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Pedagogy in literary 'postcards' João do Rio in São Paulo (1905-1915)

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Introducing João do Rio in São Paulo (1905-1915)

Cities have a physiognomy in which their predominant morality appears. [...] The first time I went to São Paulo, when the train passed the limit of the State of Rio and I began to see in the fertile land the fruitful action of human culture, I asked the conductor:

– Which land is this that looks like a person? [...]

This feeling, this short moment of my life, I have never forgotten. [...] Only this state gives what is called moral autonomy and also civilization.¹

João do Rio

The quote above was published in 1910 in the *Correio Paulistano*, a newspaper founded in 1854 and based in the city of São Paulo. In this comparison between this city and Rio de Janeiro, the paulista capital is seen in a more favorable light.² It can be astonishing to many readers nowadays that the text was signed by the writer João do Rio (1881-1921). Homosexual, obese, and of African descent, the author – born Paulo Barreto – was a controversial figure in the early twentieth-century Brazil.³ The writer's link to Rio de Janeiro was well-known and evidenced by his own pseudonym, *João do Rio* [João from Rio], created in 1903 in the *Gazeta de Notícias*, one of the main newspapers in Rio de Janeiro. The pseudonym would become more famous than Barreto's birth name. Even though some of his *crônicas*, especially in *As Religiões no Rio* (Religions in Rio), 1904, reinforced the prejudice against the Afro-Brazilian population, the writer himself experienced the consequences of this racist mentality. Before entering the literary and journalistic circles, his attempts to pursue a diplomatic career were hindered due to his appearance: in 1902, he was considered “too black” to represent Brazil abroad.⁴ After achieving success with his literary work, João do Rio was intensely attacked in the press because of his political views, his connection to migrant communities (especially Portuguese ones), his weight, and his sexual orientation.⁵ The author himself did not fit into the official project

¹ In the original: “As cidades têm uma fisionomia em que transparece a sua predominante moral. [...] A primeira vez que fui a S. Paulo quando o comboio passou o limite do Estado do Rio e eu comecei a ver na terra fértil a ação fecunda da cultura humana, indaguei do chefe do trem: – Que terra é esta com cara de gente? /Esta sensação, esse curto instante da minha vida jamais esqueci. [...] Só esse duplo estado dá o que se denomina a autonomia moral e também a civilização.” João do Rio (Paulo Barreto), “A fisionomia do Rio,” *Correio Paulistano* (São Paulo), Jan. 10, 1910, 1.

² “Paulista” refers to a native or an inhabitant of the State of São Paulo State and “Paulistano” is someone who is born or lives in the city of São Paulo.

³ About it see: James N. Green, *Beyond Carnival: Male Homosexuality in Twentieth-Century Brazil* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1999) and João Carlos Rodrigues, *João do Rio: Vida, paixão e obra* (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 2010).

⁴ Magalhães Junior, *A vida vertiginosa de João do Rio* (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 1978).

⁵ For example, in the novel *Recordações do Escrivão Isaías Caminha*, from 1909, the writer Lima Barreto (1881-1922) creates the character Raul de Gusmão, a journalist who pays soldiers to have sex with him. Gusmão is defined in the book as “an inflated figure,

of modern civilization and contradictions in his writing reveal the complexity of an individual completely in tune with his present. Despite that, he gained enormous prominence in his hometown and, as I aim to demonstrate, in São Paulo. My archival research in the *Biblioteca Nacional's Hemeroteca Digital* (digital newspaper library) revealed that, between June 1905 and October 1915, the writer published 178 texts in the *Correio*. These writings, not mentioned in any collection or academic work, reveal an unknown facet of Do Rio's career.

Readers who usually read the *Correio Paulistano* in the early twentieth century would not be surprised by the crônica that complimented São Paulo. Since 1905, Do Rio's name occupied the front page of many editions of this newspaper, in a prolific production that is largely forgotten or ignored nowadays but is the focus of this thesis. His collaboration with the paulista newspaper was publicized with great enthusiasm in several editorials and ads, and the writer, when visiting the city, would be presented in São Paulo as the *Correio's* collaborator. The collaboration coincides with a crucial moment of the writer's career. João do Rio's work comprises a textual miscellany that covers different genres: crônicas, *folhetim* (feuilleton), theater, *conferências* (conferences), and science-fiction, many of which were used for the first time by Do Rio in his career. All of them deal with the urban environment in a dynamic way. They are relatively short, and even when they do not occupy the feuilleton section, in most editions they are the literary part of the *Correio Paulistano*, taking a prominent place in the newspaper, always on the front page. His texts provide the readers with a lively depiction of aspects of modernity that is educational or even didactical, especially when taking into account his tone and the fact that many of the readers would not have been familiar with the federal capital, the main subject and scenery of most of his texts. Striking in those texts is the comparison – not always explicit – between Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. In a broader sense,

mixture of swine and ape" ("figura inflada, mescla de suíno e de símio"). According to biographers, it was a clear reference to João do Rio and his contemporaries would have known it. See especially chapter 3 of Afonso Lima Barreto. *Recordações do Escrivão Isaías Caminha* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras and Penguin, 2010). Years later, while João do Rio was publishing the column *Pall-Mall-Rio* (1915-1917) in *O Paiz* newspaper, the journalist Humberto de Campos (1886-1934) created the column *Pelle-Molle* in *O Imparcial* just to mock Do Rio, with attacks on his sexual orientation and skin tone. Every time Do Rio published a text, Campos would publish a parodic response, many times deriding *Pall-Mall-Rio* line by line. About it see: Rodrigues, *João do Rio: Vida*, 211-215.

surpassing city limits and going beyond what we know about his relationship with Rio, this thesis offers an alternative path of analysis, questioning the pedagogical character of Do Rio's literary work within the context of rivalry between the two cities, and his importance within them. Building on the bibliography that extensively covers João do Rio's relationship with Rio de Janeiro, but focusing on his texts in the *Correio Paulistano*, this thesis analyzes the significance of his texts written and/or chosen for São Paulo's audience. It aims to contribute to a better understanding of Do Rio's work, and to how the comparison between the federal capital and São Paulo contributes to the formation and molding of the paulista identity during this pivotal time in Brazil. Written exclusively for the *Correio* or selected among his other works to be republished in that newspaper (from 1908 on), these texts reveal the fragments of life in the metropolis that were not restricted to Rio de Janeiro's borders. Opposing two models of modernity and nationality, Do Rio's texts also help shape São Paulo's identity and by implication a Brazilian one. Pictures of Do Rio and his physical presence in the city of São Paulo during visits, conferences, and business reinforced that self-attributed role. The images that he constructed in his texts also convey how he portrays himself as an authority in all modern matters to the readers.

The word choice in the excerpt above is revealing of the many characteristics that were being emphasized at the time in references to São Paulo in the press and political discourses: the booming economy based on coffee exports explained the "fertile land" and was maybe the most obvious of its attributes. Others words appeal to non-material characteristics that are counterposed to Rio de Janeiro's modernization, which is more tangible and visible but has shallower roots according to Do Rio's view. In the rest of the crônica, the writer affirms that despite being a bigger city and possessing "material proof of civilization" with avenues, buildings, and automobiles, Rio de Janeiro did not have "that air of distinction and refinement" found in São Paulo.⁶ This idea of moral and intellectual superiority of the paulista land in relation to the federal capital pervades João do Rio's work in the

⁶ In the original: "a prova material da civilização" / "esse ar de distinção e de refinamento." Rio, "A fisionomia do Rio", I.

Correio. My main hypothesis is that his texts helped create images of both urban centers and contributed to the formation of São Paulo's identity, imagined at the time in contrast with Rio de Janeiro. In that respect, João do Rio's writings are didactic, intended to teach the readers about what he considers proper modern values.

In *One-Way Street* (1928), Walter Benjamin states that: "Only images in the mind vitalize the will. The mere word, by contrast, at most inflames it, to leave it smouldering, blasted. There is no intact will without exact pictorial imagination. No imagination without innervation."⁷ More specifically, Benjamin called the vitalizing image a 'dialectical image', a concept that was delineated in the *Arcades Project* as follows: "that wherein what has been comes together in a flash with the now to form a constellation."⁸ I use Benjamin's conception as the theoretical lens for this thesis. Scholars have pointed out the pedagogical aspects of Benjamin's concept. The philosopher Susan Buck-Morss emphasizes Benjamin's belief in the fundamental character of "knowledge that provided 'access to praxis'."⁹ Likewise, the pedagogue Stephen Dobson discusses the relevance of urban experience for education in the twenty-first century by reflecting upon Benjamin's dialectical imagery. Dobson argues that the urban environment requires the development of a particular set of skills. Those skills are connected not to the classroom but to praxis as well, or "learning by doing" as the author states, in informal contexts: "It entails a self-overcoming as new urban experiences confront old ones."¹⁰ Retracing Benjamin's reflections on the *flâneur*, Dobson states that that the activity of this historical urban figure "represents a corporeal and creative way of upsetting imposed usages of urban space. This can be desired and contribute to a positive heuristic."¹¹

⁷ Walter Benjamin, *One-Way Street*, translated by Edmund Jephcott. (Cambridge and London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2016, Apple Books), 109.

⁸ Walter Benjamin, "Awakening," in *Arcades Project* (Cambridge and London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1999), 462; n2a, 3.

⁹ Susan Buck-Morss. *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project* (Cambridge and London: The MIT Press, 1989), 289.

¹⁰ Stephen Dobson, "Urban Pedagogy: A Proposal for the Twenty-First Century," *London Review of Education* 4, no. 2 (July 2006): 102.

¹¹ Dobson, "Urban Pedagogy," 105, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14748460600855153>.

Through a style of writing that I claim to be ‘pictorial’, João do Rio’s texts offer a counterpoint to the government’s official aspirations for a modern country and a redefined national identity. He does not deny the need to modernize the country, but offers an alternative for how to do it through the discussion of the themes that were being promoted in this crucial moment in Brazilian history, debunking the idea of Rio de Janeiro as a model to be followed and exalting São Paulo as a more propitious contender. The writer discusses the necessity to discover an original manner to make Brazil modern, leaving the mere imitation of European patterns aside and reflecting on what makes the land unique. By doing so, he positions himself both as a mediator and an educator for the readership regarding the real aspects of everyday life in the metropolis, simultaneously juxtaposing two different “realities”: paulista and carioca.¹² The writer does have his own contradictions (for example when he himself mimics what was being done in literature and journalism in Europe), which are explored later in this thesis. Questions that can be posed in this context derive from my main focus: How did the fact that Do Rio was not only an inhabitant but also a *cronista* of the subject, carrying the city’s name in his own pseudonym, reinforce his self-attributed didactical role? If this was an attempt to advocate for social changes through literature and to influence how his readers thought about Brazilian identity, as I postulate here, why did he choose to talk about these topics in São Paulo and not Rio de Janeiro? Or how, in the attempt to advocate social change, was the metropolitan *imagery* of the two cities created by the author in different literary genres mobilized in a widespread medium in the newspaper?

I contend that the medium of the postcard can function as an analogy for Do Rio’s texts published in São Paulo, partially explaining this thesis title. Their pictorial character appeals to a depiction of not only the beauty of Rio de Janeiro but also to the peculiar, and even exotic, characteristics of the city. The author sends these textual snapshots from one city to another, helping

¹² “Carioca” refers to an inhabitant or a person born in the city of Rio de Janeiro.

to create images not only of Rio de Janeiro in the mind of paulista readers, but, by contrast, of São Paulo itself.

The use of the term *cartão-postal* (postcard) in Brazil as a synonym for the sights of a city or a beautiful urban view comes from Do Rio's time. His literary production in São Paulo coincides with the picture postcards' "golden age". The historian Verônica Pimenta Velloso affirms that the early-twentieth-century Brazil experienced a postcard "fever" and that they were a medium in which "the images were read and the words were seen".¹³ Collecting and sending postcards became fashionable among members of the elites and the middle urban sectors in practically the entire country. In 1899, the year in which Do Rio began his career, the government allowed the production of illustrated postcards. According to Pimenta Velloso, nonetheless, images of the country circulated on European cards before this time. They conveyed landscapes and portraits of former slaves and indigenous people, who were considered by the government to be detrimental to the country's image abroad. Their supposedly exotic nature appealed to people outside Brazil, but contradicted the intentions of the elites and the government. According to Pimenta Velloso, the Brazilian production of cards emphasized postal images that would express a culture of modernization and Europeanization. In this context, "postal images of the capital cities of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo would be expressive" because they highlighted "the aspects that made up the scene of a 'hygienic and modern' city" during the urban reforms in both urban centers.¹⁴ If Brazil aimed to establish itself as a modern nation on the world stage, the two urban centers emerged as the potential showcases, by means of postcards, in this process and performing an iconic function in a developing nation-state and Republic.

Up to now scholars have mostly ignored João do Rio's connection to São Paulo, focusing mostly on his relationship with Rio de Janeiro. This thesis demonstrates that João do Rio played an important

¹³ Verônica Pimenta Velloso, "Cartões-postais: Imagens do progresso (1900-1910)," *História, Ciências, Saúde-Manguinhos* 7, no. 3 (Feb. 2001): 700, <https://doi.org/10.1590/S0104-59702001000600007>.

¹⁴ Pimenta Velloso, "Cartões-postais", 700.

role in this debate and in this form of cultural technique¹⁵ by favoring São Paulo. In doing so, he creates texts that I compare to picture postcards. I argue that there are many similarities between this medium and crônicas, as well as other genres utilized by João do Rio in São Paulo. They have in common the openness of short texts, the wide circulation which crosses frontiers, and the delivery of a message that is both personal and full of codes which can be deciphered by the intended readers. Moreover, they are products and features of modernity, reproducing aspects of everyday life (usually metropolitan) in an accessible and easily reproducible form. In João do Rio's specific case, the visuality of his writings is striking and, in several cases, I contend, telling of how different from each other the federal capital and São Paulo are.

Civilization and Modernization

Do Rio produced his work during a time in Brazilian history in which citizens were bombarded by new ideas, technologies and influences, especially in urban territories. As a consequence, the meaning of certain words and concepts is difficult to grasp because of the different context in which they are used, and their (easy) interchangeability, even within João do Rio's texts. "Civilization", "modernization" and their derivatives appear constantly in the newspapers as goals for the nation so it could be placed among European countries, which, according to this view, had already achieved a superior state of civilization. One thing was clear and agreed upon: Brazil was not at that stage yet. Hence, the necessity of educating its citizens. Sections on hygiene, fashion and even grammar were published in the printing press. In this context, literary works were seen as educational and the literati as (potential) educators. The main and most easily accessible channel for propagating literature were the newspapers. They were the most widespread means of communication and the main vehicle for

¹⁵ About this see: Bernhard Siegert and Geoffrey Winthrop-Young, *Cultural Techniques: Grids, Filters, Doors, and Other Articulations of the Real*. (New York: Fordham University Press, 2015).

the diffusion of literature, operating as “agents of the propaganda of everyday life”¹⁶. Brazilian newspapers tried to convince their readers of the benefits of modernization by portraying the popular classes as dangerous, full of criminals and lacking enough knowledge to be integrated into the civilizing project while praising the benefits of European migration. João do Rio’s texts shared the newspaper pages with (pseudo-)scientific articles, techniques to identify criminals, grammar lessons, technical reports about the urban reforms in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, and even religious instruction. In several cases, his texts in São Paulo, however, show a critical tone about this view. His own signature evoked the authority to perform that task: he was João from Rio, recognized or at least advertised as the greatest cronista from the renovated federal capital which showcased Brazilian modernization. I argue that this background gave him a privileged point of view and grounded his attempt to educate São Paulo’s readers about the full scope of reality.

“Civilization” plays a particular role in the creation of the dialectical images in Do Rio’s work in São Paulo. It appears in the excerpt that opens this chapter with and in several others in which João do Rio would evaluate – explicitly or not – the different approaches to of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo to the concept in the pages of the *Correio Paulistano*. In another text, the writer claims that the federal capital was taken by hawkers (“camelots” in the original) who represented the “supreme stage of urban civilization”, adding that: “In the street *brouhaha*, they are the sound of misery!”¹⁷ In the texts, the “camelots” are also compared to machines: “Those poor devils, merry agitators of the street, came after the avenues and the automobiles and are the dizzying noise of the cars, the tramways, the whistles of the machines, the horns of the cars.”¹⁸ These people were replacing the traditional street vendors who used to sing while selling goods in the city, practices that “suddenly

¹⁶ Mark Wollaeger, *Modernism, Media and Propaganda: British Narrative from 1900 to 1945* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 71-2.

¹⁷ In the original: “suprema etapa da civilização urbana”/ “No *brouhaha* da rua, eles são o rumor da miséria!”. João do Rio, “Camelots,” *Correio Paulistano*, May 25, 1907, 1.

¹⁸ In the original: “Esses pobres diabos, alegres agitadores da rua, vieram depois das avenidas e dos automóveis e são o estonteante rumor dos carros, dos tramways dos assobios das máquinas, das cornetas dos autos.” João do Rio, “Camelots,” 1.

disappeared into the *maelstrom* of civilization”.¹⁹ The statement is ironic and criticizes that idea of civilization which in reality only brought chaos to the city, challenging common understandings of the concept. In the dictionaries at the time, “civilization” was associated with positive features, being defined as “state of advancement and social culture”.²⁰ In a similar definition, “to civilize” was “to give civilization to; make gentle, courteous, educated”.²¹ *Civilizing* and *educating* are very often used interchangeably in the newspapers of the period, revealing that they could be easily confused. In practice, their meaning was elusive and changed over time.

As postulated by the historian Teresa Meade, during the First Republic (1889-1930), the Republican leaders and ruling elite embraced the “notion of civilization,” especially in how it materialized in scientific knowledge.²² Nonetheless, there was no agreement about its definition: “civilization was something of a slogan that never achieved any status or standard among the country’s political elite.”²³ To the Republican liberals, it also meant white European culture at a time when scientific racism was used to justify exclusionary actions.²⁴ Meade complements: “the urban renewal and public health plan and the subsequent transportation, communication, and distribution networks that connected the city were justified by a selective use of scientific law as a guide to sanitation and public health.”²⁵ The ideal appeared under a variety of words, but it meant to mold the nation after European and, later, North American cultures: “based on the education of a tiny stratum of elites in western European ways, to the extent that they became the literate carriers of the discourse of imperialism, of the clothes, of the customs, of the sense of time and place and decorum.”²⁶ Meade builds on E. Bradford Burns, who argues that the ideology present in the writings of most Latin

¹⁹ In the original: “desapareceram subitamente no *maelstrom* da civilização”. João do Rio, “Camelots,” I. (Italics in the original).

²⁰ In the original: “estado de adiantamento e cultura social”. Candido Figueiredo, *Novo Dicionário da Língua Portuguesa*, 1899, v.I, 304.

²¹ Figueiredo, *Novo Dicionário*, 304. In the original: “dar civilização a; tornar delicado, cortês, instruído.”

²² Teresa A. Meade, “*Civilizing*” Rio: Reform and Resistance in a Brazilian City, 1889-1930 (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997), 19.

²³ Meade, “*Civilizing*” Rio, 19.

²⁴ See: Meade “*Civilizing*” Rio, p.17-44; Sidney Chalhoub, *Cidade febril: cortiços e epidemias na corte imperial* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1996); Lilia M. Schwarcz, *Spectacle of the Races: Scientists, Institutions, and the Race Question in Brazil, 1870-1930*. (New York: Hill and Wang, 1999); and Barbara Weinstein, *The Color of Modernity: São Paulo and the Making of Race and Nation in Brazil*. (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2015).

²⁵ Meade, “*Civilizing*” Rio, 14.

²⁶ Meade, “*Civilizing*” Rio, 32.

American intellectuals in the nineteenth century was the imitation of European and North-American cultures. This ideology appeared under a variety of names — “progress, civilization, development, and, retrospectively, modernization.”²⁷

Apropos, “modern” and “modernity” also have plural meanings, difficult to grasp even within João do Rio’s oeuvre. The dictionary *Caldas Aulete*, 1881, defines *moderno* as “recent, of a short time; current, present, from today; which is in fashion; what is not old.”²⁸ A *modernista* was a person attached to “everything that is modern; [a] person passionate about modern things, who does not appreciate what is old.”²⁹ Eighteen years later, in 1899, *Candido Figueiredo*’s dictionary gave a similar definition to *moderno* and *modernista*, but defined *modernismo* as “to cling to modern things; exaggerated use of new things.”³⁰ This sense of “exaggeration” is present in Do Rio’s work in the *Correio Paulistano*, where it is most commonly associated with Rio de Janeiro, as I will discuss in the following chapters. In his description of deeper layers of life in the modern metropolis, the writer repeatedly connects words such as “civilization,” “up-to-date,” “crowd,” “extraordinary” to “futility,” “madness,” “vertigo,” and “neurosis,” creating associations that were unique within this newspaper, and instructing his audience about them.

Despite the imprecise definition of these terms, in the early twentieth century in Brazil they were highly propagated in the press and evoked an even more prominent need to acquire urban skills. The technological and infrastructural changes in the cities, with their ever-increasing population and with foreign patterns and fashions to be followed, made the cities places of confusion. For people who did not have the knowledge to navigate the city, the urban environment was also full of dangers. The turn of the century provided a new sensorial experience, with new tastes, smells, and noises to

²⁷ Edward Bradford Burns, “Culture in Conflict: The Implication of Modernization in Nineteenth-Century Latin America,” in *Elites, Masses, and Modernization in Latin America, 1850-1930*, ed. Edward Bradford Burns and Thomas E. Skidmore (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1979), 27.

²⁸ Caldas Aulete. *Dicionário contemporâneo da língua portuguesa*, 1881, Volume 2, 1172.

²⁹ Caldas Aulete, *Dicionário contemporâneo da língua portuguesa*, 1172.

³⁰ Figueiredo, *Novo Dicionário da Língua Portuguesa*, 140.

be discovered and understood.³¹ Many people, even metropolitan citizens, saw the urban environment as mischievous and unsafe and some parts of the city were shrouded in mystery and considered potentially threatening, both physically and morally, by the elites.³² Surrounded by fragments of life in a metropolis in constant transformation, and by a government which attempted to make Brazil more similar to the French model through a project imposed from top to bottom, João do Rio produced texts that amalgamate different historical urban figures, like the *flâneur* and the *sandwichman*, both dealt with by Walter Benjamin, while pursuing the creation of an urban imagery that serves as a pedagogical tool.

Structured around the different literary genres explored by the author in the years of his regular collaboration with the *Correio Paulistano* newspaper, the chapters of this thesis discuss João do Rio's views on how to be or not to be civilized, the dangers of everyday life in the modern metropolis, the speculation about the future of the nation — whose identity was being discussed — and Rio de Janeiro as a case study of modernity being presented to São Paulo's audience. At the same time, São Paulo's identity and position within the country were also being debated.

The competition between Rio and São Paulo

In the government's project for a modern nation, the habits, practices and beliefs of the popular classes were considered an obstacle, one that needed to be removed from the path of "civilization."³³ The Republican regime, implemented in 1889, was guided by hygienist, technical and scientific criteria aimed to establish Brazil as a modern nation, and Rio de Janeiro was turned into the biggest display of the ongoing urban transformations (Sevcenko 2010).³⁴ This prompted the creation of new laws at

³¹ Nicolau Sevcenko, "República: da Belle Époque à Era do Rádio." In Fernando A. Novais ed. *História da vida privada no Brasil*, vol. 3. (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2010).

³² About this see: Meade, "Civilizing" Rio; Chalhoub, *Cidade Febril*.

³³ About this see: Meade, "Civilizing" Rio; Chalhoub, *Cidade Febril*; Jaime Larry Benchimol, *Pereira Passos: um Haussmann Tropical*. (Rio de Janeiro: Secretaria Municipal de Cultura, Turismo e Esportes, 1992).

³⁴ Sevcenko, "República".

the national and municipal levels that criminalized popular practices and beliefs linked to the popular classes. The modernization also brought up discussions about race and how it impacted Brazil's image abroad. The poor population — formed by Afro-Brazilians in its majority, like Do Rio himself — was considered dangerous and their practices and behaviors were treated as backward and undesirable. The attempt included the imitation of European tendencies in fashion, eating habits, and social and artistic events, even when they were not adequate or applicable to the Brazilian reality.

In this crucial moment of Brazilian history, two urban centers underwent intense processes of modernization and appeared as potential symbols of a new Brazil: Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. In the 1900s, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil's federal capital at the time, went through a major transformation with the objective of making it modern and attractive to people outside the city and, especially, abroad. The urban reform would enter the history books borrowing the name of its main commander, the civil engineer and politician Pereira Passos (1836-1913), who was the mayor at the time. As the historian Jeffrey D. Needell demonstrates in *A Tropical Belle Époque* (1987), the remodeling was marked by the demolition of poor houses and the construction of new buildings and avenues according to Haussmann's Paris model. It was considered the greatest step towards creating a display of incipient modernity in Brazil.³⁵ The modernization also implied the removal of those considered retrograde and flawed from the most visible areas of the city without solving societal problems and inequality, a dynamic that persists to this day. João do Rio writes in a time in which the judicial apparatus was used in favor of the reforms instituted by the republican regime that aimed to “regenerate” the population and turn societal issues into police matters.³⁶ Therefore, the repression of popular practices, most of them traditional and rooted in the Brazilian society, was implemented through systematic control by means of the law, police vigilance and arbitrary and even violent

³⁵ Jeffrey D. Needell, *A Tropical Belle Époque: elite culture and society in the turn-of-the-century Rio de Janeiro*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

³⁶ About the Criminal Code of 1890, important mark of the legal structure used by the Republican regime, see: Dain Borges, “Healing and Mischief: Witchcraft in Brazilian Law and Literature, 1890-1922,” in *Crime and Punishment in Latin America: Law and Society since Late Colonial Times*, ed. Ricardo D. Salvatore et al. (London: Duke University Press, 2001), 181-210.

coercive methods. Moreover, criminalist theories and techniques were used to supposedly identify criminals and prevent their infractions, targeting the parcel of the population considered a risk: underprivileged and nonwhite people.

Passos and his peers wanted to convert the imperial city of Rio de Janeiro, linked to the past, into Brazil's postcard, conveying the image of a modernized Republican country.³⁷ Nonetheless, the city of São Paulo emerged as a rich and politically powerful contender, a state capital whose own urban reform did not aim to create a tropical Paris, but was instead based on the technical knowledge produced by the paulista engineering schools.³⁸ The state's economy was strengthened by the coffee trade, its main commodity. As the historian Barbara Weinstein argues, the economic success of the State of São Paulo, and its prominence in the national scene, date back to the final decades of the nineteenth century, when coffee plantations altered the configuration of the region: "The construction of regional ("paulista") identity has been inseparable from São Paulo's ever more spectacular economic success story."³⁹ It was a defining moment for the affirmation of Brazil on the global scene, but there were internal disputes for the primacy of an urban center over another.

The city of São Paulo occupied a different position in the national spheres. Since the 1840s, coffee was the main commodity Brazil exported. São Paulo's prosperity due to its large production — in 1907, half of the coffee in the world was grown in this state — and an emerging industrial manufacturing sector consolidated the importance of the city on a national scale.⁴⁰ According to the historian Arias Neto, the expansion of the coffee economy is both a *producer* and a *product* of

³⁷ The city of Rio de Janeiro, founded by the Portuguese in 1565, was elevated in 1763 to capital of the State of Brazil, colony of Portugal. In 1808, when the Portuguese Court moved to Brazil, the city became the capital of the whole Lusitanian Monarchy, a situation that persisted until 1822, when Brazil became independent. With the proclamation of the Republican regime in 1889, Rio de Janeiro remained the capital. Only in 1960 was the capital transferred to the newly-built city of Brasília.

³⁸ Candido Malta Campos, *Os Rumos da Cidade: Urbanismo e Modernização em São Paulo*. (São Paulo: Senac, 2002).

³⁹ Weinstein, *The Color of Modernity*, 4.

⁴⁰ See, José Miguel Arias Neto "Primeira República: Economia cafeeira, urbanização e industrialização," in *O Brasil Republicano: O tempo do liberalismo excludente — da Proclamação da República à Revolução de 1930*, ed. Jorge Ferreira and Lucilia de Almeida Neves Delgado (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 2010), 1:206-207. 2010 and Weinstein 2015.

modernization.⁴¹ Industrial enterprises, commercial and banking sectors were stimulated by the coffee production and ports and railroads were transformed to facilitate its transportation.

Barbara Weinstein states that the competition between São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro in the early years of the twentieth century cannot be ignored, and that paulista intellectuals were keen on establishing “cultural parity” with the capital. This rivalry would significantly affect the way the urban paulista identity was formed, but, in Weinstein's argument, it did not have serious political consequences. The historian also affirms that “Prior to the decade of the 1920s, it would have been difficult for even the most dedicated disciple of *paulistinidade* to compare the city of São Paulo, as a cultural center, to the federal district.”⁴² São Paulo could claim economic and political primacy, but Rio de Janeiro would remain “the uncontested intellectual and cultural center of Brazil, and even paulista intellectuals regarded a sojourn in the national capital as indispensable for a serious man of letters.”⁴³ João do Rio's pieces for the *Correio Paulistano* were written in this crucial moment for the formation of paulista identity and regional branding as well as the discussion of São Paulo's place in terms of national identity. Do Rio plays an important part in that context, praising the state over his hometown. His texts counterpose Weinstein's statement about no writer taking that position. The otherness, and even exoticism of Rio de Janeiro, are used to discuss the cultural terms of the dispute. Do Rio's criticism of Rio de Janeiro's model of civilization appeared constantly in the *Correio*. For example, while commenting on football, the new “neurosis” among the high-classes in 1907, Do Rio says that those people went to the fields because it was “the last decree of Fashion, and the last precept of Elegance.”⁴⁴ Portuguese was replaced by English in the interactions in those places and the sport was seen through a positive lens, unlike *capoeira*, an “art” considered “exclusive to a lower

⁴¹ Arias Neto, “Primeira República”, 206-207.

⁴² Weinstein, *The Color of Modernity*, 58.

⁴³ Weinstein, *The Color of Modernity*, 58.

⁴⁴ In the original: “o último decreto da Moda, e o último preceito da Elegância.” João do Rio, “Impressões de Foot-ball,” *Correio Paulistano*, July 14, 1907, 1.

class” and criminalized at the time.⁴⁵ He added that Rio de Janeiro is a: “society weakened by all the artificial paradises of civilization, rotten to the core with exoticism, irreducible dyspeptic, fearful of love and of all strong actions.”⁴⁶ The criticism against Rio de Janeiro also took form of an open defense of the primacy of São Paulo over Rio de Janeiro and was a courageous step in João do Rio’s career, especially due to the clear association between him and the federal capital. Several of his texts published in São Paulo would be republished in book collections or newspapers from Rio de Janeiro, demonstrating that his position was not kept within São Paulo’s borders. I argue that João do Rio was not only an interlocutor, but also an asset in the dispute between the federal capital versus the paulista capital. This was a vital discussion at the time because it had implications for how São Paulo was portrayed in the national scene and also overseas.

Do Rio became an important voice in several media, writing and speaking about actions, habits, scenes in the federal capital, tracing comparisons, pointing out contradictions, and, as I argue in this thesis, teaching contemporaries about what he considered authentic modern values. Inspired by Benjamin’s reflections on the pedagogical potential of dialectical images, my analysis will focus on the work of the author published outside Rio de Janeiro, more specifically in São Paulo, a facet of his oeuvre that remains to be fully studied. With this, I intend to add to the studies of João do Rio, demonstrating they were not only regularly written in parallel with his extensive production in Rio de Janeiro, but also emphasized the supposed superiority of São Paulo in the national context.

Contextualizing João in Rio

After a long period of oblivion following his death in 1921, João do Rio’s oeuvre has been analyzed by several scholars especially since the 1990’s, when it experienced a revival, accompanied by new

⁴⁵ In the original: “era exclusiva de uma classe inferior.” *Capoeira*, a practice that combines martial art, dance and acrobatics and is associated with Afro-Brazilian population, was considered a crime in Brazil until 1937. João do Rio, “Impressões de Foot-ball,” I.

⁴⁶ In the original: “uma sociedade debilitada por todos os paraísos artificiais da civilização, carunchada de exotismo até a medula, dispéptica irreduzível, com medo ao amor e a todas as ações fortes.” João do Rio, “Impressões de Foot-ball,” I.

editions of his books, dissertations, annotated collections, translations of his texts, and a catalog tracing his work in the Brazilian press.⁴⁷ Most of them emphasize his prominent role as cronista of the *Belle Époque* in Rio and stress the impact of his wanderings around the city,⁴⁸ which he called his *flânerie*, documenting the flip side of the urban reforms in Rio de Janeiro, especially in the territories nowadays known as *favelas* (slums).

Do Rio's collaboration with the *Correio Paulistano* newspaper was regular and constantly highlighted in the paper. Nevertheless, Do Rio's connection to the paulista capital is much less studied than his relation to Rio de Janeiro, even though, as I demonstrate, it played an important function in his career and in the formation of the paulista identity during that period. In a recently published article, Cesar Braga-Pinto analyzes the folhetim *A Escola dos Vícios*, published in 1906 in the *Correio Paulistano*, and provides valuable insights into queer elements of João do Rio's writing present in the three chapters of the novel and in his other works that I analyze in this thesis.⁴⁹ Nonetheless, the fact that the texts were published in São Paulo does not play a role in Braga-Pinto's argument. Besides Braga-Pinto's work and the notes about João do Rio's sporadic visits to the city of São Paulo made by his biographers, the historian Nelson Schapochnik's *João do Rio: um dândi na Cafelândia* (2004) remains the main analysis about the Do Rio's connection to São Paulo. In Schapochnik's collection of 26 texts written by João do Rio between 1908 and 1921, all but two published in Rio de Janeiro, the focus is on his comments on São Paulo and its inhabitants. According to Schapochnik, this group of texts provides the contemporary readers with a lesser-known dimension of the writer's oeuvre: the celebration of São Paulo's modernization and the belief in its potential as a "laboratory" for economic and political experimentations.⁵⁰ The historian highlights João do Rio's role in the "invention" of a positive and distinguished view of São Paulo's identity, which persists to this day.⁵¹ I am in agreement

⁴⁷ João Carlos Rodrigues, *João do Rio: Catálogo Bibliográfico*, (Rio de Janeiro: Departamento Geral de Documentação, 1992).

⁴⁸ For example, Needell, *A Tropical*; Rodrigues, *João do Rio: Vida*.

⁴⁹ Cesar Braga-Pinto, "Eccentrics, Extravagants, and Deviants in the Brazilian Belle Époque, or How João Do Rio Emulated Oscar Wilde," *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies* 28, no. 3 (2019): 372. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13569325.2019.1653835>.

⁵⁰ Nelson Schapochnik, *João do Rio: Um dândi na Cafelândia* (São Paulo: Boitempo, 2004), 17.

⁵¹ Schapochnik, *João do Rio*, 17-8.

with Schapochnik about João do Rio's contribution to the formation of the city's identity. As I show in the following chapters, the writer favored the paulista capital even more in his writings for São Paulo's newspapers. Nonetheless, I diverge from Schapochnik's argument about the extent of Do Rio's work in the paulista capital. The historian alludes to a very "episodic"⁵² collaboration with the *Correio Paulistano* in the 1910s, referring to a later period than the one analyzed in this thesis. It is significant that Do Rio's affiliation to the paulista newspaper is much more extensive, making São Paulo readers familiar not only with encountering his texts in the newspapers, but with his ideas of Brazilian modernity.

The material uncovered in this research demonstrates that Schapochnik's assertion about the writer's work in São Paulo was reflected in prolific literary experiments. However, since it is based on fewer texts, the historian's assumption does not fully characterize João do Rio's work for the *Correio*. The regular and extensive collaboration is much more significant than previously thought. The texts recovered during my research show that João do Rio put significant effort into building a literary bridge between the two main urban centers of Brazil, and used the space of the *Correio Paulistano* to experiment with different genres and themes. Furthermore, this thesis focuses on the pedagogical character of the writer's prose, unexplored by Schapochnik and other scholars. This gives me the opportunity to compare the differences between what Do Rio publishes in Rio de Janeiro and in São Paulo and how pedagogical his approach is. I also point out that a common characteristic in all literary genres employed by Do Rio in the *Correio Paulistano* is the pictorial representation of everyday life in two distinct metropolises. Benjamin's concept of dialectical image can be applied to Do Rio's work, here, since the writer shows the flip side of modernization and how resistances and remnants telescope — to use Benjamin's term — the past into the present. The modernization imposed from top to bottom did not erase popular culture and did not count on its capacities of adaptation and survival. Capturing those aspects, Do Rio's work in São Paulo invites the reader to observe those

⁵² Schapochnik, *João do Rio*, 15.

images and, at the same time, absorb the knowledge they can provide in terms of modern values and the way to reach this objective. To do so, the writer appeals to metropolitan imagery that puts holes in Rio de Janeiro's narrative of progress and success, while exalting São Paulo's opportunity to do it differently. In this journey, the author registered and commented on urban aspects considered undesirable by the government, like popular music and dances, but also elements present in deeper layers such as the inherent miscegenation of the Brazilian population at the precise moment in which the country, and especially São Paulo, received a huge influx of immigrants, mainly from Europe, in an attempt to replace slave labor (abolished in 1888) in the coffee farms and to make the population "whiter".⁵³

João do Rio's link to Rio de Janeiro was well-known and evidenced by his own pseudonym and must be contextualized. Reading João do Rio as an ethnographer, Julia O'Donnell argues that the author offers a vision of the most "sensitive" and, because of that, less accessible aspects of the urbanization of Rio de Janeiro and its inhabitants, revealing the "human facet" of the modernization in the city.⁵⁴ I'm in line with O'Donnell in respect to Do Rio's focus on the human component of the urban environment, which is especially prominent when we bear in mind the official attempt to eradicate the habits, practices and beliefs of the popular classes. This contextualization is important for my argument because it shows the importance of Do Rio's position in the debate that favored São Paulo. Besides considering Do Rio as an ethnographer I read his work in São Paulo as that of an educator, teaching about what he considers to be proper civilization, and creating the image of the State as a superior in relation to the rest of the country, and especially to Rio de Janeiro.

João do Rio's texts are also considered an important historical source about the First Republic in Brazil (1889-1930). In her analysis of the *crônica* in Rio de Janeiro at the beginning of the regime, the historian Amy Chazkel asserts that by showing cultural resistances and survivals among popular

⁵³ Lilia M. Schwarcz, *The Spectacle of the Races: Scientists, Institutions, and the Race Question in Brazil, 1870-1930* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1999).

⁵⁴ Julia O'Donnell, *De Olho na Rua: A Cidade de João do Rio* (Rio de Janeiro: Jorge Zahar Editor, 2008), 16.

classes and the rise of the notion of an underworld in the city, João do Rio's writings become a source to recover the social and cultural history of those people and the meanings of their daily life.⁵⁵ Mapping the cultural history of Rio de Janeiro in the same period, and arguing that social relations and spaces in this urban center were porous, Bruno Carvalho affirms that the "best contemporary sources" come from João do Rio's work and that his "chameleonic abilities and acumen, nonetheless, put him in the position of being intimately attuned to the city's cultural cartography and to the cognitive maps of his readers".⁵⁶ Both Chazkel and Carvalho are centering their analysis on the federal capital, but I believe that their assertions can be applied to the paulista context, since Do Rio's work in São Paulo also constitutes a precious source which provides clues not only about the dispute between two urban centers for primacy but also for the definition of a model of nation, which should guide the other states towards the elusive "civilization". In addition, it shows the role of Rio de Janeiro's image to the formation of São Paulo identity.

João do Rio's most iconic and well-known texts exemplify the points raised by O'Donnell, Chazkel, and Carvalho. In *A Alma Encantadora das Ruas* (*The Enchanting Soul of the Streets*, 1908), Do Rio discusses life on the streets: popular professions and commerce, prostitutes, drug addicts, thieves, fortune tellers, beggars. The government's enforcement of law and the policing that came with it, were contrasted with personal experiences and particular motivations through the humanization of the individual characters which would otherwise be just part of the statistics. While working for the São Paulo-based newspaper, João do Rio published several books (see timeline at the end of this text), but two of them are particularly relevant to my discussion: *Cinematógrafo* (1909) and *Vida Vertiginosa* (1911). In the *Cinematógrafo* (*Cinematographer*) Do Rio's focus lies on the new rhythm that Rio de Janeiro gets when it opens its doors to modern inventions, such as movie theaters and motor vehicles, changing the inhabitants' perception of time and life. Introducing the work to his

⁵⁵ Amy Chazkel, "The Crônica, the City and the Invention of the Underworld: Rio de Janeiro, 1889-1922." (*Estudios Interdisciplinarios de America Latina y el Caribe* 12, v.12: no. 1 (2000-2001):79-105. <https://eial.tau.ac.il/index.php/eial/article/view/991>).

⁵⁶ Bruno Carvalho, *Porous City: A Cultural History of Rio de Janeiro (from the 1810s onward)* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2013), 83-84.

readers, he attests that the crônica “evolved into cinematography” and that “it is now cinematic – a cinematograph of letters, the novel of the operator's life in the labyrinth of facts, other people's lives and fantasy.”⁵⁷ His connection to cinema was recognized by scholars, but, as I discuss below, in his texts in São Paulo I recur to the postcard as the paradigmatic medium. In *Vida Vertiginosa* (Vertiginous Life) the writer deals with varying subjects ranging from the beginning of the feminist movement in Brazil to the behavior of “modern girls” to the adoption of foreign habits like the substitution of coffee by tea by the elites. In the opening note of the book, Do Rio states that this work had “the concern with the moment” and that “Its desire or its vanity is to bring a contribution of analysis to the contemporary era, raising a bit of historical interest in the most curious period of our social life, which is the current transformation of uses, customs and ideas.”⁵⁸

These two works are important for my research because they focus on images of metropolitan Rio de Janeiro. In this thesis, I discuss how they were used as a counterpoint to São Paulo's modernization. Throughout my archival investigation, it also becomes clear that many of the writings that would integrate these volumes had their first version published in the *Correio Paulistano* and not in the carioca press. The analysis of the *Correio Paulistano* reveals that approximately half of both of these works had been published in the paper, and later collected in *Cinematógrafo* and *Vida Vertiginosa* – a previously unknown information about the writer. It shows that the work produced for São Paulo was being used to experiment with new themes and genres. João do Rio was using texts published in the *Correio*, fragments of modernity, to compose some of his most famous collections of crônicas, another sign that his production in the *Correio* was not sporadic or a sidenote in his career.

⁵⁷ In the original: “evoluiu para a cinematografia” / “é agora cinematográfica – um cinematógrafo de letras, o romance da vida do operador no labirinto dos fatos, da vida alheia e da fantasia – mas romance em que o operador é personagem secundário arrastado na torrente dos acontecimentos.” João do Rio, “Introdução,” in *Cinematógrafo (Crônicas Cariocas)* (Rio de Janeiro: ABL, 2009), 5.

⁵⁸ In the original: “a preocupação do momento” / “O seu desejo ou a sua vaidade é trazer uma contribuição de análise à época contemporânea, suscitando um pouco de interesse histórico sob o mais curioso período de nossa vida social que é o da transformação atual de usos, costumes e ideias.” João do Rio, *Vida Vertiginosa* (Rio de Janeiro and Paris: Garnier, 1911).

The writer is also recognized for the incorporation of technological novelties and new media into his work. Flora Süssekind argues that João do Rio's production was always "cheek to cheek" with the newest means of reproduction, printing and diffusion, being technically marked by them.⁵⁹ In her analysis of this time period, she argues that in the face of the technical modernization in the press and literature, the author's preference for *crônicas*, interviews and *reportages* was in consonance with the editorial preferences at the time, showing that the novelties impacted his thematic choices as well as his technique.⁶⁰ Inspired by Süssekind's arguments, Maite Conde focuses on the relationship between literature and film in the beginning of the twentieth century in Brazil.⁶¹ She affirms that, for João do Rio, the movies were not only connected to new times, but also analogous to the *cronista's* work. By naming a 1909 series of *crônicas* *Cinematógrafo*, "João do Rio sees his literary form as akin to that of the movies. Indeed, the rapidity and discontinuity of cinema can be seen to characterize the consumption of the *crônica* itself. [...] the journalistic genre presented a collage of fragmentary stories to be consumed quickly and, like the movies, to be forgotten."⁶² This thesis intends to add to the field by analyzing Do Rio's incorporation of new media in his work in São Paulo not by comparing his writings to cinema, but to postcards. The fragmentary reality of metropolitan life was absorbed in texts sent from one metropolis to another, with a pedagogical tone that warns about the fault of the federal capital while complementing São Paulo. When Do Rio embraces the discourse of São Paulo as the ideal standard of Brazil in the press, giving elements that make it possible for his readers to imagine their community as superior or even ideal, he endorses the supposed elevated character of the State's modernization and its concern with education.⁶³ Besides the possibility of earning more money and obtaining more recognition, Do Rio connects to a project of modernization that claims to be more intellectual than its Rio counterpart. Instead of changing only the appearance of the city,

⁵⁹ Flora Süssekind, *Cinematógrafo de Letras: Literatura, Técnica e Modernização no Brasil* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2006), 19.

⁶⁰ Süssekind, *Cinematógrafo de Letras*, 19-20.

⁶¹ Maite Conde, *Consuming Visions: Cinema, Writing and Modernity in Rio De Janeiro* (Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 2012).

⁶² Conde, *Consuming Visions*, 43.

⁶³ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2006).

São Paulo politicians and elite are allegedly concerned with the instruction of its citizens, which would be used as a factor to claim that São Paulo was Brazil's cultural capital.

Conde also discusses the inadequacy of the term *Pré-Modernismo* (*Pre-Modernism*) to define that literary period. For a long time, the literature produced in the first two decades of the twentieth-century was relegated to that (limbo) category, an anteroom of Modernism, defined by a movement that comes later.⁶⁴ With the suggestive title *Antigos Modernistas* (*Old Modernists*), the literary scholar Francisco Foot Hardman asserts that the modernism in Brazil did not begin in 1922, with the *Semana de Arte Moderna de 1922* (*1922 Modern Art Week*), even though the cultural past of the country is often (re)read through the lens of the group behind this event, considered a mark of Modernism in Brazil.⁶⁵ Attached to the idea of *vanguarda* (avant-garde) it would exclude what was not considered canon by the artists and intellectuals involved in the *Semana*. According to Foot Hardman, this vision homogenizes multiple meanings and voices of modernism and ignores cultural processes that had been in course in Brazil since the second half of the nineteenth century when the “perception of space and time changed radically” in Brazilian society and “a series of thinkers and works were already inscribed in a sociocultural movement of ideas and demands” of what would be called modernism.⁶⁶ Foot Hardman classifies the work of several writers as modernist, including João do Rio's literary production.⁶⁷ The scholar considers the *Cinematógrafo's* crônicas emblematic of the perplexity in the face of an ever changing reality and affirms that Do Rio protests against the velocity of changes and the disappearance of popular traditions.⁶⁸ All of that is summarized in a kind of slogan created by Do Rio: *A pressa de acabar* (*The rush to finish*)⁶⁹, which marked that century and brought changes to

⁶⁴ Conde, *Consuming Visions*, 11. Despite the criticism of scholars such as Conde, this classification of Pré-Modernismo is still in use and it is commonly found on, for example, websites destined to high school students.

⁶⁵ Francisco Foot Hardman, “Antigos Modernistas,” in *Tempo e História*, ed. Aduauto Novaes (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1992), 290.

⁶⁶ Foot Hardman, “Antigos Modernistas,” 290.

⁶⁷ Foot Hardman, “Antigos Modernistas,” 292.

⁶⁸ Foot Hardman, “Antigos Modernistas,” 294.

⁶⁹ Foot Hardman, “Antigos Modernistas,” 294.

everyday life: “You work a lot more, you think a lot more, you really love a lot more, just without digesting anything and without having time to do it.”⁷⁰

This idea of “digestion” of external influences would appear in the *Correio Paulistano* as well, anticipating themes discussed later, especially after 1922. Published in 1928, the *Manifesto Antropófago* (*Cannibalist Manifesto*) is considered by scholars as the “most celebrated text of the Brazilian modernist movement and its founding document.”⁷¹ In the text, the foremost modernist writer Oswald de Andrade (1890-1954) states that “one had to ‘swallow’ European cultural legacies and ‘digest’ them in order to create an entirely new and original Brazilian culture—a synthesis of the colonized and the colonizer, the barbarous and the modern.”⁷² Andrade advocates for a “cultural cannibalism,” which is defined by the literary scholar Antonio Tosta as: “the appropriation of dominant and hegemonic cultures by subordinated or marginal groups, reveals a post-colonial impetus, in that it proposes re-readings of power relations that give emphasis to the agency implicated in cultural change.”⁷³ Do Rio’s case is singular precisely because he is an author between two cities, two proposals for nation and two modernities. His presence in São Paulo, which hosted the *Semana*, and even more, his adherence to the São Paulo proposal, makes this research vital for the understanding of: 1) his own career and the expansion attempts he adopted throughout his career at the *Correio Paulistano*; 2) his participation in the creation of a discourse that persists until today of São Paulo being at the forefront of the modern in art and hosting a cultural revolution.

Modernist literature was happening in the Brazilian press well before the *Semana* and João do Rio is an example of that. Bearing this in mind, scholarly work on educational components in British and North-American modernisms also become relevant to the purpose of this thesis. Analyzing

⁷⁰ In the original: “Trabalha-se muito mais, pensa-se muito mais, ama-se mesmo muito mais, apenas sem fazer a digestão e sem ter tempo de a fazer.” João do Rio, “A pressa de acabar,” in: *Cinematógrafo: crônicas cariocas*, (Porto: Livraria Chardron, 1909), p.384.

⁷¹ James N. Green, Victoria Langland, and Lilia Moritz Schwarcz, *The Brazil Reader: History, Culture, Politics* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2019), 300.

⁷² Green, *The Brazil Reader*, 300. The original *Manifesto* was published in 1928 in the *Revista de Antropofagia* (*Magazine of anthropophagy*), in São Paulo, in the first edition of that magazine.

⁷³ Antonio Luciano de Andrade Tosta, “Modern and Postcolonial? Oswald de Andrade’s Antropofagia and the Politics of Labeling,” *Romance Notes* 51, no. 2 (2011): 217–26. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/43803487>.

British modernism and the complex effects of censorship on literature, Celia Marshik denotes the unusual educational element: “texts instruct covertly where and when readers least expect education.”⁷⁴ According to Marshik, realistic and openly didactic plays were used to teach audiences about social problems.⁷⁵ Modernist texts used irony and satire to “create a space where community values might be reconsidered: at times, modes offered implicit ‘lessons’ in the need to revise outdated ethical and moral codes,” engaging in what the author calls a “reverse pedagogy,” that is, by representing flawed actions of government officials in their plays, modernist writers encourage “readers to position themselves in opposition to a range of assumptions and campaigns.”⁷⁶ I utilize Marshik’s concept throughout this whole thesis, because I believe João do Rio engages in this pedagogical approach that reverses ideas propagated as ideal, inviting readers to reflect and question them. He also attempts to arouse in the readers the critical thought in relation to “forbidden” topics. For example, in 1910, in a Sunday edition of the *Correio Paulistano*, Do Rio published comments against Catholicism and the judgement of sexual conducts as pernicious. In the dialog, two unnamed characters discuss the negative influence of literature, press, cinematographers and theater on the corruption of its readers and spectators. One of them criticizes the proliferation of pornographic and erotic publications, such as the newspaper *Rio Nu* (Naked Rio),⁷⁷ which allegedly made Rio de Janeiro an indecent place. The interlocutor replies that this kind of literature was “only a result of the general state. We are the ones who are immensely end-of-the-world, cerebral, and therefore molecularly depraved.”⁷⁸ He goes on to say, in a more revealing (and bold) statement, that: “Catholicism brought hypocrisy and the great vice of considering a crime what is natural desire. So it belittled all the yearning for the beautiful, the ardent, creating the moral. So it determined in society this interesting

⁷⁴ Celia Marshik, *British Modernism and Censorship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 7.

⁷⁵ Marshik, *British Modernism and Censorship*, 7.

⁷⁶ Marshik, *British Modernism and Censorship*, 7-8.

⁷⁷ About the magazine *Rio Nu*, see: Alessandra El Far, *Páginas de Sensação: Literatura popular e pornográfica no Rio de Janeiro (1870-1924)* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2004); Green, *Beyond Carnival*.

⁷⁸ In the original: “apenas uma resultante do estado geral. Somos nós que estamos imensamente fim de mundo, cerebrais, e, por isso, molecularmente depravados.” João do Rio, “Um Congresso de Moral Ativa,” *Correio Paulistano*, Feb. 27, 1910, 1.

phenomenon of every creature insisting that others be honorable.”⁷⁹ Despite theoretically being produced for the ephemeral pages of a newspaper, this text was published on the front page of a highly circulated medium in a country in which the majority of the population was Catholic.

Examining North-American modernism, Sarah Kerman affirms that folk songs and anthologies were “particularly efficacious forms of conveying cultural and social meaning”⁸⁰ and served as pedagogical tools to inform about a culture that was far from the mainstream: “The anthology’s pedagogical potential, however, goes beyond awareness-raising or the instillation of a canon; the very form of the anthology encourages the development of non-linear, non-contextual reading practices.”⁸¹ I apply this idea of collections with pedagogical potential in how I divide the chapters of this thesis (as described below).

The pedagogies in João do Rio’s ‘postcards’

As I stated earlier in this introduction, the analysis of educational and pedagogical elements in João do Rio’s oeuvre and his self-attributed role of a mediator and an educator in his prose written for the *Correio Paulistano* is the central issue of this thesis. Given the fact that he was talking about a place that many readers did not know, the work in the *Correio* already implies explanations that were not necessary for the inhabitants of Rio de Janeiro. As I stated, João do Rio provides a didactical portrayal of the federal capital. To do so, he uses several literary genres, which also guide the division of my chapters. I call them his different pedagogies which give this thesis its title. They are short texts based on a visual depiction of everyday life in the metropolis.

⁷⁹ In the original: “O catolicismo trouxe a hipocrisia e o grande vício de julgar crime o que é desejo natural. De modo que amesquinhou todo o anelo para o belo, o ardente, criando a moral. De modo que determinou na sociedade esse interessante fenômeno de toda a criatura fazer questão de que os outros sejam honrados.” João do Rio, “Um Congresso de Moral Ativa,” I.

⁸⁰ Sarah Kerman, “Speaking for Americans: Modernist Voices and Political Representation, 1910-1940” (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2010), 57-58.

⁸¹ Kerman, “Speaking for Americans,” 60.

Some of these writings also anticipate approaches and literary genres that Do Rio would adopt in the federal capital's newspapers and in his books later. Well-known as Rio de Janeiro's *cronista* par excellence, in São Paulo we can see his first experiments with other genres.⁸² Analyzing Benjamin's *One-Way Street*, Michael W. Jennings affirms that in the Weimar Republic, the *kleine form* was "identified as the primary mode of cultural commentary and criticism."⁸³ In each one of the following four chapters of this thesis, I focus on a distinct literary genre used by João do Rio to discuss how each one of them functions as a pedagogical representation of what the writer considers authentic modern values. Even though different from each other, they share a common didactical tone that fits within the pedagogical aspects of Benjamin's dialectical image discussed earlier in this introduction. I analyze four distinct pedagogies connected to literary genres mobilized by João do Rio.

The first chapter is dedicated to the folhetim (feuilleton) *A Escola dos Vícios* (*School of Vices*), from 1906. I argue it works as a collection of postcards showing the city in convulsion because of the Carnival. As the title suggests, it takes a didactical approach to Rio de Janeiro during carnivalesque festivities. The *pedagogy of the exotic* is present not only to provoke defamiliarization in the readers but also to invite them to see what is good in São Paulo in comparison to the federal capital. "Exotic" is a word repeated throughout the folhetim and I discuss the implication of its use in reference to Rio de Janeiro to paulista readers. As I mentioned, in a recently published article about João do Rio's emulation of Oscar Wilde, Cesar Braga-Pinto briefly analyzes the feuilleton, which he defines as a "a series of stories", together with other Do Rio's texts, to discuss the use of the term "extravagance" to refer to emerging non-normative sexual identities in literature in Brazil.⁸⁴ I agree with Braga-Pinto concerning the queerness of the work. However, by focusing on the feuilleton, which is how the work was originally announced in the *Correio Paulistano*, in this chapter I aim to demonstrate that it

⁸² Rodrigues, *João do Rio: Vida*.

⁸³ Michael W. Jennings, introduction to Benjamin, *One-Way Street*, 10.

⁸⁴ Braga-Pinto, "Eccentrics, Extravagants, and Deviants," 372.

also operates as a way of extolling São Paulo's virtues by portraying it against a negative image of the federal capital and that the didactical character of the work is not restricted to its title. The federal capital's "exotic" features — promoted by the *Correio*: "with his well-known originality, [João do Rio] will reveal entirely new scenes, observed in the exotic locations of the Federal Capital"⁸⁵ — counterpose paulista virtues and I analyze the meanings that the term could assume at the time and how it is used to postulate the dangers in Rio de Janeiro and how Carnival festivities work as a catalyst for that process. To do so, I use Bakhtin's reflections on these popular celebrations.⁸⁶ Do Rio's portrayal of Carnival does not imply an inversion of societal order, but, on the contrary, the reaffirmation of that order.

Building on what was said about his production in Rio de Janeiro, especially by the literary historians Orna Messer Levin and Níobe de Abreu Peixoto,⁸⁷ in the second chapter I focus on João do Rio's production in São Paulo and how his plays and texts published in the *Correio Paulistano* relating to theater adopt an unusual didacticism, questioning practices and values established as the ideal in the Republican regime in comparison with other writers in the same period. I discuss the *pedagogy of drama* through an opposition that would become frequent in João do Rio's texts in the *Correio Paulistano*: the dispute between São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro for cultural hegemony in Brazil. Suggested in *A Escola dos Vícios*, this competition becomes even more evident in João do Rio's (mini)plays and crônicas on drama. While Rio de Janeiro is seen as a doomed form of modernity, São Paulo is described as an exemplary case and role model for Brazil. In these texts, which he calls *cenas teatrais*, he presents ironic and comedic dialogues, especially portraying women as protagonists, that mock and discuss patterns adopted in Rio de Janeiro during the first Republic. Counterposing paulista and carioca women as representatives of different state identities, the writer favors the former,

⁸⁵ In the original: "O distinto escritor carioca, com a sua conhecida originalidade, revelará cenas inteiramente inéditas, observadas nos meios exóticos da Capital Federal." *Correio Paulistano*, Feb. 23, 1906, I.

⁸⁶ Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, trans. Helene Iswolsky (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984).

⁸⁷ Orna Messer Levin, ed. *Teatro de João do Rio*. São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 2002; Níobe de Abreu Peixoto, ed., *João do Rio e o Palco: Página Teatral*. Vol. I. (São Paulo: Editora da Universidade de São Paulo, 2009).

especially in the case of the play *Eva* (1915) and in texts that I compare to postcards which focus on female characters. As shown below, the paulista identity was also discussed in terms of the level of instruction of its citizens, and the state's educational institutions were defined as part of São Paulo's image in the national scene. The contributions for the paulista newspaper demonstrate that the writer, known for displaying the *soul* of the federal capital in his work, questions the place of Rio de Janeiro as the pattern for the rest of the country and the showcase of modernity, this time in an explicit comparison with São Paulo. His texts in the *Correio Paulistano* also reveal João do Rio's well-studied connection to Rio de Janeiro was not used to promote the city, but instead to give him the authority to question the direction the federal capital was adopting and to favor São Paulo as the *cultural capital* of the country almost two decades before the cultural revolution instituted by the *Semana de Arte Moderna* in 1922.

In chapter three, we see João do Rio leaving the backstage of theaters. With the *conferências literárias*, which were still in their early days in São Paulo, he himself takes center stage and becomes the main attraction of a literary spectacle, performing the role of the author. So, this collection of postcards focuses on João do Rio himself. The *conferências* were presented more or less at the same time as the *cenas teatrais*. However, instead of transmitting messages through fictional characters as seen in the previous two chapters, the author gives a face and a voice to his *crônicas*, embodying his literary work in front of a live audience, focusing on situations which involve several aspects of metropolitan life lived by fictional characters. The *conferências* take a topic connected to everyday life in the metropolis and develop it on the stage. The writer advocates in favor of topics considered controversial at the time, such as manifestations of popular culture (music, dance and poetry) and miscegenation, in opposition to the government's official line of thought. He therefore deviates from the norm in an artistic sense, especially in comparison to the other literati whose *conferências* would talk about more generic or traditional subjects, such as reflections on "the hand and foot," by Medeiros e Albuquerque (1897-1934) or "women in the Bible," by Coelho Netto (1864-1934). If in

Do Rio's feuilleton and pieces about theater the idea of a pictorial representation of everyday life in the metropolis had been explored, his conferences give us the opportunity to examine non-fictional texts, accompanied by reports of the audience's immediate reaction. Do Rio's work in the *Correio Paulistano* reveals several facets of his connection to the conferências circuit: as a witness, as part of the audience, as speaker, and as an intellectual offering his thoughts about the impact of the events on society at the time and on the lives of writers who struggled to survive from literature. Connected to the most recent innovations within the press and entertainment, the writer quickly embraces the conferências and uses them to promote his works and his persona. This under-studied literary genre arouses the discussion of gender roles in literary circles. Analyzing texts by the writer Julia Lopes de Almeida (1862-1934) about conferências, I also discuss the literati's misogynistic view (including João do Rio) of women participating in them.

The final chapter is dedicated to the crônicas that, I postulate, can be classified as João do Rio's science fiction, a genre that has been defined by Darko Suvin as "educational literature [...] irreversibly shaped by the pathos of preaching the good word of human curiosity, fear, and hope" and the "*literature of cognitive estrangement*"⁸⁸ inspiring readers to adopt new ways of thinking about the society in which they live.⁸⁹ I build on Suvin's arguments as well as on scholars who deal with this literary genre in Latin America, demonstrating that science fiction is the ideal genre to depict strains caused by the definition of national identities and modernization.⁹⁰ To offer new insights regarding this genre in João do Rio's work, I draw on Benjamin's discussion of the role of new technology and media in the "disorientation of human consciousness" through the concept of innervation and consequent "awakening of that sense of danger."⁹¹ I argue that in Do Rio's case, his science-fictional texts in the *Correio Paulistano* also assume a pedagogical tone and function; they stimulate paulista

⁸⁸ Darko Suvin, *Metamorphoses of Science Fiction: On the Poetics and History of a Literary Genre* (New Haven and London: Yale Press University, 1979), 36.

⁸⁹ About the influence of Suvin on science fiction studies, see: Patrick Parrinder, ed., *Learning from Other Worlds: Estrangement, Cognition, and the Politics of Science Fiction and Utopia* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000).

⁹⁰ Rachel Haywood Ferreira, *The Emergence of Latin American Science Fiction* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 2011).

⁹¹ Jennings, "Introduction," 49.

readers to reflect upon what could be different in their present while reading about fantastic uses of technological advancements and (pseudo-)scientific theories in vogue at the time in dystopian narratives which project a dark future for Brazil. It is a collection of more abstract postcards, portraying potential futures. Do Rio warns about the dangers inherent to the blind and complete surrender to scientificism or to measures, laws and practices justified by it. Do Rio also warns about the risk of losing the country's peculiarities and identity amidst the attempt to replicate European ideas and practices which do not fit Brazilian reality. Writing for his paulista audience, he uses a less-explored literary genre to comment not only on the transformations experienced at the time and brought upon by modernization, but also on the direction Brazil was taking in a moment of intense discussion about national identity.

The texts published for São Paulo's audiences are very distinct from those produced in Rio de Janeiro. In São Paulo he ridicules the upper classes' beliefs, practices and fakery and the inadequacy of ideals propagated by these social groups, while in Rio de Janeiro he concentrates on non-fictional works: interviews with literati and politicians, and reports of his visits to prisons. I aim to demonstrate that his use of science fiction in São Paulo reveals that the texts were inserted in the discussion about the future of the nation and, especially, the state's role in shaping it.

About the *Correio Paulistano*'s material

With the scope of the thesis and its theoretical framework delineated, I find it important to contextualize João do Rio's texts in São Paulo, since they remain mostly absent in scholarly work and anthologies of the writer's texts. Divided between short stories, theatrical scenes, conferences, a folhetim (started but never finished), and crônicas, João do Rio's writings for the *Correio Paulistano* deal with a wide range of themes: worker strikes, crimes, vices, suicides, fashion, art criticism (theater and music), literature in the press, journalists and their field of action, the snobbery and futility of the high classes as well as their imitation of French habits, the language in the streets, football — then in

its very early days — flirting techniques, the relationship between Brazilians and food. The variety of the topics in João do Rio's prose demonstrates the complexity of his oeuvre and the fragmentary character of the urban experience in Brazil.

The focus of this thesis on his work in the *Correio Paulistano* aims to contribute to a better understanding of Do Rio's career. In 1905 and 1906, João do Rio published more texts in the *Correio Paulistano* than in the *Gazeta de Notícias*, showing that his collaboration with the *Correio* was not occasional, and that he was exploring new territories after consolidating his name in Rio. Contrary to what has been thought until now, he was not dedicating his main attention to the *Gazeta*, but dividing his efforts between it and the São Paulo publication. This is a turning point in João do Rio's achievement of financial stability, and for his establishment in the Brazilian literary scene. The archival material uncovered during my research shows that his efforts were bigger than previously thought of by scholars. His activity in the two biggest and most influential urban centers at the time, in newspapers that were very distinct from one another but circulated in both locations, meant that his name was constantly being seen by a diverse readership. The extent, position and frequency of his collaboration with the newspaper in São Paulo indicate that Do Rio was being well-received by the public. As a second biggest, and important city in Brazil, São Paulo therefore seemed an obvious choice for growing his career on a national level.

His writings were always published on the front cover of the newspaper, arguably its more prominent page. Contrary to *Correio Paulistano*, Do Rio's writings published in the 1900s in Rio de Janeiro's *Gazeta de Notícias* appeared on the second or third pages, meaning that despite their success, his texts in the *Gazeta* did not receive as much emphasis as those in the *Correio*. From this we can infer that Do Rio occupied a more prominent place in paulista territory which he had not reached in Rio de Janeiro. In the *Correio Paulistano*, his collaboration was praised and his visits to the capital of



Figure 1.1 - *O Pirralho*, São Paulo, 17/07/1915, p.12.
João do Rio, visiting São Paulo's Law School, appears in the center of the picture, wearing black and white shoes and a white handkerchief on his jacket lapel.

São Paulo State were communicated in advance in notes in the newspaper, which even included the time of his arrival by train. His travels to São Paulo appeared in other publications in the urban center, thus showing the reach of his name in the city (Fig.1.1). His collaboration with the *Correio* was, therefore, not a sporadic contribution or a side-note in his career. On the contrary, João do Rio becomes one of the main names in the *Correio*, if not the biggest of them, and

constantly announced as part of their staff.

If the *Gazeta de Notícias*, a Rio de Janeiro newspaper in which Do Rio worked for most of his career, was founded in 1875 under the assumption of innovation, including its methods of distribution, the *Correio Paulistano*, founded in 1854, was one of the most traditional press vehicles in São Paulo and well-known in other urban centers in the country. It was the first newspaper to be published daily in the city and one of the biggest in Brazil.⁹² As announced in all of its editions during the period analyzed in this thesis, it had been an official publication of the PRP - *Partido Republicano Paulista* [Republican Party of São Paulo] — since 1872. Formed by liberal professionals and rich rural landowners in the state, the party was the only one in São Paulo until 1926, during almost the entire First Republic, and maintained an internal cohesion that allowed it to become a strong voice in the Republican regime.⁹³ Its position was reinforced by the fact that the Brazilian president Rodrigues Alves (1848-1919), who held the office from 1902 to 1906, was a member of the PRP, as well as his

⁹² Ângela Thalassa, "Correio Paulistano: O primeiro diário de São Paulo e a cobertura da Semana de Arte Moderna" (MA Thesis, PUC-SP, 2007), 10.

⁹³ Joseph Love, "Autonomia e interdependência: São Paulo e a Federação Brasileira, 1889-1937," in *História Geral da Civilização Brasileira: O Brasil Republicano: estrutura de poder e economia (1889-1930)*, ed. Boris Fausto (Rio de Janeiro: Bertrand Brasil, 2006), 62-63.

two immediate predecessors, Prudente de Moraes (1841-1902) and Campos Sales (1841-1913). In a newborn and undefined Republican regime in which the course of the nation as well as its identity were being discussed,⁹⁴ João do Rio's association to a powerful political organization cannot be ignored.

The PRP was also at the forefront of the urban reforms undertaken in São Paulo. One of its most prominent members, Antônio da Silva Prado (1840-1929), took São Paulo's office in 1899, becoming its first mayor, and remained in this position for four consecutive terms, until 1911. Prado, who headed the modernization in the state's capital during his term, was himself a landowner and a coffee producer. During the twentieth century, the capital of the state would surpass Rio de Janeiro in demographic and economic terms, becoming a megalopolis with more than 30 million inhabitants, the biggest city in the Southern Hemisphere and one of the most populous urban centers in the world. João do Rio's contribution to a newspaper explicitly linked to a well-defined political group raises the question about how this association affected the contents of his texts for the *Correio Paulistano*, as well as his image in a time of political and social upheaval. The limits and peculiarities of this connection will be explored in this thesis.

Aside from João do Rio's texts, the *Correio Paulistano* was regularly publishing (pseudo-)scientific articles, like the ones from Italian criminologists Cesare Lombroso (1835-1909) and Enrico Ferri (1856-1929), proponents of phrenology and the identification of physical traits associated with criminal behavior. Medical and hygienist advice, such as that provided by the Brazilian homeopathic doctor Alberto Seabra (1872-1934), was also published side by side with João do Rio's crônicas. The technical and scientific character of modernization in the country is reflected in the newspaper. Grammar lessons, information about diseases and prophylaxis, and editorials explaining the movements and decisions of the PRP, as well as the reasons to support its candidates also occupied its pages. Telegrams (from *Agence Havas*) were used to cover international events besides foreign

⁹⁴ José Murilo de Carvalho, *Os Bestializados: o Rio de Janeiro e a República que não foi*. (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2008).

correspondents stationed in Paris, such as Nestor Vitor (1868-1932), an exiled Brazilian poet and literary critic, and in Italy, where Alessandro D'Atri made contributions through his *Jornal da Europa* [Europe's Newspaper]. It was also common for architects and engineers to debate in extensive detail the urban reforms in São Paulo and the latest developments in this area of knowledge. The intention was to modernize the city, adopting, however, different approaches from the urban reform in Rio de Janeiro, which was openly inspired by Haussmann's Paris.⁹⁵

From the publication of João do Rio's first text in 1905, the newspaper seemed to be investing in national literature. The prominent place occupied by his texts — usually columns 1 and 2 (of 7), always on the first page — demonstrates that the newspaper was highly invested in his work. In 1907, with the implementation of so-called “melhoramentos” [improvements] to keep the newspaper up to date with “the extraordinary and continuous development of modern journalism”, the investment in literature appears to expand and other names of the Brazilian Letters would appear in the *Correio* for a short period: the journalist, politician and co-founder of the ABL — *Academia Brasileira de Letras* [Brazilian Academy of Letters], Alcindo Guanabara (1865-1918). Later, the writer Olavo Bilac, the “prince of poets” — title received in a contest promoted by the *Fon-Fon* magazine in 1913 — would join the team, publishing regularly between 1907 and 1908 (Dimas 2006). Their presence did not decrease the amount of João do Rio's contributions. In fact, the number of his texts published in the newspaper increased in those years: 27 in 1905, 14 in 1906 (when the author did not publish in any newspapers, in Rio or São Paulo, for a few months due to an illness), 50 in 1907, 55 in 1908. We can ask whether this was a consequence of a literary route opened up by João do Rio, since both Guanabara and Bilac were also his colleagues in Rio de Janeiro's *Gazeta*.

Since its beginning, the *Correio Paulistano* highlighted the collaboration with João do Rio. The editorial note — which refers to Do Rio by his real name, Paulo Barreto — states that the writer's name was known among the “intellectual circles” in São Paulo and that the rest of Brazil was familiar

⁹⁵ Malta Campos, *Os Rumos da Cidade*,

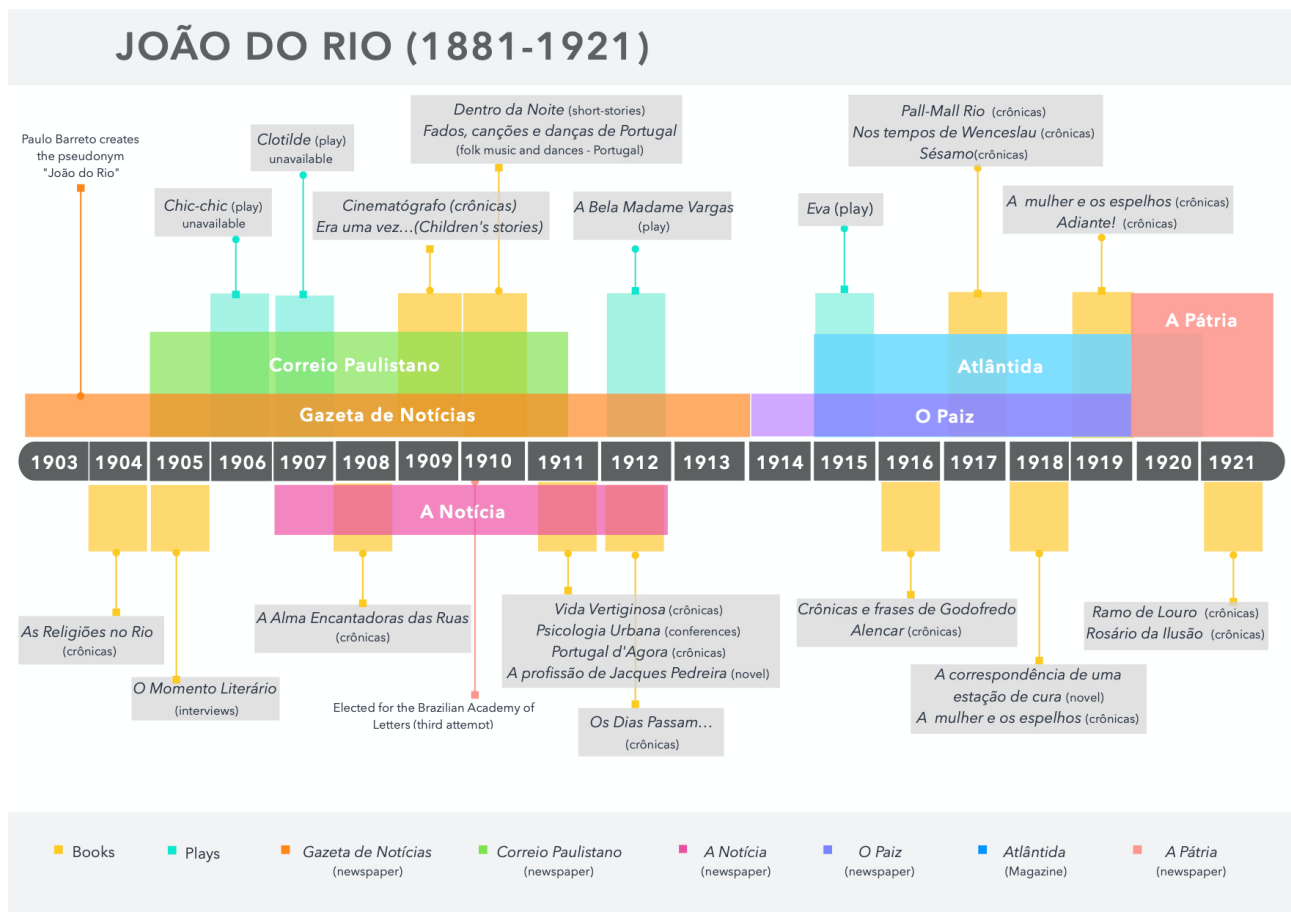
with his work in Rio de Janeiro's *Gazeta de Notícias*. Evoking the pseudonym for which he was better known, *João do Rio*, the publication affirms that his "original and light prose" as well as his "rare erudition" allied to his distinguished talent were manifested in his "splendid" style and power of observation in the book *As Religiões no Rio* and in other "studies of customs" he had produced. According to the note, João do Rio was also responsible for "setting the literary circle in motion" in Brazil with his interviews with the country's main men of letters in *O Momento Literário* [The Literary Moment], published months before in the *Gazeta de Notícias* and which would be edited as a book in that same year.⁹⁶ Therefore, his collaboration was an "*aquisição*" [acquisition] that would honor the *Correio Paulistano* and, "certainly," it would please its readers.⁹⁷ Recognized as one of the first writers to live off his literary and journalistic work, João do Rio's writings published in São Paulo point to the strategies and vicissitudes of surviving in the Brazilian Letters at a time when the demands and pressures of the marketplace, which was entering the era of mass-media, constantly impacted the *literati*. At the time, the journalistic press was the most effective way of disseminating their work, communicating with their readers and as a means of livelihood. While the *Correio*'s "acquisition" was beneficial for the newspaper itself, the regular contribution to another publication meant a new and steady source of income for the author as well, as a way to promote his name and work beyond Rio de Janeiro's borders.

This thesis focuses on the creation of dialectical images by João do Rio in the years between his huge success in the *Gazeta de Notícias* and his decision to step into the creative freedom of his own newspaper *A Pátria* (1920). The role of the press in an age of modernization was one of Do Rio's

⁹⁶ The series *O Momento Literário* was published in the *Gazeta de Notícias* between March and May 1905.

⁹⁷ In the original: "Com a crônica, que hoje publicamos sob o título *A cidade de Sancho*, começa a colaborar nesta folha o distinto escritor fluminense Paulo Barreto. /Não é um nome desconhecido que vem emprestar novo brilho às nossas colunas. O meio intelectual de S. Paulo, e por que não dizer? O do país inteiro, há muito que se familiarizou com as brilhantes produções de *João do Rio*, que tanto lustre tem emprestado à *Gazeta de Notícias*, de que é redator. /Quem há por aí que se não tenha deleitado com a leitura dessa prosa original e leve, repassada de rara erudição e demonstradora de um talento escol, que nas páginas da *Gazeta* tratava e trata com arte, esplêndida pelo estilo e esplêndida observação, das religiões no Rio e de outros estudos de costumes? /Ainda há pouco Paulo Barreto pos em movimento as rodas intelectuais com o seu delicioso *Momento Literário*, no qual vieram à baila os principais escritores da atualidade. / É, enfim, uma aquisição com que se honra o *Correio*, certo de que vai agradar aos seus leitores." "Notas," *Correio Paulistano*, June 15, 1905, 2.

main concerns. In his book of interviews *O Momento Literário*, one of the questions João do Rio asked all his interviewees was whether “journalism, especially in Brazil, was beneficial or detrimental to the literary arts,”⁹⁸ and he also extensively wrote about the topic in the *Correio Paulistano*. Studying this can give us a better idea about his career decisions in the press and its consequences to the literature he produced after that.



⁹⁸ João do Rio, *O Momento Literário*, 1905, 3.