarding the birth of colonizing matters in Portuguese America. It is not accidental that the *monções* had developed

precisely in this sphere of situations, techniques, practices and mentalities. The dates found on the rocky walls show the permanence of the use of the fluvial system, as well as permanence of the official expeditions, whose objectives we can only vaguely estimate today. Furthermore, the expeditions indicate the continuous concern of the governments with this region and the continuance of this concern through the process of Brazil's independence.

After the *Quatro Pé* waterfall was traversed, the monções moved towards the last section of the *Coxim* river, passing through the *Letreiro* waterfall, which was named *Avanhandava-mirim* by Florence as [figure 8]. Again, on various stones, there are inscriptions. Curiously however, they are different from the others. In this case, they don't possess either order or mentions to specific expeditions. Also, different from the previous inscriptions, the handwriting isn't regular, but rather it has characters of varying size that don't follow straight lines and don't concentrate in a single place as at *Quatro Pé*. This morphology strengthens the idea of regularity and officiality in one case (the previous inscriptions) as opposed to private expeditions, the monções of commerce or settlement.

In this section there is actually a long rapid of approximately six hundred feet, with many rocks sticking out of the water's surface, as well as sitting under it during the monsoon season. Channels also form along the river, and in these rapids, changing positions many times throughout the day. Even though the formation of these channels has been mentioned since the beginning of colonial navigation in these rivers, it is certain that the process of silting up in the region aggravated its existence and made inexperienced navigation even more dangerous [figure 9]. In general, today, as in the past, the most experienced pilots were born in the region, grew up inside a boat, and

could read every sign, every trace and every change in the waters. The discovery of the channels and the choice of the most suitable route for navigation were made through the observation of the surface of the water, where crests formed. Today pilots are located in the canoe stern – where they control the engine and keep very attentive to the river in these sections. When any change to the water surface occurs, he initiates a sharp turn towards the channel he judges safer. In the epoch of the monções, the pilots were located in the stem of the canoe for two reasons: first, because the maneuvering of the embarkation was mainly in the front with the zingas; and second, because, due to the length of the canoes at the time (measuring up to forty-eight or fifty-four feet long by almost three feet wide), the river's visibility from the stern was deeply compromised.

Still today, the regular procedure for crossing these rapids is without passengers. On all occasions, we had to abandon the boat with its pilot and pass the turbulent section walking along the shore.

As they came near the vicinities of the *Coxim's* mouth, the expeditions faced the last turbulent section before entering the *Taquari*. The *Campo* waterfall, located few miles from the mouth, is one of the places where it becomes much more dangerous. When the river is full, thanks to rocks and submerged logs. However the crossing of the rapids was generally performed without the need to unload the canoes and with the help of the zingas, maneuvered by pilots standing in the embarkation's stem. After overcoming this obstacle, the monções could calmly enter the *Taquari* river, leaving the rough section behind. The arrival at the *Taquari* represented such a triumph in the entirety of the expeditions that it was celebrated with fusillade and some partying.

Tired, the travelers stopped at the *Coxim's* mouth, where lies the city with

the same name. In this place, according to the reports, there was a small settlement owned by Domingos Gomes Beliago, thanks to the donation of allotments shortly after the discovery of the mines in *Coxipó*. However, almost nothing is left except scattered information about the place's existence. Florence, in 1826, doesn't even mention its existence. The Langsdorff expedition passed right through the place where *Coxim* is today²⁸. The *Beliago* waterfall, which they passed shortly after they entered the *Taquari*, seems to be at the same point as the brook with the same name, which we located downstream the city. According to the documentation, Beliago's camp would have flourished on the banks of this stream; however, its real existence can only be proven through specific prospective procedures. We have to consider the adoption of the name for the waterfall as an interesting indication, although not a conclusive one.

Coxim is a city that revived in recent times due to fishing tourism. Its name was ascribed in close relation to the monções. The Portuguese that took part in the fluvial expeditions in the XVIII century appropriated the terminology used in the communications of the Portuguese empire with the Indic subcontinent, especially in the navigations on the route to India. The monsoons are climatic phenomena, natural to this part of the Asiatic coast in the Indic Ocean. Promoted by the movement of air masses between areas of high and low pressure, the monsoons are responsible for both dry weather (when coming from the continent, hence being called continental) and rain and floods (when coming from the Indic Ocean, named maritime). The millennial oscillation of these monsoons guaranteed the formation of extremely singular biomes in the Indic subcontinent. The winter, or maritime, that occur between the months of June and October, are very important for rice-

growing. It is very probable that the fluvial expeditions in the southeast of the Portuguese America received the name “monções” (translated monsoon in English) because they coincided seasonally with the Asian climatic monsoons. Another reason would be that they are related to the cultural universe of navigation, the way of communication between Portugal and India. This is also the reason why the river and the city located at its mouth were named Coxim, after the Indian city of the same name, a Portuguese trading post in the region. The Asian Cochim belongs today to the state of Kerala. It has been an important harbor city up to today, located in the west Indic coast, and belonged to the Portuguese empire from 1503 to 1663, which was curiously, before the beginning of the fluvial trading expeditions through the Paraná and Paraguai drainage-basins.

Coxim, according to Mato Grosso do Sul, searches for a past associated with the monções, but that seems more and more unlikely to exist. Nothing in its urban nucleus or surroundings leads to the monções except the topography and the toponymy, elements that can be relevant to science but are practically nothing to the restructuring of the city’s socioeconomic profile towards historical tourism.

Near the Beliago waterfall, on the right shore of Taquari, there are structures of wood and lath-and-plaster that are gradually devoured by waves, many of which created by the movements of boats with very powerful engines. These structures, called by the locals “trenches”, probably belong to the War of Paraguai period (1864-1870). In the year after the beginning of the conflict, the rows of Paraguayan soldiers led by Resquin and Urbietta took Coxim in April 24th, but ended up stopping the march towards Cuiabá. On December 20th of the end of the same year, the Expeditionary Corps in Operation in the South of Mato Grosso, arrived in

Coxim from Uberada (Minas Gerais). They remained there until June 1866, when, fustigated by hunger and plague, they departed to Miranda, a place already in the Pantanal area²⁹.

The city of Coxim, according to the local writer of memoirs, would have its origins in the settlement founded by Domingos Gomes Belliago (1729), but it actually possesses a series of contradictory elements in its historical narrative. As a city that would have been created from a monções’ camp, (hence fluvial) it should have its nucleus develop around the harbour and focused on it. Especially since the settlements along the river banks were explored by the monções who moved inland only at a later period. In Coxim, the most active part of the city is high, facing the road that crosses it, and is distant from the portion that lies along the Taquari river. Besides the structures previously mentioned, there are no constructions or even information of colonial occupation in the district’s limits of the Taquari banks. It’s always good to remember that the place regarded as the old site of Beliago’s camp is located about four miles downstream from today’s Coxim. In the same way, the extremely regular plan of the city is different from the settlements created in the XVIII century. The XVIII settlements were majorly irregular, created without rigorous planning and enlarged successively throughout the centuries, according to the regional economic dynamics.

There are also documents in the public archive of Corumbá, Mato Grosso do Sul, which indicate that Domingos Gomes Belliago, if he ever took possession of his allotment in the Taquari banks, left the place very shortly. He could be found, according to the documentation, in Cuiabá in the following decade (1730). Not even the documentation of Coxim’s political emancipations covers further than the end of the XIX century. In the presence of this evidence, the

most trustworthy hypothesis is that the present district of Coxim, if originated by Domingos Gomes Belliago or even by the monções, didn’t keep urbanistic or architectonic traces able to testify of this past. It is certain that, in the occupation of the Brazilian extreme west during the Second Empire, with also the aim to guarantee the security and sovereignty over the boundaries, Coxim had some importance again. It is clear that the political history of the district of Coxim should not be confused with the history of the region’s occupation. The occupation is certainly connected to the monções.

Leaving the mouth of the Coxim river behind, they followed the Taquari downstream until they got in the São Lourenço river, and from it to the Cuiabá. This route could be completed without natural risks to the navigation - the only possible problem would be the attacks of the natives from the Payaguá ethnic group.

**Until Cuiabá and from there...:
Suggestions regarding the
monções’ patrimony and the destiny
of the fluvial navigations in
the extreme west of Brazil**

The village of Bom Jesus do Cuiabá, with its narrow streets spread along the dry raised shore line of the Cuiabá river, waited for the monções and provisions. There, as well as in São Paulo, prevailed the building technique of the lath-and-plaster wall. There is still the architectonic and urbanistic complex under governmental trust by the Institute of National Historic and Artistic Patrimony (IPHAN in Portuguese) in the old downtown of Cuiabá. Maybe (differently from São Paulo) what happened to the survival of this patrimony transmitted from the time of the monções was precisely the economical decadence. As it manifested itself quickly, the region suffered, but the crisis was succeeded by some maintenance of the local life and culture, which kept

occupying and maintaining the edifications, and by the urban organization in the active circuits of society. In the many mines discovered in the vicinities of Cuiabá, the amount of gold produced caused interest for little more than ten years, shifting the goldwashers to more distant regions. The most important period of the monções in Cuiabá occurred without the mining activity at its height. Through the decades, there weren't any new extremely active economical processes that transformed the city's urban organization. The social, economical and cultural activities kept on being served by the already existing edifications, and there was merely the addition of new buildings and streets. Only in the second half on the XX century did the city of Cuiabá start suffering pressures regarding its historical patrimony, especially regarding the part contemporary to the monções. These unleashed judicial disputes between the district's mayorship and the IPHAN, who only definitively concluded the process of putting the historical nucleus of the city under governmental trust³⁰.

As a city born due to the gold mining, assisted for a long time by the monções, and communicating with the world through the river, Cuiabá's urbanization followed the banks of the river that gave it its name. The steeper hills were occupied only in recent times, originating the new city with a kind of urban organization and constructions very distinct from the ones spread around the historical center, the Cuiabá harbor, the old Market and the Navy Arsenal (today transformed into a museum and a cultural center, respectively). Even with the foundation of the Vila Bela da Santíssima Trindade, in 1752, and the transference of the capitania's headquarters to that location - completed only in the following decade with the decadence of the gold mining - Cuiabá (from bororo Ikuipá, "place where the fishing is made with harpoon") was still a crucial point for

the diverse routes to many directions into the heart of the country.

As evidence of its past linked to the occupation though the rivers and the activities of the monções, a good percentage of Cuiabá's population has fishing as their main activity, either for their own consumption or for commercialization. In the feeding habits, the omnipresence of fish together with a cooking method brought by the bandeirantes and monçoeiros - beans, corn, pork - indicate not only their cultural permanence but also the peculiarity of this colony before other processes and spaces of occupation, as the backcountries of Goiás and Minas Gerais.

The ways of occupation of these backcountries of the Portuguese America excel for their mobility and, sometimes, for their ephemerality. There are plenty of reports about settlements and even villages that disappeared due to an attack of the local ethnic groups, plagues or some other sort of local catastrophe. There are few cities that were able to keep some continuity throughout of the almost three hundred years that separate us from the discoveries of gold in the banks of the Cuiabá. The material culture produced in the ambit of the colonial occupation processes on the western part of the Portuguese empire in the Americas almost didn't survive. Marked by the massive use of woods, lath-and-plaster walls, and native fibers, it was, at least in its physical aspect, victim of a very dynamic natural system.

This is very different from the coast of the Northeast, where the communication with the kingdom, the availability of more resistant materials, and even the more solid and economically active character of the litoral generated a material universe preserved until our days. In the fringes of the monções' routes there was few left of the edifications and objects associated with the movement. On the other hand, the mobile character of its population also contrib-

uted to this feeble survival. While the challenges proposed by the sugar economy (settled nearer the coast) implied the sedentarisation of the colonist, in the country of the Portuguese America - especially the parts explored by the Paulista colonists - the challenges lead, if not to nomadism, at least to a more subtle sedentarization. Not only the capture of natives, but also the mining and the trade (by the monções and by the troops) suggest a cultural setting suitable to mobility.

The availability of natural resources that could support the constant replacement of objects also leads to almost no preoccupation of these objects' long term maintenance. There was almost nothing left; be it the building material used in the houses and other constructions - lath-and-plaster walls, stucco, techniques in unbaked clay, diverse woods, straw form native palm trees like buriti and bocaiúva, or also in the navigation equipment - monoxylon canoes built mainly with peroba or ximboúva, also called tambori³¹, pirogues and other kinds of small embarkation, oars, zingas, sirgas (twisted ropes generally made of cotton and used to maneuver the embarkations, cross the rapids and navigate the narrower streams). These objects were eroded by time, simply abandoned, or used as firewood in stoves and ovens.

Even the embarkations, made of bark of big trees practically disappeared in the XIX century due to the exaggerated use of this material. The banks of the rivers explored by the monções were occupied by trees forty-five feet high, which provided excellent canoes of bark after the material was cut and molded through fire. However, as the decades of the monções' navigation passed by, its availability became rarer and rarer until big inland dislocations were needed to obtain the proper trees. Even though the monções used other kinds of embarkation, the disappearance of the big monoxyle canoes

matched the decadence of the fluvial trading routes towards Cuiabá. Very few examples of this material culture were preserved in the Bandeiras Museum in Goiás Velho, the Museum of Cárceres, or even the Paulista Museum in the capital of São Paulo. Curiously there was nothing left either in the collection of material culture of Cuiabá, or in Coxim or Camapuã.

However neither the material culture is restricted to objects³², nor the archeological patrimony to edifications or collections of objects.

The cities are there, as well as the landscape marks, including also the rivers, the toponymy and even the collective memory (even though mainly present in specific groups and places). More than visually relevant geomorphological elements, the landscape marks meant for centuries (and even millennia if we consider the native peoples) points of reference in the complex dislocation through the backcountries. The fluvial routes would be practically non viable without these visual elements used as references, especially because the navigation in the rivers follow a different dynamics from those in the sea. Even the pilots and guides from the embarkations used in the navigation of the far west were chosen among natives or mestizos, because of their knowledge of the region; a knowledge that obviously granted them a mental map of the marks and ways of the inlands.

The Camapuã village, founded in the first quarter of the XVIII century, was baptized with the names of two close hills (“Beautiful Breasts”), which leaves no doubt about the importance of this kind of register for orientation in this historical setting.

The spatial demarcation in the documentation and historiography that refers not only to the monções but also to the fluvial expeditions in general, is done in function of landscape marks. And it is important to take into account the lack of many other techniques of navigation

and localization in these secluded places of the Portuguese empire.

In the same way, as the navigation in open sea demanded extreme knowledge of diverse areas - the maritime currents, the winds and weathers behavior, the coastlines, the coral reefs and the places of restocking provisions - the fluvial navigation offered a whole lot of different challenges. The rivers possess regimes of navigability ruled by the rain seasons, the mobility of its streams, and specific disembarkation places. The transition from a drainage basin to another, through the channels that link them, implies the knowledge of indications and landscape marks that locate the disembarkment and transposition place and avoid the dislocation at random (this, in an extreme case, could factor into the loss of an expedition). So, the landscape marks compose a gigantic patrimonial entirety which refers to the occupation and colonization of the extreme west.

However, nowadays we can identify nothing but traces from this cultural universe from the monções - part native, part colonizer – unless in very specific complexes, as the ones from Cuiabá or Camapuã (waiting to be studied and promoted). Maybe the extermination of the native groups associated with the decadence of the fluvial routes - to which they were extremely important - left a very deep if not full cultural vacuum; its consequence was the loss of diverse elements, spaces, techniques, objects and memoirs. It was already the XX century before new colonizing movement of significant strength took the region, already in the XX century, with the majority of witnesses and partakers of this cultural universe not really reaching it. It is also important to consider the transplantation of southern populations in higher quantities than the original inhabitants, population that carried their cultural experiences massively to this region, pressuring the local cultures even more

and cooperating for the disappearance of whatever survived the lapse.

Nevertheless, one last perspective wasn't regarded. The slow abandonment of the trading monções in the fluvial system, that involved the catchments basins of The Paraná and Paraguai from the last two decades of the XVIII century, and definitely from the decade of the 1830, does not imply in the definitive abandonment of these practices and techniques in all places. When analyzing the documents, reports and remains of the material culture, we see they suggest the assimilation, if not of the monções, of very similar or identical practices that composed them. The historical and environmental challenges that were answered by the monções didn't disappear *in totum*; rather, they moved to areas deeper inland into America, in other fluvial systems. From the Guaporé river, on the Bolivian border, up to the Amazonas mouth there are hundreds of miles, of which two hundred and fifty are rapids. More than twenty severe irregularities of ground are found from the Guaporé to the city of Santo Antonio do Madeira, on the banks of the river with the same name. The Guaporé, after passing Vila Bela da Santíssima trindade (final stop of many monções) runs towards the Príncipe da Beira Fort, built as a guardian of the Portuguese empire's border in the amazonic region. After that, it integrates into the Mamoré river, whose spring is in the hillside of the Andes. Bordering the Pacaás Novos mountain ridge, the Mamoré presents its rapids section straight after the ridge, and completes it by the section already belonging to the Madeira, forming the two hundred and fifty miles of rapids. The possibility of the Bolivian access to the sea (the country lost its costal lands to its neighbors³³) looked reasonable crossing the Amazon jungle. However, until the disastrous attempts of building railways in this section known as Madeira-

Mamoré, the route was crossed by embarkations. The etchings produced in 1881 by the general of the Brazilian army João Severiano da Fonseca [figures 10 and 11] and by William Lewis Herndon and Lardner Gibbon – who in serving the United States navy, covered the Amazonas valley in 1851 [figure 12] – show us the morphology of these expeditions crossing the Madeira and Mamoré rivers, some of them even with a military character. With the exception of the name, there is little difference between them and the monções from

Cuiabá. Even the challenges and the material solutions for the navigation of this catchment basin – that are already from the Amazonas and no more from the Paraná and Paaguai – are analogous to the monções [figure 13]. What this suggests is that the technologies and practices don't simply disappear; they can be transplanted to regions where they are still useful or that present analogous challenges to the ones they were created for. It is also suggested that techniques and technologies don't become obsolete, at least not in a sim-

plistic manner; they only don't respond to newly proposed challenges. At least, even though it is only a vestige, the navigation of the Madeira-Mamoré system – before it's replacement with the railroads or other alternatives of transportation – gives us indication of the monções that, in a late period, didn't disappear, but “got enchanted”, as Guimarães Rosa would say.

Translation: Danielle Nastari

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² BELLOTTO, Heloisa Liberalli. *Autoridade e conflito no Brasil colonial: o governo do Morgado de Matheus em São Paulo*. São Paulo: Secretaria de Estado da Cultura, 1979, pp. 117-70.

³ HOLANDA, Sérgio Buarque de. *Monções*. São Paulo: Brasiliense, 1990.

⁴ MATTOS, Odilon Nogueira de. “A Guerra dos Emboabas”, in: HOLANDA, Sérgio Buarque de. *História Geral da civilização brasileira*, Tomo 1, Volume 1, 4. ed, São Paulo: DIFEL, 1972, pp. 297 a 306.

⁵ BEAUREPAIRE-ROHAN, Henrique de. *Anais de Mato Grosso*. Cuiabá, Mato Grosso: Instituto Histórico e Geográfico de Mato Grosso, Publicações Avulsas n. 20, 2001. Texto original de 1846, p. 14.

⁶ HOLANDA, Sérgio Buarque de. “As Monções”, in: HOLANDA, Sérgio Buarque de. *História Geral da civilização brasileira*, Tomo 1, Volume 1, 4. ed. São Paulo: DIFEL, 1972, p. 313 e seguintes.

⁷ The denomination “crowned” was given to countless ethnic groups that shaved the back part of their heads, as a kind of tonsure. However, specifically in the east of Mato Grosso,

the word “crowned” referred to the Bororos, inhabitants of the banks of the *Vermelho*, and *da Morte* rivers, and also parts of the *Araguaia* rivers.

⁸ HOLANDA, Sérgio Buarque de. *Caminhos e fronteiras*. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2001.

⁹ HOLANDA, Sérgio Buarque de. Op. cit., 1990, pp. 15-8.

¹⁰ NOVAIS, Fernando Antonio (coord.) e MELLO E SOUZA, Laura de (org.). *História da Vida Privada no Brasil*, volume 1, São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2001.

¹¹ HOLANDA, Sérgio Buarque de. Op. cit., 1990.

¹² FLORENCE, Hercules. *Viagem fluvial do Tietê ao Amazonas*, São Paulo: Brasiliense, s/n.

¹³ Idem, p. 13 e seguintes.

¹⁴ *Demonstração dos diversos caminhos de que os moradores de São Paulo se servem para os rios Cuiabá e província do Coxiponé*. Cuiabá, Mato Grosso: IHGMT, 2001, p. 12.

¹⁵ Idem.

¹⁶ FLORENCE, Hercules, Op. cit., p. 30 e seguintes.

¹⁷ Segundo Hercules Florence, em 1826, a fazenda Camapuã pertencia a uma sociedade comercial sediada em São Paulo.

¹⁸ Idem, p. 49 e seguintes.

¹⁹ MOURA, D. Antonio Rolim de. “Relação da viagem que em 1757 (sic) fez o Exmo. Conde de Azambuja, saindo da cidade de São Paulo para a vila de Cuiabá, cópia da de uma que suponho original, havida de uma das famosas Bibliotecas nessa corte”, In: Luis dos Santos Vilhena, apud SOUZA, Laura de Mello e. “Formas provisórias de existência: a vida cotidiana nos caminhos, nas fronteiras e nas for-

tificações”, in: NOVAIS, Fernando Antonio (coord.) e MELLO E SOUZA, Laura de (org.). *História da Vida Privada no Brasil*, volume 1. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2001, p. 65.

²⁰ FLORENCE, Hercules, Op. cit., p. 38.

²¹ Idem, p. 44 e seguintes.

²² Idem, p. 55.

²³ CARVALHO, Sílvia M. Schmuziger. “Chaco: encruzilhada de povos e ‘melting pot’ cultural, suas relações com a bacia do Paraná e o Sulmatogrossense”, In: CUNHA, Manuela Carneiro da (org.). *História dos índios no Brasil*. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2002. pp. 457-74.

²⁴ Idem, p. 466.

²⁵ HOLANDA, Sérgio Buarque de, Op. cit., 1990.

²⁶ FLORENCE, Hercules, op. Cit, pg. 55.

²⁷ BELLOTTO, Heloisa Liberalli, Op. cit., p. 117 e seguintes.

²⁸ FLORENCE, Hercules, Op. cit, p. 57.

²⁹ DORATIOTO, Francisco, *Maldita guerra: nova história da Guerra do Paraguai*, Companhia das Letras, 2002. pg. 105, 122-123, 563.

³⁰ CONTE, Cláudio Quos & FREIRE, Marcus Vinicius de Lamônica. *Centro histórico de Cuiabá, patrimônio do Brasil*. Cuiabá (MT): Entrelinhas/IPHAN, 2005, p. 40-3.

³¹ HOLANDA, Sérgio Buarque de, Op. cit., 1990, p. 33.

³² ROCHE, Daniel. *História das coisas banais: o nascimento do consumo séc. XVII-XIX*. Rio de Janeiro: Rocco, 2000.

³³ FERREIRA, Manuel Rodrigues. *A ferrovia do diabo*. São Paulo: Melhoramentos, 2005, pp. 23-54.

Lieux de mémoires : Phabnat des salariés au début du XXe siècle. Les cas de la Companhia União Fabril Rheingantz & Cia. (ex Rheingantz & Cia.) et de la Centrale Thermique de Saint-Ouen (actuel EDF)

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Le présent article se propose d'aborder le travail des architectes qui ont participé dans leur carrière à de grandes constructions, voire ont été primés, mais qui se sont également consacrés à des travaux destinés à l'habitat populaire et de travailleurs. Cette étude vise à montrer deux projets de patrimoine industriels localisés, l'un en France et l'autre au Brésil, dans lesquels existe une production architectonique de l'habitat populaire destiné aux salariés des entreprises.

Le premier exemple est une industrie textile, la première de l'Etat de Rio Grande do Sul – Brésil, la "Cia. União Fabril" (ex-Rheingantz & Cia.). L'ensemble des constructions demeure presque intactes en dépit de la faillite de la fabrique dans les années 70. L'autre exemple est une compagnie électrique localisée dans la proche banlieue de Paris, en Seine-St-Denis, la centrale thermoélectrique de Saint-Ouen, qui actuellement appartient à EDF (Electricité de France).

La Révolution Industrielle du XIXème siècle a fait surgir les problèmes de logement des travailleurs qui apparaît comme un thème utile à la compréhension du travail de l'architecte. Une enquête réalisée lors de l'exposition universelle de 1867 indique que, des six millions de travailleurs, 65 000 habitaient dans des installations de l'entreprise, principalement dans le nord et dans l'est de la France. Certains étaient logés dans des casernes ou parfois même à l'intérieur des fabriques, dans de vastes dortoirs ; d'autres, plus méritants, disposaient de maisons individuelles.

Godin, les fabricants Mulhouse, Menier et Krupp figurent parmi les principaux constructeurs ou d'appartements pour le personnel. Ils ont apporté

des changements radicaux tant par l'excellence de leurs réalisations, que par les théories élaborées sur le logement des travailleurs. Au début du XXème siècle, progressivement, sur l'ensemble du territoire Français, mais surtout dans les régions industrielles, d'autres chefs d'entreprises vont prendre exemple sur ces innovateurs. Dans le panorama Brésilien, les quartiers plus anciens de la ville de São Paulo tels que Bom Retiro, Brás, Moóca, Belém, Belenzinho, Lapa e Ipiranga, représentent les nombreux faubourgs construits autour des fabriques. Par l'intermédiaire de cette recherche comparative, nous pouvons orienter notre réflexion sur les ouvrages destinés à l'habitat pour travailleurs.

La compagnie ...« Cia. União Fabril » ex Rheingantz

Dans la ville de Rio Grande (RS), le commerçant Carlos Guilherme Rheingantz, en novembre 1873, fonda la « Fábrica Nacional de Tecidos e Panos de Rheingantz & Vater », la première de Rio Grande do Sul, qui plus tard se dénommera « Companhia União Fabril ». La fabrique a commencé son activité en 1874 à petite échelle et avec peu de capital. Le catalogue de l'exposition de 1901 de Porto Alegre (RS), précise que la fabrique s'est agrandie en 1876 et postérieurement de 1882 à 1899, et qu'il y aurait eu ensuite d'autres augmentations de capital et d'équipements. En 1891, elle se transforme en société anonyme, sous le nom de « União Fabril e Pastoral », et le 8 juillet 1895 la raison sociale a été nouvellement modifiée pour « Companhia União Fabril ». L'entreprise a été une pionnière dans la production de tissus et laine et possédait un élevage de mouton qui à l'exposition Brasilo-Allemande de 1881 à Porto Alegre (RS), a reçu 8 médailles.

La fabrique comptait avec des couturières et des orphelins, qui étaient chargés de friser les franges des châles. La main d'œuvre de la fabrique était constituée pour deux tiers de femmes (qui travaillaient dans la production) et un tiers d'homme (dans la manutention). Elle fournissait, en grande quantité, capes et couvertures

pour l'armée Brésilienne, atteignant son apogée de production durant la Première Guerre mondiale. La fabrique emploiera ainsi jusqu'à deux mille salariés. A cette époque, la fabrique était déjà connue sous le nom de « Companhia União Fabril ».

La fabrique était initialement localisée en face de l'une des plus anciennes prisons de la ville, déménageant ensuite pour son adresse actuelle. Sa production était de niveau régional, national et pour l'exportation vers les Etats-Unis et l'Europe. En 1904 le Commandeur Rheingantz² a pris une initiative pionnière, en installant la première filature peignée du pays, ce qui a permis la fabrication de tissus fins, cashmire, etc... La recherche de nouvelles technologies, principalement en Europe, était une constante de l'administration de l'entreprise et de Carlos Guilherme Rheingantz.

En terme d'implantation, les lots de la « Vila Operária » sont distribués uniformément tout au long de l'avenue Rheingantz, à côté du bâtiment principal de la fabrique, de forme simple et géométrique, d'un modèle en damier provenant de la culture luso-brésilienne, avec des lots petits et longs. La maison se construisait sur le bord du lot mais dans les maisons des salariés de meilleur niveau, existent des lots plus grandes et avec un recul frontal ; dans la majorité des cas, les maisons sont isolées dans le lot. Pourtant, au cours des années 20, en fonction des difficultés de l'entreprise, il y a eu une interruption de la construction et de l'entretien des habitations. La location d'habitation pour les salariés s'est maintenue jusqu'en 1968, lorsque a été prononcée la faillite de l'entreprise. Cette dernière est due à la concurrence d'entreprises de confection et des boutiques qui importaient la laine et les produits d'Uruguay, de prix inférieurs sur les marchés. [Fig. 1 a 3]

L'entreprise, au fil des années, a mené une politique de logement, constituant ainsi un faubourg de travailleurs avec des maisons alignées, et des maisons isolées pour les contremaîtres³ et les techniciens, un groupe scolaire, un jardin d'enfant, un casino ou un club pour les contremaîtres, un service médical et un magasin

coopératif. Les maisons faites pour les travailleurs depuis 1884 sont des édifices qui, aujourd'hui encore, font partie du paysage urbain. [Fig. 4 a 13]

De toutes les habitations qui appartiennent à l'ensemble de la « Vila Operária », les maisons de contremaîtres sont des constructions, constituées généralement parmi les habitations de plus grandes surfaces, d'une plus grande complexité architecturale, outre les maisons d'usage collectif telles que l'école, le jardin d'enfant et le casino (un genre d'hôtel pour les contremaîtres récemment arrivés)

Le casino des contremaîtres est l'œuvre du cabinet de R. Ahrons, et est en avance sur les projets de l'architecte Theodor Wiederspahn. Le projet a été mis en oeuvre en 1911, le bureau central suppose qu'il ait été commencé en 1909 et finalisé en 1911, en se basant sur les journaux de l'époque et sur les rapports de la fabrique, et est également le fruit du même constructeur, tout comme l'école qui date de 1912 et le jardin d'enfant de l'année 1911.

L'architecte Theodor Wiederspahn⁴ avait trente ans, lorsqu'il débarqua à Porto Alegre en 1908, répondant à une invitation pour travailler dans une compagnie Belge. Néanmoins, il possédait déjà une certaine expérience des entreprises familiales, car il avait construit 15 maisons bourgeoises sur une partie des terrains que son père avait acheté pour le lotir. Néanmoins, n'obtenant pas l'emploi promis par la firme Belge, il fut présenté à Rudolph Ahrons, qui était patron de la plus grande entreprise de construction de la ville de Porto Alegre. Theodor Wiederspahn fut alors placé à la direction du département des projets de construction entre septembre 1908 et décembre 1915, au même moment Ahrons ferma son entreprise à cause des problèmes liés à la guerre.

Selon Gunther Weimer⁵ : « La mise a disposition d'une partie de ses archives ont révélé qu'il ne s'agissait pas seulement d'un architecte qui avait réalisé un autre ouvrage de valeur, mais qui fut l'architecte le plus important de l'Etat de la première moitié du siècle passé », justifiant la qualité des premiers édifices qui appartiennent au complexe Rheingantz.

Entre autres exemples des ouvrages réalisés par Wiederspahn tant dans la capitale qu'à l'intérieur de l'Etat, on peut citer : l'actuel « MARGS » (Musée d'Art de Rio Grande do Sul Ado Malagoli) – Porto Alegre ; Maison des Impôts ; Poste et Télégraphe (actuel Memorial de Rio Grande do Sul) ; Brasserie Brahma ; la première étape de l'Hôtel Majestic (actuel Maison de la Culture Mário Quintana) et la faculté de Médecine de l'UFRGS. A Pelotas, la « Banco Pelotense » et la « Previdência do Sul » (dite cinéma Guarani) ; mais, la majorité a été victime de l'irresponsabilité et démolie, ainsi la « Caisse Economique », la « Banco da Província », Irmãos Weingartner, Café Colombo.

Le casino des contremaîtres

Le Casino des Contremaîtres était un édifice qui visait à remplir les fonctions de loisir et d'habitation pour certains contremaîtres et, principalement, les nouveaux venus d'Europe. Néanmoins, il a notamment été le siège de la mutualité (magasin), de la bibliothèque et ensuite, il fut utilisé comme maison par les contremaîtres. [Fig. 14 a 16]

Le cabinet de R. Ahrons a été sollicité sur le projet, qui le conclura en mai 1911. L'édifice est construit sur un terrain d'angle isolé dans le lot, avec un recul frontal égal sur les deux côtés. La maison est mise en relief par sa position, un terrain d'angle favorisé par la configuration des rues. Le Casino des Contremaîtres occupe une position privilégiée en terme visuel et de point d'attraction et parmi les installations de la « Vila Operária », c'est celui qui était de plus grande proximité avec le bâtiment de l'Administration.

Il s'agit d'un édifice de volume unique rectangulaire avec quelques angles rentrants et saillants ; une toiture extrêmement complexe avec des plans d'angles distincts, asymétriques, suscitant le mouvement des formes plastiques de la toiture.

Le niveau de détérioration de l'édifice est élevé, certains éléments structurels du plancher, du plafond, manquants et la majorité des portes et fenêtres. La technique de construction de l'édifice est utilisée seulement à fin ornementale et non structurelle.

Considérant l'utilisation de l'« enxaimel » dans les constructions faites dans le Rio Grande do Sul, ce type d'architecture est singulière et authentique de la société des immigrants Allemands dans l'Etat.

Le bureau central

En l'absence de plan original de cet édifice, qui est d'une sophistication sans égal pour les constructions de la région à cette époque, il a été nécessaire de recourir aux rapports de la fabrique et aux journaux de l'époque – ainsi qu'il a été évoqué antérieurement, en plus de l'inventaire détaillé fait aux moyens de mesures et photographies, avec l'élaboration de plans. [Fig. 17]

Pour que l'on puisse fixer une date approximative du début et de la fin de l'ouvrage de construction, *aussi bien comme l'hypothèse lancée de Theo Wiederspahn être le maître d'oeuvre du Casino des Contremaîtres en 1911*. Le cabinet semble avoir ouvert en 1909 et fermé en 1911, aussi pour étayer l'hypothèse susmentionnée, a été utilisée une nouvelle de la première page du journal « Echo do Sul », du 28 novembre 1910.

Le bâtiment possède deux ressauts latéraux et une symétrie bilatérale de la façade caractérisée par un axe qui part du fronton triangulaire⁷ central avec une horloge incorporée dans la toiture en mansarde. De cette dernière, sur les ressauts, se trouvent deux fenêtres de lucarne. Dans le corps de l'édifice, on note la présence de bossage inséré à la superficie des murs, la structure est composée de pilastre et la texture faite par les lignes droites du bossage diminue la verticalité produite par les pilastres.

Le jardin d'enfant, maison n° 176

Le jardin d'enfant est également un projet du cabinet de R. Ahrons, conclu en septembre 1911⁸. Sa fonction s'est modifiée au fil des années, devenant progressivement une résidence de contremaîtres. L'implantation de la maison est isolée dans le lot avec un recul frontal de jardin de 4 m, comme les autres. La forme plastique est d'un prisme rectangulaire avec une articulation harmonieuse d'angles saillants et rentrants dans l'ensemble et

sur le plan. Sur la toiture, on observe une juxtaposition de formes. [Fig. 18]

En relation à l'entourage immédiat, nous observons une caractéristique de dominance par rapport aux autres maisons. Le bâtiment utilise la technique de construction de l'« enxaimel » comme forme ornementale et non pas structurale. Les fondations sont faites de pierres taillées et les murs de maçonnerie portante de briques pleines. Le toit est de « *tacaniça-anã*⁹ » et utilise un grillage sur le pourtour, en dessous de l'avant-toit. La charpente est en bois, chevrons revêtus de planches qui reposent sur le « *frechal* » utilisation de tuiles en céramique de qualité de construction magnifique proportionnées aux volumes que constituent les divers versants du toit.

L'école

Le groupe scolaire « Comendador Rheingantz » a été conçu par le cabinet de R. Ahrons, en novembre 1911, et l'ouvrage s'est achevé en septembre 1912. Il s'agit d'un bâtiment en forme de C, avec un volume de toiture unique de même format et triangulaire. En terme d'implantation, l'école est isolée du lot avec un recul, en étant différent des autres maisons de contremaîtres, ayant le même alignement que l'immeuble du coin de la rue, qui est le Casino des Contremaîtres. Concernant le pourtour, il possède une caractéristique singulière : la toiture est du type deux versants avec tuile française et charpente en bois. La façade possède une symétrie bilatérale, ainsi apparaît une différence de traitement de façade sur les ressauts et sur la partie centrale. Le fronton pour marquer les accès est fait d'arcs rabaisés, possède des frises et une ornementation au centre avec des volutes et des festons ; les beaux frontons des ressauts possèdent volutes et courbe et un oeil de bœuf chacun. [Fig. 19]

La Centrale Thermique de Saint-Ouen – Saint Ouen, banlieue de Paris (actuel EDF)

La Centrale de Saint-Ouen est très importante dans la mesure où, au début du XX^e siècle, il était opportun de

repenser le réseau électrique parisien. La construction du bâtiment a commencé en 1910, et a été édifiée sous l'égide de la Compagnie Parisienne de Distribution d'Electricité (CPDE), constituée en 1907 pour assumer la reprise des anciennes sociétés parisiennes. La nouvelle centrale était l'un des premiers objectifs dans la réorganisation de ce système obsolète.

Elle a été construite pour allier le maximum de puissance avec une implantation minimum. La Centrale de Saint-Ouen a une grande importance dans l'histoire de l'électrification de Paris, néanmoins nous allons nous limiter à l'étude du plan architectural, et plus précisément aux habitations des travailleurs :

Première étape (1889-1914) : durant cette période, il est nécessaire d'étudier la conception et la construction de la Centrale thermique de Saint-Ouen dans le cadre plus large de l'électrification de Paris. Quant au concept d'édification, à partir de 1907, les choix techniques pertinents effectués au moment de la construction de la centrale ont contribué à doter la capitale française d'un système électrique moderne.

Deuxième étape (de 1914, date du début des travaux, à 1945) : La Centrale de Saint-Ouen acquiert une importance nouvelle sur le réseau électrique parisien.

Après la Première Guerre Mondiale – qui marque une diminution puis un retour à l'activité électrique – la modernisation de l'usine, effectuée dans les années 20, tout comme l'instauration d'une politique sociale originale, ont contribué à l'apogée de la centrale, qui va durer jusqu'à la Seconde Guerre Mondiale.

La troisième étape, de 1946 à 1966, date de l'implantation de la seconde tranche de 250 MW de Saint-Ouen II, est consacrée à deux époques distinctes de l'histoire du lieu de la centrale : la première – de 1946 à 1965 – retraça la modernisation de l'ancienne usine de Saint-Ouen, et la seconde période – de 1956 à 1966 – marque la démolition de l'ancienne Centrale de Saint Ouen.

La quatrième et dernière étape, de 1967 à 1990, est marqué par les vingt dernières années d'exploitation de la centrale qui permettra de mettre en service les nouvel-

les installations et se caractérisera également par sa décadence définitive. [Fig. 20]

L'habitat des salariés

A partir de cette période, on ne se limitera plus précisément à l'habitat des salariés de la Centrale Thermique de Saint-Ouen, qui est une partie importante du patrimoine industriel des environs de Paris. Le principal objectif sera d'attirer l'attention sur les constructions de l'usine, érigées par un architecte relativement peu étudié.

A Paris, s'est développé la construction d'édifices pour travailleurs, dont les plus fameux sont ceux de la cité du Comte de Madre, rue Saint-Maur (1863), cité Jeanne d'Arc et la cité Doré dans le XIII^e arrondissement.

Dans le cas de la Centrale de Saint Ouen, celle-ci a été édifié pour son personnel sur l'avenue Victor Hugo, sur une parcelle du terrain de l'entreprise, comme cela a été fait au Brésil dans l'entreprise Rheingantz que l'on a mis en évidence antérieurement. Les logements étaient situés dans un endroit proche du lieu de travail, accouplé avec un petit jardin. Une autre différence avec le « *Complexo União Fabril* » (ex-Rheingantz) est marquée par l'absence d'équipements communautaires dans la centrale de Saint-Ouen (actuel EDF), comme c'était le cas dans le C.U.F.

Selon le cachet sur les plans étudiés dans les archives de Saint-Ouen, c'est l'architecte Albert Benz¹⁰ qui a dessiné les plans des logements des constructions pour les directeurs, ingénieurs et contremaîtres en 1912. Après 1923, six logements supplémentaires seront accolés.

Un architecte qui consacre dorénavant une partie de son activité à la conception d'habitation populaire est doté d'un nouveau rôle, d'une véritable mission sociale. Albert Benz a ainsi participé au concours de façade de la ville de Paris en 1904, et le projet d'une maison rue François Ier a été retenu. On ne rencontrera pas beaucoup d'informations sur la biographie d'Albert Benz, mais néanmoins, nous avons retrouvé une note de jury sur le concours de façade comme on peut le voir dans la citation mentionnée ci-dessous¹¹ :

Dans l'œuvre de M. Benz, rue François Ier, n. 26, on a eu à louer la souplesse gracieuse des motifs, la façon dont sont reliées deux ouvertures pareilles superposées en constituant un motif unique, une richesse élégante dans ces colonnes adroitement reliées avec un balcon qui ne pouvait s'avancer davantage, et soutenues par de beaux encorbellements. L'esprit de composition a présidé à la répétition des deux étages, notamment dans le motif d'avant-corps. Souhaitons que Mr Benz renouvelle souvent avec les mêmes ressources d'arrangement et de goût le problème qu'il a si heureusement résolu.

Dans la Centrale de Saint-ouen, les logements construits pour les salariés sont définis en fonction du poste occupé. Dans les archives municipales de Saint-Ouen, nous rencontrons les plans originaux des logements faits pour les ingénieurs, les directeurs et les contremaîtres. Ce sont des maisons jumelées deux à deux situées Bd Victor Hugo, n° 58 et le projet date de 1912; en 1913, nous retrouvons la réalisation du projet de la maison du gardien. Le long du Bd Victor Hugo (ex-Boulevard de la Révolte), les maisons accolées des numéros 68-78, construites en 1923.

Comme on peut l'observer dans l'implantation¹² à suivre, maisons de contremaîtres, directeurs, ingénieurs et gardien (volume plus grand en rouge), les maisons 68-78 (volume plus petit en rouge). [Fig. 21 a 24]

Malheureusement, il n'a pas été pos-

sible d'obtenir l'autorisation de photographier les maisons des ingénieurs, directeurs et contremaîtres, car actuellement la petite rue d'accès a été fermée et les habitants n'ont pas autorisé l'entrée. Néanmoins, les maisons demeurent en bon état de construction et, pour ce que nous en avons observé, elles ont été construites selon le projet déposé aux Archives Municipales de Saint-Ouen.

La maison de 1923

Malgré tout, les maisons des numéros 68 à 78 ont pu être photographiées, car elles se trouvent sur le bord du boulevard et non pas à l'intérieur du terrain de la centrale qui appartient actuellement à EDF. [Fig. 25]

L'édifice est en ensemble de logement de deux étages avec murs diviseurs et accolés, présente une façade symétrique et rebâtie, un toit de tuile en céramique de deux versants avec une lucarne. La façade possède des fenêtres avec traverse droite, volet en bois et moulures horizontales simples. La porte principale comporte une partie vitrée et des frises. La qualité structurelle est très bonne, la façade semble ne pas avoir été altérée, les maisons ont conservé leurs fonctions d'origine de logement de salariés. L'échelle de la construction est en étroite adéquation avec l'espace public, l'ensemble s'intègre, morpholo-

giquement, de manière cohérente dans le milieu ambiant. [Fig. 26, 27]

Nous avons ainsi tenté de démontrer à travers les deux exemples étudiés que dans l'exercice de sa profession, l'architecte n'est pas seulement un artiste mais peut se transformer en un constructeur et un hygiéniste dans le travail qu'il effectue dans les habitats pour salariés. Le rôle de l'architecte va bien au-delà de la composition de façades et se rapproche du plan d'habitation. Dans les deux cas, les constructions continuent encore à remplir les mêmes fonctions, même si les maisons de la Centrale de Saint-Ouen, actuellement EDF, sont en meilleure état du fait de la continuation de la politique de l'habitat salarié pour résider dans ces résidences et sur ce terrain.

Dans le cas de Rheingantz, certaines constructions sont abandonnées, certaines persistent comme résidence, d'autres ont changé de destination, et l'état de conservation est en général préoccupant. De telles similitudes et différences nous fournissent une plus grande compréhension de ce thème et contribuent à l'étude de la typologie et de la forme de préservation de ces patrimoines industriels.

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² Pour avoir reçu une décoration de l'Intendance Municipale, Rheingantz était appelé Commandeur.

³ Les contremaîtres venaient d'Allemagne et étaient, pour la majeure partie, des ingénieurs.

⁴ Wiederspahn, Theodor Alexander Josef : Né le 12/02/1878 à Wiesbaden. Il s'est formé à la Koenigliche Baugewebeschool de Idstein, dans le Taurus. En 1908, il a profité de son voyage en seconde noce pour migrer pour le Rio Grande do Sul, où se trouvait déjà son frère Heinrich Josef, qui avait été engagé pour construire la ligne Montenegro-Caxias de la Viação Férrea. Des problèmes bureaucratiques empêcheront la concrétisation du contrat, rai-

son pour laquelle il fut employé comme architecte responsable du département de projet du "Escriptório de Engenharia Rudolf Ahrons". Il restera à ce poste de septembre 1908 jusqu'à décembre 1915, lorsque la firme clôtura ses activités dû à la guerre en cours. (Texte original : Gunther Weimer)

⁵ WEIMER, G. Theo Wiederspahn : sucessos e derrotas. Journal du MARGS – Gouvernement de l'Etat de Rio Grande do Sul – Secretariat de l'Etat et de la Cultura – Musée d'Art du Rio Grande do Sul Ado Malagoli. Publication mensuelle, juin 2002, n.80 p.8.

⁷ Avec le développement de corniche de fronton des XVIème-XVIIIème siècles (Renaissance)

⁸ Détails documentés en image de la dissertation de Guigou-Norro (1994)

⁹ WEIMER, G. *L'architecture de l'immigration allemande : une étude sur l'adaptation de l'architecture d'Europe centrale au milieu ru-*

ral dans le Rio Grande do Sul. Porto Alegre : Ufrgs ; São Paulo: Nobel, 1983, p. 61. [Signifie un élément provenant de l'architecture de la Basse-Saxe connu sous le nom de "Krüppelwaldmdach", dont la traduction littérale serait : *toit de 4 versants nain*. En adaptant cette terminologie à la culture brésilienne, Weimer la dénomine "tacañica naine"]

¹⁰ BENZ, Albert. Travaux: cool. O. Raquin : IR: 26, rue François Ier (8°), 1904 (Conc. Public. D'archit., Raguene. IR (3 ét) 14, rue de la Boétie, 2, rue d'Argenson (8°). 1899 (coll RAQUIN). IR : 36 avenue Montaigne (8°). 1902. Bibliographie : FLEURY, M. *Dictionnaire par noms d'architectes des constructions élevées à Paris aux XIXe et XXe siècles*. Paris, Services des travaux historiques de la Ville de Paris, 1990.

¹¹ Les Concours de Façade de la Ville de Paris. 1898-1905. Paris, Librairie de la construction Moderne, s/d

¹² <http://www.atlas-patrimoine93.net/>

Way of life and labor mode categories in the archaeological research of Havana inside the walls

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Introduction

Albeit the voids in the documents, it is possible to establish the structure of Havana's colonial society from its historical records. That is, it is possible to establish the characteristics of the production means, of the economic and social formation and of the way (and sub mode) of life. This paper tries to amplify the existing knowledge regarding colonial society when it proposes to identify Havana's sub mode of colonial life, and also the labor modes of service rendering to the port and to the Spanish Crown.

History and Archaeology both belong to the Social Sciences. They study human society and produce knowledge regarding its development, which is bound by distinct laws within different spatial and temporal frameworks. They share the same object of study: social-historical praxis, and have an unique goal: achieve the social historical processes.

There are, for sure, certain periods of human social development that can only be accessed by the archaeological record. For instance, in our country, the period that comprises the time span prior to the Spanish conquest and colonization. That does not mean that our nation's history begins with the Spanish arrival. This kind of thought would hinder us from considering thousands of years of social development in our archipelago.

The historian studies society through a data known as historical record, his object of research, which includes: documents, books, photographs, tapes, paintings, as well as "*artifacts that contin-*

ued to be used in living societies, although they could have been discarded" (Schiffer 1996: 3). We proceed below by showing the relevant characteristics of the historical record regarding Havana during the colonial period.

- Documents usually are created, written and promulgated by dominant classes during their exercise of political and economic control. They are the voice of this class and exclude the participation of the society's dispossessed segments, at least in the same level, although this segment is the most important one, number wise. This means that we can study the documents, in detail, and the lives of a small number of illustrious families from Havana, owners of political and economical power during the colonial period. On the other hand, little can the documents tell us about Havana's more modest inhabitants.

- In general terms, there are certain historical periods for which we have little or no primary information. The years from 1514-1550 do not appear in the town council's acts, since they disappeared during Jacques de Sores assault in 1555. This fact has made it impossible, until now, to set firm dates and locations regarding the foundation and the removals of the village in its beginnings, which begun its erratic life in the southern coast of the province. Besides, we must also point out the fact that, many times, access to primary documents is made very difficult for reasons that are not understandable, and also the fact that they are not digitalized, something that is due to our monetary difficulties. All these factors make consulting written documents something very difficult. On the other hand, the Spanish Archives, which contain important documents regarding our country, are not accessible to the majority of our researchers. When this access was made possible, they were used in specific research, and were not, necessarily, made available for others. We lack an effort, a serious and

long-term effort, which can only be accomplished through the State, which will enable us to have, in our country, a copy of all those documents, essential for the understanding of our history.

- Toponymic references turn out to be, in many cases, not retrievable with the desired precision required, something that would enable a better reconstruction of colonial facts. That would be very important and that does not concern, exclusively, the 16th and the 17th centuries. Even so, the location of the first houses and other activity areas at the archaeological area of Havana has led to some confirmation of toponymic references.

- Cuban traditional historiography not always clearly informs us about the sources it has used. In other cases, we do not see an internal criticism of those sources, this results in descriptive analysis, rather than explanatory ones. This historiography has had its postulates accepted much more due to authority criteria and, nowadays, they do not, always, resist modern criticisms.

By its turn, the archaeologist approaches society through a data identified as archaeological record, which corresponds to his object of study. Regarding our study of Havana inside the walls, we will define this record as:

The whole group of elements, artifacts, eco-facts and its matrices (forming smaller unities of contexts), products of human labor or elements that were somehow affected by it. Elements liable to be transformed by natural or human events, happening either in the subsoil or at the surface, and including the ones that can become partially or completely submersed. It does not matter if they belong to archaeological contexts or to transitory contexts.

Archaeological record is dynamic and does not depend upon the archaeologist's observation or note taking, to which this record has a contemporary relation.

We list below some of the more notable characteristics of the archaeo-

logical record coming from our area of study:

- It has a no discriminative character, since it is a product, in equal parts, of the work developed by all society's components. On the other hand, we do have a biased choice regarding what is set apart to be studied and restored. The wealthiest sectors usually receive more attention, due to their architectural and artifact richness.

- The archaeological record was formed over areas that witnessed previous moments of activity, so that we have, accumulated, over 400 years of information under areas that are still in use nowadays, context over context, or, in the worst scenario, contexts destroying contexts. Boundaries of modern lots and buildings do not, necessarily, coincide with the ancient ones, so that access to the latter, in their integrity, is limited, since it is not possible nor would it make sense to destroy modern buildings in order to open an access towards the city's ancient moments of life development.

- Access to records, as pointed out above, is limited by and conditioned to restoration works. It is of primal importance to have, in view of these circumstances, a concern towards the regionalization of record data. All opportunities must be seized, both the work of excavations done by third parties (usually companies) as well as the natural deterioration of modern buildings, in order to gain access to record data. In this sense, archaeology is obliged to have an opportunistic approach and to aim further, above the interests of modern building restorations.

Archaeological investigation

Departing from the previous considerations, we can say that, in accordance with what was developed by Luis Felipe Bate (1998: 49), there are three distinct processes of reality, with which archaeological investigation is linked:

1. *Substantive Theory*

In this case, historical materialism, which deals with the main object of investigation, that is, the general characteristics of the social processes. Let's conceptualize society as a concrete totality, one that deals with the many dimensions of reality, within certain categories: economic and social formation, culture and way of life. Substantive Theory allows us to study and to comprehend general, universal and historical praxis. On the other hand, one cannot reach, in an explanatory level, particular expressions within this praxis.

2. *History of the archaeological contexts*

- Theory of the formation of archaeological contexts: how does a living society create contexts that form the archaeological record.

- Theory of transformations in archaeological contexts: post-depositional processes, where we have social and natural agents in action.

- Present day presentation of the contexts: proprieties and characteristics of the data and of the archaeological contexts when observed in the present. One should precise the proprieties and the characteristics that have a link with the social relations and the activities behind the formation of each data. That is the final aim of the archaeological work.

3. *History of the information produced*

In order to study archaeological sites within a more precise level and through such topics as industries, cultures or archaeological regions, one has, usually, to make use of previous investigations, the results of which may have been published either partially or more completely, or may be reached in archives. Unfortunately, in some cases, neither way exists, and this raises a question: Why did those investigations take place at all?

Below we continue to explain the application of the first level presented, that is, of substantive theory as a fundamental object within the archaeological investigation of Havana inside the walls, according to this author's experiences and concrete propositions. We think, specifically, of the uses of the way of life and sub mode of life and of the labor modes categories.

1. **Substantive Theory. Social and economic capitalist formation, Cuban way of life, colonial sub mode of life in Havana and labor modes.**

We will use the categories of *Social and Economic Formation, Way of Life and Labor Mode* in order to study colonial society in Havana. We will analyze this society's peculiarities and generalities all through its existing period.

The most general level of information regarding a concrete society can be reached by defining its filiations to a certain Social Economic Formation, that is, the system of general and fundamental relationships of a society in its totality, which, as is known, is determined by the mode of production. One can reach a more detailed description of a concrete society by studying its way of life within a certain period of its development, that is, a particular praxis of its social and economic formation, something that includes a certain economic reproduction and super structural aspects. In its turn, ways of life can be explained with more specificity by describing or identifying the labor modes that comprise that mode and lead, through their execution, to a set of instruments and means of production organized in a specific manner. Those labor modes became visible in the daily activities and make use of determined labor processes, which are partial manifestations of the multiplicity of activities that form a society's existence. Those processes can be related either with the productive sphere or with the reproductive

sphere. The latter has not been sufficiently studied up till now, although it is very important for the formation of archaeological contexts. Lastly, one can achieve the knowledge of very specific aspects of a certain society, regarding its development within a determined context, thanks to its culture, that is, the singular aspects which are multi-determined by the concrete conditions of a social economic formation.

Colonial experience is a common ground to the Americas (where it began in the 16th century), Asia, Oceania and Africa. Those continents' nations have contributed, decisively, to Europe's capitalistic experience. Nevertheless, the implantation of a certain labor culture strange to the autochthonous development level of productive forces could only be accomplished through the use of the most violent force, which was the only assurance of the intensification of the exploration, since in those cases one could not count on an increase of the workers productivity.

When the Spanish arrived in our lands a novel mode of production began to be implanted: the capitalist mode. In the mercantile phase, Cuba was inserted in the uprising, worldwide, capitalist system. This meant a violent rupture with the historic evolution of the indigenous communities and the beginning of a dependency upon the market and the metropolis. This led to an underdevelopment, which would characterize the Cuban colony in the subsequent centuries of its history. Up until the Spanish arrival, which was marked by the up front arrival of Diego Valasquez y Cuellar, we had in Cuba, for thousands of years, solely a Primitive Community characterized by many different ways of life. Those ways of life are not included here because they go beyond this paper's objective.

We believe that both archaeology and history must, for the future, establish up till when will the economic and social formation of the Primitive

Community survive, co-existing and interacting with the capitalist formation. This requires that the plan of the archaeological research contemplates the transculturation phenomenon and that the archaeological record be carefully observed in search of evidence that may tell us about the occurrence of this phenomenon. During the colonization process the relationship established between the space available within the archipelago and the number of conquerors-colonists arriving was inversely proportional, with a clear disadvantage for the latter. This leads us to think that the colonists could not control the whole area available, the one they "owned". In so being, the indigenous people did not need to disappear in face of colonization pressure. This colonization, as can be established, was fundamentally based on primitive villages, small settlements from where the expansion towards the rest of the territory happened, when it became necessary, easy and possible to accomplish. If we were to point out a few examples, two important oriental cities, Guantamano e Las Tunas, present day headquarters of their provinces, were founded in the beginning of the 19th century. Previously we had small nucleus of villages. Colonial experience in Cuba is, above all, an urban experience, although the wealth, which was produced, came from the countryside. It is quite clear that the beginning of the colonization and the conquest led to a novel way of using the space, although many areas were left outside their realm. This allowed the survival of indigenous communities that were left relatively isolated, even though they suffered the process of transculturation through assimilation and transformation of cultural elements that came from Europe with the Spanish. Naturally, this became part of the archaeological record.

Two clear examples, although still under research, especially because we still need more excavation and the sub-

sequent technological studies, come from, on the one hand, some ceramic pieces, which have a clear indigenous fabric although they show European elements in their form and function, and on the other, from tools for cutting, made of glass, but resembling the ones produced by the Stone Age industry. Both cases were reported in research done by the CENCREM, in Lagunas de Limones, Maisí and Guantamano. These data should be added to a large list of transcultural evidence reported from archaeological records of numerous sites which are, evidently, indigenous, and that have been gathered in the past forty years. These data includes: metal tools and weapons of European fabric; the use of ceramic fragments as decoration pieces or their use as net weights; fabrication of gouges in large bones of cattle; ceramics made with indigenous technique but bearing European forms; glass fragments with signs of working in order to turn them into cutting and scratching tools; and remains of mammals that were brought by the European.

Within the capitalist formation, which continues further more, beyond the colonial period, it is possible to identify the Cuban colonial way of life, characterized by:

- Political subordination to the Spanish metropolis through a solid bureaucracy, which aimed in controlling every detail of colonial life.
- Indigenous component very little developed, productive forces wise, and with very embryony forms of tribal organization. Something that minimized its importance as an active element within the formation process of novel economical structures.
- Lack of participation of the indigenous element in the political and economical life. Practically inexistent after 1550.
- Scarcity of gold and silver. The majority of the wealth came from ag-

riculture, cattle and mining. That is, as producers of raw materials and in services.

- Confrontation between the Spanish, on one side, and the creoles, on the other. The former were linked to commerce and to the exercise of political central power. The latter were conscious, or not, of their distinctiveness, linked as they were to productive labors such as cattle breeding, agriculture and the exercise of political local power.

- Presence of a growing ethnic component of African origin. Mainly used as slave workforce.

- Presence of illegal commerce as a way of overcoming the severe commercial restrictions imposed by the metropolis that did not take into consideration the inhabitants local interests.

Cuban colonial way of life faced an irreversible crisis with the arrival and the development of a Cuban nationalistic feeling. The 1868 War only increased the crisis. By 1895 it reached its peak. It is important to point out that besides Spanish political domination, Cuba also suffered, all along the 19th century, with its economical dependency to, first, England, and in sequence, the United States. By the end of the 19th century, soon after slave abolition, which happened between 1880 and 1886, we have the transition to a nationalistic neocolonial way of life. It actually starts in 1902, with the rise to power of the first Cuban government, presided by Tomás Estrada Palma. This change on the way of life will be transcendent and is marked by the end of colonial domination in the island and the constitution of the Republic, with the attributes that this kind of situation entangles within legal order. We have here the beginning of a process of domination perpetrated by the ascending North American imperialism and of subordination of Cuban rulers to its interests. The basic concepts of independence, democracy, autonomy and self-governing were, thus,

misrepresented. The Platt amendment, constitutional appendices, guaranteed Cuba's neocolonial character and its subordination to North American interests.

The labor modes, which characterize Cuban colonial way of life, as a whole, indicate a progression in the development of the productive forces. We have the following labor modes: *encomienda*, *hacienda* (estate), plantation and central colonate. We must stress that by establishing a historical sequence for these modes we only mean that each was predominant over the orders in a historical determined moment. That is, within a certain period elements from the other modes could still be in use or could have predated the predominant one.

Since those labor modes have already been studied in other works, although not typified, here, we refer to the four of them synthetically.

Encomienda labor mode (1512-1550)

It directly relates to the conquerors-colonists efforts in exploring, intensively, indigenous workforce, which was not prepared, in view of their social development, to face production demands for the market. It is characterized by certain succeeding periods with distinct economical activities in regular use (Rey 2003: 75-90):

- Manioc cultivation and cassava production, which becomes an exportable item within the Caribbean area.

- Gold digging, essentially at the rivers, which was the main exportable product according to the interests of the Spanish Crown.

- Cattle economy, due to the need of exportable products. In this case, basically, salted meat and leathers. This economical activity is linked with the proliferation of herds and pens, and it reached its greatest expression with the labor mode that comes next, the one linked to the *hacienda* (estate).

Although the *encomienda* is an institution derived from Medieval Spain, here it is mainly targeted, within American context, to market production. In so being, it gains a novel character, a capitalist one. All through this period, the indigenous peoples were also obliged to work for producing overplus supplies for the conquerors/colonists. The latter took hold of the quantity they understood to be needed for their own maintenance. The indigenous peoples needs were not taken into account. This state of things led to a high mortality rate among the latter.

Encomienda, as a labor mode, produced capital accumulation in the island, but this accumulation was kept by only a few of the colonists. This led, from the very beginning, to social differentiation among them. The *encomienda* owners were also the representatives of political control, they watch over the interests of the Crown. They used this situation to gain privileges against the colonists that were in a minor social position, since the former are the receptors of those capitals. This accumulation process happened albeit a severe commercial monopoly was applied in the island by the Seville port control center.

This historical period was, in general terms, characterized by the violence used in the indigenous peoples' escapes, since they were submitted to the most severe exploitation. In return, the answer from the colonists was even bloodier. We have here a huge state of crisis generated by the colonization effort driven by the temptation of accessing the same kind of wealth to which the Spanish gained access in the continent, after Cortez and his troop conquered the Aztec Empire and Pizarro the Inca one. Cortez' troop came, mainly, from Cuba.

The subjects of this relationship are: Spanish colonists, socially differentiated among themselves, and the indigenous peoples.

Hacienda (estate) labor mode (1550-1762)

The appearance of the hacienda, in Cuba, is related to capitalism's mercantile phase. It is antedated by a final effort during the encomienda period in developing exportable products targeted for the market.

The quantity of available cattle areas, large and small ones, as well as the proliferation of semi wild oxen, in relation to the high demand for leather, salted meat, fresh meat and grease made the hacienda the best development option for a sustainable economy. A small number of workers are enough to make the hacienda productive: a few natives, some African slaves and some wage earners. Just like the previous period, this one was characterized by the intention of the Spanish Crown in maintaining the control over Cuba's commercial system, a firm monopoly. In this context, illegal commerce became a legitimate response in order to fulfill the needs of the colony's inhabitants. We must, nevertheless, acknowledge the fact that since the end of the 16th century up to 1700 there was a constant decadence of the Austrian monarchy in Spain. This fact allowed a relatively independent economical development in the Cuban colony, which led to the overcoming of its crisis. Cuba achieved a prosperity, which would be thoroughly attacked by the rise of the Bourbons to the Spanish throne, in the beginning of the 18th century. Among some other centralizing measures, they attacked municipal autonomy by not letting the councils rent land anymore (1729) and by creating the Havana Company (1740). The latter's ill-fated intention was of controlling, to the maximum, all the colony's production, decreasing, as a consequence, sugar, tobacco, cocoa, cotton, copper and other goods production. This production, together with the construction of ships, using the excellent Cuban wood, had allowed a considerable accumulation of capital during the 17th century,

even taking in consideration losses with illegal commerce.

Cuba's strategic and economical importance was marked by the numerous occasions when it was attacked or assaulted by the French, the English and the Dutch. In order to fight this state of affairs, the Spanish Crown created a defense system that included fortresses, walls and a modest fleet guarding the Cuban shore. Also, it maintained privateering activities in the English colonies of North America. In order to achieve its defensive goals, the Crown is obliged to coin the *Situados*, money that came from the wealthy New Spain and that allowed them to sustain their military effort in Cuba, a less wealthy colony.

Subjects: colonists, indigenous peoples, creoles, and slave workforce: African black people.

Plantation labor mode (1762-1886)

As soon as the English assailed and captured Havana, Cuba insertion in the international market happened in an explosively way, since Spain abolished its commercial monopoly: first, provisionally, and, in 1818, definitively. This period was marked by the transition from the previous commercial mercantile capitalism to a free trade industrial capitalism. Sugar cane cultivation, and sugar production at the sugar mills gained a preponderant role within national panorama because of sugar's high demand at the world market. Slave commerce became wider in order to supply workers for this industry's production. This labor mode led to an increase in the African slave exploration. In this period's early years we have the creoles controlling and developing the sugar plantations. But between 1840-1860, Spanish merchants took over since they were the ones who controlled transatlantic commerce. The workforce at the sugar mills became more and more slave oriented. This labor mode is characterized by the use

of extra-economic coercion over not qualified labor force. It also implied the use of wageworkers that dominated the technological process of sugar production, representing a minor fraction of the total labor force needed.

By the end of this period, we have Cuban colonial way of life crisis formed, the 1868 War appears. The 1868 War was a liberation effort that happened after the ones in Continental America, where, more than 50 years earlier, Spain had had to fight to maintain its possessions. Spain eventually lost them, and only maintained Cuba and Puerto Rico.

Subjects: creoles, Spanish merchants, slaves, semi slave mestizo workers, wage workers.

Central-colonate labor mode (1886-1898)

The slave's final abolition happened between 1880 and 1886. This led to the formation of large amounts of free workforce and, consequently, to a growing change regarding the labor mode that would dominate, nationally wise, since the sugar industry was still reverberating. This decision, which marked the beginning of this period, happened as an answer to the crisis that took over the plantation production mode. This crisis led to the production of low quality sugar, with high costs, being thus incapable of facing beet sugar, much more competitive in the world market. The latter's production in Europe was already highly efficient and offered a product of better quality.

The decisions that were taken in order to solve the crisis demanded that a high amount of capital was injected in the industry's technological modernization. In order to do so, among other measures that were taken, the responsibility of supplying sugar cane was shifted to the colonists, something that created bipolarity in the labor mode. On the one hand we have the

central agency, substituting the sugar mill, which had been dominated, in the last decades of the century, by Spanish merchants and by North American financial trusts. On the other, we have the colonist, agricultural producer of the indispensable sugar cane, a sector that was dominated by the creoles.

Slave abolition supplied a huge amount of workforce, one could choose among the most capable workers. Even so, in this period, we have in Cuba the arrival of some thousands of immigrants coming from Caribbean nations since their workforce could be explored, being much cheaper.

This period marked the end of Cuba both as a primary goods supplier and as a market for elaborated products. Instead, it turned into a promising field for the injection of capital coming from the North American financial oligarchy. This points to the shift from colonial dependency towards Spain to a neocolonial dependency towards the United States. This process happened parallel to the shift from free trade industrial capitalism to financial monopoly capitalism.

Subjects: Spanish merchants, North American investors, creoles, wage workers.

Colonial sub mode of life in Havana

If we have defined a Cuban colonial way of life, being a particular expression of the Social Economic Capitalist Formation, we can also define a colonial sub mode of life in Havana, one that is characterized by specific labor modes, which determined the general historical circumstances in Havana, as it became integrated to the capitalist market, being, as it was, the most important port of the Americas for the Spanish Crown. The latter viewed Havana as a refuge and as a shelter for the precious metals and other wealth that were conveyed to Spain, their final frontier. Spain tried then to conquer once more the terri-

tories that had freed themselves in the 19th century. This situation led to Havana having a preponderant role over the rest of the country. Havana ended up exploiting the island just like a small metropolis, although subject, itself, to a bigger and more insatiable one: Spain.

Colonial sub mode of life in Havana, some peculiarities:

- Havana was the headquarters of political, religious and military power. At first, as a city that gained a special relevance in 16th century Cuban context, and after 1607 as Cuba's capital.

- Subjugation of the rest of the country's interests to the Havana's ones. We can speak now of Havana exploiting the rest of the country.

- Government staff is gathered between hacienda and encomienda's owners around the city. The government agree with the existence of properties.

- The port is the central axis of the city's economical life. There we have the concentration of innumerable ships that form the annual fleets returning to Spain filled up with precious metals and other highly demanded goods. This led to a notable increase of the city's population during periods of up to one year. Rendering services to this floating population was an essential feature of the city's economical life.

- Formation of a system of fortresses to defend the Spanish Crown's monopoly interests in the Americas. (First La Fuerza, La Punta and the Morro, later, land and sea walls, and by the end of the 18th century, La Cabaña, Atarés and Príncipe).

- A huge military garrison, at first exposed to the frequent threats of the French pirates, and later by the permanent threat of an English attack. In the 19th century, this military presence is submitted to the Spanish hope of recovering its ancient continental colonies and with the outbreak of the 10 Year War, of recovering Cuba as a colony.

The labor mode that better identifies the colonial sub mode of life in Havana is the rendering of services to the Crown and to the port. Those two are characterized below.

Labor mode: rendering of services to the Crown

- Defense of the monarchy interests in Cuba, and of the wealth extracted from continental America.

- The Situados of the Viceroyalty of New Spain, being an important source of revenues to the city's economy.

- Building and constant renovations at the city's defense system.

- Building and maintenance of war ships in order to guard the shores near the city, as well as support centre for privateering operations and military attacks to settlements of other European powers in the continent. Many ships were built for the Spanish Crown, famed as being of the best quality in view of the wood used.

- Operation headquarters of the Spanish armies in their intent of recovering American colonies that had succeeded in gaining their independence during the 19th century. From 1868 onwards, it also fought against Cuba's liberation process.

From 1898 onwards, this labor mode disappeared together with the colonial sub mode of life in Havana and the Cuban colonial way of life.

Labor mode: rendering of services to the port

- Demand of drinking water and provisioning of goods to the numerous ships at the port.

- Demand of lodging, food supplies and entertainment to the huge floating population of the city, generated by the ships visit.

- Demand of repairs in the ships that visit the port.

- Establishment of storage spaces for the products that were exported and imported. This led to a novel spatial distribution within the interior of the majestic unities of habitation. In the main floor the products were stored and in the mezzanine, at least in some of its area, workshops for business control were installed. In the middle part of the 19th century we have the construction of warehouses along the port's riverside. This changed, once more, the internal distribution of space in the domestic unities. From now on we have workshops of distinct purposes.

This labor mode would prevail even after the end of Cuban colonial way of life and of the colonial sub mode of life in Havana, because the port kept being the axis of the city's economical life.

Conclusion

We may come to the conclusion that in order to accomplish a precise study of Havana inside the walls it is of vital importance to use historical material-

ism as a substantive theory. This constitutes the first step that provides an adequate mark for the accomplishment of archaeological studies.

The history of Havana inside the walls may be studied from its foundation up to 1898. It is the history of a society characterized by having a Capitalist Social and Economical Formation. There we have a sub mode of life that identifies the society itself, it is the colonial sub mode from Havana. It guarantees the colonial bounds to the Spanish metropolis, not only of Havana itself but also of the rest of the country. We have a specific predominance of two labor modes that imply a certain organization, with a specific set of instruments and production means, including the organization of the geographic space and of the ecological surroundings. These labor modes, typical of the colonial sub mode of life in Havana, which is formed by the rendering of services to the port and to the Spanish Crown, integrate in an organic way the labor modes that have, in an evolutionary

manner, predominated in Cuban colonial way of life, as a national reality. In their evolution, they are determined by the capitalist market's demands and by its transformation in time. For example, the sugar produced in the plantations of the Havana region was stored in storehouses of the city until they were sent away, exported.

The society's use of the space during a certain time span, both in terms of the extension used and in terms of its deepness, which are events that generate the archaeological record (something that characterizes the Havana region as an archaeological area), is determined by the singularities of the sub mode of life, by the labor modes within it and by their insertion, from its beginning, to the European capitalist experience. We want to clarify that this set of labor modes do not exhaust the diversity of Cuba's and Havana's productive spheres, but do answer to a generalization, one that could and should have other later case studies added to.

Os sucessivos territórios de Cézanne¹

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Cézanne na Provença, com certeza; mas, do ponto de vista dos lugares representados, constata-se uma permanência? Ou uma evolução? A noção de território do pintor, na minha proposta, será por vezes física e topográfica – os lugares onde o pintor de paisagens produz –, mas também compreendida como a resultante de escolhas culturais. Eu me proponho a observar, de um ponto de vista de iconógrafo, as

relações de Cézanne com o motivo da cidade e, por extensão, com aquele da paisagem habitada, relações que estão na origem de todas estas paisagens situadas naquilo que nós chamamos, hoje em dia, peri-urbano – uma abordagem mais tipológica do que morfológica, a tipologia sendo o meio que subsiste para o generalista, confundido pelos conhecimentos aprofundados dos especialistas.

Uma primeira evidência logo de início: Cézanne, durante muito tempo, em continuação a Corot e Pissarro, atenta para a imagem das construções inseridas na paisagem: a maior parte das paisagens que pinta, até o final dos anos 1870, depende deste tipo. Ele vai

trilhar em seguida uma trajetória pouco banal; nos anos 1880, após ter atingido um ápice com as vistas da Gardanne, o olhar de Cézanne sobre a cidade se atenua, a ponto de, nos anos 1890, abandonar quase sistematicamente o tema da paisagem habitada. Eu me interrogo sobre essa ausência, uma ausência tanto mais problemática que, durante longos períodos, antes, o olhar de Cézanne sobre as relações das construções e das paisagens desenvolve os dados da paisagem habitada com uma substância pictural forte e precisa. Proponho, para compreender essa alteração dos tipos e dos temas, considerar como fatos essas ausências, e também as presenças alusivas que as precedem e as anunciam.

Mostrei anteriormente, a propósito do lugar das artes na história cultural, como, na Provença do século XIX, as paisagens dos pintores, de Loubon a Guigou, estão na dependência estreita de uma cultura urbana;² a maioria desses pintores utiliza uma visão distanciada da cidade, e coloca em evidência estradas e caminhos.³ Todos esses adeptos da paisagem na Provença são cidadãos que fazem a escolha de um acesso a lugares identificados com precisão, geralmente em sítios urbanos ou peri-urbanos cujos nomes dão os títulos aos quadros; eles são, sem exceção nenhum, os que praticam a toponímia.

Como todos sabem, Cézanne, desde o começo de sua carreira como pintor, encontra um espaço para a pintura de paisagem; na escolha dos motivos, distingue-se desses paisagistas provençais, pela escolha de motivos limitados e que não fazem uma referência sistemática à toponímia; fora algumas telas que já consagram o motivo familiar do Jas de Bouffan, a maioria, pintadas em Paris ou na Provença, são anônimas, e devem sua identidade aos historiadores de Cézanne, a Venturi, depois a John Rewald e Léo Marchutz. A maior parte dessas paisagens mostra sítios urbanos, e em alguns casos, com uma identidade precisa: as primeiras paisagens de l'Estaque (em 1870-1871), e em Paris as paisagens em Montmartre e em Bercy (entre 1869 e 1872). James Rubin mostrou o interesse do pintor pelos sítios industriais da Provença interior em 1870. Essa indicação do impacto da indústria sobre a paisagem é de novo notável nos anos 1880 em l'Estaque.

Creio, no entanto, que essa orientação fica bastante incompleta e ao menos hesitante. Cézanne – que tem acesso constante, na Ile-de-France, depois em Aix, em l'Estaque e na Gardanne, a áreas industriais – não faz a escolha de se dedicar à paisagem habitada pela indústria; diferentemente de Pissarro e de Guillaumin, e à parte o desenho *Usines à l'Estaque* (aquarela, 1869, Mu-

sée Granet, que não leva, notem bem, a uma obra pictural acabada) e uma vista de Saint-Henri, estas tentativas não terão continuidade, e em seguida o tema industrial desaparece completamente.

Eu farei observações do mesmo tipo sobre os limites do interesse de Cézanne pelo tema ferroviário, que ele não trata verdadeiramente. Ele aborda o tema da estrada de ferro de maneira estranhamente indireta, pelo viés dos efeitos do traçado sobre a paisagem, como James Rubin mostrou; mas são efeitos discretos: nada de locomotiva (a não ser aquela, escondida da vista, com exceção da chaminé, no desenho mencionado acima), nada da visão das obras de arte, nem dos canteiros importantes, que transtornam temporariamente, de 1875 a 1877, o espaço urbano e peri-urbano em Aix: canteiro do viaduto ferroviário de l'Arc, canteiro de obras de perfuração do aterro (sob a atual avenue des Belges), canteiro da estação.

Ora, Cézanne é um viajante que utiliza sem restrição o trem naquela época. Esse novo meio de locomoção, mais eficaz do que a estrada de rodagem para articular a cidade com o território, permite a Cézanne o início de uma mobilidade sistemática, dando-lhe acesso a lugares mais distantes que alcança pela estrada de ferro. Com efeito, a partir de 1864, Cézanne começa uma vida de nômade, alternando estadas em Paris e redondezas (Auvers, Fontainebleau), em Aix, e também em l'Estaque (a partir de 1870, onde, com a cumplicidade familiar, ele fica ao abrigo do alistamento militar) e em Gardanne (a partir de 1885). Um Cézanne nômade seria impensável na geração precedente; esse nomadismo é, na verdade, tributário do surgimento da estrada de ferro, do famoso PLM,⁴ depois das linhas que vão de cidade em cidade; Cézanne, viajante e nômade, é, assim, notemos bem, um homem de seu tempo, que utiliza a estrada de ferro sensivelmente mais do que os outros pintores de sua geração. Mais especialmente, as esta-

das de Cézanne nas cercanias de Aix, em l'Estaque e na Gardanne, estão em estreita relação com a utilização das linhas de estrada de ferro locais, de Aix a Marselha, por Vitrolles e l'Estaque primeiro, depois por Gardanne (a partir de 1877). Mobilidade ferroviária, moderna e consentida, inegavelmente, que estende em torno da cidade os sítios acessíveis, e que os dispõe em rede. Evidente e paradoxal ausência, portanto, a da paisagem ferroviária, quase sem exceções, e elas ainda são bem pouco explícitas, e bem longe de darem lugar a uma visão mais ou menos heróica do trem e da locomotiva.

Comparada a estas tentativas alusivas senão restritivas, a abordagem de Cézanne à paisagem habitada, em locais agrícolas, aparece numa plenitude totalmente diferente. Pode-se datar seu início em 1872, no momento das estadas de Cézanne em Pontoise e em Auvers, onde ele se instala para morar durante dois anos.⁵ Neste período, o pintor, bastante próximo de Pissarro – do qual ele até mesmo copia uma paisagem⁶ – desenvolve dois tipos de paisagem habitada bem distintas: de um lado explora os recursos do tema da aglomeração vista à distância, de outro experimenta o tema das vistas fragmentárias, em que uma ou mais construções estão no centro da composição (a mais célebre é a *Maison du pendu*, “Casa do enforcado”). Os dois tipos condensam, a exemplo de seu mentor Pissarro, como que a própria substância da pintura ao ar livre.

Nas vistas à distância parece produzir-se uma exaltação jubilante daquilo que se apresenta. A escolha é aquela de lugares-comuns – critério constante desde Corot – cujo nome, mesmo que freqüentemente precisado, não produz a menor denotação da paisagem-qualquer-um-vê; estamos bem distantes dos critérios da celebração das referências da paisagem-espetáculo.⁷ Em Cézanne, esse apanhado de sítios próximos à cidade, e de onde se vê a

cidade, é objeto de um tratamento específico. A tela *Auvers, vue panoramique* (Auvers, vista panorâmica) (1872-1875, Chicago Art Institute), que encontra sua amplitude numa perspectiva prolongada, consagra o novo interesse pela geometria das construções que o pintor reúne com uma espécie de eliminação dos elementos (paredes, empenas e telhados). Por cerca de 15 anos, a visão à distância de uma paisagem habitada com diversas construções nutriu a visão de Cézanne, dando-lhe sua identidade. Em muitos casos, árvores em primeiro plano enquadram de maneira teatral e, admitamos, convencional, a vista distante. Notemos desde já, a definição das construções nestas vistas distantes, não cessa de diminuir a partir do final dos anos 1880. Nas paisagens do vale de l'Arc e da Sainte Victoire visto de Valcros, subsiste apenas a indicação sumária do viaduto de l'Arc, e a cidade de Aix, que a prolonga à esquerda na tela, é sistematicamente despida de qualquer indicação de construções, monumentos ou outra coisa, uma ablação que evidentemente resulta de uma coisa muito diferente de uma escolha ótica.

Nas vistas fragmentárias, os locais de costas e de colinas apresentam vistas frontais interessantes e inovadoras, em diagramações específicas.⁸ Pissarro tinha tirado partido constante disto a partir de 1867, o que foi notado por Zola.⁹ Essa pesquisa da frontalidade que terá o destino de uma fórmula e que marcará a estética da paisagem durante muitas gerações de pintores contamina as vistas onde o pintor se coloca a partir de pontos de vista elevados, subindo a linha do horizonte para bem perto da borda superior da tela. Essa fórmula da vista frontal da colina retorna inúmeras vezes: em *Vue d'Auvers: la barrière* (Vista de Auvers, a barreira) (1873-1875), em *Pontoise: l'Ermitage* (1875-1877), em *La Côte du Galet à Pontoise* (A Côte du Galet em Pontoise) (1879-1882), e também em *Médan; château et village* (Médan, cas-

telo e aldeia) (1885, V.439); ela é retomada em seguida em l'Estaque, quando o pintor volta as costas ao mar, com *Maisons à l'Estaque* (Casas em Estaque) (1880-1885; collection Mellon), ou em *Viaduc à l'Estaque* (Viaduto em estaque); ela culmina com as três telas que consagram as sensacionais vistas pré-cubistas de *Gardanne* (1885-1886). A vista frontal se encontra ainda com uma intensidade particular nas três paisagens de Chantilly em 1888; ela se perpetua nas obras tardias com as interpretação dos bosques e das pedreiras de Bibémus.

O tratamento dos dois componentes principais das paisagens habitadas – formas vegetais e construções – suscita uma análise. Tanto as paisagens de Cézanne são pobres de indicações documentárias sobre as formas vegetais – com exceção das árvores, que são objeto de uma atenção particular – quanto sua visão é infinitamente mais precisa quando se trata de elementos construídos; na representação destes, Cézanne introduz uma capacidade manifesta de separar, distinguir e descrever: distingue as tipologias das construções nos locais da Ile-de-France das construções da Provença: os telhados, os materiais de cobertura, as aberturas das paredes, o desenho das portas-janelas são objeto de uma ampla abordagem documental. Com as vistas de Gardanne, Cézanne trabalha ao mesmo tempo o reconhecimento do valor monumental de um local urbano, modificando a cada vez o ponto de vista, e a experiência estilística pictórica que coloca em questão a visão perspectiva naturalista, em proveito de uma marcante construção da figura pintada. É um resultado e um limite: as vistas de Gardanne concluem essa visão da cidade, essa postura de frente a frente, interessada em fixar nas condições da pintura a eloquência de um sítio monumental, numa visão exaltada. Não encontraremos mais esse veio em seguida. Nem na série das vistas de l'Estaque, em que as vistas distantes de um sítio urbanizado, a partir de

um ponto de vista elevado, são confrontadas com o espaço marítimo. Nem nas vistas longínquas da montanha de Sainte-Victoire, em que a escala esfuma as formas construídas – à exceção do viaduto ferroviário sobre o vale de l'Arc – nas vistas distantes onde a morfologia se sobrepõe aos traços da atividade humana. Em muitas telas, em l'Estaque e nas vistas do Sainte-Victoire visto do sul, ou seja, de Beauceuil, o pintor mantém por muito tempo sua visão das edificações simples, e insiste sobre sua inscrição volumétrica em um sítio mineral. Nos dois locais – e isso foi sublinhado pelo sítio de l'Estaque¹⁰ – o caminho do pintor, em sua busca por pontos de vista, conduziu a percursos à distância, com uma insistência que implica a pesquisa inquieta de uma visão específica.

No último período, a partir do fim dos anos 1880, a relação de Cézanne com o tema das imagens da cidade muda radicalmente; elas desaparecem, a representação dos sítios peri-urbanos passa a ter importância, a toponímia precisa torna-se a exceção. Ao longo de todo o século XIX, os pintores tinham, muitas vezes, escolhido seus motivos nos territórios das periferias urbanas: assim esta paisagem de Guigou de 1867, onde a estrada, a rota do viajante, ocupa um lugar primordial; Cézanne, em seguida a Pissarro, durante muito tempo fez da estrada um elemento de seus quadros; em Pontoise, em l'Estaque, a “rota sinuosa”, assim mencionada nos títulos, aparece no primeiro plano de numerosas paisagens. No último período, depois de 1890, a estrada desaparece das pinturas. Coloque essa ausência em relação ao acesso do pintor a lugares diferentes, uma vez que Cézanne percorreu os arredores de Aix, a partir de Lauves, com uma evidente vontade de excluir a cidade; cidadão, ele dá as costas à cidade, recusa a aglomeração; penetra numa nova porção do território peri-urbano, para uma nova

experiência da paisagem, que é também uma imersão no meio vegetal e mineral. Nas paisagens que não têm nem estrada nem caminho, o pintor pratica uma espécie de imersão num meio mineral e vegetal, onde parece afirmar uma nova liberdade. Um meio em que a toponímia enrosca-se em indicações em uma escala que não é mais aquela do território da cartografia, mas a de uma toponímia dos vilarejos, numa lógica de proximidade. Nós sabemos que o tema, se perde em identidade topográfica, ganha em identidade visual, em sabor sensual, em ato pictórico.

Desloquemo-nos até as redondezas de Arles, quase que no mesmo momento, durante a primavera e o verão de 1888; ali vamos constatar que Van Gogh e Cézanne, se têm em comum uma relação com o território peri-urbano, que ambos constróem, um em Arles, o outro em Aix, os percursos são bem distintos.

Porque o comportamento de cada um deles é diferente. Em Arles, Van Gogh é um pintor que conduz um inventário dos lugares, como ele já fizera em Nuenen e na periferia próxima de Paris, em Asnières ou em Clichy. Dois subconjuntos são caracterizados: o dos lugares urbanos familiares – o hotel-restaurante Carrel, a Maison Jaune, o Café da estação (visto à noite), os jardins da Place Lamartine, o pátio do Hôtel-Dieu; – e o das cercanias de Arles. Nestes, na primavera e no verão de 1888, Van Gogh designa seus interesses, que não são os de um inventário topográfico: as referências à toponímia são fracas ou ausentes. São, no entanto, sítios precisos, retomados sob a forma de séries, uma marca do interesse que o pintor lhes dá, que constituem categorias: as terras agrícolas, as infraestruturas referentes à travessia dos canais, a atividade nos cais. Para as terras agrícolas, eis as representações dos vergéis em flor, das quintas e da planície da Crau, os campos de trigo nos tempos da colheita; para as infraestruturas, o

pintor representa o canal de Arles em Bouc, com suas pontes móveis, que lembram os canais do norte, e a estrada de Arles a Tarascon; sobre os cais do Ródano, Van Gogh mostra o trabalho dos estivadores.

Todos os trabalhos que Van Gogh faz diante do motivo são nutridos de uma observação atenta ao mesmo tempo aos grandes caracteres morfológicos do sítio e às suas particularidades. Os desenhos e as telas executadas sobre estes motivos respondem a uma visão precisa, atenta aos dispositivos agrícolas ou técnicos: as cercas de ciprestes, os recintos fechados dos jardins, os abrigos dos jardineiros, a proximidade das culturas e da cidade; nada diminui nele uma espécie de fervor descritivo, que ignora de modo soberbo as hierarquias e as trivialidades, e que parecem a força motriz dos itinerários percorridos a pé. Não um simples vagar, mas a marcha do viajante-residente e da testemunha, que vem registrar, estação após estação, um elemento depois do outro, os diferentes momentos da obtenção de uma identidade local; em suma, para empregar os termos da crítica fotográfica, um programa documentário, que não descarta, portanto, a estimulação da contemplação hedonista: “Aqui a natureza é *extraordinariamente* bela” (carta de 17 de setembro de 1888).

Um programa sustentado por uma cultura do homem da terra informado, e que desemboca numa abordagem crítica e numa quase especialização: “Parece-me que os camponeses trabalham bem menos que os camponeses da nossa terra ... As fazendas poderiam render o triplo do que produzem se fossem bem mantidas”. Este olhar de experto sobre a agricultura, Van Gogh leva para um território da produção agrícola, observado com os critérios sobre o espaço e o tempo do trabalho: campos observados em suas extensões e em seus limites, sebes e cercas de ciprestes compreendidos com sua função

de correção das condições climáticas; culturas vistas nas fases sucessivas da produção: pomares na primavera, trigo no tempo das colheitas. Onde o sentido particular da investigação pictural dos sítios, que não afasta uma compreensão das condições materiais e técnicas da produção agrícola, uma visão conforme a tradição holandesa da paisagem, atenta a um território de trabalho e de produção. Um comportamento de inclusão, que contém um gesto de empatia pela população. Van Gogh, nesses lugares de vida simples, da periferia urbana imediata de Arles, a vê povoada por pequenas pessoas (carregadores, lavadeiras). O amigo do carteiro Roulin é preciso: “Por aqui, por ali, eu encontrei também amigos e coisas que eu amo aqui”.

Cézanne se comporta de outro modo; nas suas estadias anteriores na Ile-de-France, notadamente no contato com Pissarro, via as aldeias, suas casas, seus jardins e seus pomares com um olhar, digamos, de “pintor holandês”, ao passo que em Aix e na sua periferia, afirma outras escolhas, numa busca incessante de motivos que lhe são próprios. Sabemos que em Aix, onde reside após as estadas em Paris, e se excetuarmos as visitas de Monet e Renoir ao voltarem de uma viagem à Itália, não encontra as cumplicidades e as conivências do mundo da arte; a população daquela então pequena cidade manifesta, ao contrário, bastante desdém pelo herdeiro desviado, pelo artista frustrado. É, no entanto, em Aix que Cézanne procede à instalação de suas residências, na propriedade familiar: no Jas de Bouffan, até 1899, depois na rua Boulégon, até sua morte; completadas por ateliês, uma cabana em Bibémus, aos pés da Sainte-Victoire, depois pela construção do ateliê do caminho de Lauves, a partir de 1901. Mas com Cézanne impõe-se pela primeira vez a constatação: o artista não tem como antes esta relação de proximidade, de dependência, este con-

tacto estreito com um ambiente social imediato. A mobilidade e as instituições estabelecidas transformam as condições da vida pessoal e artística do pintor. Que ele desse as costas para a própria cidade seria então psicologicamente coerente; sabemos que Cézanne, na cidade, considera impossível enfrentar a curiosidade e as observações agressivas ou ferinas dos que o rodeiam; é preciso então sair da cidade, ganhar espaços de tranqüilidade; ele os encontra algumas vezes nas propriedades privadas, o Jas-de-Bouffan (até 1897), a casa de M. Conil, seu cunhado, a cabana em Bibémus e o Château-Noir.

Mas essa busca do conforto não é a única explicação possível; ela não explica o afastamento das vistas distantes da cidade, que foi por muito tempo seu motivo de referência. Nos seus últimos anos, instalado no ateliê de Lauves, ele esboça uma única vez uma visão panorâmica da cidade, vista do terraço; e isso não passa de um esboço que ele não traduz para uma tela. Parece que a relação familiar com a cidade teria sido posta fora de jogo por Cézanne, em proveito do percurso num território fragmentado, acessível a partir de itinerários provenientes da cidade. Cézanne, uma vez afastado da cidade, mostra um distanciamento claro em relação aos territórios de produção: ele não encontra seus motivos nas planícies cultivadas, afasta-se das videiras e dos jardins, concentra-se na morfologia; ele não vê nada tecnicamente competente, e entre os caminhos disponíveis (outros estão em atividade, como a rota de Tholonet), ele escolhe os caminhos de Bibémus, vazios de qualquer traço de exploração, e que são mostrados como instalações abandonadas.

Ele escolhe seus motivos em espaços incultos, colinas arborizadas, vazias de qualquer traço pitoresco, e onde a vegetação é mais sensível às estações; não são superfícies de produção, sabe que não encontra ali agricultores e nem testemunhas, mas aparências perma-

nentes. Seus percursos o conduzem ao afastamento dos caminhos e das estradas; são idênticos aos percursos daqueles que freqüentam esses lugares para atividades de colheita ou de caça, formas primitivas e arcaicas do trabalho; itinerários do apanhador de lenha seca, de cogumelos, aqueles do caçador de perdizes ou de tordos, as atividades que se tornaram ao longo do tempo as dos homens das cidades, de uma cidade, Aix, agora sem subúrbio. Atividades básicas em qualquer ambiente das cidades, que respondem à necessidade para os miseráveis, ou, para os outros, a um exercício ancestral de lazer fora de qualquer obrigação de horário, ao exercício do tempo livre. Itinerários que ocupam o tempo de uma meia jornada, ou mais de um dia inteiro. Um espaço e um tempo da liberdade.

Essa evasão de Cézanne para lugares de atividades arcaicas, no momento em que ele dispõe do conforto do ateliê de Lauves, não é sem significado: no Cézanne desse momento, a pintura ao ar livre, com sua permanente inquietude, se parece com a atividade de um sentinela à espreita. Assimilada a uma atividade de coletor, em sítios familiares, mas à distância dos caminhos e das estradas, distancia-se da exploração de uma paisagem habitada. Essa imersão na natureza é também o reencontro ardente com um espaço arcaico e protetor, aquele das margens da cidade: uma alternativa à contemplação da cidade.¹¹ O pintor inventa, por sua vez, a beleza dessa visão à queima-roupa da cobertura vegetal, das acumulações de rochas, dos caminhos, em sítios que são ao mesmo tempo um belvedere de onde se descobre a Sainte-Victoire.¹² Uma imersão que é compatível com um novo motivo de referência, estas imagens líricas da Sainte-Victoire, que polariza o olhar: sugere-se que as sábias análises formalistas sobre a “economia das formas e das cores” não tenham esgotado a questão.¹³

Conhecemos as observações que Walter Benjamin consagrou aos que perambulam na Paris do século XIX: primeiro Benjamin toma essa relação do transeunte com a forma arcaica do trabalho, a caça. Eu acrescento a colheita, precisando que as duas atividades são exclusivas; nos bosques de Bibémus, o olhar do pintor – do pintor Cézanne – não está desvinculado às práticas arcaicas da colheita de subsistência.

Esses fragmentos de território, à distância da cidade, não são, então, somente a garantia da solidão do pintor; não são somente um resultado por ausência; proponho ver ali um salto para fora do tempo, fora do tempo das cidades, devastadas – pensa Cézanne ao fim de sua vida – pelo progresso. É também talvez a afirmação de um afastamento de um novo mundo, aquele das imagens triviais, aquele das fotografias, do qual o reino sem limite sobre a representação das cidades e dos monumentos vem justamente começar, com as técnicas que permitem a impressão da fotografia, e que conduzem à apoteose do cartão postal ilustrado com vistas de sítios e de monumentos.

Essa abordagem pelo pintor das visões sucessivas das cidades e das paisagens habitadas parece, portanto, capaz de dar um fio condutor para associar as escolhas do artista, suas interpretações pictóricas e muitas das componentes culturais de sua biografia. Ela ganharia, sem dúvida, maior precisão, especialmente buscando as obras-chave que dão seu sentido a esta transformação.

Esses percursos de Cézanne no território peri-urbano não são sem importância na história da paisagem; os pintores da geração seguinte fazem desses lugares seus locais de referência. Após Cézanne, o inventor do sítio de l'Estaque, a lista dos artistas que ali foram trabalhar é considerável: Renoir em 1882, Monticelli em 1883, Braque e Derain em 1906, Braque e Friesz em 1907, Braque e Dufy em 1908, Braque

de novo em 1910 (Marquet seguirá em 1918). O sítio é de acesso fácil pela estrada de ferro; há uma hotelaria no local, uma forte associação da geomorfologia com a vegetação, e a presença geométrica das construções recentes que recobrem a região (o hotel Bellevue, o viaduto da estrada de ferro, as fábricas), tudo se presta para transformar l'Estaque em sítio de referência. Depois de l'Estaque e em seguida a

Martigues (consagrada por Ziem, que vinha de Marselha), entre 1880 e 1914, os artistas fixam sua utilização de um conjunto de sítios propriamente mediterrâneos: são, de oeste a leste, os sítios urbanos de Martigues, de l'Estaque, de Marselha, de Cassis, de la Ciotat e de Saint-Tropez; a cidade de Marselha, que comanda o acesso por via férrea (ou mais raramente pelo mar) aos sítios precedentes, está no centro de uma densa

rede interurbana percorrida por uma geração de artistas, até Picabia e Signac. O território do urbano e do peri-urbano se impôs entre os pintores. Mas ele não é mais o instrumento de uma marcha que conduzia ao mesmo tempo às sinuosidades e à rejeição da paisagem habitada como norma da paisagem moderna, e à exaltação da natureza.

Tradução: Eugênia Gorini Esmeraldo

As obras referentes ao artigo são:

- 04.659 - Vincent Van Gogh, *O campo de trigo*, desenho, 1888, Rijksmuseum Vincent Van Gogh, Amsterdam.
- 04.660 - Vincent Van Gogh, *Campo de trigo com papoulas*, óleo sobre tela, 1888, Rijksmuseum Vincent Van Gogh, Amsterdam.
- 04.572 - Vincent Van Gogh, *Campo de trigo*, óleo sobre tela, 1888, Stichting Collectie P. en N. de Boer, Amsterdam.
- 04.573 - Vincent Van Gogh, *Campo de trigo*, óleo sobre tela reforçada sobre cartão, 1888, Rijksmuseum Vincent Van Gogh, Amsterdam.
- 77.089 - Paul Cézanne, *Rochedos no bosque*, 1894-1898, Kunstmuseum, Zurich.
- 77.087 - Paul Cézanne, *Vista da Sainte Victoire*, 1904-1906, Kunstmuseum, Zurich.
- 80.159 - Johan Barthold Jongkind, *O Sena e os lavadouros de barcos*, s.d., Musée Boymans, Rotterdam.

¹ Contribuição do autor ao Colóquio “Como Paul torna-se Cézanne”, organizado pelo Museu Granet e a Sociedade dos Amigos de Paul Cézanne no Centre des Congrès, Aix-en-Provence, França, 14 e 15 de setembro de 2006.

² Depois Constantin (1756-1844), e seu aluno Loubon (1809-1863); os locais representados são sempre identificados pela referência à toponímia, freqüentemente em relação ao nome de uma cidade. Muitos destes quadros são chamados por Loubon de “panoramas”, assim o *Panorama du port et d'une partie de la ville de la Ciotat*, e o *Panorama de la ville et du port de*

Martigues (conservados nas coleções da Câmara de Comércio de Marselha), ambos pintados no quadro de uma encomenda oficial em 1844, o ano que precede a instalação do pintor em Marselha. Uma síntese da crônica local e do panorama é a *Vue de Marseille prise des Ayygalades un jour de marché* (1,40 x 2,40 m, São de 1853, Marselha, Musée Longchamp). Os quadros de Loubon mostram o caminho a vários pintores provençais; a Marius Engalière (1824-1857), Prosper Grésy (1804-1874), Louis-Auguste Aiguier (1814-1865) e, na geração seguinte, Paul Guigou (1834-1871).

³ A estrada e o caminho são, então, na Provença interior, os únicos instrumentos de ligação entre as cidades, à disposição das trocas econômicas e das viagens.

⁴ PLM: Companhia de estrada de ferro Paris-Lyon-Mediterrâneo. (N.T.)

⁵ Estadias que se repetirão até 1881.

⁶ O quadro *Louveciennes*, pintado em 1872 (V.153), é a cópia de um quadro de Pissarro pintado no ano precedente.

⁷ É preciso aqui dar espaço a Jongkind (1819-1891), que leva para Paris uma iconografia que repercutirá entre os paisagistas franceses, por suas imagens da cidade e de suas periferias, do litoral e dos equipamentos portuários; a referência a Jongkind é atestada em Boudin, e se poderia também buscá-la em Corot. Em sua procura por uma filiação estilística, os pintores da geração seguinte o reconhecem: “é preciso então colocar este renovador da paisagem moderna entre Corot e Monet, à testa dos outros precursores do Impressionismo, Boudin, Cals e Lépine” (Signac, 1927).

⁸ Como o assinalou Jean Arrouye em sua comunicação “Estradas de ferro e chaminés de fábrica na França” – e eu o agradeço por essa atenção – abordei essa questão em “Colinas, costas e encostas: uma figura pictural da arte moderna”, em *Lire le paysage, lire les paysages*, CIEREC, Universidade de Saint-Etienne, Saint-Etienne, França, 1984, p. 231-40.

⁹ Zola aprecia particularmente o quadro de Pissarro *Côte du Jallais* de 1867: “Um pequeno vale, algumas casas das quais se percebem os tetos rentes a um caminho que sobe; depois, do outro lado, ao fundo se recorta uma colina em faixas verdes e castanho-escuras. Está ali o campo moderno. Sentimos que o homem passou, escavando o solo, recortando-o, entristecendo os horizontes. E este pequeno vale, esta colina são de uma simplicidade, de uma franqueza heróica. Nada seria mais banal, se nada não fora maior”, mencionado por Christopher Lloyd, *Pissarro*, Genève, 1981, p. 31

¹⁰ Notadamente no belo trabalho de Xavier Prati, “Retorno ao motivo”, *L'Estaque, naissance du paysage moderne*, Marseille, 1994, p. 146-51.

¹¹ Esse espaço de liberdade encontrado às margens da cidade é também para Cézanne, nós o compreendemos, aquele dos banhistas.

¹² Uma imersão no meio natural que não é desvinculada às práticas dos pintores nos bosques de Fontainebleau, prática que também é a de Cézanne.

¹³ Ver as abordagens de Claude Frontisi “L'Estaque entre Cézanne et Braque”, *L'Estaque, naissance du paysage moderne*, Marseille, 1994, p. 84-99.

Titian, Manet, Degas: Notes on the Female Nude in Painting

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Enfant, garde bien la porte et ne laisse pas entrer les passants, car moi et six filles aux beaux bras nous nous baignons secrètement dans les eaux tièdes du bassin.

...

D'ailleurs, il s'en repentirait, celui qui nous surprendrait nues! Bilitis n'est pas Athéna, mais elle ne se montre qu'à ses heures et châtie les yeux trop ardents.

[Pierre Louÿs, *Les chansons de Bilitis*]

It is well known that Edgar Degas (1834–1917) had a great esteem for classical tradition, evidenced by his admiration for Ingres, and for the Italian masters, whose works he avidly collected.

His practices as a painter and sculptor, engraver and draughtsman – as well as his attempt as a poet – also reveal that Degas worked mainly from those works known by followers of classical tradition. In his education, he planned to get to know these great masters up close, when he took his four-year journey to Italy. It was there that he got his tools to elaborate his first great canvas – the portrait of the Bellelli family – and tackle the issue of form.

We also know that in his approach to the issue of form Degas drew from the universe of classical ballet, in which he saw a grammar of movement. In this motif, and in that of the bathers, Degas spent the greater part of his life obsessed with trying to solve the depiction of movement, but, mainly, trying to find a new mode of expression.

His last big works in oil on canvas date from the 1890s, depicting ballet dancers in sequential poses of move-

ments and female figures in their privacy washing themselves, toweling themselves dry, combing their hair, etc. From these scenes Degas took the motifs he was to work on, exclusively in pastel, in the second half of that decade. There are two motifs in particular which led him to work with oil on canvas: the one of the female figure wiping her back and neck; and that of the female figure arranging and combing her hair. A representative work by the artist involving each of these two motifs is found, respectively, in *After the Bath* (1896, Philadelphia Museum of Fine Arts) [Fig. 1] and *Woman at her toilet, having her hair combed* (1892–95, London, National Gallery) [Fig. 2]. Both seem to be new formal interpretations of a very well-known subject matter of classical tradition: Venus at her toilet.

*

In *After the Bath* – which was in Brazil between May and August, 2006, for the exhibition *Degas, the Universe of an Artist* at the São Paulo Museum of Fine Arts (MASP) – the scene is of an interior room wherein a female figure, facing away from the viewer, is kneeling on a lounge chair, bending sideways over its high back, wiping herself with a towel. The idea that she is drying herself after a bath is supported by the presence of a bathtub at the painting's left edge. The composition is very synthetic: a few thick black vertical lines on the wall in the background emphasize the effect of spatiality evoked by the diagonal placement of the lounge chair. Indeed, the point of intersection between one of the corners of the chair with the wall, between two of these black lines, compose the central point of the painting, dividing it into two equal parts. Moreover, Degas defines the figure broadly, with black contours filled with a hot color (between red and burnt pink) which takes up the entire surface of the canvas. He also projects some nuanced

shadows in parts of the floor and on the back of the female figure, all very subtle, without creating sharp contrasts of dark and light zones.

One of the aspects that catch our attention on the surface of the canvas is the pictorial skin created by Degas: at first, the application of the paint reminds us of a work in pastel, with all its juxtaposed and, sometimes, transparent layers. The background seems to have been prepared on a cold color base (a greenish hue), as we can see in many of his pastels.

This composition is directly linked to a photographic plate (now at the Getty Institute, in Los Angeles) [Fig. 3] shot by the artist himself, where one can see a reclined female figure on a lounge chair, in the same position, making the same gesture. In fact, of all the artist's photographs, this is the only one we could actually infer as being a preparatory picture for the canvas. It is important to underscore that while going from one medium to the other, Degas switched from a square format (in which the crop is closer and the background is almost imperceptible) to a rectangular one, in which he rebuilds the room that receives the figure. Though a little smaller than *Woman at her toilet, having her hair combed*, *After the Bath* is, from the point of view of its composition, proportional to its "pair". Finally, one must remember that, when reconsidering the same motifs in pastel, Degas would return to the square shape.

There are at least two aspects of *After the Bath* that allude to the tradition of Venetian painting. First, the way of arranging the colors: the preparation of the canvas with a base of green and red is, at least according to the beliefs of 19th-century artistic practice, a Venetian procedure dating back to the 16th century.¹ And the motif treated on here – though not so apparent at first sight – is a reworking of the iconography of Venus, whose most

famous version is the *Venus of Urbino* by Titian (1538) [Fig. 4].

In his essay (written in the form of a dialog) “La femme dans le coffer,” Daniel Arasse² proposes that Titian’s famous painting be seen as a pinup. At first glance, the iconography would be related to that of the matrimony painting, as it was commissioned by the husband of the young lady therein depicted as Venus;³ but, says Arasse, two things are out of keeping with this interpretation. First, the painting was commissioned four years after the marriage, and the gesture of Venus would refer directly to the preparation for sexual intercourse between the wife and her new husband. Moreover, her gesture and her figure detach themselves from the background, because, as the author brilliantly points out, she is not inside the room depicted in the background; she was placed *on* that background. She is separated from the room by a curtain, projected behind her, on her left side, and which divides the canvas in two. On the point where it is divided – which is the same of the projection of the vanishing point in the background – one can see her hand covering her sex.

Arasse builds his interpretation with another very well-known painting, namely, *Olympia*, by Manet (1863, Musée d’Orsay) [Fig. 5]. According to him, this contemporary of Degas was the person to better understand what Titian really wanted with his *Venus of Urbino*. Of course, the first similitude between these two paintings is the composition. Arasse emphasizes this proximity while pointing to the fact that, also, the hand that covers Olympia’s sex is placed in the central point of the composition, and marks the separation between the foreground and the background. Manet’s tool to do so is the very same of the Venetian master: a dark section of a wall with a curtain. The line that divides the two parts is enhanced by the presence of a lighter line, in ochre, which finishes the wall

section and separates the field featuring Olympia’s torso from that where the maid with a bunch of flowers is standing.

What does Degas’s *After the Bath* have to do with all this? Nothing, at first. Yet, if we analyze the composition conceived by Degas, in many aspects, it seems to retake Manet’s composition, which in turn, retakes that of Titian. Earlier, we spoke about the division of the composition of *After the Bath* in two parts, enhanced by the diagonal positioning of the lounge chair, as well as the presence of the thick black lines on the wall in the background that, once again, fall in between the legs of the female figure who is drying herself. Though none of her hands is placed over her sex, it is precisely these two black lines that call our attention to the towel (with which she dries herself) which falls over her sex (which we cannot see).

Furthermore, it is possible to propose a reading of this bather by Degas as a reference to the works by Manet and Titian, including in terms of the motif depicted. The three figures are each based on a live model.⁴ Manet used his model Victorine Meurent to paint his *Olympia*; and though we do not know the identity of Degas’s model, the photograph on the same motif reveals that the figure was studied from life. All three figures bear elements of eroticism and languor. Though less apparent to our contemporary eyes, Arasse demonstrates how Titian’s Venus is actually masturbating. In this sense, she is different from Manet’s Olympia, who seems to cover her sex with a certain pudency. In fact, while exposing herself completely, Olympia bears a tension and an alert expression in her gesture: the spaces of exercising female sexuality in both canvases are completely different and reveal different cultural practices in the initiation of sexual life in their own times, to a certain extent. According to a more traditional interpretation, Titian’s

Venus (or the wife of Guidobaldo della Rovere) exposes herself and gets sexually prepared for her husband. Olympia is a prostitute, and this puts herself immediately in a position of marginality on what concerns her sexuality. The pleasures of sex, in the 19th century, were outside of marriage.

Even more moralist, in this sense, is Degas’s figure, who denies us the exposure of her sex, and does not seem to seduce or give in to the gaze of the spectator. So, if Manet speaks of the great *courtisane* with his *Olympia*, Degas peeps into the keyhole of the rooms of brothels. His figure is not aware that she is being watched.⁵ On the other hand, she has an extreme and complex gesture for someone who is drying herself. Her position is not the least comfortable, and it turns her act more difficult. It is there that she reveals her eroticism.

It would be necessary to bring into the discussion another reference available to Degas while he was elaborating his figure, that is, the erotic/por-nographic photography at the turn of the century in the format of postcards, more precisely those created by Pierre Louÿs (1870–1925). A plate by Louÿs depicting female nudes reclined on an armchair, one of them projecting her hips to the back, dates from 1897 [Fig.6]. This gesture recalls very much the one seen in Degas’s figure, and a further likeness is found in the synthesized composition of the photographs: there is a curtain in the background, closing off the space and focusing our attention on the figure.⁶ Moreover, Louÿs elaborates a kind of *catalogue raisonné* of erotic gestures and positions, classified according to each of the moments of sexual foreplay.⁷ Louÿs’s obsession with classifying does not seem so different from Degas’s obsession for the female figure in movement.

Apart from his series of erotic photographs, Louÿs is known for his erotic poems. His most famous collection of

poems, published under the title of *Les chansons de Bilitis*,⁸ were actually a farce: he proclaimed to have discovered a series of poems by an author from the time of Sappho, by the name of Bilitis. The content of the *Chansons* is erotic and is mainly about encounters among women.

In the same spirit, but now taking as its main character the figure of a prostitute, Louÿs published the novel *Aphrodite, mœurs antique*, in 1896. The figure of the prostitute is embodied by that of Venus, when, in the first paragraphs of the text, the author describes her:

Depuis qu'elle s'était éveillée, deux heures après le milieu du jour, et toute lasse d'avoir trop dormi, elle était restée seule sur le lit en désordre, couverte seulement d'un côté par un vast flot de cheveux.

Cette chevelure était éclatante et profonde, douce comme une fourrure, plus longue qu'une aile, souple, innombrable, animée, pleine de chaleur. Elle couvrait la moitié du dos, s'étendait sous le ventre nu, brillait encontre auprès des genoux, en boucle épaisse et arrondie. La jeune femme gisait enroulée dans cette toison précieuse, dont les reflets mordorés étaient presque métalliques et l'avaient fait nommer Chrysis par les courtisanes d'Alexandrie.

Ce n'étaient pas les cheveux lisses des Syriennes de la cour, ni les cheveux teints des Asiatiques, ni les cheveux bruns et noirs des filles d'Égypte. C'étaient ceux d'une race aryenne, des Galiléennes d'au delà des sables.⁹

This is the same procedure used by Manet to create his *Olympia*, transforming Titian's Venus into a prostitute. He certainly opens a precedent so that Degas can work these classical forms within a contemporary context: the woman at her toilet.

Thus, if Degas's composition alludes to that of Titian, re-elaborated by Manet, it is possible that Pierre Louÿs's writings, as well as his erotic photography, may have been a reference for the artist in the making of *After the Bath*.

It is also remarkable that *After the Bath* and *Woman at her toilet, having her*

hair combed are the only oil-on-canvas works that Degas made in the 1890s, on the motif of the bather. Once again, as a profound connoisseur of classical tradition, it would be at least naïve to think that Degas chose this medium – and the layering of colors and composition – fortuitously. It is obvious that his choice was deliberate, and that both works have indeed a more interlinked relation than what is revealed at first glance. The figure from the canvas at the London National Gallery is seated on a chair, reclined, and we see an orangish-red swath constituting her hair, which is being combed by a maid. Again, the composition is a very synthetic one, and some essential elements determine the context in which the figures are placed. The composition is almost completely dominated by this auburn coloration, a very hot one, with some pink and white hues (the towel on the table, where one can see a hairbrush, among other objects). The tones are very close to those of *After the Bath*. The motif of the background with a curtain reappears as a compositional element, now draped and held to the left side of the background, also marked by thick black lines.

It is impossible not to link this image to various versions of the Venus at her toilet, as we see appearing from the Baroque era on. Just to mention a few, in which the figure of Amor or another female figure from her retinue arranges her hair, there is the *Toilet of Venus* (1633) by Francesco Albani, at the Prado Museum, in Madrid; the version by François Boucher, at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (1751); a *Venus in front of the mirror* by Johann Liss (1625–26), at the Galleria degli Uffizi, in Florence; and a version by Simon Vouet (1628–29) at the Cincinnati Art Museum.

The most interesting Baroque reference is the *Toilet of Venus* by Rubens [Fig. 7],¹⁰ which seems to be a reinterpretation of an earlier version by Titian,

dating from 1554–55, now at the Washington National Gallery. Rubens only adds the figure of a black maid (on the right side of the composition), who has her right arm involved by the long blond hair of the goddess. The element of long hair being dried, arranged and combed is present in Degas's oeuvre not only in *Woman at her toilet...*, but also in a series of pastels and monotypes, as well as in one of his sculptures.¹¹

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Going back to Arasse's reading of Titian's Venus, at a specific point, he talks about what he calls the *érotique de la peinture classique*, that is, while depicting Venus on a couch that is located – from the point of view of composition – between the space of the spectator and the space of the background, Titian seems to want that his figure be neither in the real space, nor in the painting, but *on* the painting. Arasse understands that, thus, the Venetian painter would have expressed the very condition of painting, and goes on to discuss the game of touch and gaze implied by the composition – which Manet would have undone in his *Olympia*, when he integrated her into the space of the background, affirming that painting is *to be seen* and not *to be touched*. According to Arasse, Titian's figure would have interested Manet for being *on* the painting, exposing her body while gazing and touching herself.¹² In the other depictions of Venus at her toilet mentioned above, the gaze of the figure is not direct: often reflected in the mirror, Venus's face is turning its back to the spectator – this often creates a situation in which the mirror works as “the painting within the painting.”

There is yet one other work of the 19th century that could be a link between Degas's and Titian's Venus – though it is not really a Venus, its composition bears a striking similar-

ity to that of the Venetian painting. This is the *Grande Odalisque* by Ingres (1814, Musée du Louvre) [Fig. 8]. Ingres seems to play a game of showing and hiding: the figure looks at us, but her nudity is preserved, because she is lying with her back turned to the spectator. And, returning to Arasse's idea of *erotica of classical painting*, Ingres creates a totally abstract background, with the figure's torso placed in contrast against a black background: she is not *on* or *in* any particular place...

In this lineage, Degas seems to deal with this *erotica of classical painting* when he made his *After the Bath*: in regard to the composition, his figure is inside the bedroom; the space of the spectator is outside it. At the same time, and because of the treatment of the surface, the figure *is* the bedroom, that is, she is the very surface, the very painting.

Finally, when one deals with the issue of form, and of form in painting – mainly in the classical tradition – form seems to be directly associated with the figure of Venus. In another classical text – which Degas was most certainly familiar with – it is the philosopher Plato who describes a debate among philosophers and wise men concerning love, that is, searching for its definition and interpretation. The final word, by Socrates, is based on an anecdote by a woman of Mantinea, called Diotima, who says that to attain beauty, it is necessary, first, to recognize it in beautiful bodies:

This constitutes, in fact, the way one should journey, or be led, along the paths of love: by starting with what is beautiful here and, in view of that beauty, go always up, as though climbing up stairs, from one to two, and from two to all beautiful bodies, and from the beautiful bodies to the beautiful crafts, and from the beautiful

crafts to the beautiful sciences, until from those sciences it ends in that science, which is nothing but that of beauty itself, and know finally what beauty in itself is... If some day you see it, it will not be like gold or clothes, or like the lovely youths, the sight of whom leaves you and so many others amazed and excited, wishing to simply gaze upon them and be with them, giving up eating and drinking, if necessary, just to be by their side. What do you think would happen, she said, if someone could happen to contemplate beauty in itself, in its clear, pure, and simple condition, and not embodied by human flesh, colors or so many other mortal trifles; that is, if one could contemplate the divine beauty itself in its own unique form?¹³

It is really tempting to imagine that – to borrow from Diotima's speech – “that science” could, here, be understood as painting itself.

Translation: Ana Gonçalves Magalhães
Revision: John Norman

¹ In his Journals, published in 1893, romantic painter Eugène Delacroix mentions this procedure.

² ARASSE, Daniel. *On n'y voit rien: descriptions*. Paris: Denoël, 2000, pp. 125-73 (collection Folio/Essais).

³ Guidobaldo della Rovere commissioned the painting to Titian four years after his marriage with a 14-year-old girl. Cf. ARASSE, Daniel, Op. cit., pp. 125-6.

⁴ In Titian's case – in charge of finishing the famous *Sleeping Venus* (1510 c.) by his contemporary and master Giorgione – according to Arasse, he would have proceeded as his master, studying from the live model (apparently it was Giorgione's wife who posed for him to paint his Venus).

⁵ This reading of Degas's bathers is not new. The artist's bibliography from the 1980's on (especially that contaminated by the wave of gender theory) is full of interpretations dealing with such an approach.

⁶ This plate was shown in the special exhibition *Identity and Allergy: Figures of the Body 1895/1995*, which was part of the curatorial exhibition of the 46th Venice Biennale, which celebrated the 100-year anniversary of the show – in the

same session where some of Degas's bronzes belonging to MASP were exhibited, together with the *Little Dancer Aged 14*. There are some other erotic photographs by Louÿs that remind us of Degas's bathers' compositions. For an interpretation of Louÿs erotic photographs, see GOUJON, Jean-Paul. “Pierre Louÿs photographe érotique”, *La recherche photographique*, novembre, 1988, pp. 39-47, which reproduces on page 42 a female figure bent over an armchair that immediately alludes to a Degas's pastel from the Metropolitan Museum of Art collection. In this article, the author also calls the attention to the *décor* of the spaces shot by Louÿs, its oriental aspects and a certain standard of composition adopted by him, so as to search for a classificatory structure to his erotic nudes. I would like to thank Anne Pingeot and Joëlle Bolloch, at the Musée d'Orsay, for sending me this article.

⁷ Cf. GOUJON, Jean-Paul, Op. cit., who discusses at length the organization of these photographs into albums, divided into classifying sessions. They are often followed by a card-index.

⁸ 1st. edition, 1894.

⁹ LOUÏS, Pierre. *Aphrodite, moeurs antiques, Livre Premier, Chapitre I*, Paris, 1897. The long blond

hair could also allude to the figure of Mary Magdalene. Cf. ARASSE, Daniel. “La toison de Madeleine” In: Op. cit., pp. 97-122. At the same time, how can one not think about the famous *Toilet of Venus*, with her long blond hair (as “metallic”) by Rubens (1615, coll. Prince of Lichtenstein, Vienna), or even in Titian's *Venus Andromène* (1520 c., National Gallery of Scotland) – who, though has brown hair, seems to wring it, so as to eliminate the excess of water?

¹⁰ See note 9.

¹¹ For the Degas exhibition in São Paulo, in 2006, there were two print plates, one from the Art Institute of Chicago, and the other from the Fundação Museu Castro Maya, in Rio de Janeiro; as well as the bronze 51S, placed together in relation to a large series of figures that arrange and dry their hair, among them, a bather by Manet from the MASP collection.

¹² Cf. ARASSE, Daniel. Op. cit., p. 164: “... Et je pense que, si ce tableau a intéressé Manet, c'est parce qu'il soulignait cette relation exclusive de regard en exhibant, sur le devant du tableau, une figure qui, elle, voit et se touche. »

¹³ PLATÃO. *O banquete*. Rio de Janeiro: Bertrand Brasil, 2006. (trans. Portuguese by J. Cavalcante de Souza), 211 c/ 212^a, pp. 164–5.

En été, d'Eliseu Visconti : œuvre pionnière qui dévoile son auteur

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L'œuvre et son auteur

Malgré ses grandes qualités, la facture, les couleurs ou l'illumination de l'œuvre *En été* [Fig. 1] ne représentent aucune nouveauté. C'est dans son thème, *Deux filles nues couchées sur un lit*, et dans la manière dont il est traité, que se trouve le principal point d'intérêt de l'œuvre.

Son auteur, le peintre Eliseu d'Angelo Visconti (1866-1944), est né en Italie et est parti au Brésil encore enfant. Sa formation artistique s'est faite à Rio de Janeiro, à partir de 1883, au Lycée d'Arts et Métiers, et ensuite à l'Académie Impériale des Beaux-Arts, depuis 1885. Lors de la Proclamation de la République, il s'est naturalisé brésilien et il a participé à la réforme de l'Académie, qui a été transformée en École Nationale des Beaux-Arts (ENBA). Il a été le gagnant du premier concours promu par la nouvelle institution, dont le prix a été un voyage en Europe. Pendant sa période de perfectionnement à Paris (1893-1900), il a étudié à l'École des Beaux-Arts, à l'Académie Julian et à l'École Guérin, participant au cours de composition décorative d'Eugène Grasset.

Les nus féminins dominent la production artistique du jeune Visconti, surtout pendant cette période. Cependant, après son mariage en 1909 avec la française Louise Palombe, la thématique familiale sera une constante jusqu'à la fin de sa carrière. [Fig. 2]

Il a travaillé en France pendant au moins deux autres périodes (1904-07 et 1913-20), quand il a réalisé les œuvres de décoration du Théâtre Municipal de Rio de Janeiro et peint plusieurs aspects des jardins parisiens et de Saint Hubert,

où il a habité dans une propriété de la famille de son épouse.

De 1908 à 1913, il a enseigné à l'ENBA de Rio de Janeiro, mais son activité principale a toujours été la peinture, avec laquelle il a gagné sa vie sans difficultés. En 1941, un paragraphe synthétise la réputation du peintre :

En travaillant pertinemment, libre de toute influence d'artistes et d'écoles, Visconti présente une peinture forte et brillante, d'une technique admirable. Paysagiste, portraitiste, peintre de genre, de nus et décorateur, Visconti est un maître.¹

Entre les prix qu'il a eus, on souligne une médaille d'argent à l'Exposition Universelle de Paris, en 1900, et une médaille d'or à l'exposition de Saint-Louis, aux États-Unis, en 1904. Il est aujourd'hui considéré un pionnier du design et un précurseur du modernisme au Brésil.

La réception de l'œuvre

Le plus ancien registre de la peinture *En été* est le catalogue du Salon des Champs-Élysées, de mai 1894. En octobre de la même année, elle est présentée à l'Exposition Générale des Beaux-Arts de Rio de Janeiro, reçoit une médaille d'or de 2^e classe et devient partie de la collection de la Pinacothèque de l'ENBA.

Plus récemment, *En été* a été montrée dans plusieurs expositions collectives, et sa participation à deux d'entre elles met en évidence ses qualités spéciales. Cette peinture a été la couverture du catalogue de l'Exposition *Le désir à l'Académie*, qui entendait lancer un regard contemporain sur les œuvres de la deuxième moitié du 19^e siècle. Elle a été exposée dans la section «Le Cabinet», même si elle n'est jamais restée dans des alcôves fréquentées par des hommes, ou n'ait été produite pour des collectionneurs. Elle a été considérée l'œuvre «dans laquelle la pulsion du désir pointe vers une transgression, image érotique déterminée par une impulsion qui la détourne de l'objectif proposé».²

Chronologiquement située à cheval sur le passage entre deux siècles, *En été* réunit en soi des caractéristiques de ce moment de transition et de l'art qui était à venir. Dans la grande *Exposition de la redécouverte*, qui a fêté les 500 ans du Brésil à São Paulo, en l'an 2000, la toile a été choisie par les commissaires de deux sections, «Art du 19^e siècle» et «Art Moderne». Initialement, elle serait exhibée dans la deuxième, mais à cause d'un incident avec une autre œuvre, elle a été cédée à la première, en dépit du fait qu'elle figurait déjà dans le catalogue «Art Moderne». Ainsi, la toile a accompli son double rôle, étant exposée dans la section la plus appropriée selon la date de sa création aussi bien que dans le catalogue, marquant l'audace de son thème.

Dans le livre *Limage de l'enfant dans la peinture brésilienne*, *En été* représente le maître Visconti, malgré le fait qu'il ait peint beaucoup de scènes de genre contenant des jouets d'enfants. L'auteur remarque le contraste entre l'expression des filles et met en évidence, chez celle qui est réveillée, «la force concentrée dans le regard inquisiteur qui semble exiger une réponse aux problèmes qui l'affligent».³

Une entrée spéciale du *Dictionnaire critique de la peinture au Brésil* remarque dans cette œuvre un élément très courant sur les représentations occidentales de l'adolescence :

... celle de gauche [...] s'est profondément endormie, et sur son très beau visage se reflète une naïveté et une pureté que la sœur réveillée ne possède apparemment plus... Le tableau, parfois également nommé Deux Sœurs, est spécialement remarquable par l'évocation des différentes textures, par l'admirable contour des corps et par le chromatisme, d'une extrême légèreté.⁴

Dans l'expression des filles, ces auteurs dévoilent les inquiétudes et la perte de l'innocence, inhérentes à l'adolescence. Cependant, le premier commentaire direct sur le sujet de la peinture vient d'une publication étrangère, qui traite de l'image «décadentiste» de

la femme lors du passage entre les deux derniers siècles. Dans le chapitre «The lesbian glass», Bram Dijkstra exploite le chemin parcouru par les artistes en construisant cette iconographie, et, répertoriant les travaux de peintres de plusieurs nationalités sur ce thème, l'écrivain cite *En été* et remarque : «Surely it's not just the debilitating summer heat that gave these youngsters their air of contented exhaustion».⁵

Le relief que cette toile a pris lors de l'exposition *Le désir à l'Académie* a engendré le seul commentaire négatif jamais fait sur Visconti. Une journaliste fait des affirmations malicieuses, agressives et infondées sur de grands noms de la peinture brésilienne, et commente l'œuvre dont nous parlons : «Les normes académiques n'ont pas empêché Eliseu Visconti de faire une célébration voilée de la pédophilie, exposant sur la toile *En été* la nudité pré-adolescente de ses nièces».⁶

Quoique sans accuser le peintre de pédophilie, deux autres articles publiés à la presse reportent le rapport familial avec les modèles. L'un d'eux nous donne l'avis d'un professeur universitaire en visite à l'exposition.

*Pour Ubirajara, le désir ne se fait pas présenter que dans le corps, mais aussi dans la représentation – «parfois, sur un coup de pinceau en plus ou la sur-brillance d'un tissu» – comme c'est le cas de En été, d'Eliseu Visconti. Dans la toile, la sensualité ne se trouve pas sur les deux adolescentes nues (toutes deux nièces de l'auteur), mais sur le drap, qui ressemble à un «nid très chou».*⁷

En fait, l'affirmation selon laquelle ces filles seraient ses nièces est une légende familiale, basée uniquement sur des ressemblances physiologiques, et qui ne tient pas debout vis-à-vis des dates.

Ana Cavalcanti fait, sur sa thèse de doctorat, l'analyse la plus détaillée de l'œuvre. Elle est d'accord avec l'impression de fragilité et d'innocence indiquée par ceux qui commentent les nus

adolescents viscontiniens. Cependant, elle tient à remarquer :

*La scène, d'une candeur et d'une pureté infantiles, exhale en même temps une sensualité inattendue, créée par la rencontre du regard de la jeune fille qui se réveille avec celui du spectateur. Nous avons l'impression d'avoir franchi une porte interdite et d'avoir envahi son intimité, comme si, en ouvrant une porte par hasard, nous avions surpris cette scène qui ne nous était pas destinée.*⁸

Elle parle de *sensualité inattendue*, laissant entendre l'idée, latente dans le sens commun, selon laquelle la sexualité est l'exclusivité de la phase adulte de l'être humain, ou, sait-on jamais, de la femme.

Plusieurs auteurs soulignent l'érotisme de la toile *En été*, mais chacun le voit d'une manière particulière. Dijkstra le voit dans le rapport entre les deux filles, la journaliste le place dans la relation entre le peintre et les modèles, Ribeiro le déplace vers la représentation des matériaux, et Cavalcanti le retrouve dans le rapport entre la figure et le spectateur, dont leurs regards se rencontrent.

Genèse de l'œuvre

Une peinture aussi singulière vaut bien d'être investiguée depuis sa création. Visconti n'est pas resté imperméable aux principaux mouvements de son époque. Dans certaines de ses œuvres, plusieurs critiques ont retrouvé les réflexes du Symbolisme, du Pré-raphaélisme, et même de l'Art Nouveau. Cependant, *En Été* ne se trouve pas entre ces œuvres, qui sont plus tardives. [Fig. 3 et 4]⁹

Visconti était un de plus dans le bataillon d'artistes étrangers qui tentaient leur chance à Paris et était très attentif à toute la vie culturelle qui l'entourait, à la presse, à la littérature et aux Salons.

La « femme fatale », qui peuplait les fantasmes masculins vers la deuxième moitié du 19^e siècle, «archétype qui réunissait en soi toutes les séductions, tous les vices et toutes les voluptés»¹⁰, présente

dans les romans, poèmes et même dans les arts visuels, n'a pas de place dans l'œuvre de Visconti. Les jeunes filles représentées dans ses nus sont belles, charmantes par leur sensualité tranquille et réceptive. [Fig. 5, 6, 7, 8 et 9]

Le tempérament du peintre brésilien, pas très voué aux grandes angoisses et conflits existentiels, ne lui a permis d'assumer qu'un côté des contradictions régnantes ces années-là¹¹, et, comme alternative à la femme fatale, il a adopté la femme-enfant. [Fig. 10 et 11] Toute la critique brésilienne a toujours fait ressortir dans les nus viscontiniens des caractéristiques telles que : chaste, immaculée, naïve, douce, innocente, tendre, voire même «loin des perturbations érotiques».¹²

Il ne nous est pas possible de signaler une seule citation directe et catégorique d'une œuvre littéraire au sujet de *En été*. Cependant, les poèmes de Paul Verlaine, réunis dans *Parallèlement* (1889) avec le sous-titre *Les amies*, s'approchent beaucoup du thème et du traitement qui lui est attribué dans *En été*. Une lecture attentive de ces poésies signale tous ces termes avec lesquels les nus de Visconti ont toujours été qualifiés : fragile, content, délicat, tendre, douce, candide, timide... L'on ne perçoit dans ces poèmes, ni même dans les nus viscontiniens, aucune ombre de culpabilité ou de perversité. La sexualité est vue dans son aspect sain, agréable, heureux. Coïncidence ou pas, l'un des poèmes s'appelle *Été*.

Une réédition de *Parallèlement* a vu le jour justement en 1894¹³. Même si l'on ne peut affirmer que Visconti a lu cet ouvrage, il est incontestable que ce thème circulait dans l'ambiance culturelle de Paris vers la fin du 19^e siècle. Visconti est arrivé à Paris en 1893, la même année où le romancier Marcel Proust (1871-1922) publiait dans *La Revue Blanche* une nouvelle qui apportait une approche différente de la problématique de l'amour lesbien, *Avant la nuit*. Avant de se suicider, son personnage avoue la

raison de son acte, au moyen de diverses réflexions à propos de sa condition.

Si la beauté est désirable, quelle honte y aurait-il à désirer une femme quand on aime la beauté ?

[...] *Dans ce passage qui rompt le pacte entre la morale et la volupté, Proust opère un déplacement très important de la vision de l'homosexualité qui passe du territoire du vice à celui de l'esthétique.*¹⁴

Cette nouvelle a dû chauffer encore davantage le débat que ce sujet engendrait certainement dans les cafés et entre les intellectuels et artistes. Si la peinture de Visconti ne suit pas les modèles à caractère exotique ou pervers pratiqué dans la plupart des créations sur le thème de l'approche sensuelle entre femmes, elle est plus facilement inscrite dans le cadre d'une motivation esthétique.

Une source où Visconti a sans doute puisé est la production de nus exposée dans les deux Salons les plus importants de Paris à l'époque, qu'il a pu observer au cours de l'année de son arrivée. Selon l'une des tendances qui se manifestaient alors – celle de présenter le nu féminin en intérieur – le lit était le lieu préféré, là où la lecture servait de prétexte pour exhiber le corps de la femme, ainsi que le simple sommeil ou encore l'acte de ne rien faire. Le nu adolescent était aussi très présent en tant qu'allégorie, invariablement représenté en plein air, comme il convient. Le Matin assume l'aspect d'une jeune pudique, le Printemps ne se passe pas de la présence de fleurs ou d'oiseaux blancs, rappelant sa pureté. L'Été, la saison la plus chaude de l'année, est représenté maintes fois, non pas par une seule, mais par plusieurs jeunes filles, qui s'amuse sur l'herbe ou se mouillent les pieds dans les eaux fraîches d'un ruisseau.

En été ne correspond pourtant pas à l'allégorie de la saison, une fois que c'est une scène d'intérieur, caractérisée par l'économie d'éléments. Il ne s'agit pas non plus d'une simple représentation

de plus d'un nu sur un lit, non seulement par la présence de deux figures au lieu d'une seule, mais aussi par l'extrême jeunesse de ces dernières. Sur les reproductions que nous avons pu rencontrer de peintures exposées dans les salons à cette époque, sauf de très rares exceptions, les adolescentes sont représentées en plein air, et sur le lit figurent des femmes d'âge mûr.

Un autre détail innovateur se retrouve dans la composition du tableau *En été*, soit la perspective accentuée des modèles, en direction opposée à ce qui se faisait d'habitude. Cette écorce plus rare, faite à partir de la tête et plaçant les pieds au fond, Visconti a pu l'observer au Salon du Champ de Mars de 1893, dans *La femme aux joioux*, de Manuel Gelin, qui aurait pu lui apporter aussi la suggestion de l'enfance à travers les jouets.

Analyse comparative

À partir de la collecte de données iconographiques, fruit d'une minutieuse recherche qui s'est étendue sur plus de trois ans et qui a compté aussi sur d'autres travaux antérieurs de plusieurs auteurs, il a été possible de conclure – sauf en cas de nouvelles découvertes – que la peinture *En été* est pionnière dans la représentation de *deux filles nues couchées sur un lit*.

Avant elle, deux peintures se font remarquer par leur représentation de femmes adultes. *Le sommeil*, [Fig. 12] de Gustave Courbet (1819-1877), est consensuellement considérée par plusieurs auteurs, y compris Dijkstra, comme pionnière de la représentation explicite d'un rapport sensuel entre deux femmes, libre des prétextes mythologiques, allégoriques, littéraires ou exotiques, aussi bien que du préjugé qui les liait fatalement à la prostitution.

Marie-Jo Bonnet considère ce chef-d'œuvre un point de repère dans l'histoire de l'iconographie selon ses recherches.

C'est aussi montrer les femmes dans leur

*singularité amoureuse avec une telle force plastique que Le Sommeil va s'imposer comme une nouvelle image l'amour entre femmes qui transcende son époque, parce que Courbet y a surmonté la collusion entre la morale, la politique et l'esthétique.*¹⁵

L'autre peinture est *La siesta* (s.d.), [Fig. 13] de Prilidiano Pueyrredón (1823-1870), peintre argentin petit-fils de français, qui a fait quelques années d'études à Paris.¹⁶

Possiblement plus vieille de quelques mois que celle de Courbet, si cette peinture n'est pas aussi explicite, elle peut néanmoins être considérée pionnière, puisqu'elle expose *deux femmes nues couchées sur un lit*, également sans l'utilisation des alibis culturels habituels. On remarque qu'aucun des deux peintres – ni Courbet ni Pueyrredón – n'a eu de contact avec l'œuvre de l'autre.

En partant de cette caractéristique commune aux trois œuvres – le fait d'être pionnières – une comparaison plus détaillée entre elles peut aider à comprendre à quel point *En été* est remarquable, aussi bien dans l'art brésilien que dans un univers bien plus vaste.

En ce qui concerne la genèse de chacune, nous avons vu que *En été* a été considérée une œuvre de cabinet. En revanche, elle est née pour les grands salons – de Paris et de Rio de Janeiro. *Le sommeil*, par contre, a été une vraie œuvre de cabinet, commandée à Courbet par Khalil Bey, un ancien ambassadeur turc à Paris, pour son séjour de bain. À l'occasion de sa faillite, son propriétaire a été obligé de vendre sa collection d'art. Plus tard, lorsque *Le sommeil* fut exposée à la fenêtre d'un marchand, elle a causé un tel scandale, que le fait a été enregistré dans un procès verbal au commissariat de police¹⁷. Par contre, en ce qui concerne *La siesta*, aussi bien que les nus de Pueyrredón en général, il reste encore beaucoup de doutes.

Desconocemos si estos desnudos fueron realizados por el artista respondiendo a un encargo o para ser contemplados por un reducido grupo

*de espectadores. Pero es indudable que ponen de manifiesto la actitud de libertad y de hedonismo que caracterizó toda su vida.*¹⁸

Selon la légende qui persiste toujours comme tradition orale, la plupart des nus de Pueyrredón aurait été détruite par les membres de sa famille, pour préserver leur bon nom.

En ce qui concerne le destin final des œuvres, chacune en a eu un différent. *En été* fait aujourd'hui toujours partie de la collection du Musée National des Beaux-Arts, l'héritier de celui qu'il a intégré depuis l'année de sa création. *Le sommeil* n'a appartenu à son commanditaire que pendant deux ans, et a finalement été intégré à la collection du Musée du Petit Palais. *La siesta* appartient toujours à une collection privée, et, selon Laura Malosetti Costa, n'a jamais été exposée au cours du 19^e siècle.

Quant aux couleurs, la palette la plus riche est celle de Courbet. Cependant, les couleurs les plus chaudes et les plus contrastantes se dévoilent dans la peinture de Pueyrredón. La palette la plus discrète et suave est celle utilisée par Visconti. Le plus grand contraste se trouve sur le premier plan, entre le blanc de l'oreiller et le noir des grilles de fer du lit, qui est pourtant assouvi par un schéma d'interruptions. Partout ailleurs, l'auteur utilise plusieurs tonalités de dorés et châtains. Sur certaines parties du corps des filles, des tons rougeâtres leur donnent un aspect sain. Le tout s'harmonise dans un équilibre parfait, qui collabore à l'ambiance de tranquillité et de confort exhalée par la scène.

Courbet utilise la formule de la blonde et de la brune, lieu commun de l'iconographie de deux femmes, ce qui est aussi le cas de *La siesta*, mais de manière bien plus subtile.

La diferencia en la pose y distinta coloración de las carnes dan a entender que son dos las mujeres, pero por su gran parecido podría pensarse en una sola modelo.¹⁹

Ce recours ne séduit pourtant pas Visconti. Les deux filles de *En été* ont la même couleur de cheveux et de peau, et ne semblent avoir qu'une petite différence d'âge.

Nous pouvons identifier certains points communs entre les trois toiles en question : elles ne comportent aucune forme de caricature visant à stigmatiser les femmes ou à les identifier comme étant dépravées, l'on n'y voit pas de traces de message moraliste, d'allusion au péché, au regret ou à la pudeur, ni même des contrapositions suggérant le dualisme entre érotique et spirituel ou profane et religieux. Malgré cela, les œuvres de Visconti et de Courbet ont reçu de leurs sociétés d'autres titres, qui remettent aux alibis culturels. Ainsi, nous pouvons rencontrer la toile *Le sommeil* sous le titre *Paresse et Luxure*, et *En été* est parfois nommé *Les deux sœurs*.

Par rapport aux modèles utilisés, on n'aperçoit qu'une similitude entre la fille qui regarde l'observateur dans *En été* avec celle d'un autre *Nu* [Fig. 7] de Visconti. La blonde et la brune de Courbet peuvent être vues dans plusieurs autres de ses toiles, comme les *Trois Baigneuses*, mais spécialement dans *Vénus poursuivant Psyché de sa jalousie*. Dans le cas de Pueyrredón, il existe une identification plus claire, quoique non confirmée. Faisant un commentaire à propos de *El baño*, un autre de ses nus sauvés de la destruction, Malosetti Costa affirme :

*Otra cuestión plantea el tratamiento mismo del desnudo: se trata de un retrato, es una mujer claramente identificable, cuyo rostro aparece nuevamente en la Mujer cosiendo un pavo y parece ser la misma que duerme en el primer plano de La Siesta.*²⁰

Racontant la légende qui s'est créée autour de la figure du peintre argentin, l'auteur ajoute, «... que la modelo de esos cuadros era su ama de llaves, «la Mulata»». ²¹ Cette dernière, à son tour, serait Romualda Lisboa de Cané, à qui Pueyrredón a laissé, par testament, sa villa «Cinco Esquinas», où les deux vivaient ensemble.²²

Dans *Le sommeil*, les corps des deux femmes sont disposés de manière à répondre justement aux attentes de celui qui a commandé le tableau, permettant que le spectateur-proprétaire ait une vision directe des parties qui l'intéressent davantage. C'est aussi le cas de *La siesta*, malgré le fait que les fesses y soient moins en évidence. Dans *En été*, par contre, les corps des deux filles restent subtilement dissimulés, l'on ne peut voir leurs contours les plus intimes. Le corps de la compagne, l'oreiller et la grille du lit, le tout accompagné de l'écorce, façonne le jeu d'occultation et dévoilement.

Visconti montre ainsi une intention différente, celle de ne pas exposer aussi franchement les corps des filles, ce qui fait de *En été* une peinture rare, qui échappe au rapport traditionnel avec l'observateur qui est, en général, masculin. Il semble que le spectateur n'est pas la raison d'être des figures de Visconti. Elles possèdent une harmonie propre, intime, qui finit par l'inhiber et lui donner l'impression d'être un intrus, susceptible d'altérer cet équilibre si délicat.

La disposition des corps nus, ainsi que la direction des regards vers l'observateur sont des traits de la tradition européenne. Cependant, rares sont les nus de Courbet qui présentent cette caractéristique, et ces derniers laissent entendre un air de provocation presque agressive. Dans *Le sommeil*, les femmes dorment, ou les yeux fermés, regardent à l'intérieur d'elles-mêmes. C'est ce qui se passe aussi dans *La siesta*, en dépit du fait que l'on ne peut voir les yeux de celle qui tourne complètement le dos à l'observateur, ce qui en fait indique, en plus, qu'elle l'ignore. Dans *En été*, l'une des filles semble dormir profondément, ou est sur le point de le faire, alors que l'autre regarde l'observateur. Mais ce regard n'a rien de provoquant, ni même d'inquisiteur. Ses lourdes paupières semblent exprimer une profonde sensation de plaisir et satisfaction, que

sa compagne arrive aussi à exprimer, malgré ses yeux fermés.

La composition de Courbet est soigneusement étudiée, aussi bien pour atteindre les objectifs de son commanditaire que ceux du peintre. Chaque objet présent sur la scène est chargé de symbolisme. Les bijoux, qui en règle générale embellissent et attachent les cheveux dans les nus traditionnels, ici se déploient et occupent les places destinées aux vêtements enlevés dans les scènes de couple. Ce faisant, il semble que Courbet ait voulu dénuder le nu féminin et le libérer de ses conventions séculaires.

Pueyrredón, lui, se montre bien davantage dépouillé dans sa composition, ne présentant à l'arrière-plan qu'une chaise, le bout d'une table et des rideaux rouges. Le rideau, élément utilisé également par Courbet, peut être considérée plutôt un acteur qu'un obstacle, dans la mesure où, au même temps, il cache et dévoile.²³

La composition de *En été* est encore plus simple, présentant un arrière-plan totalement vide, en opposition aux arrière-plans richement détaillés des académies de Visconti de la même période. Le peintre n'a ajouté aucun objet qui ne fasse partie intégrante de la scène. La dichotomie exprimée par ces éléments – la blancheur et la douceur des draps et oreillers sur lesquels les filles se reposent, ainsi que la dureté et la froideur de la grille du lit sur lequel elles sont fermement ancrées – peut contenir maintes significations.

Les plus évidentes se rapportent à la tendresse maternelle en opposition à la discipline paternelle, et à la pureté de l'innocence contrastant avec le désir qu'elle peut provoquer, ou bien avec les aigreurs du mûrissement.

En concluant cette triple comparaison, nous nous rendons compte que l'œuvre la plus élaborée et pleine d'intentionnalité est celle de Courbet. Ceci peut être expliqué par le fait que le peintre travaillait déjà depuis une dizaine d'années sur le thème des femmes et par les polémiques que ces œuvres avaient causé. Dans la mesure où *Le sommeil* n'a pas été conçu pour participer au *Salon*, Courbet s'est senti plus à l'aise pour délivrer son message selon ses convictions. Rejetant les conventionnalismes et les scrupules moraux, le peintre a aussi atteint ses prétentions de choquer la bourgeoisie, d'affronter son hypocrisie.

De son côté, sans avoir l'intention d'affronter ou de dénoncer quoi que ce soit, cherchant plutôt la reconnaissance et le prestige que le Salon de Paris pouvait lui procurer, le jeune peintre brésilien travaille sous un autre esprit, exprimant sur sa toile une sensualité discrète, mystérieuse, sublime.

La naturalité profonde, mise en évidence par nombre d'auteurs, ainsi que la proximité de la scène de *En été* donnent l'impression d'une intimité qui aurait dû être gardée secrète, dans l'espace privé de la chambre. «La jouissance du voyeur vient de la sensation de transgression qu'il, ou elle, sent lorsqu'un

tabou est brisé».²⁴ Quoique «surprise» par le spectateur, la jeune fille qui le regarde n'esquisse aucun geste de pudeur, n'essaye pas de cacher son corps ou son visage, ce qui pourrait indiquer qu'elle n'a peut-être pas encore perdu son innocence, n'ayant donc aucune raison de se sentir embarrassée. En revanche, le peintre, qui a perdu depuis longtemps sa naïveté, subtilement dissimule pour elle les contours les plus intimes de son corps, «... un certain degré d'occultation éveille souvent plus efficacement les sentiments érotiques que le dévoilement total des parties sexuelles».²⁵ Visconti arrive à imprimer sur cette toile une ambiance limite entre le sublime et l'érotique.

Il est aussi intéressant de remarquer qu'en dépit du fait qu'il utilise depuis ses débuts une représentation franche et réaliste, mettant même en évidence les poils pubiens sur deux de ses nus [Fig. 6 et 14], Visconti n'a jamais subi aucun type de censure ou de représailles.

Une telle acceptation, dans le cas de Visconti, est peut-être due au fait qu'il n'a nullement l'intention d'affronter ou de révolutionner. Son réalisme était le fruit de la sincérité, de l'authenticité de l'expression. C'est pourquoi *En été* reflète le positionnement du peintre au long de toute sa carrière – rénovation sans confrontation, conciliation de la tradition avec le nouveau.

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¹ RUBENS, Carlos. *Pequena história das artes plásticas no Brasil*. São Paulo, Imprensa Nacional, 1941, p. 161.

² Catalogue *O desejo na Academia 1847-1916*. Pinacothèque de l'État de São Paulo, décembre 1991 à mars 1992, p. 20.

³ JORDÃO, Vera P. *A Imagem da criança na Pintura Brasileira*. Rio de Janeiro: Salamandra, 1979, p. 22.

⁴ LEITE, José Roberto T. *Dicionário Crítico da Pintura no Brasil*, Rio de Janeiro: ArtLivre, 1988, p. 520.

⁵ DIJKSTRA, Bram. *Idols of Perversity: fantasies of feminine evil in fin-de-siècle culture*. New York: Oxford University, 1986, p. 156.

⁶ MORAES, Angélica de. Safadezas com chancela acadêmica. *Jornal de Tarde*, São Paulo, 14 décembre 1991.

⁷ O Desejo está na Pinacoteca. *Bandeiras*, année 1, n° 03, São Paulo, 15 au 31 janvier 1992.

⁸ CAVALCANTI, Ana Maria T. *Les Artistes Brésiliens et "Les Prix de voyage en Europe" A la fin du XIX^e siècle: vision d'ensemble et étude approfondie*

sur le peintre Elisen d'Angelo Visconti (1866-1944). (thèse de doctorat) Paris: Université Paris I – Panthéon Sorbonne, U. F. R. d'Histoire de l'Art et Archéologie (sous la direction du Dr. M. Eric Darragon.), 1999, pp. 215 et 216.

⁹ Voir aussi figures 1, 2 et 4, en SERAPHIM, Mirian Nogueira. *Elisen Visconti e a construção da cultura artística de São Paulo*, RHAA n° 5, pp. 123 et 124, décembre 2005.

¹⁰ PRAZ, Mário. *A carne, a morte e o diabo na literatura romântica*. Traduction de Philadelpho

Menezes, Campinas : Unicamp, p. 196.

¹¹ “Esprit et âme, saint et pécheur, transfiguration et vice, éphèbe en adoration et faune en rut, femme-enfant et femme fatale, élection et malédiction, Arcadie et exotisme, paradis et jungle, tendresse et brutalité, raffinement et barbarie, ascèse et désir, transfiguration de la mort et exaltation de la vie, sublimation et abomination, modernisme et archaïsme, montée et descente, décadence et ascension : telles sont quelques-unes des antinomies entre lesquelles l’époque balance et dont la dialectique cherche à déboucher sur une synthèse.” JOST, Dominik. *Literarischer Jgendstil*. 1969, p. 23, cité par Claude QUIGUER. *Femmes et machines de 1900: Lecture d’une obsession* Modern Style. Paris: Klincksieck, 1979, p. 145.

¹² Cf. DUQUE, Gonzaga. “Elyseu Visconti”. In *Contemporaneos*. Rio de Janeiro: Benedito de

Souza, 1929, pp. 19-26.

¹³ VERLAINE, Paul. *Œuvres Poétiques Complètes*. Paris: Gallimard, 1948, p. XXI.

¹⁴ BONNET, Marie-Jo. *Les deux amies : essai sur le couple de femmes dans l’art*. Paris: Blanche, 2000, p. 150.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 136.

¹⁶ Deux périodes: de 1835 à 1841, et de 1844 à 1849, ayant passé les trois ans entre ces deux périodes à Rio de Janeiro. Il retournera encore une fois en Europe, entre 1850 et 1854, période à laquelle il peut avoir eu l’occasion de retourner à Paris. C’est après ce dernier séjour en Europe que, probablement, il a commencé à peindre ses nus.

¹⁷ FAUNCE, Sara & NOCHLIN, Linda. *Courbet reconsidered*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988, pp. 175 e 176.

¹⁸ GIUNTA, Patricia Laura. “Prilidiano Pueyrredón e los orígenes de un arte nacional”. In *Prilidiano Pueyrredón*, Buenos Aires: Banco Vellox, 1999, p. 82.

¹⁹ MALOSETTI COSTA, Laura . “Los desnudos de Prilidiano Pueyrredón como punto de tensión entre lo público y lo privado?”. In: *Arte entre lo Público y lo Privado*, Buenos Aires: CAIA, 1995, p. 95.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 94.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 92.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 96.

²³ CHEVALIER, Jean & GHEERBRANT, Alain. *Dicionário de Símbolos*, 14. ed. rev., Rio de Janeiro: José Olympio, 1999, p. 951.

²⁴ LUCIE-SMITH, Edward. *Ars erotica*. Lisboa: Livros e Livros, 1988, p. 100.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 170.

The identity of *The Athlete* by Picasso

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A small town in Spain, Horta de San Juan¹, located in the district of Terra Alta, province of Tarragona, which from the distance seems a fortification, received twice the visit of an artist who would become one of the most important artists of the 20th century: Pablo Picasso (Málaga, Spain, 1881- Mougins, France 1973). The first stay took place between June 1898 and February 1899, for medical recommendation. Picasso was not 17 years old yet and arrived from Madrid very weak with scarlet fever. His parents, worried and lacking financial resources followed the doctor suggestion of a change of airs, and sent him to Horta de San Juan, hometown of Manuel Pallarés (friend of the painter who later would be Picasso’s father’s assistant in the art school where he taught). Pallarés went together and with

his friend Picasso spent a period of discoveries and made some artworks. The majority, now belonging to the Museo Picasso, in Barcelona, were drawings of animals, figures and, mainly landscapes that included the impressive mountain of Santa Barbara, near the town. Jaime Sabartés², his youth friend, who during the 1930s would be his secretary, commented about this period:

“Allí todo es nuevo para él, se asimila al ambiente. Hace como los otros. Va a los bosques, limpia el corral, cuida las bestas y pinta. Calza alpargatas como los campesinos. Aprende a cuidar un caballo, a curar una gallina, a sacar agua del pozo, a atratar a la gente, a hacer un nudo sólido, a nivelar la cargas de un asno, a ordenar una vaca, a preparar un buen arroz, a prender lumbre en el hogar y otras cosas”.

We can say, thus, that it was a lifetime experience for him.

The second arrival to Horta would occur in 1909, when Picasso already had some innovative experiences. Under the influence of African art and also of the primitive Spanish art he had produced between 1905 and 1906, a strong work like the *Portrait of Gertrude Stein*,

where the physiognomy of his friend and collector seems an angled mask, being considered today one of the symbols of the beginning of cubism. At the *Salon d’Automne* of 1906, Picasso and several colleagues had been deeply impressed by Paul Cézanne’s paintings, mainly the *Grandes baigneuses*, now in the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Picasso would confess to the photographer Brassai that Cézanne was his only master³, and it is well known his phrase “*Le petit-fils de Cézanne – c’est moi*”⁴. In June 1907 Cézanne’s posthumous exhibition was presented in Paris at the Bernheim-Jeune Gallery, which would mark even more Picasso’s production, as we can see in the work *Friendship* (1907-1908), now at the Hermitage, in Saint Petersburg and, particularly, in *Les demoiselles d’Avignon*, now at the MoMA, in New York, which he finished in the same year and would become one of the most significant works not only of his career but of all art of the 20th century.

So, between mid-June and the end of August Picasso returns to Horta when he with his girlfriend Fernande Olivier were in Barcelona for his sister marriage. His family was shocked with the

fact that he had brought a woman with him without being officially married. After their arrival, Fernande had a kidney crisis and, also Picasso's father disapproved the works his son had shown to him. Impatient and disappointed, the artist decided to travel to the place he had known during his youth and from which he had good memoirs.

The village has always been called Horta de San Juan, but Picasso used to refer to it as Horta de Ebro⁵, or "Pal-larés' land. The name is linked to the river Ebro that passes on the region, and where a brutal battle during the Spanish Civil War took place.

When the couple arrived in the village, everybody was curious with their beautiful and elegant clothes: Picasso wore velvet trousers and Fernande's hats with veil were astonishing. It was also a scandal when people found out they were not married. Little by little, they made a few friends, and Picasso produced many works, and this stay ended up by representing his maturity in the cubist production. He would often say that it was in Horta that everything had begun. The small village, with its configuration, made the cubist paintings possible: voluminous houses form a geometrical and compact mass with points of emptiness, shadows and angles. The landscape was already familiar to the painter⁶ and he made landscapes, still-life, portraits of Fernande Olivier and male figures.

One of these paintings, entitled *The Athlete* or *Bust of a Man*, oil on canvas measuring 93 x 72 cm, would become part of the collection of the Museu de Arte de São Paulo [fig. 1]. It is a man's torso seen from the waist, nude, almost a construction of volumes and shapes. There is an idea of strength, coming from this the title *The Athlete*. The tonalities of gray to beige and earth show the influence of Cézanne, as well as the composition in a geometrical scheme, as if Picasso had applied Cézanne's recommendation to Emile Bernard, in a

letter of 15 April 1904⁷, to treat nature "by means of the cylinder, the sphere, the cone, everything brought into proper perspective so that each side of an object or a plane is directed towards a central point". The arms forming the inferior sides of the painting are like cylinders, which form semi-spheres in the shoulders and descend to the scapulae in triangles and acute angles united on the chest of the figure, from where climb the lines of the neck. The face is a circle with facets where the cheeks, the well-designed mouth and the strong nose with somber eyes, fixed on the viewer, are formed. One must observe the baldness on the front head where the hair forms another darker triangle, descending on circle and rectangle to meet the small oval left ear.

Despite the construction full of angles and sharp cuts, we notice a physiognomy beyond the figure, which we cannot say from some other portraits he made of Fernande in the same period (even more geometric). However, we all know who is depicted in them. In the figure of the *Athlete*, besides the profound eyes what is impressive is, I repeat, the highbrow and the baldness that attracts the attention and marks the face expression. The painting enters officially MASP collection in 1958 and all references about it, since the first catalog, published in 1963, mentions the fact it was painted in Horta de Ebro, in 1909. We have never heard anything about the eventual sitter.

Suddenly, in January 2007, by e-mail received at MASP⁸, the astonishing message here reproduced, sent by Elias Gaston⁹, president of the Centre Picasso d' Horta:

"Solicitamos el ektachrome de la obra "Busto de homén (o atleta)" de Pablo Ruiz Picasso. Esta obra está realizada en Horta de Sant Joan (Horta de Ebro) en 1909. Se trata del retrato de Joaquim Antonio Vives, propietario del Café del pueblo donde Picasso y Fernande Olivier pasaban ratos de tertulia con sus amigos de Horta".

The news was really a surprise. Joaquim Antonio Vives is cited in some publications about Picasso, but we needed more information.

John Richardson¹⁰, in his long biography about Picasso, reports about this period in Horta:

"At first they rented rooms from Tobies Membrado; Picasso was obliged to work in a shed. After a few days they moved to Horta's one and only inn, the Posada Antonio Allès. The baker (Joaquim Antonio Vives) loaned Picasso a room he could use as a studio".

On page 130, there are four photographs by Picasso: two views of Horta de Ebro, a self-portrait of the artist besides some canvas and a photo of a guitarist, curiously with the same baldness in the forehead that appear in MASP's *Athlete*, indicated only as "Man with guitar at Horta de Ebro, summer 1909". MASP's painting is reproduced in the following page, and it is impossible not to make a connection between the photo and the picture, published almost side-by-side. However, nothing was said about the identity of the musician or the *Athlete*.

Joan Perucho¹¹ met some Picasso's friends in the village, among whom Joaquim Antonio Vives that in "*tiempos de Picasso, regentaba un café o taberna, donde se tocaba la guitarra y cantaba*".

Elizabeth Cowling¹² mentions the series of paintings inspired in Fernande Olivier made in Horta de Ebro, all documented and well known, with variations of composition, angles of the head, of light and colors, commenting the similarities between the other paintings – of the village, the mountains and two paintings of the head and shoulders of a man (without mentioning the sitter).

Anne Baldassari¹³ publishes the same photo belonging to the Picasso archives, in Paris, again with the indication "Portrait of a guitar player", commenting the curiosity of the people in Horta had with Picasso's cam-

era, which he took everywhere, shooting several places and people, among them a seated guitarist. And again that resemblance with the physiognomy of MASP's painting.

So I decided to write to Elias Gaston mentioning Richardson's biography and asking more details about Joaquim Antonio Vives. He not only answered but also sent photographs, including one of a *café* [fig.2] and corrected some information on Richardson book, which were wrong according to him. He explained¹⁴:

“En este Café, Picasso y Fernande Olivier se reunían por las noches con sus amigos de Horta (Tomas y Tobias Membrado, Nicolas Amposta, Manelet Garcia) y cantaban acompañados por la guitarra de Joaquim Antoni. En la obra de Richardson hay algunos errores

en el capítulo de Horta. En 1909 Picasso estaba instalado en el Hostal del Trompet, en la plaza de la Iglesia. Delante mismo del Hostal estaba la panadería con el borno de pan, propiedad de Tobias Membrado. Picasso instaló su taller de trabajo (estudio) precisamente en la buhardilla de la casa de Tobias Membrado (el panadero).

He also informed that Joaquim Antonio Vives Terrats (this is his complete name) was born in Horta de San Joan in 1879 and his father, Juan Vives Pujol was a musician. In 1909, when Picasso went to Horta for the second time, Joaquim Antonio was 30 years old. His official profession, which is mentioned in the census of 1905, was that of *cafetero*, meaning he had a *café*. As his father, he learned music (the photo showed him with his guitar) [fig. 3] and shared his work as *cafetero* with that of a

music teacher and director of the local orchestra. Elias Gaston informs that Joaquim Antonio Vives was model for other Picasso's paintings¹⁵. He would die in Horta on 19 January 1944.

From the photos one observes that the artist used photography as an initial record of works that he would later produce. And that one confirmed what I had already deduced in Richardson and Baldassari's publications: the guitar player in Horta de Ebro was the sitter for the Picasso's athlete, therefore MASP's painting, inventory number 144, known as *Bust of a Man* or *The Athlete* is now enriched with the sitter identity: Joaquim Antonio Vives Terrats.

Translation: Eugênia Gorini Esmeraldo

Revision: Ana Gonçalves Magalhães

¹ I am grateful to Elias Gaston, president of Centre Picasso d'Horta, for the information and attention in our contacts when I decided to write this article, and to Ana Gonçalves Magalhães who revised the translation to English.

² “Everything was new for him, he soaked up the atmosphere. He did what other people did. He went to the woods, cleaned the yard, looked after animals and painted. He wore espadrilles like the peasants. He learnt to take care of horses and hens, to draw water from the well, to talk to the people, to tie strong knots, to balance the loads on an ass, to milk cows, to prepare good rice dishes, to light fires and other things”. PERUCHO, Joan, *Picasso El cubismo i horta de Sant Joan*, Martine Joulia; Susie Pickard; Julie Funnell. trad Tarragona: Museu d'Art Modern; Barcelona: Columna, 1993 p. 210

³ BRASSAÏ. *Conversas com Picasso*. Paulo Neves. trad. São Paulo: Cosac e Naify, 2000 p. 112.

⁴ According to DAIX, Pierre, 1995, p. 181, quoted by RICHARDSON, John. *A life of Picasso*: volume II: 1907-1917. New York: Random House, 1996, p. 47.

⁵ PERUCHO, Joan. *Picasso, el cubismo i Horta de Sant Joan*. Martine Joulia; Susie Pickard; Julie Funnell. trad Tarragona: Museu d'Art Modern; Barcelona: Columna, 1993, p. 164.

⁶ VALLENTIN, Antonina. **Pablo Picasso**. Paris, A. Michel, 1957, p. 173, says “this decomposes and organizes itself in the best way in front of his eyes. There is the special light that means a pushing factor for the repetition of the “seen” in a compact mass”. Also COWLING, Elizabeth. *Picasso: style and meaning*. London: Phaidon, 2002, p. 212 comments that “Picasso's production during these months [...] was thoroughly integrated, his approach disciplined: there is unquestionably a Horta style”.

⁷ Quoted by RICHARDSON, John. *A life of Picasso*: volume II: 1907-1917. New York: Random House, 1996, p. 446 note 25

⁸ “We would ask an ektachrome of the work “Bust of a man (“The athlete”) by Pablo Ruiz Picasso. This work was done in Horta de San Joan (Horta de Ebro) in 1909. It is the portrait of Joaquim Antonio Vives, owner of the Café of the village, where Picasso and Fernande Olivier spent moments of conversation with their Horta friends.” E-mail sent to MASP on Sunday, 31 December 2006.

⁹ I am grateful to Elias Gaston for all the information and attention in the contacts that followed when I decided to write this article.

¹⁰ RICHARDSON, John, *A life of Picasso* Vol. II: 1907-1917, New York: Random House, 1996, p. 126.

¹¹ “At Picasso's times, managed a café or tavern, where one could play the guitar and sing”. PERUCHO, Joan, *Picasso, El cubismo i horta de Sant Joan*”, Martine Joulia; Susie Pickard; Julie Funnell. Trad. Museu d'Art Modern Diputació de Tarragona: Columna, 1993, p. 166.

¹² COWLING, Elizabeth. *Picasso: style and meaning*. London: Phaidon, 2002, p. 212.

¹³ BALDASSARI, Anne. **Picasso and photography**: the dark mirror. Deke Dusinberre. trad. Paris: Flammarion, 1997.

¹⁴ E-mail to MASP, sent on Sunday, 14 January 2007 “At this café, Picasso and Fernande Olivier met at night their Horta friends (Tomas y Tobias Membrado, Nicolas Amposta, Manelet Garcia) and sang while Joaquim Antoni played his guitar. In Richardson's book there are some mistakes in the chapter about Horta. In 1909 Picasso lived at Hostal del Trompet, in the Iglesia square. In front of the Hostal was the bakery with the stove for the bread, Tobias Membrado's property. Picasso installed his studio precisely in the cellar of Tobias Membrado (the baker's house”.

¹⁵ The other works by Picasso portraying him, according to the information sent by Centre Picasso d'Horta, are *Torso (Nude man)* oil on canvas, 65 x 42,4 cm, Pola Museum of Art, Kanagawa, Japan and *Torso (Nude man with crossed arms)* charcoal, temper and watercolor on paper, 65,5 x 49,5 cm, Hermitage Museum, San Petersburg, Russia.

Lasar Segall and the Jewish Avant-garde in Europe and in Brazil

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Lasar Segall's relation to Jewish culture is one of the main themes that guide the studies of his work. Born in 1891 in Wilna, Lasar Segall was part of an important group of Jewish artists from East Europe that in the end of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century immigrated to the West seeking for opportunities to pursue an artistic carrier. As was the case of most of these artists, even after acquiring almost all their education in Germany, and taking active part in the German expressionist movement, Lasar Segall maintained straight ties to the culture in which he was born, and this had a significant impact on his poetics.

However, if we really want to understand the importance of Jewish culture for Lasar Segall, we must not be satisfied with this first statement. Segall's involvement with Jewish themes is evident to anyone that bathers to visit the Lasar Segall Museum in São Paulo and admire his works, but without a precise analysis of the historical context in which Segall's dialog with Jewish culture effectively occurred, it will certainly be heard to understand his work.

Under the spell of the romantic myths about the ways of life of Jews in the Ghettos of East Europe, which were created in the turn of the 19th to the 20th century by Martin Buber, Hermann Struck, and other leaders of "Zionist culture", we tend to see in Segall's pictures representing Jewish themes, the echoes of this lost nostalgic world, closed in their secular traditions. As a consequence, we interpret them as the result of a purely emotional experience. Without neglecting the importance

that Lasar Segall's childhood in Wilna had for the construction of his inner world, I want to demonstrate here that since very early Lasar Segall was also interested and stimulated by theoretical questions involving the construction of Jewish art. These ideas circulated in the intellectual world of the most enlightened Jewish communities of Russia, as was the case of Wilna in the beginning of the 20th century. This direct and intense involvement with what we now call the "Jewish Renaissance", was seminal for the configuration of Lasar Segall's work, both in respect to formal aspects, as in respect to their theme.

Even before Segall arrived in Berlin, in 1906, he was already in direct contact with important personalities of the Jewish intellectual world, who were all involved in the construction of a national identity through the arts. This interest in the Jewish problematic is constant throughout Lasar Segall's life, even if his degree of involvement with the theme varied significantly.

By examining Lasar Segall's whole production, we can distinguish a few moments in which he was more directly involved with Jewish themes.¹ A first moment of intense involvement with Judaism correspond to a period that initiates in Wilna, and expands until approximately 1912. During these years, Segall seems to be identifies with the efforts of his first teacher, Lev Antokolski, to construct a specifically Jewish art. A second moment, initiates in 1918 when Segall long stays for a long period in Wilna, and extends until 1923, when he immigrated to Brazil. There are two other periods in Brazil, in which Jewish themes gain relevance: in 1927, motivated by the death of his father Abel Segall, and a last period, which coincides with Nazism in Germany, between 1937 and 1945. In these years of war, Lasar Segall transforms his work in a vehicle of denunciation and protest against the persecution of his people. The two first moments belong,

in a way, to a same context: that of the development of a Jewish avant-garde movement in Europe, which differed significantly from the questions placed in his Brazilian period.

1- Wilna and Berlin: Segall's initial education under the sign of the "Jewish Renaissance" movement in Russia

Even though the literature on Lasar Segall is extensive, very little has been done until now to understand his initial artistic production from the period before he moved to Dresden in 1910, and adopted the impressionist style of some of his teachers at the Dresden Academy, such as Gotthard Kuhl and Robert Sterl. The fact that only a few works survived from this period, and that we know very little about the cultural context in which he circulated at the time, certainly does not contribute to change this situation. However, a preliminary investigation shows that we can learn much about Segall's poetics from a systematic study of his relation to the rich cultural atmosphere of the Jewish community in Vilna and Berlin.

The sparse information that we have on Segall's artistic education in Vilna and Berlin were basically furnished by the artist himself in his biographical notes entitled "My Recollections"², which was written many years later, when he already lived in Brazil (around 1950) and by some of Segall's letters that survived among his documents and are kept today at the Lasar Segall Museum in São Paulo. His autobiography opens with a paragraph in which he describes his first education, referring to Marc Antokolski and his nephew Lev Antokolsky as the artists who introduced him to the visual arts. According to Segall, they were the first to confirm his talent, giving him lessons and insisting that he should leave Russia to peruse an artistic education in Paris. These annotations, even if brief, say much of Lasar Segall and the position of his family in

Vilna, situating the young artist in a very specific cultural context³.

Mark Antokolski (1842-1902), was considered the most important Russian sculptor of the end of the 19th century, and was also the first Jewish artist in Russia to occupy an important position, both nationally and internationally. Originally from Vilna, Antokolski benefited from the liberal politics of Czar Alexander II, who, around 1860, started to suspend the various restrictions imposed on Jews inside the empire, permitting them to have access to education and tolerating the emergence of a literature in Yiddish and Hebrew.⁴ Marc Antokolski received support from the wife of the local governor, general Nazimov, who paid his studies at the Imperial Academy in Saint Petersburg. He initially dedicated himself to the representation of Jewish themes, such as the *Jewish Tailor* (1864) [fig. 1], but after suffering pressure from the part of critics to abandon such subjects, he then on to dedicate himself to sculpture with historical themes, becoming the most important and known sculptor of the Russian Empire. In 1877 Antokolski moved definitively to Paris, where he became a member of the Academy in 1893. In spite of his successful international career and official position as first sculptor of the Russian Empire, Marc Antokolski continued fighting for the creation of a Jewish tradition in art, by writing articles and by giving talks throughout Russia.⁵

Antokolski identifies himself with the “Peredvizhniki” (“The Wanderers”) movement, which emerged around 1870 from dissatisfaction with the official art of neoclassical tendency. Inspired by the “Barbison School”, this group of artists dedicated themselves to social themes in a realist style, and to the organization of art exhibitions throughout the different provinces of the Empire, including Vilna. Antokolski took part in many of these exhibitions, helping to define in this way

the basic tendencies of the new Jewish artistic production that simultaneously emerged in some of these provinces.

In spite of living in Paris, Marc Antokolski made frequent visits to Vilna, helping to found a private school of arts in the city, and leaving it to the direction of his nephew, the painter Lev Antokolski. This is the school where Lasar Segall affirms to have studied. Another important disciple of Marc Antokolski was the sculptor Ilya Ginzburg, who was accepted in the Academy of Saint Petersburg through Antokolski’s direct influence, and was to become one of the most active artists in the battle for the construction of a specific Jewish art at the time. Both Lev Antokolski and Ilya Ginzburg were, for example, members of the important Historical and Ethnological Jewish Society, founded in 1908, and that between 1912 and 1914, under the auspice of Baron Horace Guenzberg and the direction of Semyon An-Sky, collected hundreds of folkloric and religious objects from the many Jewish communities existing in the provinces of the Empire with the aim of registering and preserving the traditional and popular roots of Jewish culture in the East. Ginzburg and Antokolski were also involved in a later project, in which the young artists El Lissitzky and Issachar Ryback also took part. This project aimed to collect architectural and decorative material from the synagogues and other communitarian spaces in the Jewish Ghettos, in order to build a Jewish Museum in Saint Petersburg, which was effectively founded in 1916. We will come back to this expedition that was also of great importance for Lasar Segall’s work.

Even more than his uncle, Lev Antokolski dedicated his life to the training of young Jewish artists. Under the influence of the “Wanderers”, he believed that an authentic Jewish art was to be born from the realistic representation of the simple life of Jews, and

of their “innate” inclination towards sobriety and humanity. The model for this art, in his opinion, was produced by the Jewish-Dutch painter Joseph Israëls, but also Isaak Levitan’s (1860-1900) landscapes shared some of this “spirit”. Therefore it is not a coincidence that during the first years that Lasar Segall spent in Berlin, he tried to follow closely the example of these two artists. Segall expressed his admiration, especially for Joseph Israëls, frequently in his correspondence of the time. In a response letter written by Werner Schultz in 1912 to Lasar Segall we read for instance: “I do not know Josef Israëls’s work very well, and therefore cannot reaffirm your discourse. If I have money once again I want to buy his biography. I want to know him better since he fascinated you.”⁶

An analysis of Lasar Segall’s works produced in the first years of his education in Vilna and Berlin leave no doubt as to his filiations to the theoretical principles proposed by Lev Antokolski and the first generation of artists associated to the “Jewish Renaissance” movement. The picture *Fatherless* [Fig.2], painted in 1909, for example, is closely inspired on a composition from Israëls [Fig. 3]⁷ that Segall probably saw in the important Jewish art exhibition, which occurred in 1907 in Berlin. Other pictures, as *The Samovar* (1908) and *Old man with a stock* (1910) [Fig.4] are directly inspired on the production of other artists, such as Lionid Pasternak, Yeruda Pen [Fig. 5], and Ilya Repin, all involved in the Jewish-Russian context to which Lev Antokolski and Ilya Ginzburg belonged. In this respect, it is also interesting to note that when Lasar Segall, in his autobiography, speaks of the first works of art he had the opportunity to see in Russian magazines, he will cite almost exclusively artists of Jewish origin engaged in the Jewish Renaissance in that country: “Sometimes I had the opportunity to see reproductions of works from Repin, Serov, Levitan, Wroubel

[Michail Wrubel], Bakgt [Léo Bakst], and others that caused less impact on me, in Russian.⁸ From the list above, only Wrubel was not of Jewish origin.

The continuity of Segall's ties with this Jewish-Russian artistic milieu during the first years he spent in Germany is easy to understand. In the first place, this movement had an unfolding in Berlin, counting with the active participation of artists such as Ephraim Mose Lilien, Hermann Struck, Lesser Uri, Nathan Birnbaum, and a younger generation, which included, among others, artists such as Jacob Steinhardt e Ludwig Meidner.⁹

The "Jewish Art" exhibition mentioned above, organized in Berlin in 1907 and included German and Russian artists of both countries, is a proof of the intense communication between Jewish artists of these two countries. Besides that, or better, exactly because of that, there were a significant number of Russian-Jewish artists with the same life trajectory as Lasar Segall, such as the painter Abraham Palukst, (1895-1926), and Issai Kulvianski (1892-1970). Both were, as Segall, students of Antokolski, and studied latter at the Kunstgewerbeschule (School of Applied Arts) in Berlin.¹⁰ Lasar Segall also returned two times to Vilna during the period he spent in Berlin (in 1909 and in 1911), certainly informing himself in first hand about the activities of his professor and some of his colleagues.

In 1910 Lasar Segall decided to move to Dresden, and inscribed himself in the local Academy. This change was responsible for his distancing from the stimulating Jewish atmosphere in Berlin and his involvement with Impressionism, the prevailing art style in the Dresden Academy. In fact, the works produced by Lasar Segall in Berlin already contained impressionist elements that he found in the pictures painted by Israëls and his famous friend, and president of the Berlin *Sezession*, Max Liebermann.

Until he moved to Dresden, however, his pictures were dominated by social themes, painted in very sober colors, which Antokolski considered proper of Jewish artists.

Segall's involvement with Dresden impressionism was intense. He started to dedicate himself to the representation of everyday life, and landscapes. Jewish themes acquired a secondary place in his work at the time.

An exception in this new phase of his work, however, is the lithographic series *Pogrom*, produced between 1913-14 [Fig. 6]. Because of the relative isolation of this series with regard to the main thematic of Lasar Segall's work in the period between 1912 and 1918, it is plausible to suppose that the series is related to a specific event that could have mobilized a return to a Jewish theme. In fact, as Ziva Amishai-Maisels demonstrates¹¹, the year of 1913 was marked by the news of a process put forward in Russia against a supposed ritual murder promoted by Jews, which launched a new wave of *pogroms* throughout the country. The news on the process and its consequences for the Jewish population in East Europe mobilized an intense debate in German intellectual circles and was, according to the author, the main reason for Jacob Steinhardt's return to Jewish themes, for example, after a relative absence of this thematic during the years that followed his stay in Paris and during the period of his activities as a member of the expressionist group *Die Pathetiker*.¹² It is therefore possible that Segall's prints were also related to these events.

2 – Expressionism and Jewish culture:

After the end of the First World War in 1918, Lasar Segall returned to Vilna for a period of four months.¹³ During this long stay in the city he certainly had opportunity to reestablish contact with his colleagues that continued to

be active in the "Jewish Renaissance" movement, while he was in Germany. Lasar Segall surely discovered very fast (if he had not already received news from the movement in Germany), that the movement had changed under the impact of the political transformations in Russia, and because of the ever growing involvement of a new generation of Jewish artist with cubo-futuristic avant-garde. Lasar Segall's own work had suffered important transformations during the years of the war, and he was now integrally identified with the developments of Expressionism in Dresden.¹⁴ These new circumstances allowed Lasar Segall's reencounter with Jewish themes. This encounter was to be of great importance for the development of his expressionistic work, after his return to Germany.

During the period that Segall maintained distance from the "Jewish Renaissance" movement, it suffered fundamental changes as to the comprehension of what should be considered "Jewish art". If in the years pervious to World War I, Jewish art was defined mainly through its content, and by a certain disposition towards humanitarian attitudes, around 1916 this perspective started to change, and a second generation of artists and critics (as well as some of the previous generation, such as Ginzburg e Maxim Syrkin), started to reconsider such position and to propose the construction of a Jewish national art through the study of formal aspects of the Jewish visual tradition, translating this tradition into the modern language of avant-garde. With the intent to collect new material for this project, the Jewish Historical and Ethnographic Society organized an artistic expedition in 1916, under the leadership of El Lissitzky and Issachar Ryback. Both artists visited numerous communities, collecting typical element of Jewish visual culture in Synagogues and other public spaces. This material was later installed in the newly founded

Jewish Museum in Saint Petersburg, directed by Ilya Ginzburg.

In the same year of 1916, the Jewish Society for the Encouragement of the Arts was also founded in Saint Petersburg, with the collaboration of artists such as Ilya Ginzburg, Nathan Altman, and Marc Chagall. The main aim of this “society” was to promote and develop the arts among Jews, organizing important exhibitions, in 1916 in Saint Petersburg, and 1917 in Moscow. Both shows were a great success, presenting a large number of young artists involved with the idea of constructing a specifically Jewish visual culture, such as El Lissitzky, Ryback [Fig. 7], Rabinovich, Manievich e Chagall [Fig. 8].

Together with the presentation of the work of these new artists, some theoretical texts exposing the new points of view of this “second generation” started to circulate broadly. The most important of these articles was published in 1919 by Issachar Ryback and Boris Aronson in ídiche in the journal *Ojfgang*, under the title “Di Wege fun der Jüddischer Malerei” (“The paths of Jewish art”). These two cubo-futurist artists, more members of the “Kiev Art League”, another avant-garde organization, but also of the “Society” of Saint Petersburg, summarized in the article the most current ideas under artists involved with the actualization of the “Jewish Renaissance” in the terms of a new Jewish avant-garde art. In a few words, they defended in the article that the “Jews”, in opposition to the Russians”, had a preference for surface and a tendency to avoid any notion of deepness and corporal volume in their paintings. Still according to the authors, they also preferred to work with tones, than with pure color, being particularly interested in so called “impure” and “sober” colors. The same idea appeared later in the commentaries of another member of the Kiev League, the poet Dobruschin: “Jewish women use to wash their colored close before

dressing them for the first time. Russian peasants, for their turn, like to use their close as colorful as possible. The characteristically Jewish colors are black, violet, gray, and a tone of pale gold, as the echo of a distant legend told many times.”¹⁵

The return to his native city for a longer period and the news of these new reflections on the theme of Jewish art, had great impact on Lasar Segall’s work. Since 1916 he had adopted an expressionist vocabulary in pictures such as *Double Portrait Margarete and Zoe* (1917), or *Russian Village* (1917/18) [Fig. 9], using strong colors and geometric forms that accentuated the expressiveness of the figures. His thematic also had important affinities with the typical expressionist vocabulary, as can be seen in the series *A sweet creature*, based on Dostoevski’s book, an author that was very appreciated by German expressionist in general. After his stay in Vilna, however, we not only see Lasar Segall return to Jewish themes with great energy, but we can also observe a significant change in the treatment he gives to color in his work. Segall abandons the saturated and “pure” colors that formed triangular patterns with which he constructed his figures, to adopt a reduced palette of sober colors, with very sophisticated tone distinctions, revealing a growing interest in “impure” colors. It is not a coincidence that the colors that start to predominate in Lasar Segall’s pictures, as in *Kaddish*, *Death*, or *Eternal Wanderers* [Fig. 10], are exactly the same ones considered typically Jewish, as violet, ochre, gray, and gold.

Here we must however make an important observation regarding Segall’s relation to the new ideas concerning “Jewish art”. If from a formal point of view he seems to have identified himself with the new positions defended by Russian Jewish artists such as Chagall, Ryback e El Lissitzky, in turn, Segall never engaged himself directly in the

construction of a *National* Jewish art. From this point of view he continued to think like his teacher Lev Antokolski and the first generation of Jewish artists in Russia, who still believed in the possibility of assimilation of the Jews into the Western European societies. Largely based on the ideas of these first artists and critics, Segall believed that the Jews, because of their particular condition, could contribute more than any other group of people to the German expressionist movement. Segall wrote, for instance, that because they were individual that:

Lived more from the inside to the outside, than from outside to inside, [...] one should deduce that ... the Jews establish more easily and rapidly than any other [folk], a vivid relation with expressive art, that is, with today’s Expressionism. Since it must be specially easy to bring a Jewish artist to a true relation with contemporary art ... I think we encounter here a rare case in which an artistic movement finds in a specific human group a soil previously prepared by nature.”¹⁶

If we take the German context around 1918 into account, in which Lasar Segall developed his new expressionist painting with Jewish themes, Segall’s position can be better understood. The post-war period testified an increasing identification between expressionism and national xenophobic ideas about art, and we can imagine that more than to give a contribution to a specific national Jewish art, Segall wanted to oppose, or at least resist the appropriation of Expressionism by the Germans. Segall believed firmly that Expressionism should be seen as a progress in the aesthetic vision of humanity, and not as an exclusive stamp of German culture. It is no coincidence that, many years later, already in Brazil, while giving a lecture on Expressionist art in the Vila Kyrial in São Paulo, Segall would cite basically foreign artists in the hall of the founders of the movement: “Expressionism appeared in a moment of humanity’s spiritual

crisis and, in this chaos it heard only its own voice, which expressed the ardent desire for a new religion, for a new man. Its first prophets were the Russians, French and, *under their influence*, also the Germans”.¹⁷

It was from this particular position, as Jewish artist interacting in the context of post-war Europe, that Lasar Segall produced master-pieces such as *Kaddish* (1918), *Eternal Wanderers* (1919) and *Pregnant* (1920), all of high pictorial quality and originality.

3 – Segall and the Jewish culture in Brazil

With his definite immigration to Brazil, Lasar Segall distances himself once more from the Jewish atmosphere that had been such an important inspiration for his work between 1918 and 1923. When he arrived, he was received and valued by local artists and intellectuals as an important member of the German expressionist movement, without mentioning his ties to modern Jewish culture. Therefore, in spite of the fact that Segall married Jenny Klabin, a Jewish woman, and, as it seems, established straight contact with the Jewish community in São Paulo, the Jewish theme leaves the center of his production again, as in the beginning of his period in Dresden. In São Paulo, his work is dominated by the representation of the local landscape and of his new friends.¹⁸ However, if Jewish themes were apparently less important for Segall in his Brazilian period than they had been in Germany, where he saw himself constantly faced with his Jewish identity in a society that was becoming more and more anti-Semitic, it is possible that, in a more subtle way, his ties to Jewish culture also influenced his initial reception of Brazilian culture. Very important in this context is Segall’s identification with the Brazilian black population, to the point of representing himself as black in the picture *Encounter*, painted in 1924 [Fig. 11]. At first sight,

we can think of this work as an affirmation of a new identity, opposite in some measure to the Jewish identity that he carried with himself during his years in Germany. Yet, this interpretation becomes less certain when we realize that the representation of black people also occupied a specific place in the discussions about Jewish art brought forward by the Jewish avant-garde in Russia.

In 1916 the critic Maxim Syrkin wrote an article entitled “Jewish Art” that had large repercussion under Jewish artists of the time. In this article he traced a parallel between the Jewish peoples and primitive folk in Africa and Polynesia. According to Syrkin, Jews were also a primitive and pure “race” that “as the colored races, that is, the Polynesian and the blacks”, had a particular genius.¹⁹ Analyzing Syrkin’s text in his article “Jewish Artists and the Russian Silver Age”, John Bowlts arguments that it was an important reference for artists such as Robert Falk [Fig. 12] and Nathan Altman, who developed an interest in the iconography and the representation of black figures. Is it possible that Lasar Segall was thinking in these terms when he painted *Encounter*? Maybe Segall’s Jewish identity could have helped in some way his integration to his new Brazilian home. The subject is very instigating and deserves deeper investigation.

Segall’s returned to the direct representation of Jewish themes in 1927, by the occasion of the death of his father. In previous years he had already eventually painted the image of Abel Segall, emphasizing his profound religiosity through attributes such as the Bible, or the Kipa, as in *Old Age* (1924), but his death and mourning by the family lead him to produce a series of pictures centered on Jewish rituals and traditions. *Father Abel*, *Kaddisch* (1927), *Religious Holiday*, and the work *Wake* (1928) [Fig. 13], among others, are part of this group of works. Differently from the works with Jew-

ish themes produced during his German period that, as we saw, aspired to reach a universal expression through Jewish specificity, these works seem to underscore the personal and private character of the pictured event. Most of these works are in paper, a more intimate medium than painting. They don’t suggest a “universal pain”, or refer to the general condition of humanity, but speak of the sadness of the Segall family in face of the loss of a dear one. In the same way, the persons depicted are all easily recognizable, and their suffering is described with precision. Such a personal and singular approach seems to justify Lasar Segall’s large use of religious references and symbols in these works. However, in spite of the relevance of this group of drawings and prints, we cannot say that the Jewish theme was predominant in the whole of his production in that moment. On the contrary, through the decades of the 20’s and 30’s, Segall dedicated himself above all to the representation of Brazilian landscape and its population. In this period he created paintings such as *Banana Trees*, *Profile of Zulmira*, and the series *Mangue*. The theme of the “Immigrants” was also depicted in a series of prints, conceived, in most cases, from photographs and sketches he had produced during his crossing of the Atlantic. At that moment the theme did not have the meaning of protest against the Nazi politics that it would acquire with his *Immigrant Ship* (1939/41) [Fig. 14]

We can say that the Jewish themes becomes once again central in Segall’s work after the ascension of the Nazis in Germany, and during the Holocaust, especially after 1937, when the news about the mass persecution of Jews in Germany and in East Europe started to spread. Works such as *Pogrom* (1937), the album *Visions of War* (1940/43), *Immigrant Ship* (1939/41), and *Concentration Camp* (1945), are all part of this new constellation. If during his German period Lasar Segall was interested in the discussions about

the construction of a Jewish identity in art, now the question that bothered him was the real possibility of extinction of his people and culture. In 1937 Segall had several of his works included in the Degenerate Art exhibition, organized by the Third Reich, and many of his old friends in Europe had to go into exile. Segall's monumental pictures of the 30's and 40's, aimed, above all, at denouncing these circumstances. In this process, Segall not only found inspiration in the information he received through journals, magazines and letters from friends that were still in Europe, but also (and maybe in even greater measure) from his own memory. Therefore, as Maria Luiza Tucci Carneiro indicates, there is a certain affinity between these and earlier works, even if the themes were profoundly re-signified and re-contextualized in face of the political events of the time.

We can say that previous themes reappeared and were reinterpreted under a new, more introspective and humane dimension. The immigrant depicted in previous decades assumed now the face of the refugee, who's social drama is this time limited by the Nazi spectrum that haunts (when it does not dominate) the old World ... Although he did not personally testify many of the themes depicted between 1936 and 1947, Segall was capable of reconstructing ... the acts of social injustice, the suffering of the eternal wanderers and the atrocities of the war.²⁰

In face of the necessity of social engagement, we see Segall take distance

from the Avant-garde conceptions that had oriented his work during his European period and in his first years in Brazil. The Avant-garde project – including that of the Jewish avant-garde – that was based on the idea of formal renewal of artistic language, gave place to the necessity to resist and denounce. All his work was directed to the commotion of the beholder, as means to establish a chain of solidarity based on the principle of “fraternity”.²¹ It is in this sense that we should interpret Segall's condemnation of Kandinsky's position, for example, when in 1937 he wrote to him about his personal attitude:

... I close the door of my atelier and the world disappears. More important than Czechoslovakia is the question if this blue is well applied with that brown, if the extension and direction of the line matches completely, if the weights were distributed correctly, etc.²²

In an ironic tone Segall answered to his old Parisian friend:

Mrs. Kandinsky, you are the happy one, you have the strength to close yourself to the world in your atelier, dedicating yourself to work with tranquility, considering the problems of art more important than the facts of today's world, with which we are all, whether we want it or not, directly tied, and of which we unfortunately are, as individuals and as artists totally dependent.²³

When put face to face with the events of his time, Segall decided that questions related to art and to “avant-garde” should be put aside, and all the plastic

experience of the artist should be placed at the service of the denouncement of the violence impinged upon Jewish peoples. However, this denouncement, because it was based on the ideas of solidarity and fraternity, became a condemnation of prejudice and violence under any circumstances, trespassing the limits imposed by the urgent case of the persecution of Jews to encompass the whole of oppressed humanity. In the monumental pictures that Segall produced in these years, his Judaism reverts once more into humanism, a theme that was always central to Lasar Segall.

I would like to end this article pointing to the lack of research on Lasar Segall's relation to the Jewish community in Brazil. In spite of the efforts of authors such as Tucci Carneiro that try to advance the studies of Segall's relation to Judaism in our country, there is still much more to be done. We know very little, for instance, about Segall's involvement with Jewish immigration processes in Brazil during World War II, and nothing about his position on the foundation of Israel. There are still many questions that must remain open. I am sure that new researches will contribute a great deal to a better understanding of Segall's projects during the years of the War. I leave here therefore the invitation and the encouragement for those who want to initiate this journey.

Translation: Claudia Valladão de Mattos

* The dates used in this article for Lasar Segall's work follow the new chronology established in my book *Lasar Segall: Expressionismo e Judaísmo* (Perspectiva, 2000). In some cases these dates do not correspond to the dates used by the Lasar Segall Museum. When this happens, both dates will appear on the image reference. The date established by the Lasar Segall Museum will be followed by the inscription MLS, and will be presented after the date adopted in the article.

¹ We can certainly also find works with Jewish themes in other periods of Lasar Segall's life, yet they do not constitute a coherent group of

works as do the ones which form the three periods discussed above. In these periods, Jewish themes become central to the artist.

² SEGALL, Lasar. “Minhas recordações”, In: *Textos Depoimentos e Exposições*, Museu Lasar Segall/Iphan, São Paulo, 1993.

³ That Lasar Segall affirms in his autobiography that Marc Antokolski saw some of his drawings when he was still a child, (“An important event in my world ... occurred when my drawings were shown to the famous sculptor Antokolski.” Cf. Segall, “Minhas Recordações”, op. cit., p. 11) is an important information that

helps us situate the social position of Lasar Segall's family in Vilna. If we take Antokolski's status, and his outstanding position inside the Jewish Renaissance movement into account, this direct contact can only indicate a favorable position of the family with regard to enlightened sectors of the Russian intellectual world.

⁴ Cf. STANISLAWSKI, Michael. “The Jews and Russian Culture and Politics”, In: Susan T. Goodman (org.), *Russia Jewish Artists in a Century of Change 1890-1990*, Munich and Nova York, 1996, pp. 16-27.

⁵ Idem.

⁶ Cf. letters from Werner Schultz to Segall, Arquivo Lasar Segall/Museu Lasar Segall/Iphan. The same admiration for Israëls reappear in a letter sent in 1912 by Carl Pankow, a friend from Berlin, as a response to Segall: “[...] you are right when you say that, maybe because you left my family home so early, all your being is somewhat melancholic and, therefore, you have a large degree of piety that impels you to dedicate yourself integrally to the great master Israëls, and to deepen yourself with concentration in his work.” For a discussion of the date of the letter see cf. Claudia Valladão de Mattos, *Lasar Segall. Expressionismo e Judaísmo*, São Paulo: Perspectiva, 2000, p. 9, note 14. Letter from Werner Schultz to Segall, Arquivo Lasar Segall/Museu Lasar Segall/Iphan.

⁷ For a visual comparison of the two pictures, see my book cited in the previous note.

⁸ Cf. Lasar Segall, “Minhas Recordações”, Op. cit., p. 9.

⁹ Most of these artists had contact with the Zionist movement of Theodor Herzl and, later, Martin Buber. On the “Jewish Renaissance” in Berlin, see: Inka Bertz, “*Ein neue Kunst für ein altes Volk*” *Die Jüdische Renaissance in Berlin 1990 bis 1920*, exhibition catalogue, Jüdisches Museum, Berlin, 1991.

¹⁰ Both artists arrived in Berlin somewhat later than Segall, when the latter was already in-

scribed as a student in the Academy. Lasar Segall certainly knew at least Kulvianski, who was only a year younger than himself, and as Segall, was interested in Max Liebermann’s *Sezession* (maybe because of the close relationship between Liebermann and Israëls) and was a member of the *Novembergruppe* in 1920. Cf. Inka Bertz, Op. cit., p. 43.

¹¹ Amishai-Maisels, “Die Drei Gesichter des Jacob Steinhadt”, In: *Jakob Steinhadt. Der Prophet*, catalogue Jüdisches Museum, Berlin, 1995, p. 24.

¹² In this point, Inka Bertz disagrees with Amishai-Maisels, because she sees in the theme of the “Prophet” and in his Apocalyptic landscapes a strong relation with the Old Testament and, therefore, with Jewish culture, and not only the elaboration of themes related to expressionist imaginary, as Maisels wishes to see. Cf. Inka Bertz, “Propheten und Ostjuden. Zur Verarbeitung von Zeiterfahrung im Werk Jakob Steinhadts vor und nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg”, in: *Jakob Steinhadt. Der Prophet*, op. cit., p. 65-92.

¹³ Segall initially planed to stay only some weeks in Wilna, but after falling sick with Spanish fever, he ended up staying a much longer period in order to reestablish his health before returning to Dresden.

¹⁴ For an analysis of Lasar Segall’s engagement in German Expressionism see: Claudia Val-

ladão de Mattos, *Lasar Segall. Expressionismo e Judaísmo*, Op.cit.

¹⁵ Dobruschin, “Kunst Primitiv un Kunst Buch far Kinder”, cited in: Avram Kampf, *Jüdisches Erleben in der Kunst des 20. Jahrhunderts*, trans. Peter Hahlbrock, Weinheim, Berlin: Quadriga, 1987, p. 36-7.

¹⁶ The original text is to be found in the archives of the Lasar Segall Museum. The text is in German and is still unpublished, without date or title. Museu Lasar Segall/IPHAN.

¹⁷ Cf. “O Expressionismo”, 1924, unpublished until 1958, when it came ut in the newspaper *Estado de S.Paulo*. (My emphasis).

¹⁸ Segall’s effort to adapt himself to his new surrounding is very well pictured in Sergio Miceli’s book *Nacional estrangeiro*. Cf. Sergio Miceli, *Nacional estrangeiro*, São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2003.

¹⁹ Maxim Syrkin, “Evrei i iskusstvo”, In: *evrejskaya nedelja* (Moscou) 1960, apud. John Bowlt, “Jewish Artists and the Russian Silver Age”, in: *Russian Jewish Artists*, Op.cit., p. 42.

²⁰ TUCCI CARNEIRO, Maria Luiza & LAFER, Celso. *Judeus e judaísmo na obra de Lasar Segall*. São Paulo: Ateliê, 2004, p. 48.

²¹ Idem, p. 50.

²² Vera d’Horta, *Lasar Segall*, Buenos Aires: Fundacao Finambrás, 1999, p.345-6.

²³ Idem, *ibidem*.

“Brazil and Vargas”: Reflections on the Report by Rockwell Kent after his trip to Rio de Janeiro in 1937

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Considerations regarding the “Brazil and vargas” report¹

Although very little known in Brazil, Rockwell Kent² was much more than a painter, drawing artist and architect, for there seemed not to be limits inside himself for all he wanted to do in his life. Thus, Kent was famous as book, magazine and advertising illustrator,

engraver, writer, traveler and leftist political activist, which led him to register himself in the United States Communist Party. From his deeply restless and creative mind, one may observe up to what extent he contributed to the issues of his times, issues involving art, culture and politics.

From his uncountable trips around the world, Kent brought much more than images registered in drawings, painting, illustrations and engravings; he brought a rich cultural diversity. For example, on a trip to Brazil in 1937, as newly-elected vice-president to the National Committee for People’s Rights and representative from the Joint Committee for the Defense of the Brazilian People, Rockwell Kent

and his colleague Jerome Davis, also an activist, came as political observers to Rio de Janeiro. They spent nine days in this city, collecting information on the Getúlio Vargas’ Dictatorship, which had begun as a coup d’état in the same year. They also sought information on where Prestes, revolutionary leader who had revolted against Vargas and had been arrested as political prisoner, could be found.

Thus, amidst the turmoil occurring in Rio at that moment, Kent and Davis were sent to Brazil on November 25, after plans starting in June of the same year during a conference with Brazilian Ambassador Oswaldo Aranha, near Vargas’ coup. In a richly-described report, Kent provides reasons for his

colleague Davis and him to have been sent to Brazil. Five months before their trip, as his article mentions, Vargas had replaced his “state of war” by one of “emergency.” This way he had brought a more liberal sense not to draw so much attention to the barbarism of his arbitrary and unconstitutional arrests, such as those of Prestes and so many others. Besides, Vargas was close to declaring his coup, which would put an end to democracy.

Kent begins his article narrating his adventures with Vargas’ secret police at his arrival in Brazil in the middle of the night and the fear of being expelled after his briefcase was confiscated by secret agents, since this briefcase contained a list of names of political prisoners, including that of Prestes himself. In reality, in all his sagacity and congeniality, all Kent wanted was to find out Prestes’ whereabouts and free him, since this was also Ambassador Aranha’s wish. Not only that. During pre-Second World War times, amidst a tense and ready-to-explode climate, one wished to make Brazil, a country of such congenial, calm, honest and hardworking people, free itself from a dictator aligned with the totalitarian and fascist European regimes, such as those of Mussolini’s Italy and Franco’s Spain. In sum, one sought peace, freedom, work and land for all workers.

So as to empower himself, Vargas nominates José Américo de Almeida, writer from the North of the country who was used to living with the misery of his people and who decides to distribute land to the masses, which brought despair to the coffee elite. In this atmosphere of the elite’s dissatisfaction and the masses’ extreme satisfaction, for the latter would finally have a piece of land, Vargas gains the long-dreamed mass support and finds himself an alibi for his coup. Moreover, smart Vargas also conquers the Church, returning its autonomy regarding Education, as long as it suffocated any communist upsurge

among students, both at schools and universities. Therefore, with deceived masses due to land promise and the Church support, Vargas encountered total freedom to impose his dictatorship.

Amidst this Vargas’ dictatorial climate, Kent demonstrates how much people do not really care about arrests and torture, for if they did, there would not be fertile soil for the evil done by Vargas, who Kent claims cannot kill since deep inside himself, Vargas was a nice person. According to Kent, Vargas’ kind of discourse resembles the view one had of Lorenzo Magnificent, who in front of his sick son, denies him for the State, thus defending public life to the detriment of the private one. Or rather, according to Kent himself: “L’état c’est moi!”³ – renowned quote from Louis the 14th, a quote which in Kent and Vargas’ context would show the totalitarian view of the president. After attacking him in his report, Kent considers Vargas a light-hearted person after all.

Another aspect worth mentioning in this report is the kind of writing Kent uses to narrate the late parade to celebrate the Flag’s Day, when he describes with an artist’s eye the green and white clothes, Napoleon’s dress. Thus, Kent compares Vargas with Napoleon, not only in terms of the soldiers’ clothes, but also due to the way of governing, above everything and everyone to reach glory and recognition. However, what kind of glory is it that arrests to torture? Even the 1937 Constitution is against such horrible practice.

In Rockwell Kent’s discourse there is something strange, maybe due to the very atmosphere of censorship and repression surrounding people’s thoughts, words and expressions in those days, a kind of fear that Brazil – US relations would be diplomatically affected. That is to say, in the beginning of his report, Kent narrates the onset of his trip to Rio, his almost being expelled after the event involving Vargas’ secret police,

the denunciation of Prestes’ arbitrary arrest, Vargas’ relations with Fascism. However, further on in his report, Kent defends Vargas’ good character, when the opposite takes place in Brazil.

Searching for data on Rockwell Kent, I have found drafts from this report, which bring uncountable versions with exchanged words and crossed-out paragraphs. Why did he do so? When writing an article, an author always modifies words to obtain a better text, there is always a choice of words and sentences more adequate for the thought to be developed. But why cancel whole paragraphs? What would be behind this fact? Would it be for mere opinion shifts? Or would Kent have been convinced to change his opinion by someone whose interests were affected at that moment? These questions remain unanswered.

What may be stated is that there was strong censorship and that the United States did not want to be involved in a diplomatic incident with Brazil, since the country occupies a major portion of the continent and had strong relations with Europe, including personal ones of friendship with Italy, for example. Therefore, breaking up with democracy was not Kent’s or the United States’ objective. Rockwell himself, although a communist, was a democrat and believed in democracy, in the right to work, in well-being within society, and in people’s freedom.

For instance, at the end of a draft⁴ for the report presented by Kent in 1938, whose final version follows, there is an interesting conclusion where Kent proposes that Vargas be deposed, through the following sentence: “Good, let’s throw him out!” There is still another part which draws attention when Kent is being interrogated by the Lieutenant, and the latter asks about Davis, taking him for James Levinson, a communist also searched by the Vargas’ regime. In the final version of the report, this is not mentioned. Why? For what reason?

It may be noticed in Kent's drafts that he is much sharper than in his final version, which contributes to a softening in his discourse despite the fact it brings elements of blunt accusation against Vargas, like in the final version here presented. Perhaps the fact Ambassador Aranha had recommended care in relation to what he would write not to affect relations with Brazil is the reason for all that. In fact, a comparative analysis between his drafts and the final version here presented allows for stating that Rockwell Kent's thoughts undergo certain change: he softens the content of the report and omits some blunter parts, thus aiming at avoiding direct confrontation with Vargas' politics, which could affect relations between Brazil and the United States at that moment.

Rockwell Kent and Cândido Portinari

It was also in 1937 that Rockwell Kent and Cândido Portinari met. From this important friendship arose a fundamental relationship permeating the artistic production of both Kent and Portinari. From this cooperation and through Kent's support, Portinari achieved projection in the international market, in the United States above all, through the exhibition of his works in the New York World Fair in 1939, for which he creates three panels, through the exhibition at the Riverside Museum, also in New York, in the following year, as well as in several other American cities. Besides displaying Portinari's works, Kent obtained an important progress for his career by means of the catalogue introduced by Kent, called *Portinari: His Life and Art* written in 1940. In this catalogue Rockwell Kent presents Portinari to the American public, describing his works and character. In the same catalogue, there is also an introduction by Josias Leão, who narrates Portinari's path, from childhood to top success.

In fact, right in the beginning of this important friendship, Portinari painted a portrait of Rockwell Kent's, which today belongs to the collection of the Brazilian Art Museum from the Armando Álvares Penteado Foundation, MAB-FAAP. [Picture 1]

*

O BRASIL E VARGAS, por Rockwell Kent⁵

Aqui se encontram as maiores possibilidades não desenvolvidas para a riqueza produtiva a serem descobertas neste globo. E aqui estavam os maiores contrastes. Na costa moram os negociantes sofisticados da classe mais alta, os quais passam metade de seu tempo na Europa, falam cinco ou seis línguas e vivem em esplendor imperial, incomodando-se muito pouco com os índios aborígenes que vivem em forte selvageria na selva, como os selvagens o fazem.

(“South by Thunderbird”, Hudson Strode, Random House, 1937).⁶

PODER-SE-IA ACRESCENTAR que da população de 47.000.000, 11,888 milhões são listados como empregados e 8,860 milhões são trabalhadores nas atividades agrícolas, pecuárias e rurais; que os salários da maioria desses trabalhadores são de 2 mil-réis por dia (ou por volta de 12 centavos); que milhões trabalham como peões; que a subnutrição próxima à fome prevalece; e que 75% da população é analfabeta. Riqueza em contraste com a extrema pobreza, cultura contra analfabetismo; enormes distâncias e poucas rodovias e ferrovias (uma milha de ferrovia para cada dez nos Estados Unidos da América). Recursos ilimitados e variados e uma única economia monocultora; e em vez da alegria daquela segurança generosa da subsistência que uma terra tão rica poderia alavancar – tem sido computado em vinte vezes seus atuais milhões – o povo vive em servidão ao capital estrangeiro e sob dependência

perigosa em relação aos mercados estrangeiros. O Brasil nunca foi colonizado; foi explorado.

A história do Brasil é uma trágica história de explorações sucessivas que levaram à ruína e à revolta. E apesar do progresso do Brasil nos últimos 160 anos ter ocorrido através da independência visando à democracia e esse mesmo progresso ter sido tão contrário ao caráter de seus povos latinos, quanto de seus índios e negros, os quais, através da escravidão, estes últimos foram elevados à condição de cidadãos. Erigido na independência nas grandes propriedades, sujeitos a uma economia sobre a qual não tinham qualquer controle e a um governo remoto, o povo estava tão apático em relação aos seus direitos democráticos quando esses eram constitucionais conforme se mostram hoje à sua anulação.

Na tarde de 25 de novembro, próximo ao acontecimento do golpe de Estado de novembro, Jerome Davis e eu, representando o Comitê Nacional pelos Direitos do Povo e a Junta do Comitê pela Defesa do Povo Brasileiro, chegamos ao Rio de Janeiro, para averiguar a situação política, entender a cabeça do povo e chegar às tais conclusões como poderiam ser do interesse do público americano, no julgamento do Brasil como um vizinho amigável. Tínhamos nove dias para fazê-lo. Nós tínhamos cartas de recomendação: as minhas eram sob a forma de apresentações pessoais – do que provou ser uma das de natureza mais amigáveis e úteis – do embaixador brasileiro, Senhor Oswaldo Aranha, em Washington; e Davis tinha, além de cartas pessoais, incluindo uma do filho do presidente Vargas para seu pai, muitas apresentações oficiais de importância. Chegando ao Rio, fomos a um hotel na praia de Copacabana. Banhamo-nos, trocamos de roupa, jantamos, passeamos um pouco e fomos para a cama, aliviados por ter chegado e que nenhum funcionário do hotel batera às nossas portas no alvorecer, ou

antes, para nos fazer chegar ao avião a tempo. Nós dormimos. Se o que agora segue não cabe em um “relatório”, pode pelo menos irrelevantemente animá-lo e sugerir algo da atmosfera ou nuvem sob a qual nós, em comum com o povo brasileiro, deveríamos encontrar.

Enquanto eu inclinava minha cabeça, quase tirando uma soneca –

(Eu estava, é claro, realmente morto para o mundo)

De repente veio uma batida,

Como a de alguém gentilmente batendo,

Batendo à porta do meu quarto:

“É algum visitante”, eu resmunguei,

“Batendo à porta de meu quarto –

Apenas isto e nada mais”.

“Saia daqui”, eu berrei. “Deixe-me sozinho. Eu quero dormir. Eu não vou pegar o avião. Vá embora”. E imergindo minha cabeça no travesseiro, puxei o lençol para cobrir-me.

A batida, gentil e insidiosa, continuou.

Eu agarrei o telefone e berrei uma boa e velha reclamação anglo-saxã em ouvidos portugueses. Desliguei o telefone. Deitei minha cabeça no colchão com o travesseiro sobre minha cabeça.

Aquela batida – que não parava – alcançou êxito.

O telefone tocou. Deus – isto é um sanatório! “O que é? O que é?” –

“É a polícia”, veio a voz gentil do carregador.

Tais visitantes, a tal hora! (Era exatamente meia-noite.) Acendendo a luz e me envolvendo em qualquer roupa, abri a porta com tais expressões de desculpa e boas-vindas, como achei que nos faria a todos muito felizes. Não há direitos quando se está em “estado de guerra”. Mas amigos! – é aí que você precisa deles.

Deixei três camaradas entrarem, homens da polícia secreta à paisana,

provaram ser. Exigiram meus papéis, todos eles, cada rascunho ínfimo. Num dos cantos do quarto ficava minha pasta, aberta quase duas polegadas. Para o outro lado do quarto levei meu passaporte e, quase sem olhar o alvo, atirei-o para dentro da pasta. A polícia irradiou admiração. Bati no meu peito e todos rimos. Distribuí cigarros e comeci a apontar frestas que poderiam ter me servido para o ocultamento de documentos. Quando eles terminaram de revistar o local, disseram para que eu me vestisse. Eles estavam, agora, completamente amistosos e educados. Eu me vesti e quase de braços dados descemos e fomos para fora, para um táxi que nos aguardava.

Eles me carregaram para a delegacia de polícia central na frente da qual estavam recostados dois soldados arruinados, pequenos e muito sonolentos, com baionetas enormes. Tomamos um elevador, subimos e fomos para um corredor átrio tão semelhante ao qual Barron havia passado e mergulhado para a morte. Disseram-me para aguardar em uma sala de espera. Acendi um cigarro e estudei um mapa do Brasil. Dez minutos depois uma porta abriu e fui intimado à presença do tenente.

À escrivania do tenente e separado dele por uma cadeira vazia sentou-se um homem gordo, tão despen-teado, sem fazer a barba, sujo, como você encontraria aos montes. “Eu falo inglês”, disse o homem, com sotaque não convincente. “Eu sou o intérprete. Sente-se”.

Tomei a cadeira vazia.

“Nós o trouxemos aqui”, disse o tenente com a máxima cortesia, “para ajudá-lo no trabalho pelo qual o senhor veio para o Brasil. Nós queremos ajudá-lo”.

Irradiei minha satisfação. “Oh, muito obrigado!”, eu disse e sorri largamente. Do mesmo modo todos eles fizeram, tão agradavelmente.

“Tomamos seus papéis”, continuou o tenente, “com a finalidade de guardá-

los para o senhor. Não queremos que nada aconteça a eles”.

“Que gentis, que maravilha!”, exclamei e apertei sua mão. “Como posso agradecer-lhes por sua consideração? Como posso agradecer-lhes a todos?”; ri de felicidade e, assim, todos o fizemos.

Agora, ao passo que Davis e eu havíamos de fato possuído muitos documentos e panfletos de uma natureza tão antidiplomática que nos envolveria em dificuldades, estes haviam há muito tempo sido rasgados em pedacinhos, e através do vaso sanitário do avião, despachados para o Oceano Atlântico. Tudo havia sido jogado fora – exceto um; em minha primeira entrada na polícia fui dolorosamente alertado sobre sua presença maldita entre meus papéis! Era uma longa lista dos mais eminentes daqueles prisioneiros brasileiros cujo bem-estar deveríamos averiguar. Apanhado em flagrante? Melhor me defender do crime cometido.

“Por sua oferta de assistência, tenente”, reporte-me a ele, “estou feliz e agradecido. E devido a sua oferta – tão generosamente feita – irei agora, neste momento oportuno, pedir por uma certa informação pela qual eu havia pretendido vir até os senhores. Onde” – procurando em minha pasta e apresentando o documento – “estão esses cavalheiros? Onde eles estão? Eles estão bem?” Entreguei-lhe a lista, que ele examinou.

Como na explosão de uma bomba em um mercado agitado em meio-dia festivo, a população é repentinamente transfigurada com horror, indignação, ódio, medo – então, neste primeiro olhar para o primeiro nome, o bom tenente mudou o tom. “Prestes!”, ele gritou e toda a sala recuou, recuou e olhou ferozmente para mim. “Prestes! O senhor o conhece? E conforme ele lia mais nomes, o horror deles crescia.

“Quem lhe deu isto?” “Seus compatriotas”, eu disse.

“E o senhor conhece esses homens?” “Não ainda”.

Por fim, furiosamente, ele pegou a pasta, socou o maldito documento dentro e colocou a coisa toda fora do alcance. Havia chegado o momento para cigarros.

Acendendo o do tenente, eu o abracei.

“O senhor é americano?”, perguntei ao intérprete, tocando em seu joelho sujo.

Alguém se referiu a minha incrível foto do passaporte: eles gostaram da imagem. Rimos – e tudo estava bem. Ele é “muito simpático”, disse um. “Sem dúvida!”, eu disse: de acordo.

Liberado para voltar para o meu hotel, sugeri que eles honrassem com aquele estilo de escolta policial com a qual estava acostumado. “Além disso”, acrescentei, “que tal o outro companheiro, Davis?”. Seria melhor termos tudo esclarecido.

O espasmo que a menção de Davis trouxe foi dissipado quando o tenente se certificou de que Jerome Davis não era o defensor do Trabalho Americano, David Levinson. Ainda iriam examiná-lo. Meus três amigos se levantaram para ir comigo.

“Podemos todos parar para beber algo, tenente?”, perguntei.

“Não”, disse o tenente, severamente.

“Por favor, só um pequeno gole?”, mais dois homens se uniram à nossa festa.

“N-não”.

Nós seis marchamos para fora.

“Isso é o que você consegue deste maldito fascismo”, resmungou um de nós – não eu.

Lotando um táxi, sentando um no colo do outro, dirigimo-nos para um café. Eu pedi whisky duplo com soda e gelo e comecei a discursar sobre o movimento trabalhista, o C.I.O., e sobre como os trabalhadores do mundo

controlariam o mundo. Eles irradiaram aprovação.

“Esta é para a revolução!”, eu disse e levantei meu copo. Bebemos a ela.

Davis foi esplêndido. Pulou da cama para nos deixar entrar. Irradiou boas vindas quando eu disse: “Meus amigos”. E quando eu acrescentei, “A polícia”, voltou para a cama. A polícia não fez muito mais, mas ficou mais e mais embaraçada enquanto eu vasculhava o quarto procurando por algo para dar a eles. Eles pareceram envergonhados por terem vindo. E quando finalmente a porta fechou e trancou atrás da pasta do professor e nas costas dos policiais, Davis levantou sua cabeça do travesseiro, sob o qual estavam seu passaporte, sua carteira e sua cópia da maldita lista.

Na manhã seguinte ligamos para a Embaixada Americana e contamos nossa história. E naquela tarde o assistente do embaixador chegou ao nosso hotel na companhia de um detetive da polícia e com nossas pastas. A única coisa que não foi devolvida foi a lista dos prisioneiros políticos. O assistente do embaixador informou-me que eu estava sob séria suspeita, que eu poderia ser obrigado a permanecer no meu quarto de hotel até a partida do próximo avião. Mantiveram algum controle sobre meus telefonemas, mas de acordo com o que sei não me rastream. Tive permissão para ficar. Os policiais, às vezes, não são ruins. Davis, desse dia em diante – nós assim concordamos – seguiu seu trabalho sem dificuldades por eu ser suspeito.

Os planos para nos enviar ao Brasil iniciaram-se em junho de 1937, durante uma conferência com o embaixador Aranha, em Washington, com o qual os notórios maus tratos dos prisioneiros políticos sob o regime de Getúlio Vargas foram discutidos e protestados novamente. Cinco meses antes da saída do comitê sucedeu no Brasil, primeiro, o fim do assim chamado “estado de guerra”, em prol de um “estado de emergência” mais liberal; depois, a

volta do “estado de guerra” e com ele mais prisões; e por fim, um golpe de estado com o qual as eleições pendentes foram suspensas, o mandato do presidente Getúlio Vargas se perpetuou e a constituição democrática foi suplantada por uma mandatória.

“O que você vê aqui hoje não é Brasil. O povo brasileiro não vai tolerar a ditadura. Você pode me citar dizendo isto”. Assim falou H. Sobral Pinto, o advogado eminente, corajoso e católico conservador que defendeu Prestes em seu processo por traição. Do mesmo modo, de fato, disseram muitos outros com os quais encontrei no Rio. Ainda eles o toleram realmente. O fato de Getúlio Vargas andar nas ruas do Rio como um cidadão privado, sem ser observado, sem segurança, pode ser evidência não só da gentileza inerente dos brasileiros, mas de sua completa falta de preocupação com o governo. Eles querem democracia e paz. Eles querem se libertar da censura, da espionagem, do medo. Eles querem trabalhar, viver com segurança, ser bem alimentados; eles querem lazer e alegria. Deixe os soldados lutarem; o povo quer paz. Conseqüentemente, como o governo é pensado como um poder à parte, também as revoltas contra ele são deixadas para aqueles cuja violência armada é um negócio.

No calor da rebelião de Prestes, um ciclista passou por onde as tropas estavam atirando uns contra os outros através da avenida. Ele soou sua buzina. As tropas pararam de atirar enquanto ele passava.

O recente golpe de Estado consumou-se sem um único tiro. Em relação aos soldados que foram reunidos no Rio e marcharam pelas ruas, as pessoas diziam “Vargas está contando seus eleitores”.

Eu estava no Rio durante as comemorações atrasadas do Dia da Bandeira. A ocasião deveria ser de interesse especial, celebrando não apenas a continuação do regime de Vargas, mas

através da queimada das bandeiras dos estados brasileiros, aquela união mais forte dos estados seria consolidada pela nova constituição. Uma multidão de tamanho razoável esteve presente, não maior do que o suficiente para tornar bem impassível o aspecto diário das vias públicas da cidade. E as tropas estavam lá: soldados de branco, de verde; e guardas resplandecentes em roupas napoleônicas. E grupos de homens, pequenos meninos e meninas, de uniforme integralista verde e branco. Bonitos o suficiente – mas ninguém se importava. Não até o meio-dia, quando as tropas marcharam de volta para casa: “Eles *bloqueariam* o tráfego na hora do almoço!”, disse um certo espectador.

O Brasil, explorado por séculos segundo os interesses do imperialismo português e, subseqüentemente, segundo os do imperialismo internacional – uma exploração internamente incitada pelos maiores proprietários de terra brasileiros e pela burguesia urbana mais elevada – está hoje principalmente subjugada ao capital americano e britânico. Essa servidão financeira aos poderes democráticos, entretanto, não foi suficiente para assegurar àqueles os poderes sobre o monopólio do comércio brasileiro, o qual poderia ser sustentado por obrigação e proteção de seus interesses contra a crescente influência dos poderes fascistas sobre a política e sobre os negócios internos brasileiros. Essa influência, a menos que seja detida pela ação da Grã-Bretanha e dos Estados Unidos, ou rejeitada por uma democracia militante dentro do Brasil, deve levar eventualmente a um abrupto declínio no comércio americano-brasileiro, a um colapso das seguranças e a uma tal situação pan-americana, que pode desafiar a Doutrina Monroe e até ameaçar a democracia americana. Nem as maldades do fascismo, nem – em relação ao que existe hoje – suas bênçãos questionáveis, como podem exclusivamente afetar o povo do Brasil, devem ser consideradas como a própria preo-

cupação do governo americano. Aquela política de isolamento a qual nos tornou oficialmente despreocupados com as depredações da Itália fascista e da Alemanha na amigável Espanha, a qual alegremente tolerou a agressão bárbara do Japão na China, não será alterada para defender o povo brasileiro contra as desalmadas perseguições civis, as quais os tiranos brasileiros, em sua marcha em direção ao fascismo, praticam. Quais governos têm corações? Eles são, propriamente, os instrumentos dos interesses públicos. E que aqueles “interesses”, os quais foram até agora exclusivamente efetivos em determinar a política interna, ganharam o estigma do itálico, meramente traem a importância da nossa humanidade. Estamos muito sensibilizados com o confinamento dentro das prisões brasileiras de milhares de homens e mulheres inocentes, com as torturas selvagens impostas a muitos deles, com os assassinatos oficiais? Sim, estamos sensibilizados: não muito. São iguais as massas no Brasil – aquelas massas que, agora sofrendo o máximo, têm muito a ganhar com a liberdade através da revolta, cujo tipo, cujos parentes e amigos, cujos líderes são as vítimas torturadas e aprisionadas da ditadura – eles estão muito sensibilizados? Eles estão. Muito sensibilizados. E ainda – eles são tão pobres, tão ignorantes, tão destituídos de armas, tão assustados e oprimidos – não sensibilizados o suficiente.

Eles não estavam sensibilizados o suficiente para ganhar a revolta de 1922, nem no levante de 1924-6 para carregar Prestes até a vitória. Em 1930 foram levados pelas promessas de grandes reformas para vencer o domínio de São Paulo; e em 1932 para esmagar a volta de São Paulo e reter o “Vargas” liberal deles, na Ditadura. Mas Prestes viveu. Fortalecido no propósito e amadurecido na consciência ele conspirou durante o exílio pela libertação de seu país. Uma greve ferroviária precipitou a revolta parcialmente organizada. No

norte foi esmagada pelo cruel bombardeio das cidades; no Rio de Janeiro, pelo esmagamento promovido por um regimento militar. Prestes tornou-se um comunista declarado; e nem se deve duvidar que outros comunistas, inclusive o alemão Ewart, foram co-líderes e nem que o partido comunista do Brasil inteiro ficou do lado dele juntamente com a Aliança pela Libertação Nacional. Mas a acusação de “comunista!” que Vargas agora dirige contra todos os simpatizantes da revolta de Prestes e da causa da Democracia em geral era, de fato, não mais do que um pretexto para tais prisões e perseguições com a finalidade de manter o Ditador no poder e exaltá-lo na consciência pública como o salvador do Brasil. Seu propósito era assustar: os brasileiros riem. Por tudo isto, muitos poucos estão sensibilizados o suficiente.

Um “estado de guerra”: todas as liberdades civis anuladas. E Vargas ditador. Ainda a constituição, com suas medidas para o governo democrático, permaneceu uma firme censura e um conseqüente embaraço para a autocracia. Sob a constituição o mandato presidencial de sete anos agora estava perto de seu fim: um segundo mandato foi banido. Conseqüentemente o verão de 1937 viu uma campanha para eleição presidencial em todo movimento, demonstração visível de que as medidas eleitorais da constituição seriam observadas. Novamente, como em 1930 e no levante paulista de 1932 foi um conflito entre os interesses especiais e mais locais dos cafeicultores, manufatureiros e capitalistas da rica São Paulo sustentada pelos interesses estrangeiros no Brasil, e o não menos especial, não obstante, mais largos interesses do Rio Grande do Sul, apoiados pela burguesia urbana e pelos liberais por todo o Brasil, os quais haviam firmado a Aliança Liberal nas eleições de 1930. Em termos de indivíduos a briga entre Flores da Cunha, ex-governador de São Paulo – representado por Armando Sales de

Oliveira, um advogado e empregado da corporação – e o rival implacável e inimigo de Flores, o próprio Vargas. De fato, um dos primeiros atos de Vargas em relação a sua declaração de “estado de guerra” foi depor Flores. E Flores, indubitavelmente sem bom julgamento, voou para o exílio. O candidato de Vargas era um José Américo de Almeida, um liberal, amigo e apoiador de Vargas, e ex-ministro das Comunicações do próprio Vargas. Américo era escritor e homem sem propriedades. Ele era do norte, daquele norte do Brasil onde a destituição em seu pior grau prevalece. Ele conhecia os pobres e sentia a sua miséria. Não era homem de negócios, seu sentimento humanitário era desenfreado pelas questões de propriedade e negócios. *O que deveria ser feito tinha mais valor para ele do que como fazer.* Terra para o povo era seu pensamento; acabar com a pobreza. As massas vibravam por ele. Ele sentiu um impulso messiânico: “Eu sou o salvador do Brasil!”, exclamava; “Dinheiro? Eu não tenho; mas eu sei seu paradeiro”. Os políticos, assustados, o abandonaram: “Eu não preciso de políticos”, ele declarou. “As pessoas são minha força” (isto no Brasil). A burguesia, os liberais, estranharam; logo eles ficaram horrorizados: o candidato deles, um louco! As massas se regozijaram.

A menos que tenha sido a intenção de Getúlio Vargas desde o início da campanha, ou antes, de permanecer no poder (e disso não há evidência direta)⁷ deve ter sido por volta dessa conjuntura que ele concebeu o golpe de Estado e fez seus planos. Certamente a natureza bem considerada daquele extenso documento, a constituição de 1937, aponta para longas semanas de preparação. As deserções da burguesia pelo apoio ao seu candidato “louco” foram-lhe acrescentadas ao endosso de Moscou. Aquilo provou para eles a acusação da oposição: e sem nenhuma alternativa, mas o odiado paulista os deixou, de fato, privados de seus direitos civis. Vargas

era desse grupo: no que ele fez, contou pelo menos com a apatia deles.

E havia mais com que ele contava. Além dos dois maiores partidos originalmente representando os interesses vitais dos dois estados, havia um pequeno, mas verdadeiramente organizado no campo: o fascista integralista sob o comando de Plínio Salgado. “Vamos lançar uma moeda”, foi dito, “para ver se quem ganha é Américo ou Flores”. “Mas onde eu entro?”, perguntou Plínio. “Você ganha”, eles responderam, “se a moeda ficar em pé na sua borda”. Sem chances, ofereceu sua ajuda a Vargas.

Na altura da amargura da campanha e conseqüente desordem na arena política, uma extraordinária e autoritária proposta foi feita para Vargas, isto é: que ambos os candidatos rivais saíam da corrida em favor de um candidato conciliatório a ser concordado. Vargas recusou. Exatamente seis dias depois, sem mais nenhuma agitação do que uma concentração de tropas no Palácio do Governo, a Assembléia Geral foi destituída, a constituição cancelada, a eleição suspensa e a “Democracia” – que sombra dela restou – terminada. O golpe de Estado era um fato consumado: Vargas era ditador.

Como o golpe de Estado havia-se consumado sem banho de sangue, não houve perceptíveis, se é que houve quaisquer, perturbações subseqüentes. E houve relativamente poucas prisões. A caça aos “comunistas” persiste: poucos são traídos em suas pretensões. O povo vive com medo de ser espionado, de ser ouvido ao acaso em conversas, de ser delatado. Os suspeitos são observados e os fios de telefone são grampeados. A censura apertou. Para a United Press e para a Associated Press, dois censores cada. Censores nos correios; censores nos escritórios telegráficos. Uma censura para cada palavra da notícia impressa. Aos editores dos jornais do Palácio do Governo reunidos por citações oficiais, o governo falava:

“Você ficará satisfeito em obedecer às novas normas da censura”, anunciava. “É claro que eu obedecerei”, respondeu um corajoso jornalista, “mas eu não ficarei satisfeito”. As publicações brasileiras estão proibidas de elogiar a Rússia Soviética, a China ou a Espanha legalista; estão proibidas de atacar a Itália, a Alemanha, o Japão ou o general Franco; têm permissão de dizer o que lhes agrada sobre os Estados Unidos, a Grã-Bretanha e a França. Eles fazem.

“Professor:

Em obediência à decisão do Reitor e até que outras instruções sejam divulgadas, eu requisito que o dia escolar em cada curso seja iniciado com falas curtas, mas incisivas, diretamente atacando o comunismo, ou criticando suas teorias fundamentais ou atacando os resultados de sua aplicação prática.

“Para aquele fim o professor encarregado da primeira aula do dia em cada curso é requisitado a fazer o discurso desejado em acordo com a agenda”.

Isso é para os professores da universidade e para os professores em todos os lugares. “Mas”, disse um professor, “eu não sei nada sobre o comunismo. Vocês me providenciarão um livro sobre o assunto?” “Certamente não”.

A Constituição, de 10 de novembro de 1937, traz: “Foi *garantido*,” diz Vargas, “ao povo brasileiro...” Quando, em 1891, o Brasil se tornou uma República, uma Constituição padronizada em relação à dos Estados Unidos foi adotada. Fornecia, como a nossa faz, para um Presidente eleito independentemente e duas Casas, e para um judiciário apontado pelo Presidente para sempre (sic). Mas com leves alterações, essa Constituição permaneceu no poder até 1934. A Constituição de 1934, promulgada por uma Assembléia Constituinte sob o governo de Vargas, estabeleceu o voto secreto e garantiu votos para as mulheres, sem, entretanto, estender o eleitorado para além dos limitados ní-

veis dos letrados. Estabeleceu Cortes de Justiça Eleitoral com autoridade, não apenas em disputas eleitorais, mas sobre a elegibilidade dos eleitores sob a lei. Este poder, aplicado à nova medida da Constituição de 1934 para representação funcional – a qual, favorecendo os empregadores, era distintamente fascista – fortaleceu o controle do governo sobre o Congresso Federal. A Constituição de 1934 emancipou monges e devolveu à Igreja Católica o poder nas escolas públicas. Então Vargas conquistou a Igreja. As mudanças sociais levaram a pequenos avanços na prática. Prisões sem acusação ou garantia tornaram-se ilegais: as prisões arbitrárias continuaram. O reconhecimento que estendeu aos sindicatos não registrados não foi efetivo.

O que Vargas no último 10 de novembro “garantiu ao povo brasileiro” é, com efeito, uma garantia ao povo, dele mesmo como Ditador permanente de suas vidas, propriedades e destinos. Leia de sua Constituição:

É a prerrogativa do Presidente decretar um estado de emergência e um estado de guerra...

No acontecimento de uma ameaça estrangeira ou a iminência de perturbações internas, ou a existência de um esforço combinado, plano ou conspiração, a qual tenda a perturbar a paz pública ou colocar em perigo a estrutura das instituições, da segurança do Estado ou de seus cidadãos, o Presidente da república pode declarar por todo o território particularmente ameaçado, um estado de emergência.

No momento em que seja necessário empregar as forças armadas para a defesa do estado, o Presidente da República poderá declarar um estado de guerra para todo o território nacional ou parte do mesmo.

Parágrafo único – Para nenhum desses atos é necessário obter a autorização do Parlamento Nacional, o qual pode não suspender o estado de emergência ou o estado de guerra, declarado pelo Presidente da República.

(Artigos 73,166.)

Pelo menos deve haver um equívoco do desenfreado e completo despotismo o qual, em seu próprio arbítrio, torna-se o direito “Constitucional” de Getúlio Vargas, sua “garantia” para os demais estados do Brasil. “Durante a existência do estado de guerra tais partes da Constituição, como o Presidente da República indica, terão fim de seu vigor”. O Estado sou eu!

Mais importante, conseqüentemente, do que um estudo mais aprofundado das medidas constitucionais será uma investigação sobre o caráter, afiliações e políticas do homem que tão habilmente levou a recente república do Brasil ao fim. A mesma facilidade com a qual sem muitos seguindo e no mesmo solo onde dois partidos fortes lutaram pelo controle, ele roubou o prêmio, revela o que lhe é concedido: destreza política. Um homem de charme e cultura, de força de vontade tolhido ou por lealdade ou por convicções, um oportunista, um malabarista de forças opostas, ele é eminentemente um audacioso aventureiro na política. Suas políticas como expressas por seu declarado programa administrativo e ocultadas entre a verborragia de sua Constituição, pode não ser levada a sério.

“Constrói o Exército e a Marinha, constrói ferrovias e rodovias; estabelece o povo na terra”. E naquela ordem! Por que, sem nenhuma ameaça de poder estrangeiro, mais armas? – a menos que seja pelo apoio ao poder de Vargas! E com o país falido, como? Por que ferrovias, rodovias? Para quais mercados? E para *quê*? Mais pessoas possuindo, cultivando a terra é bom: deveria vir em primeiro lugar. Há muito na Constituição objetivada no fortalecimento do poder federal às expensas dos estados isolados: “as forças armadas são instituições *nacionais* permanentes, organizadas na base da... obediência fiel à autoridade do Presidente da República... operações militares sendo a província e responsabilidade dos comandantes chefes, *livremente escolhidos por ele*”. (Grifos

do autor). Ao governo federal são dados amplos poderes de intervenção nos assuntos internos dos estados, mesmo em obrigando a passagem de leis prescritas, em suplantando o governo dos estados, e em desmembrando seus territórios. O trabalho é convidado a se organizar; suas organizações *podem* ser “reconhecidas”; greves e greves forçadas pelos empregadores são declaradas ilegais.

Vargas é armado por sua própria Constituição para fazer seu poder absoluto à vontade e, se ele quiser, tornar sua posse permanente. Além do mais, mesmo sem a declaração daqueles estados de “emergência” e “guerra” pelos quais os poderes pessoais do presidente são legalmente aumentados, a Constituição concede tais poderes normais ao presidente e seu partido como para assegurar seu domínio. O Brasil está sobrecarregado com a ditadura; Vargas está no poder: aquela Ditadura significa fascismo?

“A Nação italiana”, escreve Mussolini (e “A Nação italiana” como concebida por ele deve ser aceita como o padrão do Estado fascista), “é um organismo que tem fins, uma vida e meios superiores no poder e duração aos indivíduos sozinhos ou grupos de indivíduos compondo-o. É uma unidade moral, política e econômica que encontra sua realização integral no Estado fascista”. É o Estado Unido, cujas corporações são “o instrumento que, sob a égide do Estado, cumpre a regulamentação orgânica completa e Unitária da produção com uma visão para a expansão da riqueza, do poder político, do bem-estar do... povo”. A empresa privada é tão essencial para o fascismo quanto para a democracia capitalista. A ditadura pelo estado – ou por um indivíduo personificando o estado – é tão essencial ao fascismo quanto tem sido ao “comunismo” na URSS, como foi para os tiranos gregos e o Império Romano, como é no presente para a manutenção em *status quo* dos governos latino-americanos. “A regulamentação

orgânica e Unitária da produção”, o *controle* da empresa privada e o controle – absoluto, repressivo, benevolente (como pode ser) do trabalho, é essencial e peculiar ao fascismo. Por tal controle intencional dos recursos, instrumentos e forças de produção e das vidas dos produtores, harmonizados, de alguma maneira, com a manutenção das divisões de classe, riqueza e privilégio especial, é o fascismo a ser definido.

Se permitirmos esta definição e voltarmos novamente para um exame da Constituição de 1937, encontraremos pouco que a condene – ou a exalte – como nitidamente um instrumento fascista. Suas restrições sobre o trabalho organizado são definitivamente de inspiração fascista, embora suas generalizações em relação à responsabilidade do Estado pelo bem-estar do trabalho sejam muito evasivas para serem tomadas seriamente. A Constituição está, de fato, principalmente preocupada com tais medidas repressoras que podem fortalecer o empregador em sua exploração do trabalho sem, de maneira alguma, exceto pela taxaço, torná-lo responsável perante o Estado ou, através do Estado, contribuinte para o avanço do Brasil. A Constituição é eficaz e concisa em sua definição dos direitos federais (isto é, Presidenciais), e foge de eventuais responsabilidades. Procuramos por programa, planos; para – com o fascismo em mente – uma intenção, escondida ou expressa, para fundar um verdadeiro Estado totalitário. Não está lá. Nem nas declarações públicas do genial Vargas (e da natureza destes eu apenas julgo através da impressão que causaram na consciência pública) realmente ele parece um fascista. Certamente ele aceitou o apoio dos integralistas, uma minoria militante fascista que, para dilatar suas insignificantes posições, desfilava seus pequenos meninos e meninas em uniforme. Mas se o recente decreto superficialmente dispersando os integralistas – e, incidentalmente, e não superficial-

mente, todas as organizações políticas nacionais, inclusive o trabalho – foi considerado uma dádiva para a opinião pública, ou como um ato de princípio – ou prudência – Vargas não é – não ainda – o instrumento deles.

Nem é Vargas classificado como um fascista, mesmo pelos brasileiros liberais e defensores da democracia ou, para o meu conhecimento, pelos radicais. A avaliação de seu caráter é a avaliação dos brasileiros; aventureiro político sem seguidores; o esteio – assim foi expresso para mim – de uma gangorra política, mantendo sua posição precária, isolada pela manipulação de forças opostas. Aquela influência fascista européia está ativa no Brasil e não é para ser questionada. Ainda a razão para isto é primariamente econômica. O Brasil quer negociar: e negociar com nações fascistas acarreta amizade. O Brasil está aberto à influência fascista, e aquela influência é a mais bem vinda naquilo que é consistente com a posição da Igreja na Espanha. Vargas é ditador: de Mussolini, Hitler, Franco – mãos – calorosas, mãos afetuosas – do outro lado do oceano (sic).

Aquele fascismo não está estabelecido no Brasil, o que não é nem definitivamente objetivado, não deve em nenhum grau ser atribuído aos *princípios* do ditador brasileiro. Politicamente falando, Vargas, o oportunista, não tem justificativas – apenas manter-se no poder. Nem o caminho para o poder nem, uma vez lá, sua proteção contra coisas terríveis – no Brasil, hoje – é o fascismo. Não é o fascismo porque não os interesses estrangeiros no Brasil, nem os donos das plantações brasileiras e manufatureiros, nem a burguesia urbana querem o fascismo. Não ainda.

Eles querem, conforme disse, democracia e paz. Eles querem viver no contentamento de tal liberdade civil de acordo com a civilização. Os empregadores querem ser livres para explorar o trabalho e livres de responsabilidades pelos resultados da exploração. O

trabalho quer liberdade para organizar e fazer greve. As massas querem democracia, aquela através da qual, de alguma maneira, eles possam colonizar sua terra, tornar-se prósperos, ricos, empregar e explorar o trabalho. O Brasil não é desenvolvido, é imaturo. Ele e seu povo não estão mais prontos para o fascismo do que mostraram estar, quando Prestes fez greve, pelo comunismo. Dê democracia a eles: eles a querem.

Talvez o aspecto mais sério da situação criada pela nova Constituição seja a de que um retorno à democracia ou mesmo, contra a vontade do ditador, para uma mudança de ditador, é agora virtualmente impossível no Brasil, exceto por meios revolucionários. Mesmo as vozes de descontentamento e a discussão da mudança são hoje inconstitucionais; ao passo que tal política intencional organizada por uma oposição não é apenas legal sob uma democracia, mas essencial para sua vida, torna-se necessário um plano secreto, tramado em sigilo e medo e gerado na violência. Aquelas perseguições políticas que têm sido a ordem sob Vargas continuarão em toda sua grosseira injustiça e execrável barbaridade enquanto a oposição viver e temer o enrijecimento de sua prática. As prisões estão lotadas: não os tribunais. Os prisioneiros não são culpados, não são submetidos a provações. São espancados, torturados por “confissões” – que devem levar a mais prisões, mais torturas, mais prisões; mais glória para o guardião da nação. Quem se importa! Eles estão acostumados com tais coisas no Brasil. Eles estão acostumados ao governo no qual eles têm pequena parte, a constituições que são ridículas, a ditadores. Que a esposa de Ewart foi abominável e obscenamente torturada diante dos olhos do marido, de fato. A revelação de Chermont de suas torturas, diante do senado brasileiro, ninguém questiona. Tais coisas são raramente notícia no Rio. “Aquela é a polícia em todos os lugares”, o povo diz. Eu acho que é.

“Como”, um americano pode se perguntar, “nossa polícia se comportaria a não ser cara a cara com eles? Nossa liberdade de imprensa, exposição, acusação, nosso Comitê La Follette, nossa democracia? O que *fazem* e tem feito apesar de controlar – em Porto Rico, Hoboken, Chicago, Gallup? E enquanto uma realização da barbaridade verdadeira e potencial de nossa própria polícia não mitigar nosso horror ante as barbaridades maiores e mais extensivas da polícia sob Vargas, nos inclinará a observar o último como em nenhum degrau uma expressão de uma crueldade inerente à natureza brasileira, nem mesmo da excepcional crueldade e do caráter vingativo do próprio Vargas. O mal prospera na não-democracia.

O ditador, de fato, não é um homem cruel. Ele, Vargas, dizem que impediu que seus assistentes militares executassem os líderes da revolta de Prestes. “Vargas”, o povo diz, “jamais matará”. E enquanto a nova Constituição realmente permite a pena capital pela primeira vez na história brasileira, pelo menos recente – isto não é geralmente observado como expressivo de suas inclinações. Em consideração ao entendi-

mento da situação brasileira e própria e seriamente temendo o que poderia vir disto, vamos dar ao ditador aquilo que lhe é de direito: Vargas é, pessoalmente, adorado por muitos.

A declaração do advogado conservador, Sr. Pinto (citado antes neste relatório), “O povo brasileiro não tolerará a ditadura”, pode, em minha cabeça, ser tomada como a expressão do Brasil. Vargas ainda rege. Américo, o candidato das massas, fica como um prisioneiro virtual, em sua pequena casa no subúrbio do Rio. Ele é um homem despretenhoso, gentil, quieto, pequeno e observa um pouco tristemente um mundo que dolorosamente para seus olhos míopes devem parecer um embaçado disforme. “Eu lutei pelos pobres”, ele me disse, “pelo povo. Eu queria democracia: isso é tudo”. Ele falou como se sua vida, seu mundo, estivesse todo dentro dele. O mundo deve vir para ele, para que possa vê-lo. “Quando eles vierem para mim de novo”, ele disse, “quando eles me quiserem, estarei pronto”. Até então, gentil e quietamente, ele esperará. Seria melhor!

“Nós estamos perplexos”. Assim falou um jornalista líder do Rio; um

liberal. Nove dias eu fiquei no Rio, um estranho ignorante da língua, dependendo da conversa dos meus amigos e daqueles que entrevistei, ou de intérpretes. Eu conversei livremente com frequência para o grande embaraço dos meus ouvintes. Acho que acreditaram em mim, confiaram. Os homens conversaram livremente comigo – em voz baixa; eu acreditei neles. Este relatório é o registro de minhas impressões e, infelizmente talvez, mais do que isso. Tentei trazer alguma ordem para minha perplexidade. Isto é perigoso. Tome este relatório com cuidado.

“Por favor”, disse o embaixador Aranha quando o deixei, “não escreva nada sobre o Brasil que perturbe a amizade entre os brasileiros e americanos”, confio que não tenha feito. Deixe-me ir além e tentar apoiá-lo. “Todos os executivos americanos”, disse-me um executivo americano no Rio, “dizem que Vargas vai parar com sua tolice e jogar bola”. Bom: vamos jogar bola. Com Vargas no bastão, vamos atacá-lo.

Tradução: Karin Phillipon

¹ KENT, Rockwell. “Brazil and Vargas”. *Life and Letters Today* 18, n.12 (summer, 1938): pp.15-27. [Kent Coll. Series 2B-7].

² Rockwell Kent, author of the “Brazil and Vargas” article, was born on June 21, 1882 and died on March 13, 1971. Coming from a bourgeois family from Tarrytown, in the state of New York, Rockwell Kent soon showed serious artistic aptitudes. At 15 he was already a professional in porcelain painting at his aunt Jo’s workshop, to whom Rockwell,

his widow mother and brothers resorted in difficult times. From an early age, therefore, Rockwell dedicated himself to drawing and painting. However, when he was offered a scholarship at the New York Art School, Rockwell turned it down due to family pressure, what led him to enroll at the Columbia University School of Architecture in 1900. From his contact with architecture, Rockwell made important projects which also reflected in his personal life. In: JOHNSON, Fridolf.

Rockwell Kent: an anthology of his works. New York: Alfred. A. Knopf, 1981.

³ “I am the State”. Author’s translation.

⁴ Draft for the report, date unknown.

⁵ Tradução da autora.

⁶ Inglaterra, Hamish Hamilton.

⁷ É sabido agora que a Constituição estava pronta em maio e que o golpe de Estado estava agendado para junho.