

The Lisbon-Rio Aerial Crossing (1922) in the Pages of *Seara Nova* Magazine¹

El cruce aéreo Lisboa-Rio (1922) en las páginas de la revista Seara Nova

A travessia aérea Lisboa-Rio (1922) nas páginas da revista Seara Nova

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ABSTRACT

The intent of this article is to analyze the way the Portuguese magazine *Seara Nova* approached the historical-cultural relations established between Portugal and Brazil in the early 1920s. We also plan to recover the representations conceived around the idea of **sister homelands**, in a period when the government of Portugal made a considerable effort to tighten the relationship with Brazil. Two events were remarkable within this context: the aerial crossing between Lisbon and Rio, and the visit of the Portuguese President at the time, António José de Almeida, to Brazil, both in 1922.

Keywords: Portuguese/Brazilian relations; *Seara Nova* Magazine. Representations. Intellectuals.

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RESUMEN

Este artículo busca analizar como la revista portuguesa *Seara Nova* abordó las relaciones histórico-culturales establecidas entre Portugal y Brasil en el inicio de los años de 1920. Buscamos todavía recuperar las representaciones concebidas alrededor de la idea de las **Pátrias-hermanas**, en un período de considerable movilización del Gobierno Portugués en estrechar las conexiones con Brasil. Dos eventos fueron excepcionales en ese contexto: el cruce aéreo Lisboa-Rio de Janeiro y la visita del presidente de la República de la época, Antonio José de Almeida, a Brasil, ambos ocurridos en 1922.

Palabras clave: Relaciones luso-brasileñas. Revista *Seara Nova*. Representaciones. Intelectuales.

RESUMO

Este artigo busca analisar como a revista portuguesa *Seara Nova* abordou as relações histórico-culturais estabelecidas entre Portugal e Brasil no início dos anos de 1920. Buscamos ainda recuperar as representações concebidas em torno da ideia das **Pátrias-irmãs**, num período de considerável mobilização do Governo português em estreitar as ligações com o Brasil. Dois eventos foram marcantes nesse contexto: a travessia aérea Lisboa-Rio de Janeiro e a visita do então presidente da República, António José de Almeida, ao Brasil, ambos ocorridos em 1922.

Palavras-chaves: Relações luso-brasileiras. Revista *Seara Nova*. Representações. Intelectuais.

1 INICIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The *Seara Nova* magazine expressed the ideas of a group of republican intellectuals who took on a relevant role within the context of the crisis of the First Portuguese Republic (1910-1926). These intellectuals, known as *seareiros*, proposed a renewal of the mentalities as a way of restructuring the established republican regime.

It seemed pertinent to us to elect the periodical as one of the possible readings in order to situate the representations built around the relations between Portugal and Brazil, considering the relevant role of the publication as a strong and conscious opinion former.

According to the *seareiros*, only a conscious public opinion would be able to impose on the politicians the plan of structural reform that the Portuguese society needed at that time.

At a first moment, we proposed a synthesis of the guidelines and conceptions that guided the group of intellectuals who were the organizers of the magazine. In the next section, we focused on the readings present in *Seara Nova* about the relations between Portugal and Brazil, especially those that privileged the Lisbon-Rio aerial crossing.

2 THE SEARA NOVA MAGAZINE

Before we go further into the analysis of the relations between Portugal and Brazil elaborated by

Seara Nova magazine, we would like to summarize the purpose of the magazine, emphasizing its role in the early 1920s.

We must not, however, ignore the different historic contexts in which the *seareiros* moved about throughout the fifty-eight years of the magazine's existence (1921-1979)², with its monthly format, although not always regular.

The group *Seara Nova*, who had in the magazine its main means for propagating their ideas, developed a relevant work of democratic reflection and pedagogy. It brought together around the periodical many generations of prestigious Portuguese intellectuals and a vast group of contributors, whose collaborations extended through the different areas of human thought. As stated by Rafael Amaro:

Its civic and intellectual wealth represents – as I stated before on different occasions – one of the most important places in the memory of the struggle, in Portugal, for the defense of a certain enlightened, cosmopolitan, rationalist and free tradition, against another part of us that is more irrational, authoritarian and nationalist. (AMARO, 2001, p. 197-198).

The magazine originated on October 15th, 1921, with the firm purpose of renewing all of the Portuguese elite, the goal of denouncing the **evils** and proposing reforms that could help overcome the serious crisis of the First Republic (1910-1926). It is a context of government

² From the 1980s on, *Seara Nova* "renewed its project as a cultural and democratic magazine, founded on the values of democracy, progress and social justice, of peace and solidarity, and based on the *seareiro* spirit, principles that it continues to follow" Cf. Check the "History" section of the magazine's website: <http://www.searanova.publ.pt/pt/static/menu/97/Hist%C3%B3ria.htm>.

instability after the fall of Sidonism³ and the explosive aftermath of the post-war financial, economic and social problems. We must emphasize, still, that it emerged amidst this scenario of cultural and political void of the liberal-republican regime in effect at that time (AMARO, 2001).

In this period, along with the preoccupation with the decadence of the First Republic, the *seareiros* faced a growing sympathy in the country for the brand of corporative and organic nationalism represented by the monarchy defended by the Portuguese Integralism⁴ or by segments of the republican right wing that adhered to the movement called Cruzada Nun'Álvares⁵. Fascism also attracted the more conservative sectors of society. *Seara Nova*, up until the movement that led to the military dictatorship of May 28, 1926, battled these conservative movements that seduced a significant part of the Portuguese people in the intellectual, political and academic spheres.

The magazine bore a differentiated aspiration in the scenario at that time. It did not represent an organ of an aesthetic-literary current, nor a vehicle for philosophical-cultural indoctrination. The group, initially composed by Raúl Proença, Jaime Cortesão, Câmara Reis, Raúl Brandão, Augusto Casimiro, Faria de Vasconcelos, Ferreira de Macedo, José de Azeredo Perdigão and Aquilino Ribeiro (and, in 1923, also by António Sérgio) was aiming for a supra-party political intervention (REIS, 1996).

The *seareiros* considered themselves as the intellectual elite; therefore, they attributed to themselves the following tasks:

To energize a movement of renewal of all of the Portuguese intellectual elite that would lead them to take over the role of creating a strong and conscious public opinion, capable of imposing on the politicians the plan of structural reform that the Portuguese society lacked. (REIS, 2004, p. 325).

The magazine was chosen as a privileged means of propaganda. However, they still resorted to editorial activity and to cycles of conferences as channels of intervention with the public opinion.

Despite all the differences in thought among the *seareiros*, there was a set of principles that kept them

united under the leading roles of Raúl Proença and António Sérgio during the first stage of the magazine, between the years of 1921 and 1926. It was, therefore, the hegemony of culture in political action and the subordination of politics to morality; the belief in the supremacy of reason and in the efficacy of ideas as privileged transformative forces of the world; the assumed intellectual avant-garde that attributed to the perfecting of the elites the **cure** to all present problems of the Portuguese society. There was a profound idealist effort in making the ideal a reality, as well as a complete refusal of any solutions and conceptions of Jacobin and materialistic origins about democracy and socialism (AMARO, 2001).

Most of these guidelines were kept until 1939, when Sérgio left the position of director of the magazine. When they assumed a **radical left** position in their inaugural program, presented in the first issue of the magazine, the *seareiros* declared their position to the left of the Republican Democratic Party, which had monopolized power for a few years.

They declared themselves against Jacobinism, in its anti-clerical and anti-Catholic senses, and reclaimed the socialist ideal with a reformist conception as opposed to taking the perspective of the socialization of property and class struggle, as the Socialist Party proposed. They did not support the *coups d'état* and the revolutions as they were interpreted; instead, they defended a revolution of mentalities (REIS, 2004).

We can see that, from this point on, it was not about taking a rupture stance; it was a strategy of reform conceived as the best way of serving the country. Thus, the dialectics between tradition and modernity is present in the principles advocated by the group.

The Republic, which had been established by radical means with the support of the urban plebs of Lisbon and of the Portuguese Carbonari, was, under the hegemony of the democrats led by Afonso Costa between 1910 and 1917, Jacobin, anti-clerical and anti-monarchical, but markedly conservative in other spheres. According to Fernando Rosas:

³ Sidonism was an anti-parliamentarian regime introduced by Sidónio Pais in Portugal, during the First Republic, between 1917 and 1918, with the support of the Portuguese Integralist movement. The Parliament became subordinated to the Executive, in an effort to try to overcome the political instability of the republican regime, and the powers of the President were reinforced, instituting the presidential rule. The Sidonist dictatorship, as a project and political experience, ended with the murder of Sidónio Pais, in Lisbon, on December 14th, 1918. Check out RAMOS, 1994, p. 522-528.

⁴ The Portuguese Integralism constituted a sociopolitical traditionalist Portuguese movement with significant presence between 1914 and 1932. It characterized itself as an oppositional force to the New State of Oliveira Salazar. It originated with a group of Catholic and monarchical people exiled in Belgium, in 1913, and it began as a cultural movement in reaction to the anti-clericalism of the First Republic. In 1914, the movement took on a political role, incorporating disillusioned republicans, and being fully constituted in 1914, in Coimbra, around the magazine *Nação Portuguesa*. They opposed the recently established republic and defended a monarchy based on municipalistic and trade-unionist representation, following the old traditions of the Portuguese monarchy. Cf., RAMOS, 1994, p. 473-480.

⁵ We will discuss this movement in the remainder of the text.

The Republic does not touch the material basis of conservatism, in land, in business, in property, it doesn't nationalize, it doesn't expropriate, leaving it unharmed as a socioeconomic oligarchy. (ROSAS, 2004, p. 37).

At this stage, the Republican government did not present any relevant propositions, neither in the social reform area, nor in the realm of strategies to modernize the economy. Thus, part of the right wing incorporated to their discourse of order the strategic reflection about the development of the country. Only in the post-war context there were reactions that could be interpreted as the emergence of a republican left. A reasonably cohesive program was formulated to serve the reality of the country concerning social reform, public education, financial policies and the economic modernization (ROSAS, 2004).

It is in this organizational scenario of a Republican left, which will not oppose the anti-liberal, anti-constitutional and authoritarian project of the conservative right, that we can place the *seareiros*, despite a few exceptions. There is controversy concerning the favorable position for a transitory dictatorship, defended by Raúl Proença and António Sérgio, as a means to complete the necessary reforms and to stop the advance of fascism and of the conservative and authoritative right in controlling the country (PINHO, 2013).

Seara Nova, according to Amaro (2001), was the main political and cultural reference of the battle against all forms of irrationalism and determinist positions, whether they were about race, class or science. This fact is relevant at a time when the values and concepts linked to modernity were questioned within western culture. In this sense, amongst the movements of the conservative right previously mentioned, the **Cruzada Nacional Nuno Álvares** represented a very burdensome antagonist.

This organization grouped together politicians of many different orientations in a true nationalist consensus, backed by the rebirth of the worship and myths of the glories of the national heroes. It emerged in the context of the national disaster of the Great War and the disillusionments towards Sidonism and had its foundations on nationalism and on the cultivation of a more conservative Catholicism. We must remember that António José de Almeida (President between 1919 and 1923, as well as a remarkable character in the history of republicanism in Portugal) was part of the Crusades from their very beginning in 1918. This attitude would later be criticized by the republican left (LEAL, 1998).

The Crusade had an important role in the opposition of the Catholic right to the forces of the republican left and to the institutions of the First Republic. It also provided significant elements of a symbolic and

ideological background that led to the dictatorship of 1926 and founded the nationalist and corporatist authoritarian regime of the New State (LEAL, 1998).

It is important to add that, by propagating the exemplarity of Nuno Álvares Pereira (a beatified man referred to as Saint Constable), the movement operated the synthesis of two expressions of messianism as a symbolic function. It united the providentialist Catholic tradition of the **saint** with the lay republican tradition of the **constable** (LEAL, 1998, p. 831). It is, furthermore, in this second dimension of the worship of the constable as an expression of messianic nationalism that we can understand the adhesion of President António de Almeida to the movement.

An original aspect of the *seareiros* until the 1930s, a time of greater presence for António Sérgio, was the idealism with which they conceived the battle for the hegemony of reason as a mission. In this sense:

Seara Nova was seen as the headquarters of a group of elites enlightened by reason, whose competence was to shed light on the consciences of all those who still lived under the rule of the shadows. (AMARO, 2001, p. 208).

With this synthesis we hope to have shed some light on the guidelines that oriented the positioning of the magazine and the context in which it was founded, helping to understand the interpretations built around the relationship between of Portugal and Brazil. Especially from the perspective of the educational lesson and the reform of values defended by the *seareiros*, which in our perspective, are present in the articles published about the subject here in analyzed.

3 RELATIONS BETWEEN PORTUGAL AND BRAZIL AND THEIR REPRESENTATION ON *SEARA NOVA*

While leafing through the pages of the magazine until 1926, we observed that the Portugal-Brazil relations were approached through some remarkable events and a section dedicated to news from Brazil. As previously mentioned, two facts can be high lighted: the Lisbon-Rio de Janeiro aerial crossing, and the visit of President António José de Almeida to Brazil, both of which took place in 1922. It is also worthy of our attention the section **Bilhetes do Brasil** ("Notes from Brazil"), in which the Portuguese journalist and editor Álvaro Pinto wrote commentaries and impressions about the reality of the country and the mentioned events while he was living in the Brazilian capital back then, Rio de Janeiro.

The first reference to the aerial crossing was loosely referred to in the month of April by *seareiro* Augusto

Casimiro in a highly praising tone to the aviators: Admiral Gago Coutinho and Officer Sacadura Cabral.

Gago Coutinho and Sacadura Cabral are sailors. They belong to the group of those who, in Portugal, still represent the strong and noble ascendants of heroic times [...] and they will unite, in the bold curve of a flight, Portugal and Brazil. Well done! May God guide them and give us the joy of relishing their triumph. Thanks to them, Portugal is not just truculent selfishness, deceitful lowness, negligence towards the Homeland, denial of heroism. (CASIMIRO, 1922, p.286).

The situation was of extreme political instability in Portugal, and it would climax with the **Bloody Night** of October 19th, 1921, a consequence of a situation already worn out by conflicts. During this event, three historic republicans were murdered (Machado Santos, José Carlos da Maia and António Granjo), and the consequences were crucial for the aggravation of the crisis of the Republic.

The final preparation for the Portugal-Brazil aerial trip happened still under the shadow of this complicated episode. President António José de Almeida considered renouncing his position, even after averting the serious crisis catalyzed by the **Bloody Night**. However, once more he changed his mind for a national reason: the Lisbon-Rio aerial crossing.

It was the first aerial South Atlantic crossing, which began on March 30th and reached its final destination (Rio de Janeiro) on June 17th, 1922, with various stops. This flight was conceived with the intention of reviving the good relations between the two peoples at the time of the celebration of the centennial of the Independence of Brazil.

And this is how the **spirit** of this crossing was represented in the letter sent by António José de Almeida to the Brazilian President of that time, Epiácio Pessoa:

This travel made by air will add a new stanza to the epopee of the travels that the Portuguese once performed by plowing through the seas. There you have the heart of our race, Mister President, conducted by the hands of Heroes in an almost superhuman enterprise. Your Excelency will undoubtedly receive it with the brotherly affection that animates the relations of the two great countries that we have the honor of presiding over, and for this reason I will be truly grateful to you. (ALMEIDA apud FRANÇA, 1992, p. 61).

The flight would really be an epic accomplishment, with mishaps that would lead to the replacement of the hydroplane on two occasions. The first serious incident happened on April 18th, when there was a malfunction on the hydroplane *Lusitânia* next to the São Pedro and São Paulo rocks, close to the archipelago of Fernando de Noronha, thus, already in Brazilian waters. When he became aware of the incident, the Portuguese President dispatched the following message to the aviators: “Never

has a paladin won, with fewer honors, a battle, for reason of, during its course, switching horses” (ALMEIDA apud TORGAL, 2002, p. 176).

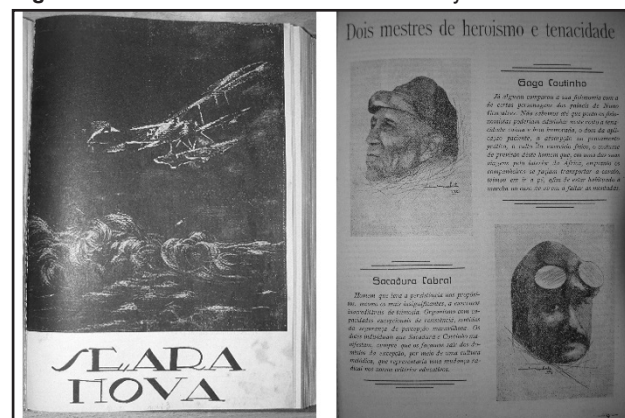
The adventure was featured on the first pages of the Portuguese press, which sent reporters from the following newspapers: *O Século*, *Diário de Lisboa*, *O Dia* and *O Comércio do Porto*, aboard the cruiser *República*, one of the ships that served as guide and support during the trip.

It is clear that the magazine *Seara Nova* dedicated special attention to the crossing when they released a special issue dedicated to the event. A note from the directive body about the purpose of the issue denotes, in our opinion, the importance given to the aerial crossing. This is what was said:

In honor of the act performed by the two Portuguese sailors Sacadura Cabral and Gago Coutinho, we opted not to publish in this issue the standard sections on controversy and politics, saving them for the next one. (A MISSÃO..., 1922, p. 13).

In Figure 1 below, we can notice the prominence given by *Seara Nova* to the event. On the cover there is a caricature of the hydroplane and, on page nine, photographs and dedications to the aviators with the title: “Two masters of heroism and tenacity”.

Figure 1 - Two masters of heroism and tenacity.



Source: *Seara Nova* (1922).

The texts published emphasized the value of these two Portuguese men, who accomplished a feat as noble as that of the generation of the illustrious sailors of 1500. And, with that feat, the universal value of the great discoveries was recovered, with a new and genuine contribution to the humanity.

The opening article of the magazine, signed by Jaime Cortesão, received the emblematic title of **The New Lusiads**. This attribution seems very representative of the ideology that was created about the crossing. The imagery of the Portuguese heroism of former days,

immortalized in the verses of Camões, show up reworked in new times, in **modern** times.

Like their ancestors four hundred years before them, these two men will feel that their act is of the kind that is propagated from century to century. Just like the navigations of their fellow brothers at the dawn of Renaissance, their sublime flight announces to men a new Spring of the Species. [...] The modesty and the pride, the tenacity and the discipline, the organizing method and the spirit of giving and sacrifice, that which the Portuguese of old times praised the most, resurfaces in these two like an apparition of spirits [...] Once again Portuguese eyes may cry sublime tears, and the lips repeat, in paraphrases of glory, the verses of the *Lusiads*. Once more on the Western beach, the patterns that limit the ages are drawn. The whole world lights up again with the lamp of the little Portuguese house. (CORTESÃO, 1922, p. 1).

Cortesão (1922) insists on the universal meaning of the undertaking that transcended the political act of approximation between the two countries. He also emphasized as the main characteristic of the Portuguese reclaimed by the aviators: “The modesty and the pride, the tenacity and the discipline, the organizing method and the spirit of giving and sacrifice” (CORTESÃO, 1922, p. 1). In the eyes of the writer, the feat was so remarkable that it reached “the miracle of unifying the national conscience in the same intense and heroic enthusiasm” of former days (CORTESÃO, 1922, p. 1).

Gago Coutinho and Sacadura Cabral were considered **national heroes**; however, the dedication and the exhaustive studies necessary for the success of the task were highlighted. To the *seareiros*, it was not just a matter of talent; in other words, they insisted on the fact that the achievement had required dedication, hard work, discipline and research. These values could cast light on a new direction for the situation of the country. The aviators “did not improvise, they reaped the harvest of a continuous and pertinent work” (COSTA, 1922, p. 44-45).

This would be the marking differentiating trait in the message of the *Seara Nova* group, for they presented a project for the renewal of the Portuguese intellectual and political elites.

In addition to the enthusiasm and the poetry inspired by the victory of the aviators, people tried to draw a moral and educational lesson from the event. Thus, articles of a more informative and scientific nature were proposed. One of them relates the experimental trip, the Lisbon-Madeira crossing that took place on March 22nd, 1921. This first trip was performed in order to test the technique that would eventually be adopted in the Lisbon-Rio aerial crossing. Observations by Gago

Coutinho based on the studies conducted by the admiral were presented (JESUS, 1922).

Attention must be drawn to the audacity of the trip, due to the minimal material resources; “a small airplane, with a single engine of low power, a single pilot, a single observer, and no radiotelegraphy” (JESUS, 1922, p. 2-4). In spite of everything, the experimental role of the flight is highlighted:

As a fundamental contribution to the technical issues that the existence of practical long distance flights will depend on in the near future. (JESUS, 1922, p. 2-4).

The merit of the Portuguese aviators was in the fact that they were the first ones to travel a long distance over the ocean with no external indications, but with previously calculated reference points and distances.

Symbolically, this first victory that would be crowned by crossing the South Atlantic to Brazil was presented by Sacadura Cabral as an act of redemption of the Portuguese in relation to the more developed nations in Europe, especially England. This feeling was expressed by the aviator in the following comment made when he spotted a great English ship (the *Avon*) along the Lisbon-Madeira route:

The act of being able to show to foreigners that the Portuguese, as much as one can judge, is capable of doing the same as any other, is a pleasant sensation more deeply felt by those who, by chance, life has led to travel outside the country. (CABRAL, 1922, p. 10).

The dialectic tradition-modernity emerges in the pages dedicated to this event, which feeds the memory of great navigations, recreated by this new enterprise. The Order of Christ Cross on the ships of 1500 and on hydroplane *Lusitânia* (as seen on the cover of the magazine) symbolized the meeting of these two generations of heroes and the permanence of Catholicism as a cultural value.

The dialectical movement also appears in the modern study dedicated to aviation that resorted to the classic Portuguese science of maritime navigation. Gago Coutinho transferred the technique of maritime navigation (sextant) to aerial orientation and created a new sextant with an artificial horizon. (JESUS, 1922)

In an article signed by Ezequiel de Campos and directed to Jaime Cortesão (1922, p. 12-13), an even more critical tone about the aerial crossing was disclosed.

The author was a frequent contributor to the magazine, and held an important role in the conception of projects for the modernization of the country's economy by means of agricultural development, which was published in the periodical. Campos recognizes the commitment and the success of the enterprise, even if he questioned the privilege given to the so called **Science of Position** as an obstacle to the development of Portugal:

Portugal will always be ill-fated as long as it refuses to cultivate the science of use, by methodical works, by studying its territory, by distributing well its people in profitable and lucrative labor, and by balancing collective activity for a national human purpose. The time when the science of position was essential to us is long gone. (And for all these reasons I would reject Álvaro de Castro's bill for careers in air navigation: we are not metallurgists, nor do we have the fuel [...] and the commercial solution of flying to Brazil is incipient – First the bread...). (CAMPOS, 1922, p. 13).

Even with all the honors and the meanings attributed by the *seareiros* to the Lisbon-Rio flight, the aviators, who were considered national heroes (the **new Lusians**), were not exempt from criticism. Raúl Proença did not approve of the posture of Gago Coutinho and Sacadura Cabral, who stayed in Rio for over a month attending dinners and soirées **like two bourgeois intent on biting all the way to the end of their big slice of glory**, and concluded with this harsh remark:

There is no prestige that can withstand thirty days of dinners, open-air religious services, dances, soirées, exhibitionism, and speeches by D. Juans parvenus [...]. The two heroes, honestly, are trivializing and compromising their image. (PROENÇA, 1922, p. 60).

This trivial and overly festive attitude did not agree with the moral and educational message that the *seareiros* were trying to convey about the great feat of the aerial crossing. It was necessary to preserve the images of dedication, hard work, studies and researches as values that might reform Portuguese society.

Despite the possible slips, the great feat was celebrated in all over Portugal, according to the literature produced. In the pages of newspapers, in movies that were made, in poetry and lyrics of *fado* songs, the event mobilized all social forces, generating a symbolic construct about the glorious past of the country resumed by the new pioneers.

Not even the serious social, political and economic problems that aggravated the crisis of the republican regime seemed to prevent the mystique created around the heroes of the thousand five hundred, harbored by the success of the aerial enterprise:

About the frenzy of the events and about the misfortunes of the land', motherland was the only word 'that did not grow old', said on this day the *Diário de Lisboa*, putting on top of the headline the pictures of the two heroes, and under them, the images of Prince Henry the Navigator, 'precursor of Gago Coutinho', and of Álvares Cabral, 'precursor of Sacadura Cabral'. In Portugal, from the North to the South of the country, it is said that the bells of all the churches tolled festively. (FRANÇA, 1992, p. 64).

As stated by Torgal, the nationalist meaning of this trip was able to generate a true feeling of national enthusiasm around it. It was a kind of palliative of great symbolic value to heal all the **diseases** of the Republic. It was also a decisive step towards the invitation made by Brazilian President Epitácio Pessoa at the Portuguese President António José de Almeida for visiting the country.

It is important to consider that this nationalist feeling, backed by the glorification of the saints and the knights of the Portuguese nation, as well as by the heroic and evangelizing historical feat of the discoveries, was reinvigorated in the triumphant mystique created around the Lisbon-Rio crossing. This contributed to the political-ideological hegemony of the anti-republican right. A great part of this symbolism, sustained by the Portuguese Integralism and by the Nun'Álvares Crusade, was incorporated by the conservative and authoritarian ideological matrix of the New State, established in the years of 1932-33.

The invitation extended to *seareiro* Jaime Cortesão to complete the presidential entourage to Brazil was announced with much enthusiasm by the magazine. The writer was revered as an official representative of the Portuguese culture and of modern generations, as well as a **spokesperson**, even if indirectly, for *Seara Nova* in this event. In this same article, the reasons that justified the visit to Brazil were enunciated:

For the celebration of the Independence centennial, for the need to strengthen the relations, emotional and economic, with Brazil, and as a crowning of the air travel of Coutinho and Cabral, the Portuguese embassy has, at this time, the most transcendent political significance. (CORTESÃO, 1922, p. 73).

It is interesting to point out that, in issues 8 and 16 of the periodical⁶, Jaime Cortesão published two articles on the preparations for and the meanings of the expedition of Pedro Álvares Cabral that led to the arrival of the Portuguese, in 1500, to the territory that eventually became Brazil. This contributed to feed the memory of the historic relationship between the two countries.

The visit of António José de Almeida had great repercussion in the national media. Brazil, in the Portuguese imaginary, was the son that emancipated himself and knew how to do it, holding its massive territory together, with a lot of wealth to be explored.

The basis of the symbolic character was attached to the historical link between the two countries. One must remember the importance of Brazil in the history of Portugal, both in the colonial past as well as in the first

⁶ Respectively titled: "The Expedition of Pedro Álvares Cabral and the Marchioni family" and "The departure of the fleet of Pedro Álvares Cabral".

decades of the twentieth century. It had been a source of wealth and provided the landscape for intense social life with the metropolis, and, in the 1920s, it was the main territory to receive a significant amount of Portuguese immigrants. Most of the thousands of Portuguese who moved to Brazil achieved their desired material success.

The presidential trip was not reduced to a diplomatic situation, it implied the reunion with the successful so-called **emancipated son** and the **embrace** to the Portuguese people who had emigrated to Brazil. We may also add the intention of garnering the support of the rich and powerful Portuguese colony to the fragile republican regime.

According to António Pedro Vicente, the Portuguese nation was solidary to President António José de Almeida, who remained loyal to his sympathies for the Brazilian Republic from the moment of its implementation, in 1889. Thus, “he defended the advantage of having a democratic embassy in Brazil” (VICENTE, 2001, p. 162-163).

In the article by Quirino de Jesus, a *Seara Nova* contributor, we can see the representations incorporated in the Portuguese ideas about Brazil. When reminiscing the times of ascension and of decline in Portugal supported by milestones of the Portuguese history, the author refers to Brazil as the greatest achievement of Portuguese colonization and thus evaluates:

In our decadence, beginning during the sixteenth century, we accomplished half of the creation that humanity has had from us until today. We have created Brazil, a work that not even France could match during the period of its hegemony. (JESUS, 1922, p. 15-16).

Further along, he claims to consider the emancipation of Brazil as the trigger to a phase of decline of Portugal, which leads to a consideration, amongst the Portuguese elites, that the country was doomed to be reunited with Spain later on. Referring to the relations with the Portuguese colonies in Africa, he says:

[...] We have Angola, where we can find everything that is necessary to make another Brazil, at the foot of the immense Zaire river basin [...]. (JESUS, 1922, p. 15-16).

We then realize the symbolic dimension attributed to the historical and cultural relations between the two countries in their different periods. Another striking element in this vision is the idea of Brazil as a creation, a result of the greatest glory of the Portuguese past. Here, the myth that Portugal invented Brazil takes force, pilfering the contribution of the indigenous and the African cultures during the course of this invention. Since the end of the nineteenth century, the Brazilian intellectual elite had been trying to break free from this myth, creating a cultural autonomy and forging a Brazilian identity.

The myth of the invention was present in the speeches given by António José de Almeida in Rio de Janeiro. This is what the acclaimed **popular tribune** said in one of his speeches:

But Portugal has to be grateful to the independent Brazil of the present days for the energy, the courage, the intelligence and love for the race with which it has sustained, increasing, developing and infusing it with greater majesty and beauty, its work, which was the greatest glory from its past. (ALMEIDA, 1922, p. 7-9).

Incidentally, it was intriguing to come across a cover of *Seara Nova* magazine (n. 10, March 15th, 1922) that exhibited an illustration about the International Exhibit, which would happen in Rio de Janeiro as a crowning of the festivities celebrating the Brazilian Independence centennial. There were no articles about the Exhibit in that issue, and the image shown caught the attention. See Figure 2 below:

Figure 2: Cover of *Seara Nova* magazine.



Source: *Seara Nova* (1922).

First, we have the mentioned cover next to the insignia of the flag of the United Kingdom of Portugal, Brazil and Algarve. The similarity between the emblem exhibited on the cover of the magazine and the symbol on the flag referring to the period when Brazil was elevated to the category of Kingdom in the Portuguese Empire (1816-1821) is clear. It seemed relevant that this image was chosen to represent the Portuguese-Brazilian relations.

Such image reminds us of a different moment in the colonial relations. As it is known, Rio de Janeiro was the capital of the Kingdom of Portugal and the then Brazilian colony had ascended to the condition of United Kingdom to the metropolis in 1815. It was a period of considerable political importance for Brazil in the correlation of forces between colony and metropolis. The situation was unprecedented in the History of European colonialism,

when a colony turns into the Kingdom's capital. The relocation of the Portuguese court to Brazil in 1808 could not be neglected in the images built about the relations between the two countries, as the historiography that analyzes the period can confirm.

The presidential visit also fed these symbolic constructs. It was the first time that a Portuguese chief of State visited Brazil after the Independence in 1822. His stay, from the 17th to the 26th of September, was filled with many visits and functions, such as: feasts, a visit to the National Congress, a reception at the Portuguese Republican Guild, the Rio Universal Exhibit, among many others.

António José de Almeida set himself apart with his speeches. The beauty and the meaning of his rhetoric were registered by both Brazilian and Portuguese presses. The main interest of the Brazilians was in the figure of the President, who was popular in the Portuguese colony, and the expectations were contemplated. (FRANÇA, 1992).

In this way, the comments about the delay of 10 days in the presidential entourage were largely dismissed. As it is known, the trip was arranged so that the President and his guests could attend the festivities in celebration of the Brazilian Independence Day, September 7th, which did not occur.

In the section **Bilhetes do Brasil** ("Notes from Brazil"), written on *Seara Nova* by Álvaro Pinto⁷, who at the time resided in Rio de Janeiro, impressions about the aerial crossing and the presidential visit sprouted, in addition to many comments in relation to the Brazilian reality.

In his notes, the journalist wrote that once the noise of the parties and celebrations was extinguished, it could be said that President Almeida's visit "left the best and longest lasting impressions" (PINTO, 1923, p. 115-116). He could also ascertain that "there is no separation between the Portuguese and the Brazilian" (PINTO, 1923, p. 115-116).

In the same note, he recorded his impressions about the development of Brazil as something promising and with a certain amount of idealization. Álvaro Pinto commented that with no social issues and with vast fertile lands, "speaking our language, sharing many of our traditions, harboring that largest and strongest Portuguese nucleus" (PINTO, 1923, p. 115-116), Brazil had great prospects for becoming the most powerful South American nation. He reasserted the importance

of the Portuguese-Brazilian convention as a powerful instrument of connection between the two peoples.

He also emphasized the need to strengthen the commercial relations between the two countries. Ever since the war (in reference to WWI), according to the journalist, Portugal had been giving more attention to the European market. Once the European countries rebuilt themselves, they would not need the Portuguese products anymore.

As previously mentioned, President António de Almeida's speeches were emblematic; he "turned words into a fundamental weapon" (TORRALBA, 2002, p. 180). The words represented a powerful resource in contrast with the material poverty and the shortage of resources that was felt during the trip.

The situation is well illustrated by the crawling speed (about 10 knots) of the boat *O Porto*, due to the poor quality of the coal, and by the complaints of the first lady, D. Maria Joana Queiroga, who claimed that she could not join her husband in his visit to Rio because there was not enough money to make her look proper (TORRALBA, 2002).

The conciliatory tone of the presidential oratory sought to enhance the relation of complementarity between the two countries in different historical moments, reinforcing a linear view without tensions and conflicts. Hence, the image of **sister homelands** is projected, something that was highly regarded in this embassy that was carried out with splendor and circumstance.

The serious financial and political issues of the Portuguese Republic, which were reflected in the delay of the trip and in the inauguration of the Portuguese Pavilion at the Rio de Janeiro Universal Exhibit, did not seem to impact negatively the allure provoked by the presidential speeches. This is what the Portuguese newspaper *O Mundo* said when commenting on the speeches pronounced by António de Almeida in Brazil:

Has Portugal ever had more elegant, more literary and more academic public speakers than Mr. António José de Almeida? I do not know, but what I do know is that there has never been a more Portuguese speaker. He represents our race; he translates the passion of our people, not only in their sublime sentiment, in their wonderful intuition, but also in their imperfections. (ALMEIDA apud VICENTE, 2001, p. 172).

The Brazilian press also offered praising considerations about the rhetoric of the Portuguese

⁷ Álvaro Pinto, a Portuguese editor and journalist who participated in the creation of important magazines in his country. He was secretary and director of the magazine *Águia* (1912-1921). Pinto emigrated to Rio de Janeiro in 1920, where he partnered with writer António Sérgio to set up a typography called "Anuário do Brasil", continuing the editorial experience started in Portugal. The journalist lived in Rio de Janeiro for sixteen years, and became an activist of the interchange between intellectuals from Portugal and Brazil. Check out MADANÉLO SOUZA, 2007, p. 1-12.

President (VICENTE, 2001, p. 175-176). It was an embassy carried out with splendor and with a certain feeling of popular festivity, as Antônio José de Almeida hoped for, since he enjoyed speaking to the crowds. And, in this sense, the most popular speech was offered at Praça da Independência (Independence Square), next to the Universal Exhibit, where there were approximately three hundred thousand spectators.

The executive commission of the Portuguese colony in Brazil collected a large sum of money in order to help settle the expenses involved in the trip and also to send money to Portugal, where it would go to charity.

As stated by Torgal (2002), the practical results of the presidential visit were few. A Portuguese-Brazilian literary convention was signed, as well as an agreement excusing from military service in case of dual nationality and a convention on the protection of the work of migrants. However, only the literary convention was contemplated in the Portuguese law of the 1st of November of 1923.

The larger meaning, however, was symbolic: the idea of approximation between the two peoples, between the two **sister-republics**, as well as the configuration of a nationalist and populist journey that left the memory of Antônio José de Almeida alive in Brazil.

4 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Besides all the representations constructed, it must be noted that the coexistence between Brazilians and Portuguese at this time in Brazil was not completely friendly. There are records of a strong nativist movement in the country. This movement was reflected in the dispute for the labor market since the end of the Nineteenth Century and, also, in the field of intellectual production.

In the same period, the news of a nativist campaign in Brazil also evoked contradictory feelings in Portugal. Some social segments reacted to these **lusophobia** situations displaying their criticism of such movement. In 1921, the radicals of Lisbon reacted harshly to the anti-Portuguese movement, calling Brazilians “descendants of wild monkeys” and admonishing that “with Brazil we can still do as we please” (RAMOS, 1994, p. 511).

The magazine *Seara Nova* also referenced the nativist movement, as we can see in a salutary note for the anniversary of the proclamation of the Brazilian Republic. This is what was said:

Staying true to the majority of the Brazilian people, who repudiate the insults offered to Portugal in the name of a hateful nativist campaign, *Seara Nova* salutes Brazil for its national celebration. (AO BRAZIL..., 1921, p. 95).

The historical past of Brazil establishes the **roots** that connect the country to the Portuguese-European cultural tradition. Whether it is to break, to deny or to affirm the continuities, the thinking produced by the Brazilian intellectuals encounters the European cultural matrix and, especially, Portuguese culture, which was responsible for the colonization of this part of America that invented itself as the Brazilian nation.

As the Mexican writer Octavio Paz said (apud SOUZA, 1994, p. 24), America was born as a European Utopia. We carry this symbolic legacy before we have our own historic existence; we begin by being a European idea. **Country of the Future, New World**; we are the fruit of a premeditated existence, imagined and projected by the Other.

It is in this field of tension between being founded and the eagerness for establishing itself that the Brazilian intellectual movements of the end of the Nineteenth and the first decades of the Twentieth Century must be considered. The Brazilian intellectual elite wished to reinvent the nation striving for cultural autonomy. The search for a national identity was the background of the messages produced about the formation of Brazil.

The Portuguese society of the end of the Nineteenth Century and beginning of the Twentieth Century was going through a series of transformations, among which were the end of the monarchic regime and the establishment of the Republic, in 1910. All these changes were spanned by the discussion about **being Portuguese**. Works were produced at this time that left their indelible mark on the debate about the Portuguese identity. Ideas, argumentations and symbols were formulated to constitute this identity. Portugal went through a kind of (re)founding in a transition marked by the dialectic between tradition and modernity, propelled by the changes in the political space in Europe.

We found proximities in these moments of foundation and (re)foundation lived both by Portugal and Brazil, which allowed for new and old interpretations about the common past to be reworked, as well as issues that point to a distancing and a rupture with the historical Portuguese-Brazilian tradition.

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