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## RIO DE JANEIRO WRITTEN BY RUY: A METROPOLIS IN THE 1920S

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**Abstract:** This article presents images and sayings about the city of Rio de Janeiro in the 20s of the 20th century, selected from Ruy Castro's book, *Metrópole à Beira-Mar*. Modern Rio in the 1920s. This procedure is part of an investigation. The objective of this work is exploratory and initial concerning the main research. Therefore, all the important points presented will later serve for an analysis discourse, about the human cartography that the relationship between the city and literature can produce. The historical event used as the reference is the "Exhibition of the 1922 Independence Centenary" in Rio de Janeiro. Therefore, we believe it is necessary to find the images created by the writer to present Ruy Castro's modern Rio in the 1920s.

**Keywords:** Rio de Janeiro, 1920s, human cartography, pedagogy of the sea.

## INTRODUCTION

The concept of "modernity" crosses countless disciplines without a consensus that could generate unanimity for it. The complexity already established by this concept led us to consider some recognized references and authors in the field.

In "A *Metrópole à Beira-Mar*" it is evident that the "modernity" underlined by the author wants to indicate how much Rio de Janeiro, the federal capital designated in decree number 1 of the Republic proclaimed on November 15, 1889, boiled and found itself in ebullition amid the countless novelties that invaded the daily life of Rio and Brazil, such as large foreign cities.

The designation of "Beira-Mar" comes so much from the main source of research at the time, the newspaper "Beira-Mar", and in doing so, the author brings to the scene the representation of the city by one of its features, the fact that it is a coastal city that develops socially and culturally in the urban fringe, as because this characteristic reveals the change in this decade. of behaviors and customs, as the sea became the territory of foreign visitors and cariocas for swimming in the sea as a new activity. The port was a reference for connecting with the world, but also for introducing novelties, however, this "metropolis" that is inserted in modernity goes through a redimensioning and remodeling so that the novelty starts to arrive through the air, just as there is moving from the port, from the



BEIRA-MAR. (RJ). 1928, edition00131. FBN digital collection:<http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/067822/1449>

sea to the public promenade, where the city's news parade.

The author refers at various times in the book to Rio de Janeiro as a "city that does not hide its contrasts", but because of the importance it exercised ("It was also a city imbued with history, used to hosting power...") was definitely inscribed in the Modernity announced in other countries and continents. Chapter 1 of the book presents "the action scenario", that is, with this title the author already indicates the strength of the "modern" landscape of the city of Rio de Janeiro and, at the same time, the power of this same modernity to make Rio de Janeiro a scenario rich in stories, events and significant transformations for her and for the country, as "it was the city that all Brazilians dreamed of visiting."

Amidst the construction of skyscrapers, imported cars passing through sharp avenues in the city groove, "modern times, fast roads", the electric tram, buses, ferries, trains, but it was the "car that changed the city's physiognomy and even its smell." Since "the odor of manure had been replaced by that of gasoline." This same bubbling city "was home to 32 embassies and legations and 41 consulates", we have news. The advent of cinema, theaters, the various newspapers and magazines produced here gave the desired, desired and desired modern profile. The construction of "Beira-Mar", "Atlântica" and "Niemeyer" avenues, called "ocean walkways", was not by chance, because they kept the permanent parade sidewalks of local, national and foreign personalities in their cars (or on foot), although recurrently destroyed by the sea's undertow, they were still the showcase of the Carioca modernity that was advancing, through the sea and through the life of Cariocas and citizens circulating in the city. The most intense portrait of this "modern" city is summarized in the passage: "Rio de Janeiro had spent 1922 in political,

social, economic and ideological upheaval. It had been the scene of a war, conspiracies, heroism, scientific news and urban ebullition. In the chess of which he was the board, Brazil was played."<sup>1</sup>

This fragment shows how much the so-called "modernity" registered and explored in the work of Ruy Castro takes on such relevance before a lens that wants to know more about this concept of "Modernity" beyond the specific events to which he, the author, he refers, as Carnival, to the "Exhibition of the Centenary" of the Independence of Brazil in Rio de Janeiro, among others. Likewise, it is seen that the city, still the federal capital, harbors relations beyond the "seaside" of Guanabara Bay, so, in the chess game chosen to represent the Rio de Janeiro scenario, Brazil with its plays, voices, identities and speeches that transit at the flavor of marchinhas and newspapers.

Another question that arises is to what extent this "modernity" proclaimed before our eyes by Castro<sup>2</sup> is it in tune with the process of "modernization" in the capital city? It is also worth checking more accurately what is "modernity" and "modernization, in addition to "modern" in it, as they are expressions and notions explored throughout the book and that can support the reading of newspapers, since the author is based on extensive research in journalistic newspapers as well. But it is necessary to investigate next to this Rio de Janeiro "À beira mar (newspaper)", to what extent other cities presented their modernization processes or not in the newspapers that circulated in the 1920s. from that time 80% of the population was illiterate, however, with the profusion of newspapers produced from the beginning of the 20th century onwards, this picture changed more quickly. It is also worth checking to what extent the newspapers, research documents, were significant for the daily life of other

cities. It is known that radio from 23 plays a preponderant role as an informative and cultural voice, which across the country is even more relevant in view of illiteracy. So, it is necessary beforehand to relativize the degree of penetration of newspapers in the lives of Brazilians. And also how much are literate men impacted by newspapers at the time?

In the case of Rio de Janeiro, if on the one hand Castro even indicates that it was a literary city, by the amount of poets who consecrated themselves when they arrived here, or just entered the city's literate life; on the other hand, or alongside this, Ruy registers her perception that women occupy a different role by changing and shortening dresses, as well as by starting to work outside the home. Another important element of contrasting Carioca "modernity" was the racism evidenced in several activities of Rio's life. These are some of the guiding principles of the readings to be developed. In this sense, the same vitality felt when we analyze the framework that configures a "just modern Rio de Janeiro", according to the author, will be sought in newspapers from cities in other states, such as the "*Almofadaka*" of Manaus, "*A Bahia Ilustrada*" of Salvador, "*A Província*" of Pernambuco, "*O Verde*" of Rio Grande do Sul, for example, in order to investigate to what extent it is present or not and for what reasons this may or may not happen.

But the "modernity" that "could be in a verse, but also in an attitude or a hairstyle"<sup>3</sup> is not only noticed in Ruy Castro's book, because to deal with this challenge it is also necessary to use references that validate the efforts made to relate to "modernity", as an allegory of a way of being in the world and for it carry over. And what do we mean by the allegorical dimension in this narrative generated by the research? According to Diehl<sup>4</sup>:

"Through allegory, a threefold relationship is deepened:

That of the classic subject who could assert a coherent identity among himself. The allegory now starts to suggest the precariousness of the coherent and true identity and in this the subject that constructs the coherent totality starts to falter;

That of objects that are no longer the deposits of ultimate stability, now undergoing decomposition and fragmentation;

That of the process of signification, whose meaning arises from the corrosion of the bonds of experiences of subjects and objects." (2002:103)

In fact, at the beginning of the 20th century, cities are the very representation of "Modernity", due to the broadening of citizenships expressed in the new urban landscape of surface and underground, at least. Modern life in the urban space of the 20th century lives in the tension between construction and destruction, as stated by Marshall Berman in: "*Tudo o que é sólido desmancha no ar*": "an environment that promises adventure, power, joy, growth, self-transformation and transformation of the things around us – but at the same time threatens to destroy everything we have everything we know everything we are"<sup>5</sup>. The transitory landscape of cities around the world and, to a certain extent, Brazilian ones, is the ticket for the race towards the transformation of everyday life. So, it is worth asking how this process was perceived in other Brazilian cities, some at least, in order to leave the Rio de Janeiro/São Paulo axis, and seeking a more inclusive view to understand how this extensive and surgical "Modernity" impacted Brazilian life full of contradictions. What do newspapers count?

The newspaper is not an impartial and neutral transmitter of events, nor is it a despicable source because it is permeated by subjectivity. The press is an instrument for manipulating interests and intervening

in social life. Based on this assumption, the historian seeks to study him as an agent of history and capture the living movement of ideas and characters that circulate on the pages of newspapers. The abstract category of the press is demystified when the figure of its producers emerges as subjects endowed with a determined conscience in social practice. (CAPELATO, *apud* Leite, 2015)<sup>6</sup>

In this sense, it is intended to carry out a reading of the work of Ruy Castro already mentioned in comparison with the newspaper: *Jornal do Brasil*<sup>6</sup>, in which Benjamin Costallat writes a series of chronicles entitled “*Mistérios do Rio de Janeiro*”<sup>8</sup> and *Fon Fon*<sup>9</sup> that announces modernity through the onomatopoeia of its own title. By proposing this research having the discourse on the urban in perspective and taking the Applied Linguistics approach, which constitutes a broad epistemological field related to the most diverse issues that generate discursive practices within a society.

According to Moita Lopes<sup>10</sup>, L.A. “presents different perspectives, most likely arising from different interests and undoubtedly resulting from an always questioning attitude towards the object of study”. The author also highlights that the “idea that all knowledge is political” and that “politicizing the act of researching and thinking about alternatives for social life is an intrinsic part of the new ways of theorizing and doing applied linguistics”<sup>11</sup>. This way, putting in perspective a “place of investment in a redescription of social life.”<sup>12</sup>

So, corroborating what Moita Lopes, Biazzi and Dias state<sup>13</sup>, understand that the task of L.A. is to answer many questions, especially those concerning the discourses that permeate society and the social imagination:

(...) the specialty of AL is to study how language happens in the most varied contexts of situations, in the real world, seeking to show how it constitutes us as people in our contact with each other, how we use language to interact in social groups and what meanings it acquires in the most

diverse circumstances of interaction. (BIAZZI e DIAS, 2007:3).

According to Rajagopalan<sup>14</sup>, as a linguist based in LA, the journalistic discourse is structured on the constant act of giving news, informing, that is, it is supported by the “designation”.

We know that every news, every journalistic report, begins with an act of designation, of nomination. By the way, traditional grammar itself teaches us that it is first necessary to identify the subject of the sentence and then say something about it or, equivalently, predicate something about the subject already identified. It is necessary, first, to name, and then to say something about the object in the world so designated. (RAJAGOPALAN, 2003:84)

And it is through the “designation” and the use of proper names, as they are free from previous or established brands, that, for example, several personalities from Rio de Janeiro, the city of the 1920s, are marked by Ruy Castro. Numerous chapter-by-chapter paragraphs of the book bring the designation to begin your comments and readings. For Rio de Janeiro, the author explores the common noun “metropolis” since the title. How the: “*Metrópole à Beira-Mar*”, the author takes Rio de Janeiro out of isolation in order to symbolically match it to modernized cities or cities in the process of modernization. In this case, there is a certain subversion of the typical process of modern discourse, which is separatist, regionalizes and even isolates the object of interest and observation by name. After all, what metropolis by the sea does Ruy Castro build in his speech? And that modern city builds the speeches of newspapers cited by Ruy (*Jornal do Brasil – Costallat Chronicles*<sup>14</sup> and newspaper: *Jornal Beira Mar*)

But, Castro<sup>16</sup> in order to underline the ongoing process of modernization in the city, the federal capital, in order to show how worthy it would be to be among the

other international metropolises, it explores the potential of this noun “metropolis”, in a representation capable of filling the “Rio de Janeiro” of news and urban scenes that make it load with equal relevance all the characters<sup>16</sup> which the author identified and highlighted in his narrative devoted to Rio de Janeiro, with the clear objective of equating the city with the place of importance given to São Paulo in the same decade, mainly by the “1922 *Modern Art Week*”.

Castro<sup>18</sup> wants to show how Rio de Janeiro was also in line, as a federal capital, with the project of modernity acclaimed in other cities and capitals of the world – keeping the due proportions and contradictions that can be perceived by an attentive reader. It is important to realize that the “designation” makes visible what could be invisible, but more than that, it isolates the city from many other Brazilian ones, especially the city of São Paulo - which is not by the sea”, as we all know.

This process of isolation from the desired modern city, typical of modernity, was also observed by Nascimento<sup>19</sup> about the episode of the “Vaccine Revolt” at the beginning of the 20th century in which a process of cleaning was recurrent as a characteristic feature of the remodeling:

It must be noted that the deportations to the Amazon were not only for those participating in the “Vaccine Revolt” or its leader, the fearsome Prata Preta, but was part of a campaign to remove undesirables from a city that was trying to Europeanize and to modernize from an urban reform, as it was possible to observe in the texts published by the newspaper: *Rio de Janeiro nu*. (Nascimento: 2013)

In urban cartography directed and built by the book of Castro<sup>20</sup> one sees the discourse fed and feeding on itself, considering that the author’s prose does not relinquish journalistic evidence in any way, even if “read” with bias by some who do not share the carioca

feeling, that is, the feeling of belonging to the carioca culture. And this connects to what the linguist, Rajagopalan<sup>21</sup> indicated as “the power of designation” and on this he concludes: “The danger lies in the fact that the naive or unsuspecting reader tends to confuse description with the referential term, opinion with the *fait accompli*, this is where the greatest danger lies.”<sup>22</sup>

Perhaps, the relevance of the book lies precisely in this shift in perspective that comes from literary and cultural criticism in general, presenting São Paulo as the city of *1922 Modern Art Week*, when Ruy Castro’s book largely undoes such centrality, through the numerous significant events for the life of the country that took place in the capital at the time. It is observed that the “metropolis by the sea” also suggests spatial displacement. If in the past the sea was the space for movement and conquests, in urban modernity, on land, the paths are along streets and avenues that cross the remodeled cities. To be “Beira Mar” (by the sea)” specifies and spatially restricts, in addition to suggesting the transitory, as “*Beira Mar* “ is a way of being in the city, in a possible reading for the book of Castro<sup>23</sup>. This suggested spatio-temporal relationship is also the suggestion of being in motion.

In this research, seeking other narratives about other cities is a way to redimension this tug of war between Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, although we know that it is also the relationship between development axes in the country in the decade in which we stopped. The challenge is quite instigating insofar as the documents of the time, the newspapers to be consulted, will be under the “effect” of the researcher’s contemporary gaze. However, this “double” reaffirms the so-called “regional separatism” characteristic of modernity. According to Diehl<sup>24</sup>: “The separatism of less developed regions represents a search for proximity to European modernity.”<sup>25</sup>

By delimiting the general context of the research object, in a time frame given by Ruy Castro's book, the 1920s of the 20th century in Rio de Janeiro, we first understand that the reading experience is the social practice, also discursive, that directs our look at a period that (almost) can only be known through documentary records, in this case, through book books and newspapers and magazines from the period in question. Such referral shows how much we already have this social construction mediated by the selected texts, however, we understand that we will also be mediators with analysis and criticism instruments that enable reflections on measures, landscapes and subjects that made up not only Rio de Janeiro, the "city by the sea", but also other cities that could or could not be in line with the ideals of "modernization", "modernity" and "civility" that seemed to be in force at that time and with implications for customs, behavior social and for the relations and conditions of production of works, knowledge and cultural actions.

In this sense, it is worth paying attention to the orders in force in the observed discourses, which may be by images and/or words, by suggesting the absences that formed them and the presence of elements that constituted them. We are interested in discussing from the perspective of the role of the "author" to what extent this modernity so longed for and at the same time narrated in its effervescence and discontinuity establishes a relationship or not between some Brazilian cities reported in newspapers of the time. In fact, the told, sung, silenced metropolises have a profile consistent with the nomination of metropolis? Are the contrasts and contradictions suggested? Swept away from the local and discursive landscape?<sup>25</sup>

The initial search phrases to be treated as categories are: "modernity"; "city and modernity"; "sense of nationality";

"metropolis", following the reading of Castro<sup>26</sup>. These are some of the documents to be explored by the search for "modernity"; with 720 occurrences in total; "city and modernity" without registers for expression; "sense of nationality" (192 occurrences), the initial categories for the research.

However, in a search with the phrase "metropolis" for all 775 registered newspaper that include the Brazilian states and some foreign cities such as Lisbon and Paris, in the FBN digital collection, in the "Hemeroteca", there are more than 29 thousand occurrences with this search term. It is true that the program indistinctly registers advertisements and texts of a different nature, but the survey is frightening when compared to the other experimented terms. Therefore, the scrutiny of newspapers will take a period foreseen in the work schedule of this project to be adequate for the investigation, but it is worth mentioning that the newspaper: *Jornal do Brasil* and the magazine: *Fon Fon* from the period of the 1920s will guide the discussion of the research.

Another interesting search that resulted in hundreds of pages of newspaper giving news was "centenary", with numerous references to the "exhibition of the centenary of independence" in Rio de Janeiro and more than 4 million pages with a total of 130 thousand occurrences of the phrase search engine. Therefore, it is the event of great impact in the 1920s. And if we compare it with the search for the "Modern Art Week", we will find 120 occurrences in the same 775 newspapers that make up Brazilian states and some foreign metropolises, cataloged in the Hemeroteca.

According to Angel Rama in: *Cidades das Letras*<sup>28</sup>, the cities manifest more than just physical space, they develop their own language that relates to what represents and legitimates them. Rio de Janeiro at

the beginning of the 20th century, still the country's capital, saw itself in an effort to accompany the development of European cities in their remodeling process, which was equivalent to modernization with buildings that destroyed those of the past. The image used in the narrative of Castro<sup>28</sup> was “the city rises”, an allusion to the skyscrapers that were built. At the same time, there is an allusion to the parataxis of Marques Rebelo's novel, *The star rises*. Such ambiguity already brings in itself, in addition to the irony about Rio de Janeiro, a suggestion of the contrasts that the city keeps exposing them.

But it is in the “*Exhibition of the Centenary of Independence*”, 1922, in which the author centers his research, creating an agile and dense narrative about the 1920s in Rio de Janeiro. Ruy Castro presents us with a virile Rio de Janeiro, fast-paced, brilliant and full of novelties, in addition to being the city open to visitors and cultural agents of the effervescent period, literally speaking.

The profusion of newspapers in Rio de Janeiro was also a factor in the influx of poets to the city. In this briefly presented scenario, we propose to explore Castro's narrative in order to raise some elements of the subjectivities in question, without neglecting the sociocultural context that affects and is affected in the daily urban dynamics of Rio de Janeiro. Alongside this, an investigation will be carried out in narratives from newspapers from other cities in other states in order to establish a textual map on the literate subjectivities that manifest themselves in newspapers. For this purpose, the digital collection of the National Library Foundation will be accessed in the “*Hemeroteca*” section, which holds copies from the period and from the Brazilian states.

The autobiographical dimension may be present in the letters section, for example, in chronicles and local columns, which will require a different perspective in document

analysis, however, extremely relevant. We are interested in understanding how that “modernity” was experienced outside the Rio de Janeiro/São Paulo axis, which has already been widely explored by researchers in the area. In this sense, the research intends to contribute to the debate of and in the letters and in the cultural context of reviewing issues related to the feeling of nationality, to the modernization process, especially.

## THE ACTION SCENARIO

“*Metrópole à Beira-Mar...*” initially presents the modernity of foreign, European and American cities, in the beginning of the 20s of the 20th century as a beacon to understand the modern Rio de Janeiro de Castro<sup>30</sup>:

“In 1920, the world already had cinema, the phonograph, electricity, the automobile, airplane, theory of relativity, aspirin, cocaine, psychoanalysis, X-ray, skyscraper, football, lipstick, razor blade, Russian Revolution, fascism, feminism, dodecaphonism, Cubism, Futurism, Dadaism, Expressionism and dozens of other isms, including: *je-m'en-fichismo*<sup>30</sup> \_not to care\_ in the face of so much news. This attitude was nothing more than theatre, because it was impossible to remain indifferent to what big cities suddenly had to offer related to Rio de Janeiro was one of them.” (CASTRO, 2019: 31)

The relationship of Rio de Janeiro with the other European and American metropolises of the time is a trait that runs through the entire book, since the aspiration of those who govern the city and live in it, especially cultural personalities, to make Rio a modern city and with it the country, and comparable to the others already in this condition. The aspects listed by the author are a good measure of what guides the reading of a city at the time, as well as showing the elements that are significant throughout the book for the discourse built on the city. From science to human, aesthetic and behavioral relations, the broad spectrum



of the urban is also a way to map the points that could define modernity in a city.

In 1922, Rio de Janeiro “would witness the slaughter of the so-called “Dezoito do Forte” by federal troops on Copacabana beach”, but, “luckily, Rio de Janeiro had already had Carnival since 1835”. This leads us to the author’s perception that the uniqueness of the city makes it the object of someone else’s desire:

“It was the city that all Brazilians dreamed of knowing. Those who visited her and, weeks later, returned to their villages told with emotion how they had traveled by tram alongside Olavo Bilac, listened to Ernesto Nazareth at the keyboard of a grand “Bechstein” at Galeria Cruzeiro and seen Ruy Barbosa leave the Ideal Cinema with a copy of the magazine: “*Tico-Tico*” that was under the Arm - the illustrious of Rio de Janeiro, always at the hand of passersby.”(CASTRO, 2019: 32)

Walking through the city streets is also a mark of this opening to the new, although this habit comes from the previous century. Literature has registered this scene intensely, but in the case of Brazilian Literature, we have João do Rio de Janeiro, for example, as an emblematic author in relation to the uses and ways of being in the urban territory of Rio de Janeiro. In addition to this feature, cinema is undoubtedly the representative space of modernity in cities. Cinema, the art of the beginning of that century, would definitively change the leisure habits of city citizens. And in Rio de Janeiro, our contemporary author, journalist and biographer highlights:

“The Ideal<sup>32</sup>, in fact, it was a movie theater with a movable roof – in the summer, you could watch the films in starlight. And it would not be surprising if, when visiting the famous Elvira brothel, the street: Rua do Riachuelo, in Lapa, the visitor bumped into its facilities, and on the same night, with the poet Manuel Bandeira, the composer Villa-Lobos, the bohemian Jayme Ovalle,

caricaturist Di Cavalcanti and beloved troubadour Catullo da Paixão Cearense, beloved customers of the cafetina.” (CASTRO, 2019: 32)

Given the excitement of visitors to the city who knew its topography between hills and ocean beaches, its islands (Paquetá, Fiscal and Cobras) there was the news about the words used that many of them did not know, which also gave more uniqueness to what could be considered new, including the linguistic plan. However, it was not a city with regular and linear features:

“At the same time, Rio de Janeiro did not hide its contrasts. In the beginning it had been the main house and the slave quarters; then the farms and tenements; more recently, bungalows and villas; and now, in the dawn of the twentieth century, it was preparing for the final transformation: the arrival of skyscrapers and slums. (...) In 1920, there was not exactly a North Zone and a South Zone. There was Rio de Janeiro.” (CASTRO, 2019: 33)

And in these contrasts, the author continues giving news about the occupation of the urban territory of Rio de Janeiro:

“In a country where urinals still predominated, Rio de Janeiro was the city with the most toilets and sewage services, health, hospitals, firefighters, public education and municipal positions (...) In that same 1920, the University of the Rio de Janeiro, the first in Brazil (...) Rio de Janeiro was the only city that did not have an “interior”. All of Brazil was its countryside.” (CASTRO, 2019: 33-34)

Rio de Janeiro was not only at the center of power, as a federal capital city, but was at the center of everything that a “modern” city could want to be and have. Curiosity about electric energy was no less important as the advent of the city’s historical moment:

“In 1920, with 6 thousand “registered” cars, Rio de Janeiro was already experiencing traffic jams.(...)”

The car changed the city's physiognomy and even its smell. The odor of manure from the streets was replaced by that of gasoline. In place of stables and stables, sheds called garages were installed, where cars were kept, washed and lubricated. Repair shops, auto parts stores and pumps appeared." (CASTRO, 2019: 35)

The service sector, the auto parts industries that were setting up, accompanied the city's transformation. The succession of engineers running the city as mayors was also an indication of this desire for modernization. From Pereira Passos in the early 1900s to Carlos Sampaio in 1920 the city, "*it had already exchanged the rancidity of colonial alleys and alleys for the dynamics of its new layout, designed by avenues, remodeled streets and vast Portuguese stone sidewalks.*"<sup>33</sup>.

The Avenue: Avenida Central, soon renamed Av. Rio Branco, takes on the prominent space at the expense of squares and squares with a medieval appearance:

"Located from sea to sea, from Praça Mauá to Passeio Público, and taken over by cinemas, theaters, clubs, newspapers, bakeries, cafes, banks, insurance companies and public buildings, the Avenue quickly imposed itself on the city. The street itself: Rua do Ouvidor, the main artery of the Empire, was reduced to one of its transversal streets."(CASTRO, 2019: 37)

The movement of people on the Avenue had been so intense that it required a new action plan from the city's police, as well as the "institute, in 1919, of hand and hand for pedestrians". The changes continued because one of the characteristics of the modern city is its unfinished business. There are successive works, changes, giving a transitory character to city life. Other times: "*Modern times, fast lanes. Over the next two years, Rio de Janeiro was cut in all directions with the opening of the avenues (...) And Copacabana, linked to the city by the new tunnels, was getting ready to flourish*"<sup>34</sup>.

In this physical space, the costumes begin to change, from the formality dictated by the elders, it evolves into clothes more suited to the local heat, perhaps not innocently. According to the author:

"Perhaps the discredit in relation to their elders, who had dragged the world into a useless war [1st.] led young people to look for their identity, including when dressing. (...) But nothing has rejuvenated the population more than the decline of the goatee, beards, whiskers, pears and flies under which the cariocas hid." (CASTRO, 2019: 39).

And the woman? What woman was this from the modern metropolis? It is worth checking the description given by the author:

"At the same time, American cinema defended the existence of a new woman. The films, as early as 1920, showed women in action, working in stores and offices, flying planes, painting their eyes and letting themselves be kissed by men they had just met. But if many movies were make-believe, the women who starred in them weren't. Fusing illusion and reality, the studios supplied magazines such as: *Fon-Fon!* and *Para todos...* with photo reports about the "private" life of these actresses, describing their leisure, clothes and temporary dating – the *flirts*, how to write. It was a world that opened up to women, scaring the unprepared". (CASTRO, 2019: 42).

It must be noted that the author reproduces the vision of the whitened city and women and girls of a certain social condition. In fact, the entire cultural scene initially presented is mainly of men, and some women, in a situation that allowed them to make a living from writing. The very mimetic relationship with the figures of the European painter (Modigliani) reveals the look that permeates Ruy Castro's writing.

And following his intention to show the modern Rio de Janeiro of the 1920s, Castro after describing in detail the models that cover women, for example, indicating the tubular



July 5th and 6th, 1922: from left to right, Lieutenants Eduardo Gomes, Siqueira Campos, Nilton Prado and the civil: Otávio Correia [https://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Revolta\\_dos\\_18\\_do\\_Forte\\_de\\_Copacabana](https://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Revolta_dos_18_do_Forte_de_Copacabana)



[<https://www.facebook.com/cineidealcarrioca>]

shape for the dresses, the short hair with a shaved nape, the waist that goes down to the hips as a marking, among other important details for the relationship with female forms and with seduction. In fact, Castro goes so far as to indicate the information that “*Rio de Janeiro had a plethora of seductions – they made them enter a suddenly adult and modern world*”<sup>35</sup>. From a plastic point of view, the image for this woman (girls) of the modern city resembles the *mignonnes* (reproduction photo) by Modigliani, painter.

In the field of press and literature and their circulation, profound changes were also observed, as the number of newspapers, magazines and newspapers increased. And the place of the literary scene is revisited several times throughout the book, giving Literature a social construction value. Modernity highlighted the world of the literate, the literate city:

“It was a literary world. Information came through the word, in newspapers, magazines, books, debates and conferences. Even the caricature, the main image in a press that is still scarce in photographs, was an affluent of the word - cartoons without captions are rare. Rio de Janeiro in the 1920s never had less than fifteen or sixteen daily newspapers circulating at the same time. (...) When it came to the national press, that meant the Rio press. The number of weekly magazines was no less.” (...) in a country where 80% of the population could neither read nor write, the illiteracy rate in Rio de Janeiro dropped to 40%.” (CASTRO, 2019: 43-44).

To be on the move, to do something was the fundamental trait for men in newspapers, in this world of letters: “*editorial life was intense. In 1920, Rio de Janeiro had around forty bookstores, several of them also unfolding into publishing, printing, stationery, newsstands and bookbinding workshop.*”<sup>36</sup>.

In another observation by the author of “*Metropole à Beira-Mar...*” the copying

relationship with the already modernized European cities, here modifies the relationship of citizens with the fact that summer is valued. Why then would Rio de Janeiro be “metropolis”, a symbol of modernity in the country? Ruy Castro presents several enumerations, among the narrations. Enumerations make a text more dynamic, however, they do not develop the stories contained in the created list. The vigor and successful research initiative of this author in his endeavor also resides in the fact that many of those cited, subjects and facts, are in their time developed in a singular narration.

At a certain point in the beginning of the book, when the scenario that supports the recognition that Rio de Janeiro is modern, in addition to being the capital of power in the country, in fact, accumulating representational functions (social, cultural, economic and political). It is important to present the following facts:

“From those who arrived between 1850 and 1930, Joaquim Nabuco, Medeiros and Albuquerque, Olegário Mariano, Barbosa Lima Sobrinho, Bastos tigre, Mario Rodrigues, Théo-Filho, Manuel Bandeira, Austragésilo de Ataíde, Afonso Arinos (...)

They settled in Rio de Janeiro – most of them, forever –, they joined forces with the people of Rio de Janeiro in general, such as Joaquim Manuel de Macedo, Manuel Antônio de Almeida, Machado de Assis (...) That’s why Rio de Janeiro was a metropolis, greater than the sum of parts”. (CASTRO, 2019: 45-46).

If the press had established a decisive role for itself “in the campaigns for Abolition and for the Republic”, another achievement came together, freedom of the press:

“You couldn’t stand still. In 1920, even the powerful journalist Pedro Leão Velloso, a great man at the turn of the century, had already become outdated. (...) The newspapers were now owned by men like Irineu Marinho, the first Brazilian journalist



Modigliani (1884-1920)

to impose the style of the American press, changing the compulsive belletrism for something more like modern reporting. (...)

All newspaper owners became fighting men. (CASTRO, 2019: 47).

In another, also combative, perception, the author observed that Lima Barreto “certainly disagreed with the motto that Pimentel [Alberto Figueiredo] used as the subhead of his column in the newspaper: ‘Rio de Janeiro civilizes itself’<sup>37</sup>. The curiosity about this journalist, Pimentel, is that the perception of the city becoming civilized came from his window on the “Avenue”, so much so that his column in *Gazeta de Notícias* was called “Binocular”, elaborated from 1907 to 1914.

Another character in the literary scene who seems to contribute to the modernity underlined by Ruy Castro is Leite Ribeiro, who, according to the author, “He was not an intellectual, but he liked books and writers. His bookstore was a monument to culture”. Next to Garnier of the street: Rua do Ouvidor had become the “home” of the greatest novelists such as Julia Lopes de Almeida. In 1922, this publisher launched a catalog with 180 names published in 5 years. He also published a monthly magazine with a circulation of 15 thousand copies and it has

“150 pages of text on average” and of eclectic character for accepting “collaborations from all stylistic currents”, also housing “medallions, such as the poet Alberto de Oliveira and the critic João Ribeiro; moderns, such as poet Ronald de Carvalho and critic Sergio Buarque de Holanda; mockers such as reporter Orestes Barbosa and humorist Mendes Fradique (...)”<sup>37</sup>.

And even in the face of such effervescence of literary verve, anyone who wanted to read universals like Gorky, Tolstoy, should do so in French. And he provokes Castro: “But who in the bourgeoisie, in Rio de Janeiro in the young twentieth century, didn’t read French?”. Now, better clarifying the dimension of what he named as “minimally literate circle”<sup>38</sup>. French culture was so present in the cultural and literary scene, beyond the influence of fashion, makeup, perfumes, that “entire libraries were sent to bind Paris”. And the Parisian influence did not stop there, personalities of this literary and journalistic world from 1912 to 1920 “passed<sup>39</sup> seasons of two or more years in Paris”, which, after visiting “the cafes and undergrounds of Montmartre” in the “carioca salons and newsrooms, all of them, in one way or another, would bring something new to the cultural scene from Rio de Janeiro. And this one was ready to receive them.”<sup>41</sup>

In his quest to find the modern city, the author arrives at the seaside space. After a police episode that took place with King Albert I of Belgium, Castro narrates the social commitments of the couple Alberto I and Elizabeth <sup>42</sup>:

“And every morning, as if it were an official commitment, the couple would go to Copacabana, accompanied by a Navy officer, to bathe in the wet sand and swim (...) The sea was a slow conquest. At the beginning of the century, when the first beaches began to be frequented – Caju, Boqueirão do Passeio, Lapa, Flamengo and Copacabana itself -, the city hall was concerned with providing buoys, hiring lifeguards and installing ropes, chains and rings, everything to make bathing in the sea safer. But the expression “sea bath” was almost an understatement because, then, few people knew how to swim. Most bathers just lay on the sand and let the waves come and lick them. The truth is that, until 1920, there was still no beach culture – nowhere”. (CASTRO, 2019: 55).

In this discovery of beaches, baths and bodies, there is a significant difference in relation to the famous “French Riviera”, because, despite attracting tourists from various European nationalities in the 19th century, if the temperature got hot, everyone flocked to it.: “A appreciation of their summers would only begin in 1923, and for very specific reasons. However, in Rio de Janeiro’s “Riviera”, the sea also changes the appearance of sports in the bodies of the moment, which go from skinny and pale to dark and strong. If sports were violent and even bloody before in the Empire, rowing and crossings take the place of those that were banned in the Republic. In addition to these new sports, along the city streets, it was possible to see the new direction of the walks and the movement of visitors and cariocas, in addition to the regulars of the capital who settled there:

“In Rio de Janeiro, trams, cars and tunnels had already taken the city to Copacabana.

But the houses, built facing the inner streets, saw the beach only as a backyard. Only in 1922, with the redevelopment of the Avenue: Avenida Atlântica – now formed by two paved lanes, separated by a romantic lighted central flowerbed – seaside walks, on foot or by car, became common and people, en masse, descended the sand. But not all at once, because only little by little would the bathing suits become more comfortable (...)

It was as if, in the waves and on the sand, the cariocas were being educated by the sea” (CASTRO, 2019: 56).

This “pedagogy of the sea” was no longer due to the overseas expansion of other times, but to life on the shores of it, in a land that receives influences from abroad and, at the same time, recreates its representations while in the state of Rio de Janeiro. It is the “between” that seems to be building the “carioca” of lighter clothes, less marked bodies in the female curves, both because of the influx of those who disembark here, either as visitors, or as employees, diplomats, also in a transitory situation - the ambassadors of the countries represented here spent four years in Brazil -, and interact with their news with residents and regulars of Rio de Janeiro in the 1920s. The sea gradually also “teaching” the bodies that frequent it and come to trust it as accessible and domesticated territory by the “edge”, by the margins, that life can present itself in a lighter and more playful way.

From the sea to the salons, it is the neighborhood of Santa Teresa that opens the salons to the so effervescent modern city for some. Laurinda Lobo opened the doors of the palace and the guests were, for the most part, foreigners, however, her trump card in literature was Julia Lopes de Almeida, who at the time was an editorial phenomenon. It is known that the buffet at the more informal evening receptions was by Colombo and the entertainment was provided by “8 Batutas, by Pixinguinha”. Regarding the presence of



"On the sea, it was written a city"<sup>43</sup>

literature in this modern city by Ruy Castro, we can highlight the name of João do Rio, among many others, which is thus characterized by the author:

"João do Rio was cosmopolitan, affected, thought in French, dressed in the dandy fashion, and adored everything about Portugal. Nationalism, already latent in Europe since the 19th century, had resurfaced almost everywhere in the post-war period and with the same characteristics: aggressive, intolerant, full of commercial and military squeamishness - as if each country had to cling to what was its own and keep an eye on others. Brazil, on the eve of the celebrations of the January Centenary of Independence, in 1922, was sensitive to these rapes." (CASTRO, 2019: 75).

We have a question to be discussed later about the "nationalism" present in the press of the time and what is effective in modernist literature and the author's call of modern. Whether the "nationalism" of its own character and different from the Romanticism widely discussed, studied and commented on by specialists manifests itself as Ruy's book perceives it or if there is a gap between what was perceived and what was lived and experienced at the time. In other words, it is worth investigating to what extent the "nationalism" indicated by Castro in his book

by pointing to some of its representatives belongs to the hegemonic discourse or not. But for Ruy Castro, João do Rio de Janeiro was the first "modern" reporter, a term written in italics by the author himself: "If Ernesto Senna was the first Brazilian reporter and João do Rio, the first *modern reporter*"<sup>43</sup>. And also about the important figure of João do Rio: "In September 1920, he launched his newspaper in Rio de Janeiro: *A Pátria*, a modern and vibrant morning, openly sympathetic to Portugal, but whose release came at the worst moment for its owner director, editor-in-chief and main columnist."<sup>45</sup>

But the entire presentation and description of the modern Rio de Janeiro of the 20s does not despise the contrasting views, and Lima Barreto was one of those voices:

"Lima Barretoit was against the Republic, Carnival, samba, candomblé, cinema, automobiles, airplanes, telephones, modern dances, flirting, footing, swimming, bathing suits, football, everything type of sport, including chess and ping-pong, and the customs of Botafogo and Laranjeiras, which were "well-off" neighborhoods". (CASTRO, 2019: 81).

And for the author of "Metrópole...", Orestes Barbosa inaugurated in Brazil the police report: "There are two cities in Rio de Janeiro", he wrote. "The mysterious one is

what enchants me the most. I love to see her and feel her against the other [Maravilhosa] – the city that everyone is very happy to know.”<sup>46</sup>. Orestes wrote mainly about prisons and Frei Caneca’s House of Detention was his favorite in terms of description. Ruy comments: “In one of them, ‘In the city of the dagger and the gazua’, he compared the galleries of Detention to the rich and poor neighborhoods of Rio de Janeiro, with their respective residents.”<sup>47</sup>. In 1922, the book: “*Na prisão*” by Orestes, written in the prison house and in 1923, published: “*Ban Ban Ban*” and the literary innovation was due to the style that presented the text “sliced up, telegraphic – each sentence, a paragraph -, which Orestes had already used in newspapers for years”<sup>48</sup>.

Along with this, the literary and social environment included Science:

“No one thirsty for a literary or scientific life, amateur or professional, could complain about having nowhere to go – Rio de Janeiro was swarming with associations that catered to all tastes. There were the official salons, such as the Brazilian Academy of Letters, still in the building of the Silogeu Brasileira, street: rua do Passeio(...)”<sup>49</sup>.

In this recurrent frenzy that Castro turns and moves, he refers in his book when marking the arrival of modernity in Rio de Janeiro, then the capital, according to him: “Modernity could be in a verse, but also in an attitude or

a hairstyle.”<sup>49</sup>. It could also be in the presence of a woman in the newsroom, something still unusual for the environment, thus: “It was not just the presence of a woman in a newspaper report that was new. The very institution of the reporter, the journalist who went to the streets and returned with the news, only then began to establish itself in the Brazilian press.”<sup>51</sup>. For Julia de Lopes de Almeida and Carmem Dolores, it was more than a hobby. They inspired girls who wanted to imitate them.

The image of women spilled over into literature, for example, in the chronicles of Alvaro Moreyra, who in 1923 published his book: *A cidade Mulher*, a curious formula in which the woman had aged in reverse, the older she was, the younger she was, in an allegory of Rio de Janeiro. “*Here it is*” is Alvaro’s first chronicle and is about the prohibitions on Copacabana beach. At a certain point, he continues on to the neighborhood and the beach: “When the Republic was proclaimed, the Carioca land was in its twenties... From then to today, it was like this... Girl and girl, little by little, she got rid of, lost the shy air, I wanted to live... The body took on the rhythm of the waves, the grace of the slender trees.”<sup>52</sup>.

In the field of politics, Rio de Janeiro in the 1920s is presented as a “city in convulsion”: “Rio de Janeiro had a full year in 1922. At the



Publisher: Benjamin Costallat’s announcement in the edition of: *Cidade Mulher* by Alvaro Moreyra, 1929.



end of March, nine men gathered for three days – the first two, in the Tailors Union, in Praça da República, and, in the third, in a house in Niterói – and they founded the Communist Party of Brazil.”<sup>53</sup>

Anarchist ideas had arrived in Brazil in the wave of immigration that occurred at the turn of the century. Together, they reached the foundation of unions and even some bombings. The future had arrived in all forms and the city’s landscape was in a continuous process of change, one of the characteristics of this modernity in the metropolises. Thus, regarding the necessary demolitions that the then Mayor Carlos Sampaio indicated were necessary, Ruy said: “The future also seemed to have arrived on the wings of the Santa Cruz, the seaplane with which, on June 17, Portuguese aviators Gago Coutinho and Sacadura Cabral landed in Rio de Janeiro, coming from Lisbon, on the first air crossing of the South Atlantic<sup>54</sup>”. Although, even with the modernity of the planes sent by the Portuguese, with 33 years of existence in the Republic, the country with a population of 31 million Brazilians, only 2 million were eligible to vote. However, the military fresh out of the school in Realengo yearned for the secret ballot. Brazil was even changing its way of seeing itself. He saw himself as an adult, urban and modern: “Cities were growing, uncontrollable, and people were losing their innocence. The transformations were more palpable in the metropolis – Rio de Janeiro city.”<sup>55</sup> According to Castro, in his research and critical observation of the situation in the country: “Modernity was unstoppable and had its laws. hours after the massacre<sup>56</sup>, that same night, fifteen kilometers from Copacabana, Arthur Rubstein sat at the piano at Theatro Municipal to perform, in a world premiere (...).”<sup>57</sup>

The “Exhibition of the Centenary of Independence” had arrived in September

1922 and offered an extensive program for the population:

“But the exhibition was not limited to parties and pyrotechnics. That was just his popular side. In ten months of duration, it hosted 29 technical and scientific congresses, with the dissemination of research, presentation of new concepts and discussions on the need for regulation of various professions. It promoted a cycle of debates that ranged from livestock to heavy industry, from Pan-Americanism to world peace and from Spiritism to the protection of children.(...) In the commercial area, exchanges were signed, partnerships were discussed and contracts were signed, involving wood, ores, livestock, agricultural products, navigation and industrial implements.”(CASTRO,2019:149-150)

And what is the importance of the Exhibition for Rio de Janeiro and for Brazil? One of them was the appreciation of architects, the city changed the landscape with new constructions ordered or not:

“Parallel to the exhibition, the carioca had in his eyes another spectacle: that of Rio de Janeiro undergoing the greatest urban surgery in its history – even bigger than that of Pereira Passos at the beginning of the century. This time, it was as if the city was being disemboweled and re-stitched(...) At each intervention, the carioca left a skin behind and added a ring to the tail. But that was the fate of modern cities: they were never finished.

Rio de Janeiro had spent 1922 in political, social, economic and ideological upheaval. It had been a stage for war, conspiracy, heroism, scientific news and urban ebullition. In the chess that was the board, Brazil was played.”(CASTRO, 2019: 159 - 160).”

The central thesis of Castro’s book is to present Rio de Janeiro in the 1920s as “modern”, a way of distinguishing the city of São Paulo. In this conviction, Castro will reiterate this idea in different ways, for example, reconstructing

the moment when some of the artists who lived in Rio de Janeiro decided to participate in the Semana de 22 in São Paulo.



Castro redimensions Rio de Janeiro as “just modern” and attributes to São Paulo the modernist character: “It’s not that Rio de Janeiro had modernism in its own way. Rio de Janeiro was just modern. Although they generally agreed, not always the groups from the two cities, Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, were in agreement.”<sup>58</sup>



After 22, the decade progresses and Rio de Janeiro rises with skyscrapers, as well as dresses shorten. When he arrived at 30: “Rio de Janeiro woke up to a sound it was no longer

used to hearing – that of horseshoes clicking on the asphalt.”<sup>58</sup> Finally: “The 1920s were ending. And until the last year that was his due, he already came with another termination – 1930(...) Rio de Janeiro had done its part – it had moved Brazil forward.”<sup>61</sup>



Brazilian historiography will certainly have a challenge ahead, to prepare a review of Modernism in Brazil. A “Modernism” that took the São Paulo look to the rest of the country and the world. Who knows, after “Metrópole à Beira-Mar”, with the Rio de Janeiro of Ruy de Castro, in which personalities almost erased from the social memory and the history of Modernism, do we have the courage and eyes willing to see new possibilities of telling this episode of Brazilian culture?

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17. The pleasant reading of “*Metrópole...*” led us to know a little about the poet Rosalina Coelho Lisboa, winner of the 1st. ABL Award” with the book: “*Rito Pagão*”, a book of sonnets with a cover by Di Cavalcanti and edited by Monteiro Lobato, which was widely publicized and commented on in newspapers at the time as a “victory for feminism in Brazil”, according to the weekly “*Fon Fon*” of 1921, edition 033, page “No país das musas” (<http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/259063/38472>). E no CPDOC/FGV: <http://www.fgv.br/cpdoc/guia/detalhesfundo.aspx?sigla=RCL>. And it will be the first action derived from the research as we will present it at the SECOND MEETING OF WOMEN OF LETTERS PORTUGAL on 9/26/2020, *on line*, news about the author revealed in the 1920s, in a Panel coordinated by the researcher: “Women’s writing: yesterday, today and always” with two other researchers, namely: Prof.Dra. Anélia Pietrini (UFRJ); Prof.Dr. Dilercy Adler (UFMA) presenting their respective research productions. It is possible to see photographs of one of the copies of the aforementioned award-winning edition that I acquired at a used bookstore in São Paulo, available on my social network: FACEBOOK, sob codinome “capitunascimento”: [https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story\\_fbid=3535780176432330&id=10000011468320](https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=3535780176432330&id=10000011468320) CASTRO, the same;
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22. 2003:88;

23. CASTRO, the same.

24.

25. The same, p.156

26. Under the sign of “modernity” we find at a first glance at “*Bahia Ilustrada*” of 1919, we have the column referring to the remodeling of the magazine itself in order to keep up with the “new times”

-There is in the “*Diário de Pernambuco*” (Pernambuco Diary) in the Column on Aníbal Fernandes, the comment about the “provocative flavor of modernity in his chronicles...”. placed in Recife. In life he received distinctions in Paris and England. Further on in another occurrence of the phrase “modernity” we find a text by Gilberto Freyre on: “*A Visão Estética da guerra*”, of February 26, 1924. The text is a chronicle that gives news about a conference by Odilon Nestor that Freire attended critically, but in a respectful and friendly way.

-In “*Verde*” from MG, we find in 12/1927 a column by Ribeiro Couto on “what does modernity consist of?”, but there are five other occurrences on “the yearnings of modernity”, for example.

-In “*O Combate*” of June 1929, one of the columns informs the visit of Gustavo Barroso to Maranhão, specifically to São Luiz and quotes in a certain passage that the “vibrant modernity” of the city left the visitor enchanted.

27. CASTRO, The same;

28. RAMA, Angel. *A cidade das letras*. São Paulo, Boitempo, 2015.

29. CASTRO, 2019.

30. The same;

31. The expression: “*je-mèn-fichismo*” means: “I don’t care”; a certain “air blasé” in front of something, apparent indifference.

32. The Cine Ideal was located on the street: Rua da Carioca, number: 62, Downtown and ended its activities in 2014.

33. CASTRO, 2019:36;

34. The same, p.37;

35. (CASTRO, 2019: 41)

36. The same, p.42;

37. CASTRO, 2019, p.48;

38. The same, p.58;

39. The same, p.52;

40. Castro referred to: João do Rio de Janeiro, Medeiros and Albuquerque, Benjamin Costallat, Ronald de Carvalho, Raul de Leoni, Alceu Amoroso Lima, Théo-Filho, among others.

41. The same, p.53;

42. Nowadays, references from the South Zone of Rio de Janeiro with Rainha Elizabeth Street that preserves a bust of the queen in the block where Carlos Drummond de Andrade lived, a street that connects Copacabana to Ipanema. A few years ago, the Queen’s historic passage through Brazil was celebrated with a navy band, in front of the discreet monument on the corner of the street: Conselheiro Lafaiete, post 6 in the Atlantic district.

43. Inscription on the bench where the statue of Drummond was fixed is part of the poem: “*Mas viveremos*” by the book: *A rosa do povo* (1945). This Picture is available on the website [ <https://copacabana.com/galeria-da-estatua-do-carlos-drummond-de-andrade> ]

44. CASTRO, 2019, p.87;

45. The same,in the same place,p.76;
46. The same, in the same place,p.87;
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53. CASTRO,2019, p. 80;
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55. It refers to the movement of 18 from Fort Copacabana.
56. The same,in the same place,p.148;
58. CASTRO,2019:264
59. Search for the phrase: “CENTENARY”: Preparation for the “Exhibition of the Centenary of Independence” inRio, *FON-FON*.(RJ).1922,Edition 001, p.20. FBN digital collection: <http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/102237/20>
60. The same,p.418;
61. The same,426;
62. Filatelia: Selo histórico leiloado em 2016: <https://www.conradoleiloeiro.com.br/peca.asp?ID=2344297>