DOI: 10.18441/ibam.21.2021.77.71-95

The Future of the Past: The Representation of the First Brazilian Republic in the *World's Columbian Exposition* in Chicago, 1893

O Futuro do Passado: A Representação da Primeira República Brasileira na Exposição Universal de Chicago, 1893

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| **Abstract:** Four years after seizing power, the Republicans who founded the United States of Brazil mounted a representation at the *World's Columbian Exposition* in Chicago in 1893. Under the threat of a monarchist insurrection and in order to affirm their authority, the Republicans employed this exhibition to re-write the Brazilian imperial past and ascertain their political future. Relying on an analysis of design history, this article discusses exhibition displays –carriage from D. Pedro I framed as a bygone past, the installation of a golden pyramid to flaunt regional power, and a selection of Fine Arts that revealed the Republicans' desire for a particular social order– as points of access to unpack this first republican representation at World's Fairs, and the competing political and economic interests behind this show of *order and progress*.

Keywords: Chicago's *World's Columbian Exposition*; Brazil; First Republic; Design History; Fine Arts.

| **Resumo:** Apenas quatro anos após depor a Monarquia, os Republicanos que fundaram os Estados Unidos do Brasil montaram uma representação para a Exposição Universal Colombiana de Chicago em 1893. Ainda sob a ameaça de uma insurreição monarquista e em vias de afirmar sua autoridade, os Republicanos se utilizaram da exposição para reescreverem o

passado imperial brasileiro e projetar seu futuro político. O presente artigo, escrito sob a ótica da história do design, analisa mostruários de exposição –uma carruagem imperial pertencente a D Pedro I enquadrada como um passado remoto, a instalação de uma pirâmide dourada que exaltava poder regional, e pinturas que revelavam o desejo republicano por uma certa ordem social– como chaves de acesso para compreender essa primeira representação Republicana em Exposições Universais e os múltiplos interesses políticos e econômicos por trás da mostra de *ordem e progresso*.

Palavras-chave: Exposição Universal de Chicago; Brasil; Primeira República; História do Design; Belas-Artes.

INTRODUCTION

Any fairgoer entering the Mines and Mining Building of the *World's Columbian Exposition* would be hard-pressed to miss the display mounted by the United States of Brazil, for there it was, glittering under a translucent ceiling, a 15-feet high gold-leafed pyramid (fig. 1) (Buel 1894). On its surface an inscription boasted the weight and value of the gold extracted in the state of Minas Gerais between 1720 and 1820, the most profitable years of Brazil's colonial past. The pyramidal shape succeeded in attracting the fairgoer's attention. As with World's Fairs of this kind, any sense of order originally desired by exhibition organisers was made irrelevant by the sheer number of exhibits shipped from across the globe to be fitted into ever shrinking spaces. The Brazilian section 'sandwiched between the mineral displays of Idaho and California' (Buel 1894) could have gone unnoticed if it was not for the design of its main display, a shining and towering object broadcasting for all to see that Minas Gerais was Brazil's *El Dorado*.

The pyramid's scale and size were indexical to the volume of gold extracted in that period. Since in 1893 most international currencies were valued by the gold standard, the pyramid functioned as a true measurement of the wealth Minas Gerais had contributed to the world capital. This visible measurement of wealth not only aligned with the positivist belief in material evidence and scientific progress prevalent among Brazilian Republicans, but also evidenced to international entrepreneurs mining profitability in the country. Less readily obvious to contemporaries, the dates inscribed on the pyramid jump to the eyes of historians who can read the omission of the Brazilian imperial period (1822-1889) as a strategy to link the newly instated Republic to the nation's golden colonial past.

In this short discussion of a display designed to represent Brazil abroad in 1893, one can recognise the intricate interplay between design and the struggle for political power that makes International Exhibitions and World's Fairs so attractive to current scholars and historical actors alike.[1] Recent research has unearthed particular aspects

[1] Correspondence from Afonso Pena, then Minas Gerais governor, names George Chalmers (a Briton associated with the Morro Velho Mining Company) responsible for conceptualising the display. The pyramid was shown in the Preparatory Exhibition in Rio de Janeiro "to emphasize in the federal cap-

Fig. 1: *Brazilian display in the Mines and Mining Building, World's Columbian Exposition, 1983 (James W. Buel. 1894.* The Magic City: A Massive Portfolio of Original Photographic Views of the Great World's Fair and its Treasures of Art, including a Vivid Representation of the Famous Midway Plaisance. *St. Louis, Mo.: Historical Pub. Co., 1894).*

of the Brazilian representation in Chicago focussing on the history of sciences and electricity (Cesar and Cavalcanti 2016), geographic knowledge and the international projections of states like Bahia or Para (Assis 2017), or the ascension of the United States in global geopolitics (Gimenes 2017). Yet, little attention has been given to the

ital the enormous mineral wealth of Minas [Gerais] state, at the same time to convince many people, by the figures […], that the foreign mining companies give a lot of advantage in the country" (Arquivo Nacional (AN), AP14, 523-2004/13.54). In the aftermath of the regime change, Republicans from Minas Gerais demanded increased political participation in the new federation, and imparting economic importance to its resources, at home and abroad, became paramount.

concrete manifestations of political visions, ideas and conflict onto Brazilian displays and collections seen in Chicago. This paper contributes to this approach by unpacking how discourses were materialised and, in particular, by discussing through the collection of oil paintings sent by Brazil how patriarchal values resurged amidst political turmoil. Moreover, the historiography of Brazilian participations at World's Fairs, International Exhibitions and Expositions Universelles rarely addresses the passage from the Empire to the Republic and the cleavages in the national representation caused by political change. Four years after ousting the Brazilian Monarchy with a military coup, the Republicans seized the World's Columbian Exposition as an opportunity to ascertain their power and visions for Brazil. However, despite devising numerous strategies of exhibition display to enforce these views in 1893, the republican veneer cracks under a close scrutiny of the exhibition material coupled with archival documentary evidence. Internal conflicts among republican factions who fought to re-write the Brazilian imperial past and inscribe themselves in its future are revealed in the discussion that follows.

THE FIRST YEARS OF THE FIRST REPUBLIC: CONFLICTING NATIONAL PROJECTS

The invitation to participate in the exhibition arrived in 1892, a time when Brazil was in economic and political turmoil (Dean 1993, 222-225; Fausto 2001, 139-144). Marshal Manuel Deodoro da Fonseca, elected president in 1891, resigned months later after a failed attempt at dissolving the National Congress (Fausto 2001, 143). Long-standing disagreement with the Congress, disaffections with the civilian leaders of the *Partido Republicano* (Republican Party) and with his vice-president, Marshal Floriano Vieira de Araújo Peixoto, heightened Deodoro's political instability and incited regional dissent across the country (Fausto 2001, 144-146). In this climate, the Chicago invitation was accepted only after Floriano Peixoto became president backed by high-ranking navy officers.[2] Floriano Peixoto's willingness to accept the invitation in the midst of political conflicts can be understood precisely because of the disorder the nation had been through. The opportunity to exhibit at the *World's Columbian Exposition* was seized as a strategic opportunity to fight Floriano Peixoto's political corner and reinstate national control after the troubled period of the *governo provisório* (provisional government, 1889-1891). The task of organising a nation-wide exhibition representation can be compared to that of making an inventory and (re)organising the nation itself. As the imperial elite had presented their versions of a national project abroad in previous exhibitions (Barbuy 1999; Hardman 1988; Heizer 2001; Pesavento 1997; Rezende 2017, 2016, 2010; Schuster 2017, 2015a, 2015b, 2015c; Schwarcz 2006; Turazzi 1995) the recently installed Republicans used exhibitions to negotiate their views for a new Brazil.

[2] *The Graphic: Number Devoted to Brazil at the Columbian Exposition,* October 28, 1893, 3.

A domestic preparatory exhibition was held in the capital, and the twenty states of the federation were asked to contribute with their best regional production.[3] Regionally organised pre-exhibitions amassed and selected huge numbers of exhibits sometimes travelling thousands of kilometres before arriving in Rio.[4] That all exhibits had to pass through the federal capital for scrutiny, as during the Empire, nodded to the political importance of Rio to the discontent of the increasingly powerful states of São Paulo and Minas Gerais. These events, therefore, have to be understood in the historical context precipitated by the overthrow of the Empire.

After the military coup of November 15, 1889, the new Republic became mired in political uncertainty. The Republican Party incorporated disputing interests since its foundation in 1870 and remained united chiefly by their common opposition to the Empire (Fausto 2011, 127-128). Some urban party members supported slavery abolition, the broadening of the social base of the state and the extension of suffrage. Other party members were economically powerful landowners who turned to the republican cause demanding more political power and financial autonomy for their regions via decentralisation and federalism. Amidst this heterogeneous membership, the Republic was proclaimed by Rio's army garrison, "with little participation by the civilian leaders of the republican movement", as noted by José Murilo de Carvalho (1991, 142). The Brazilian army was in conflict with the imperial government since the Paraguayan War; to them, the end of the monarchy came as a response to the *questão militar* (military issue) (Carvalho 1991, 141-142).

Carvalho identifies four major political currents in the republican movement that formed alliances or opposed each other in a changing political game (Carvalho 1991, 141-142). In the first years of the Republic, each faction invented a founding allegory, elected a mythical leader, erected monuments, commissioned paintings, and promoted symbols that visually argued for their particular views for the Brazilian Republic. The first faction identified by Carvalho were the military who ousted D. Pedro II, known as the "Deodoristas", after Marshal Deodoro, acclaimed by his supporters as the "father of the new regime" (Carvalho 1991, 143). Lacking an ideology or a distinct national project, the military's claim for political significance rested on Deodoro's symbolic importance as the hero who eliminated the old regime, its economy centred on agriculture and slavery, and its political system controlled by lawyers. At the *World's Columbian Exposition*, this faction was represented by the heroic painting by Henrique Bernardelli depicting Deodoro during the proclamation.

Contrasting Deodoristas' military hero, Benjamin Constant was hailed 'the founder of the Republic' by positivists also associated with army officers (Carvalho 1991, 144-146). Constant, an engineer, taught at the *Academia Militar* (Army Academy) and the *Escola Superior de Guerra* (War College). His positivist convictions influenced

[3] *Diario de Noticias*, January 7, 1893, 1. All translations are the author's.

[4] *Diario de Noticias*, January 7, 1893, 1.

several young army officers and resulted in significant social and political reforms during the First Republic like the separation between church and state in 1890. Having given "an ideology to the new Republic", Constant was considered by his followers to be "the thinker […] the theoretician, the leader who had a historical version and a project for Brazil" (Carvalho 1991, 144-146). This project involved a republican dictatorship governed by enlightened men who, inspired by the laws of development, would lead Brazil out of its theological state (identified with the Empire) and into a positivist stage. For these urban dwellers with military or civilian technical training, science was a "legitimate power resource", and art "should be the idealization of reality and promote the civic cult of the family, the fatherland, and humanity" (Carvalho 1991, 147-148). Carvalho emphasises the positivists' inclination for a "manipulation of symbols" (1991, 152), a strategy clearly seen in the Brazilian Fine Arts exhibition sent to Chicago where a new social order and the role of women in it were imagined through paintings and sculptures.

The third republican faction, the *Jacobinos* (named after the French revolutionaries) was identified with radicals from "the urban middle sectors and the army's officer corps, often positivist-influenced or positivists" (Needell 1987, 241). Some army officers who drifted without a specific political ideology had allied themselves to these radical party members from Rio for whom the French Revolution produced the republican ideal. Political centralisation and authoritarian regimes appealed to both military and positivists who fiercely opposed their liberal party members from São Paulo. The alliance between positivists and *Jacobinos* peaked during Floriano Peixoto's mandate (1891-1894), also known as "the consolidator of the Republic" and "the Iron Marshal" (Fausto 2001, 290). This political alliance, albeit fleeting, was especially significant as it commanded Brazil's first representation as a republic at a World's Fair in the United States.

Liberal Party members formed the most organised and homogeneous faction of the Republican Party. Mostly uniting landowners and coffee growers from São Paulo, Rio Grande do Sul and Minas Gerais states, these Republicans opposed political centralisation. They demanded an increased level of regional self-government, supported free trade, and an export economy. The Liberals aspired to the United States' model of federalist democracy wherein state representatives have legislative and executive powers in a National Congress. Journalist Quintino Antônio Ferreira de Sousa Bocaiuva, the Republican Party's president at the time of proclamation, was the oligarchy's driving force. Whilst other republican leaders were considered "father", "founder" or "consolidator", Bocaiuva's founding republican manifesto from 1870 "asserted his role as […] responsible for the introduction of the new regime" (Carvalho 1991, 151-152). The Liberals' oligarchic republican model eventually prevailed among the political infighting. The Brazilian constitution from 1891 was heavily inspired by that of the United States, and political power came with the presidency of Prudente José de Moraes Barros (1894-1898), the *paulista* who became the first civilian republican president.

THE PREPARATORY EXHIBITION: A SHOW OF ABUNDANCE AND PATRIOTISM

Heterogeneous and conflicting as they were, the Republicans found in the opposition to the Empire a point of convergence and reconciliation. In the leading to the Preparatory Exhibition in 1892, thirty years of imperial participation in International Exhibitions and World's Fairs was characterised as a "spectacular apparatus that disguised under the richness of our splendidly gifted nature the poorness of the manufacturing industry."[5] In republican times, "this has no longer reason to exist".[6] Although much effort was dedicated to differentiate this first republican representation from imperial ones, the command of the Preparatory Exhibition relied on the expertise of Ladislau de Souza Mello e Netto, who worked as national and international exhibition commissioner since 1867 (Rezende 2010; Turazzi 1995, 151-153).[7] Netto embodied a parcel of the national elite –literate, scientifically trained– who remained influential even after the regime change (Needell 1988). Netto directed the *Museu Nacional* (National Museum) for nearly 20 years until May 1892, when he became the Preparatory Exhibition vice-president.[8]

The preparatory works lasted from May to December 1892.[9] Originally scheduled to open on 15 November 1892 to celebrate the fourth anniversary of the Republic, exhibits arrived from all parts of Brazil to be sorted, ordered, classified and mounted only a few days before the opening.[10] Due to what one commentator called "the old habit of Brazilians", or the tendency to leave things to the last minute, the opening was postponed twice.[11] The Preparatory Exhibition opened on 17 December, although in a chaotic state.[12]

The Preparatory Exhibition stretched across three sites. The main one, the former National Museum building, displayed the majority of general exhibits. Agricultural products, Amazonian timber, pedagogic works, furniture and shoes disputed the inappropriately small building space with displays of telegraphs and railways, minerals, anthropological exhibits, and a "perfectly and carefully arranged" coffee display from the *Centro da Lavoura e Commercio* (Commerce and Farming Centre), among several others.[13] Even after the opening, unopened boxes were found in corridors and exhib-

5 *Diario de Noticias*, "A Exposição de Chicago", October 8, 1892, 1.

6 *Diario de Noticias*, "A Exposição de Chicago", October 8, 1892, 1.

7 *Diario de Noticias*, 'Exposição preparatória no [M]useu Nacional', October 10, 1892, 3.

8 "Brazil's fair commissioners", *Chicago Daily Tribune*, April 3, 1893, 5; 'Victim of Chicago's climate', *New York Times*, June 18, 1893, 1.

9 The Graphic: Number Devoted to Brazil at the Columbian Exposition, October 28, 1893, 5.

10 *Diario de Noticias*, 'Exposição preparatória no [M]useu Nacional', October 10, 1892, 3.

11 "Exposição Colombiana", *Gazeta de Noticias*, November 19, 1892, 1.

12 It lasted for twenty days, December 17, 1892 to January 6, 1893. See *Diario de Noticias*, December 18, 1892, 1; 'Exposição Colombiana', *Gazeta de Noticias*, November 18, 1892, 1.

13 "Exposiçao Colombiana", *Gazeta de Noticias*, November 20, 1892, 1; 'O Brasil em Chicago', *Gazeta de Noticias*, January 13, 1893, 1; 'Exposição Preparatoria no Museu Nacional', *Diario de Noti-*

its were displayed in entrance halls and patios.[14] Crucially, the chaotic reception of exhibits precluded their sorting and ordering into classes of objects for comparison, overlooking one of the most fundamental principles of a competitive industrial exhibition. The second site, the *Arsenal da Marinha* (Navy Arsenal) hosted a more carefully designed exhibition containing naval technologies, machinery and models developed in Brazil since the war against Paraguay (1865-1870).[15] This exhibition singling out naval achievements resulted from the Navy's political importance ensured by Marshal Floriano Peixoto. On the third site, the *Escola Nacional de Bellas-Artes* (National School of Fine Arts), an art exhibition was organised by sculptor Rodolpho Bernardelli with paintings and sculptures especially selected to represent Brazilian life and history in Chicago. The *Bellas-Artes* exhibition was positively acclaimed in contemporary reports that claimed Brazil could assume "a first place in the arts" and compete side by side with "her American sisters" in this "branch of national activity where we will be dignifiedly represented".[16]

The call for participation in the Preparatory Exhibition may be partially responsible for the chaos in the main site. The front page of periodicals frequently published adverts asking Brazilians from across the country to send "a great number of products, objects, reports [and] photographs" to the exhibition organisers' address in Rio.[17] The Brazilian public was encouraged to dispatch "products, notices, and information" they thought "useful and pleasing", to "demonstrate the degree of activity of our industries and our development in civilisation".[18] Free transport for exhibits was offered.[19] Likewise, state exhibition commissioners and local authorities were expected to dispatch to Rio "natural and industrial" products from their regions.[20] This compilation system contrasted with the strict instructions issued by the Empire in the 1860s and 1870s for organising regional and national exhibitions (Rezende 2010). In 1892, it seems a new decentralised and patriotic method of inventorying the nation was forged. Brazilians were asked to mobilise themselves "in the name of their country" and contribute to the "formation of the whole that will represent the individuality of our

cias, October 10, 1892, 3; 'O Brazil em Chicago', *Jornal do Brasil*, December 18, 23, 24 and 27, 1892, 1. The *Centro da Lavoura* has expertise in organizing Brazilian coffee exhibitions abroad. They had been responsible for the frequent and successful Brazilian participation in dozens of exhibitions in the 1880s, when private initiative took from the state the power to promote Brazilian coffee abroad.

14 The chronic problem regarding a proper space for national exhibitions lingered from the first exhibition in 1861 until 1904, when the Brazilian pavilion built in St Louis was re-built in Rio to become a national exhibition building. However, it was never used as an exhibition space.

15 "Exposição Colombiana", *Gazeta de Noticias*, November 20, 1892, 1; 'O Brazil em Chicago', *Jornal do Brasil*, January 8, 1893, 1.

16 "Exposição", *O Paiz*, December 17, 1892, 1; *Jornal do Brasil*, January 3, 1893, 1; 'A Exposição', *Diario de Noticias*, October 8, 1892, 1.

17 "Exposição preparatória no Museu Nacional", *Diario de Noticias*, October 10, 1892, 3.

18 "Exposição preparatória no Museu Nacional", *Diario de Noticias*, October 10, 1892, 3.

19 "Exposição preparatória no Museu Nacional", *Diario de Noticias*, October 10, 1892, 3.

20 "Exposição preparatória no Museu Nacional", *Diario de Noticias*, October 10, 1892, 3.

fatherland".[21] These public calls to citizen participation, however, offered little or no logistical information: no submission was given, no object specification was made, and no preferred products were mentioned. In another populist move, one newspaper published that even objects that escaped exhibition classification were welcome.[22] Not only could anyone send anything for free for the attention of exhibition organisers in Rio, but also exhibitors like the *Inspetoria Geral das Estradas de Ferro* (Railway General Inspectorship), the states of Pernambuco and Santa Catarina bypassed the Preparatory Exhibition and sent their contributions directly to Chicago.[23] Organizational chaos had major implications for the Brazilian commission, as we will soon see.

Amidst clutter and shortcomings, the Preparatory Exhibition opened as a festive and patriotic affair. Military bands played and the museum building was entirely covered in flags from Brazil and the United States, and other sorts of ornaments.[24] "Representatives of all social classes were present", and in particular, "a great number of ladies" who were invited to submit exhibits that proved "the progress of women in Brazil".[25] United States' minister and diplomats, Brazilian ministers, Rio's acting mayor, highly-ranked authorities and exhibition commissioners completed the show.[26] Brazil's abundance, a rhetoric widely promoted in imperial exhibitions, was evoked again. In his opening speech, Netto exalted the abundance of Brazil's productive forces and praised the large number of exhibits from almost every state.[27] What was displayed in the main site, he bragged, was just a fraction of submissions. Twice as many exhibits were in stock or in transit to Rio. "Brazil", Netto proudly assured the crowd, "will not go unnoticed in Chicago".[28]

"We will not be the last, but also will not be the first" –with these words the *Jornal do Brasil* sentenced Brazil's performance in the *World's Columbian Exposition*.[29] Opposing Netto's optimism, the newspaper predicted that even among South American nations Brazil could not expect a "first place in this great industrial fair".[30] Lack of time and resources, almost total absence of privately organised initiatives, and problems

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21 "Exposição preparatória no Museu Nacional", *Diario de Noticias*, October 10, 1892, 3. In Portuguese, *pátria*, or fatherland, is also the root word for *patriotismo*, or patriotism.

22 "Exposição preparatória no Museu Nacional", *Diario de Noticias*, October 10, 1892, 3.

23 "O Brasil em Chicago", *Gazeta de Noticias*, January 16, 1893, 2; 'Exposição', *O Paiz*, December 18, 1892, 1.

24 "O Brazil em Chicago", *Jornal do Brasil*, December 18, 1892, 1; 'Exposição Preparatória', *Jornal do Commercio*, December 18, 1892, 3.

25 "Exposição Preparatória", *Jornal do Commercio*, December 18, 1892, 3; 'Exposição de Chicago', *Revista Illustrada*, October 2, 1892, original emphasis.

26 'O Brasil em Chicago', *Gazeta de Noticias*, 29 January 1893, 1. Marshal Peixoto was not present at the inauguration, but made a visit to scrutinise the 'industrial competition' before opening. See also "Exposição Colombiana", *Gazeta de Noticias*, 20 November 1892, 1.

27 "Exposição preparatória", *Jornal do Commercio*, 18 December 1892, 3; 'O Brazil não se Apresentará Despercebido em Chicago'.

28 "Exposição preparatória", *Jornal do Commercio*, December 18, 1892, 3.

29 "O Brazil em Chicago", *Jornal do Brasil*, January 8, 1893, 1.

30 "O Brazil em Chicago", *Jornal do Brasil*, January 8, 1893, 1.

concerning the immense national territory were to blame.[31] The *Gazeta de Notícias* also demonstrated frustration with the republican attempt at totalizing the national productive forces in one show. The exhibits, they published, "cannot give the exact idea of what Brazil is capable".[32]

Beyond organisation and representativeness, other telling aspects of the Preparatory Exhibition remained unquestioned by contemporary commentators. If exhibit arrangement, information, classification, comparison and ranking were not foregrounded by exhibition organisers, what were then their primary concerns and interests? Why an exhibition held under the Iron Marshal's strong government and the republican motto of *ordem e progresso* (order and progress) did not convey either? Netto's opening speech hinted at it, a show of abundance. At the Preparatory Exhibition, abundance was not only a strategy to get closer to what Needell calls a desired Europeanised culture (1999, 7). "Abundance" was framed, employed and displayed as the key working principle of Brazil's participation in capitalist expansionism. The show of plenty, even if uncomplimentary and disordered, was a show of power, possession, success, and progress, especially during a period of political transition and struggle. The Preparatory Exhibition turned into an opportunity to galvanize national objects, subjects, and productive forces in a symbolic cohesive act. Patriotic pride, celebration of the new regime, and the reclaim over national abundance explain why it went ahead against all the odds.

REPUBLICANS SET CAMP IN CHICAGO

While Netto led the show of abundance in Rio, Marshal José Simeão de Oliveira, a member of the Supreme Military Court and former Secretary of War, coordinated national interests from Chicago.[33] In a historical period dominated by *Jacobinos* militaries allied to positivists, the appointment of scientists, army or navy officials to order and represent the nation should not come as a surprise. Liberal professionals and scientists managed specialist sections in the various exhibition buildings that comprised the *World's Columbian Exposition*, whereas military personnel occupied the higher posts in the exhibition hierarchy (Brazilian Commission 1893). Of the approximately twenty exhibition commissioners working in Chicago, seven were military men, two represented the Fine Arts, one was the women's representative, and the remainder were engineers, medical doctors, and political authorities (Brazilian Commission 1893). "The [Brazilian] commission includes some of the leading scientific and professional men of the country", informed the New York

31 "O Brazil em Chicago", *Jornal do Brasil*, January 8, 1893, 1.

32 "O Brasil em Chicago", *Gazeta de Noticias,* December 24, 1892, 1.

33 "Brazil's fair commissioners", *Chicago Daily Tribune*, April 3, 1893, 5; 'Victim of Chicago's climate', *New York Times*, June 18, 1893, 1.

Times.[34] Among them, the sculptor responsible for the Fine Arts preparatory exhibition, Rodolpho Bernardelli, and Carlos Gomes, the greatly acclaimed opera composer (Ministério da Agricultura 1894).

Marshal Oliveira arrived in the United States as President of the Brazilian International Commission in June 1892, and worked for ten months before other commissioners arrived.[35] Evidence suggests that Oliveira worked alone overseeing the national pavilion construction, securing space for Brazil in the various exhibition buildings, coordinating the dispatch and arrival of exhibits, and liaising with commissioners back home.[36] Evidence also suggests that Oliveira's instructions to exhibition commissioners in Brazil were seldom followed and that communication broke down on many occasions. Writing to Netto, Oliveira exposed difficulty in communicating with Brazil, informed that the spaces secured in exhibition buildings were smaller than originally requested, and that negotiations for space in the Fine Arts building were ongoing.[37] Oliveira also requested that commissioners limited the number of exhibits sent from Brazil to avoid high transport costs.[38]

Oliveira was not heard; the ambition to show abundance prevailed. After the Preparatory Exhibition closed, "500 tons of exhibits, 5,300 packages, 2,220 bags of coffee, 128 cases of wine, 21 cases of minerals, 87 packages of wood, 41 cases of paintings and statues, and 58 cases of machinery" found their way to Chicago.[39] The clutter and disorganization seen in Rio was transposed to Chicago. According to the *New York Times*, Oliveira fretted over the Brazilian exhibition for months.[40] The chaos was reported as a contributor to Oliveira's death in June 1893.[41] "Nervous strain" and "overwork" caused by "the incompleteness of things" in the Brazilian representation were identified as the key *causa mortis*.[42] Eager to transform the case into a drama plot involving heroism and purposefulness, the North-American press was quick to associate Oliveira's death with mankind's struggle to understand, classify and organise

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34 "Brazilians don't like it", *New York Times*, April 4, 1893, 2.

35 "Brazil's fair commissioners", *Chicago Daily Tribune*, April 3, 1893, 5; 'Victim of Chicago's climate', *New York Times*, June 18, 1893, 1.

36 "Brazil's fair commissioners", *Chicago Daily Tribune*, April 3, 1893, 5.

37 "O Brasil em Chicago", *Gazeta de Noticias*, December 24, 1892, 1; 'O Brasil em Chicago', *Gazeta de Noticias*, January 13, 1893, 1; 'O Brasil em Chicago', *Gazeta de Noticias*, January 16, 1893, 2.

38 "O Brasil em Chicago", *Gazeta de Noticias*, January 29, 1893, 1.

39 "Brazil's fair commissioners", *Chicago Daily Tribune*, April 3, 1893, 5; 'Brazil's exhibit has arrived', *Chicago Daily Tribune*, April 22, 1893, 1. Both articles mention 500 tons of exhibits, 5,300 packages, 2,220 bags of coffee, 'coffee enough […] to give every visitor […] a taste of the luscious beverage', 128 cases of wine, 21 cases of minerals, 87 packages of wood, 41 cases of paintings and statues, and 58 cases of machinery.

40 "Victim of Chicago's Climate", *New York Times*, June 18, 1893, 1; 'He Broke Down at Chicago', *New York Times*, June 21, 1893, 5.

41 "Victim of Chicago's Climate", *New York Times*, June 18, 1893, 1; 'He Broke Down at Chicago', *New York Times*, June 21, 1893, 5.

42 "Victim of Chicago's Climate", *New York Times*, June 18, 1893, 1; 'He Broke Down at Chicago', *New York Times*, June 21, 1893, 5.

the world around them.[43] "He had a splendid constitution", described the *New York Times*, "but the demands he made upon it were too great for even his robust nature".[44] Oliveira was depicted as the handsome, robust, brave military who succumbed under the Herculean task of giving shape and form to an ocean of exhibits found in a "crude state".[45] These reports painted a dim picture of Brazil, disorganised and deadly inefficient, a picture that certainly challenged the progressive image the "distinct Brazilians" in Chicago wanted to convey.

Admiral Joaquim Antonio Cordovil Maurity assumed the presidency of the Brazilian exhibition commission and coordinated a representation of approximately 2,400 exhibitors at the *World's Columbian Exposition* (Brazilian Commission 1893, 15-145).[46] Although more than half of the Brazilians exhibited at the Agriculture Building –a ratio seen in previous exhibitions (Rezende 2016)– it was the "fifty magnificent paintings and a number of statues" displayed at the Fine Arts Building and the Brazilian pavilion that differentiated this first republican representation.[47] This "intellectual representation", to quote how a series of newspaper articles, framed the republican investment in the Arts, included 109 Fine Arts exhibitors –showing paintings, sculptures, drawings and engravings– and 400 Liberal Arts exhibitors –showing books, music, photography, and drama (Brazilian Commission 1893, 103-133).[48] As the remainder of this article will argue, the selection of artworks taken to Chicago aimed at rewriting Brazil's past and incorporating a seemingly long-standing republican narrative into Brazilian history. The positivist strategy of showing republicanism as the inevitable political stage for national development after the Empire was sustained by another particular display shown in the Transportation Building, which will finalise the discussion below.

CHANGING THE NATIONAL PAST

Chicago fairgoers nearly missed the Brazilian Fine Arts representation carefully selected by Rodolpho Bernardelli during the Preparatory Exhibition at Rio's *Escola Nacional de Bellas-Artes* (National School of Fine Arts).[49] Upon arriving in the United States,

43 "Victim of Chicago's Climate", *New York Times*, June 18, 1893, 1.
44 "He Broke Down at Chicago", *New York Times*, June 21, 1893, 5.
45 "Victim of Chicago's Climate", *New York Times*, June 18, 1893, 1.
46 The Graphic: Number Devoted to Brazil at the Columbian Exposition, October 28, 1893, 5.
47 "Brazil's Fair Commissioners", *Chicago Daily Tribune*, April 3, 1893, 5. According to the Brazilian Commission report, Brazil had 1,211 exhibitors in the Agriculture department and 1,178 exhibitors elsewhere.
48 The Brazilian "intellectual representation" was discussed on the front pages of the *Jornal do Brasil* from December 29, 1892 until approximately January 3, 1893; 'O Brazil em Chicago', *Jornal do Brasil*, December 29, 1892, 1.
49 "O Brazil em Chicago", *Jornal do Brasil*, January 3, 1893, 1; 'A Exposição', *Diario de Noticias*, October 8, 1892, 1.

Brazilian commissioners found that the space originally allocated for Brazil in the Fine Arts Building had been withdrawn.[50] Indignation followed. Some commissioners wished to display the artworks in the national pavilion; others wanted to leave the *World's Columbian Exposition* as a protest for the unjust treatment.[51] Size became a strong argument to regain Brazil's Fine Arts Building space, although not the size of the Brazilian art exhibition but the size and alleged importance of the nation. "Space has been assigned to small European countries", a commissioner complained, "Italy and Switzerland, and many of the smaller nations on that side of the ocean, are recognized, while Brazil, which is an American nation, and which has close and friendly relations with the United States, is shut out. We do not like this".[52] The commissioners' protests worked, and Brazil was granted some space in the Fine Arts Building whilst the remaining artworks, including most of history paintings, were displayed in the national pavilion.[53]

The artworks selected to represent Brazil in Chicago encapsulated various republican messages, even their quarrels through manipulation of symbols and the making of a civic pantheon. Associations between Rodolpho Bernardelli and the leaders of the republican movement further reinforce the hypothesis that a visual argument with positivist and military ambitions was manufactured for the *World's Columbian Exposition*. Bernardelli, well known for expressing his political ability in either the Empire or Republic, had benefited from a friendship with Don Pedro II and enjoyed state patronage to study at European art schools in the 1860s (Weisz 2007). The advent of the Republic did not jeopardise Bernardelli's privileges: his personal relationship with Benjamin Constant guaranteed him a post at the newly reformed National School of Fine Arts, which Bernardelli directed for 25 years (Weisz 2007). Bernardelli was appointed Fine Arts chief Exhibition commissioner around October 1892, a moment considered late by contemporary commentators who judged he would have "very little time to develop his section".[54] The republican construction and manipulation of national symbols, however, were advanced by that time, as discussed by Carvalho (1990) and Lúcia Lippi Oliveira (1989). Bernardelli had a plethora of artworks to select for Chicago and to represent at least three causes significant for the Republicans in power around 1893. The first cause coincided with the inscription of republican events and myths into a national history narrative to ascertain the Republic's political validity, if not inevitability. The second cause, intertwined with the first, referred to the aforementioned conflicts and factions of the Republican Party and the hailing of their leaders as heroes. The last cause, more

50 "Brazilians don't like it", *New York Times*, April 4, 1893, 2; Evidence does not disclose why but I infer it may be related to the breakdown in communication discussed above.

51 "Brazil Fair Commissioners Indignant", *Chicago Daily Tribune*, April 4, 1893, 5.

52 "Brazilians don't like it", *New York Times*, April 4, 1893, 2, and 'Brazil Fair Commissioners Indignant', *Chicago Daily Tribune*, April 4, 1893, 5.

53 The Graphic: Number Devoted to Brazil at the Columbian Exposition, October 28, 1893, 20-21.

54 "A Exposição" and "A Exposição de Chicago", *Diario de Noticias*, October 8, 1892, 1.

implicit but no less significant, related to the perceived role and representation of women in the new Republic.

Five oil paintings favoured the inscription of republican events and myths in national history making. The large canvas *A Primeira Missa no Brasil* (The First Mass in Brazil), painted by Victor Meirelles in 1860, is a mark of Brazilian visual romanticism already exhibited by the Empire at the *Centennial International Exhibition* of Philadelphia in 1876 (Rezende 2010; Schuster 2015a). Following the history painting tradition, this oil proposes a myth of foundation whereby the arrival of the Portuguese in Brazil in 1500 was met with agreeability by the indigenous populations. Its romanticised version of "discovery" depicts indigenous families as docile and obliging next to the Portuguese who consecrated the new found land. As the *World's Columbian Exposition* commemorated the "discovery" of the American continent, the Republicans reutilised the *A Primeira Missa no Brasil* oil to reinstate a nationalist and Western-centric version of historical events. This painting's re-display in Chicago also placed the new regime as the most recent political stage in the development of the Brazilian civilisation (Rezende 2005).

Four other oil paintings completed the narrative of progress and development towards a Republican nation: *Os Bandeirantes*, *A Proclamação da Independencia* (The Proclamation of Independence), *O Martírio de Tiradentes* (The Martyrdom of Tiradentes) and *A Proclamação da Republica* (The Proclamation of the Republic). *Os Bandeirantes* (c.1889) by Henrique Bernardelli, Rodolpho Bernardelli's younger brother, narrates a theme unexplored in Brazilian culture until recently. During the colonial period, the *bandeirantes* were explorers hired in most cases by the São Paulo province to hunt runaway slaves. In Brazilian folklore and history, they became associated with the expansion of the Brazilian inland and the finding of mineral wealth. The pictorial depiction of the *bandeirantes* in 1893 represents the political ascension of the São Paulo state in the national scenario, a movement that would pinnacle a year later with Prudente de Moraes. For the liberal *paulista* oligarchy, the *bandeirantes* were celebrated as local, brave, rural heroes. Their image spoke of the expansion of national frontiers not only outwards but inwards as the São Paulo region grew in power and threatened the status quo identified with Rio de Janeiro.

A Proclamação da Independencia (The Proclamation of Independence), painted by Pedro Américo in 1888, also reframed a national historical event with a regional slant. This oil was sent by the São Paulo state exhibition commission and not well received in the Preparatory Exhibition in Rio due to domestic political tensions.[55] *A Proclamação da Independencia* produces an allegory for the moment when Portuguese Prince Regent Pedro I declared Brazil's independence from Portugal by the margins of the Ipiranga River in São Paulo. Also known as *O Brado do Ipiranga* (The Cry from Ipiranga) the inclusion of this painting in the Brazilian representa-

[55] "O Brazil em Chicago", *Jornal do Brasil*, January 5, 1893, 1.

tion suggests a *paulista* relevance in the process of independence that explains Rio's disapproval.

Tiradentes, as painted in 1893 by Aurélio de Figueiredo in *O Martírio de Tiradentes* (The Martyrdom of Tiradentes), became a heroic, regional figure hailed to recognition and prestige with the advent of the Republic. Joaquim José da Silva Xavier was an eighteenth-century second lieutenant from the Minas Gerais province, whose occasional work as a dentist gave him the nickname *Tiradentes* (tooth-puller). In 1789, during the Brazilian gold rush, Tiradentes led a group of discontents against Portuguese mercantilist exploitation of his province. His plot to proclaim a republic in Minas Gerais was unveiled; Tiradentes was sentenced to death, hanged and quartered in Rio in 1792. In a case of spectacular display of power and terror, the Portuguese crown paraded Tiradentes' remains between Rio and Vila Rica, the capital of the Minas Gerais province, where his head was left on public display. For some factions, Tiradentes became an anti-monarchy civilian myth that conveyed the idea that republicanism had been desired by the Brazilian people for a long time (Carvalho 1990; 1991, 151), while Tiradentes' rural and regional background pleased the Minas Gerais and São Paulo oligarchies. For the positivists he became "the precursor of independence" and was "placed in the civic pantheon of the nation" with Bonifácio and Constant (Carvalho 1991, 146). This "civic trinity", states Carvalho, "symbolized the advancement of Brazilian society toward its historical destiny", the positivist society (Carvalho 1991, 146).

Finally, the painting *A Proclamação da Republica* (The Proclamation of the Republic), painted by Henrique Bernardelli (c. 1890), imagined Marshal Deodoro entering the imperial courts and ousting the Monarchy under the acclamation of his officials. For the military in power in 1893 this painting established a different national hero and another candidate to the republican pantheon. The composition shows Deodoro in a heroic combative pose in the foreground while Constant and Bocaiuva act as coadjutants in the background. As Carvalho points out, since those first years this painting "has become the standard representation of the proclamation of the Republic" present in every schoolbook; a positive and long-lasting association between republicanism and militarism in Brazil (Carvalho 1991, 145).

While the military, landowners and positivists fought a symbolic battle over diverging mythical and historical narratives, three artworks by the Bernardelli brothers suggested cohesion in the roles and representations ascribed to women in the new Republic. When called to participate in the Preparatory Exhibition women were often described as *compatriotas* (compatriots) and encouraged to secure the place that "with all dignity, relates to the Brazilian women in the progress of universal civilisation".[56] Women, however, were not free to choose what to exhibit in Rio or Chicago. Newspaper adverts announced what was expected: "needlework, lace, ornaments made of fish scale and feather, children's clothing, cushion covers, among other homemade,

[56] "A Exposição de Chicago", *Diario de Noticias*, October 8, 1892, 1.

crafted artefacts".[57] Martha Sesselberg, appointed chief commissioner for the Brazilian women's exhibition, corroborated the role and representation to be put on display: "the women of Brazil, in character and education, are […] home loving, home-abiding".[58]

The committee members responsible for the Preparatory Exhibition and the Brazilian women's section in Chicago were invariably related to male exhibition commissioners.[59] This reflects what Luce Irigaray (1985) discusses in her Marxist analysis of women as exchange commodities in a patriarchal society. Irigaray points out that women can only be "wives, daughters and sisters [who] have value only in that they serve as the possibility of […] relations among men" (Irigaray 1985, 172), as in the *World's Columbian Exposition*, where women exhibitors featured only superficially whilst agency and self-expression were continually denied to them. Women, even as makers, designers and exhibitors, were to conform to a "home loving" or "home-abiding" role, and were given the care of their families in a society in which "all the modalities of productive work that are recognized, valued, and rewarded […] are men's business" (Irigaray 1985, 171). As exhibits, the representation of women was no less prescriptive and oppressive. The three artworks by the Bernardelli brothers that represented and ascribed women's societal roles were *Maternidade* (Motherhood) (fig. 2), *Messalina* (fig. 3), and the sculpture *Cristo e a Adúltera* (Christ and the Adulteress), which will be analysed alongside the painting *Marabá* (fig. 4), also exhibited in Chicago.

In the oil *Maternidade*, Henrique Bernardelli explored the theme of motherhood by depicting a peasant woman nursing a child. The semi-veiling of her eyes and face makes her unknown. The artwork's title suggests H. Bernardelli's attempt to paint a universal mother and to impose a sort of Linnaean Systema Naturae classification on her. Art historian Camila Dazzi calls this representation an "indeterminate temporality" to be attributed to any place and woman (Dazzi 2006). H. Bernardelli painted *Maternidade* in Italy in the mid-1880s. Dazzi discusses his inspiration from contemporary Italian artworks also exploring motherhood as the redemption of women's sins (Dazzi 2006). This cultural milieu also inspired H. Bernardelli to paint *Messalina* a few years later. Named after the roman empress Valeria Messalina, known, condemned and executed for her unconventional sexual behaviour, this painting has striking similarities with *Maternidade* in composition and meaning. Messalina's eyes are darkened, and her face barely discernible. The composition frames her limp body ambiguously, halfway between satiation and lifelessness –a reminder of the dangerous linkages between womanly pleasures and death. Dazzi notes how this myth's late nineteenth-century popularity belongs to a global "moralist crusade, which through literary, medical or philosophical works, intended to reaffirm the women's role as spouse and mother" (Dazzi 2006).

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57 "A Exposição de Chicago", *Diario de Noticias*, October 8, 1892, 1.

58 The Graphic: Number Devoted to Brazil at the Columbian Exposition, October 28, 1893, 6.

59 "Comite das Senhoras", *Diario de Noticias*, October 4, 1892, 3.

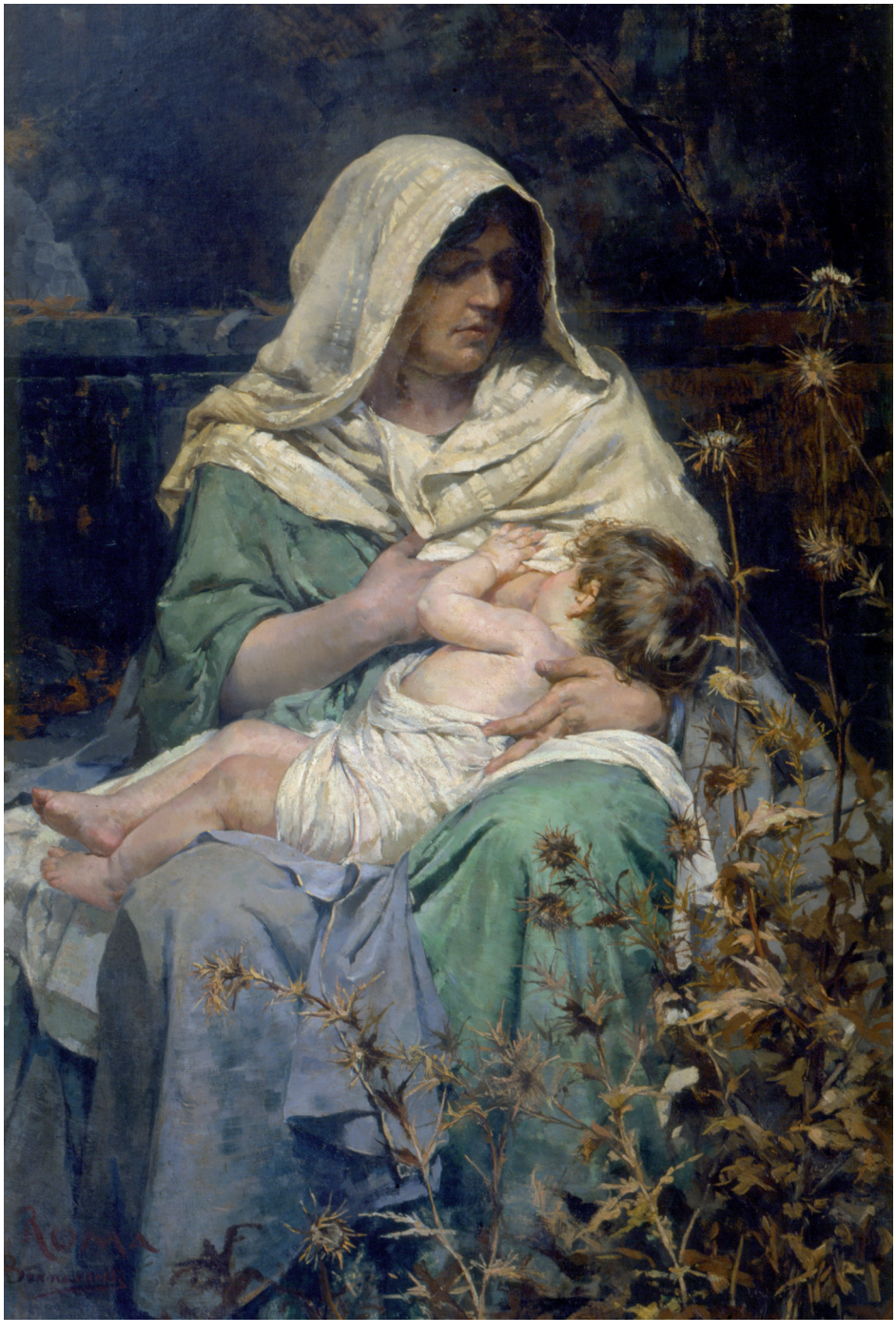

Fig. 2: *Henrique Bernardelli (Valparaiso, Chile 1857-Rio de Janeiro, Brazil 1936),* Maternidade*, circa 1885. Oil on canvas, 150 × 100 cm. Coleção Museu Nacional de Belas Artes/Ibram/Ministério do Turismo. Photo: César Barreto.*

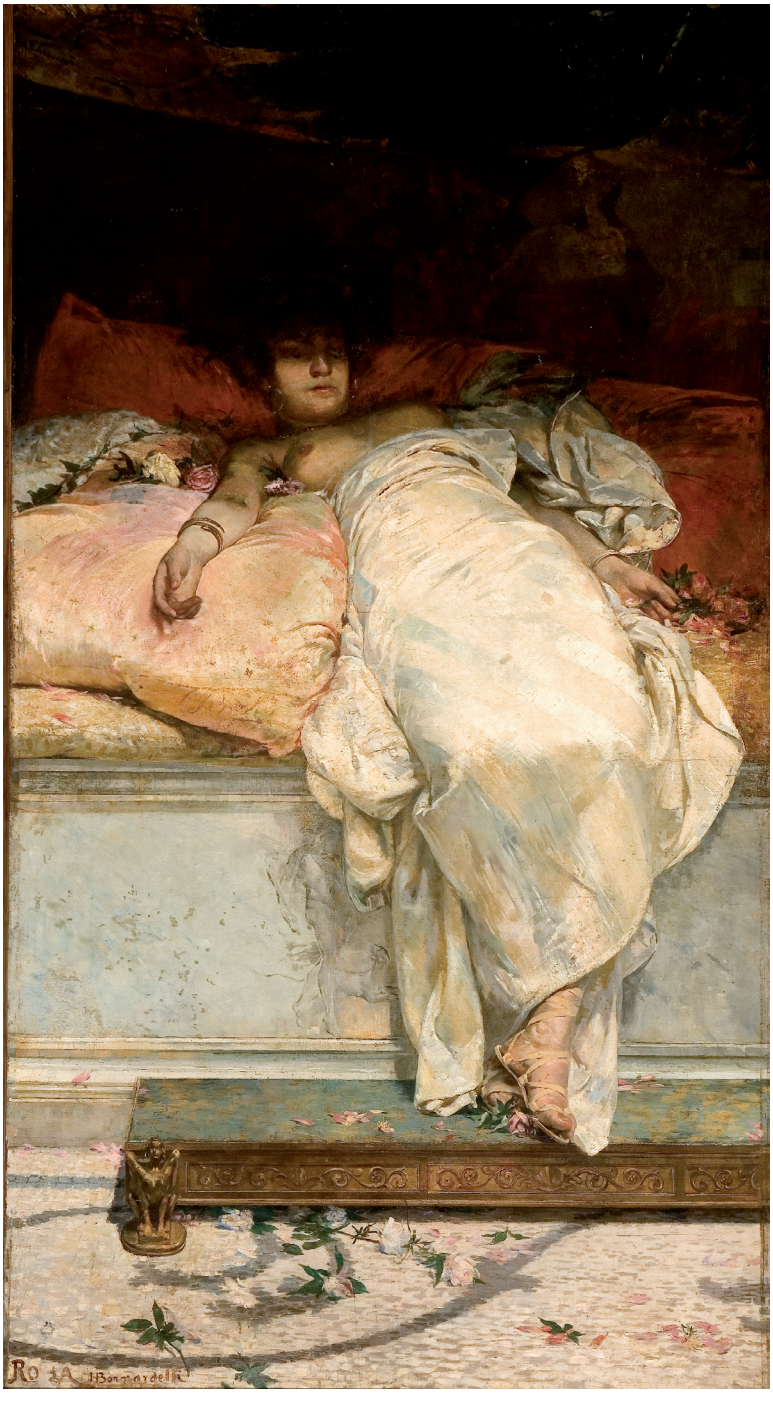

Fig. 3: *Henrique Bernardelli (Valparaiso, Chile 1857-Rio de Janeiro, Brazil 1936),* Messalina*, 1878 / 1886. Oil on canvas, 207 x 115 cm. Coleção Museu Nacional de Belas Artes/Ibram/Ministério do Turismo. Photo: Jaime Acioli.*

At the *World's Columbian Exposition*, *Maternidade* and *Messalina* conjoined messages. At one level, these paintings remind us that female body representation belonged to men (painters), in a fitting example of what Irigaray calls the exchange of women in a gender economy (Irigaray 1985, 170-191). At another level, these paintings ascribed a twofold role for women in patriarchal societies as either mothers or prostitutes. According to Irigaray, "a commodity –a woman– is divided into two irreconcilables 'bodies': her 'natural' body and her socially valued, exchangeable body, which is a particularly mimetic expression of masculine values" (Irigaray 1985, 185-186). These paintings exhibited reflect such duality:

> As mother, woman remains on the side of (re)productive nature. […] Mothers, reproductive instruments marked with the name of the father […], must be private property, excluded from exchange. […] Their responsibility is to maintain the social order without intervening so as to change it (Irigaray 1985, 185-186).

Whilst mothers are excluded from the exchange dynamics of the patriarchal society, prostitutes are "explicitly condemned" but "implicitly tolerated" as they signify a commodity's use-value (Irigaray 1985, 186). In Irigaray's analysis, a third role, albeit

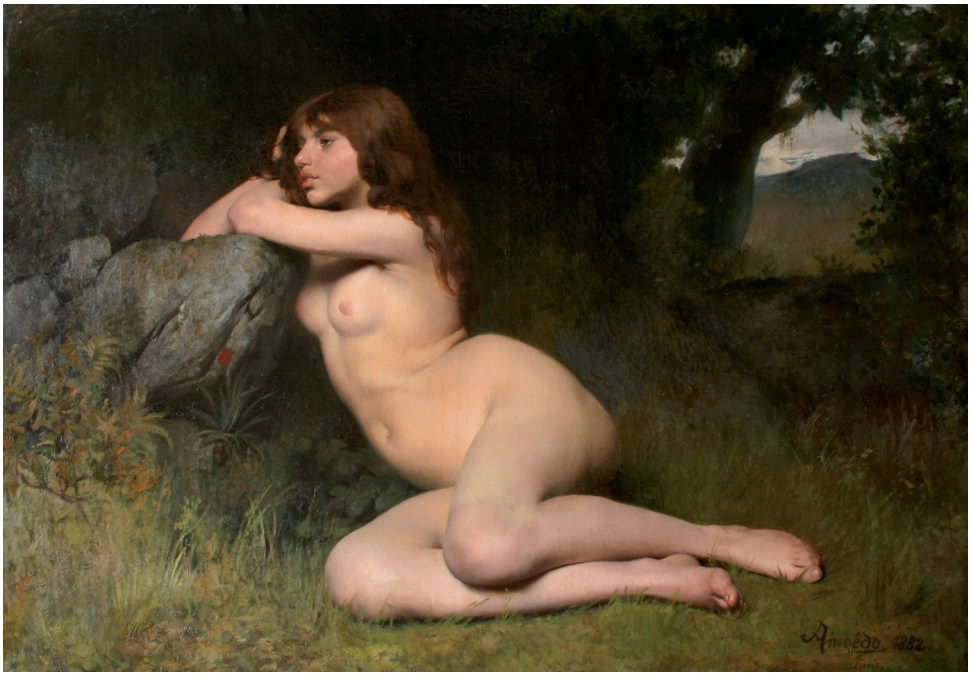

Fig. 4: *Rodolfo Amoedo (Salvador, BA 1857-Rio de Janeiro, RJ 1941),* Marabá*, 1882. Oil on canvas, 120 x 170 cm. Coleção Museu Nacional de Belas Artes/Ibram/Ministério do Turismo. Photo: Acervo Mnba/Ibram/Ministério do Turismo.*

a transitional one, can also be ascribed onto women's exchange value: that of a virgin or "pure exchange value" (Irigaray 1985, 186). Tellingly, a characterisation of virginity was part of the Brazilian Fine Arts exhibition sent to Chicago in the painting *Marabá* (1882) by Rodolpho Amoedo. The composition of *Marabá*, a mixed-race woman sung by poet Gonçalves Dias, conjures equally the idea of virginity and that of a new Brazilian race. Whilst in *Maternidade* the woman's body is fulfilled by procreation and her sins redeemed by motherhood, in *Messalina*, sexual pleasures lead to shame and death. The narrative of womanhood, sexuality and shame was further compounded by a final artwork exhibited in Chicago, also created by Rodolpho Bernardelli. In *Cristo e a Adúltera* (Christ and the Adulteress), a marble group from 1881, R. Bernardelli sculpted the biblical passage that tells the story of a married woman who seeks forgiveness for her sins. This artwork epitomised the precepts conveyed by the previous two: that a woman was to obey the laws of men. The patriarchal representation of the Brazilian society during an unstable political period cannot be considered coincidental. Men in need to exert control, over the nation and over gradually emancipating females, reinforced "the constitution of women as 'objects'" to "emblematize the materialisation of relations among men" (Irigaray 1985, 184-185). The possession and exchange of women's representation in exhibitions was a compelling and recurrent way of reiterating the power of male commissioners.

DEMOTING PAST PATHS

The Chicago fairgoer who would be hard-pressed to miss the 15-feet high gold-leafed pyramid in the Mines and Mining building would most likely overlook the Brazilian object displayed in the Transport Building, for there it was, battered in a corner, a carriage used during the first reign of the Brazilian Empire (fig. 5). *The Columbian Gallery*, one of several illustrated albums issued by interested parties in the *World's Columbian Exposition* and responsible for its global readership and dissemination, framed the carriage as an "ancient […] relic" (Werner Company 1894). How, then, was the imperial carriage placed within the carefully selected narratives of past glories mounted by the Republicans to fight for their political future?

Displays of transportation were one of the defining aspects of the *World's Columbian Exposition*, an exhibition that celebrated the moment when European caravels arrived in the new continent and changed the course of humanity. The imperial carriage display was inserted in a large series of exhibits of modes of transport, old and new, used to evidence human movement and development over the centuries. These exhibits and their techniques of display promoted an evolutionary linear view of progress that reinforced the exhibition premise that European enlightenment and expansionism diffused civilisation across the globe, especially in the Americas (Werner Company 1894). This narrative was designed through displaying models of Viking ships used in the barbarian invasions that formed Europe, a "primitive train" used in New

York in the 1830s to illustrate "the evolution of the modern space-destroying locomotive", and a 1850s' prairie schooner used by Western pioneers to conquer the plains of North America (Werner Company 1894). Foregrounding this narrative of colonialist emancipation and conquest were the replicas of the three sailing ships –Santa María, Pinta and Niña– commanded by Columbus then moored in the spectacular basins of the White City, the nickname given to the exhibition premises for its white-cladded, Beaux-Arts architecture and planning (Harris *et al*. 1993).

Fig. 5: *Carriage from the first reign of the Brazilian Empire, Transport Building,* World's Columbian Exposition*, 1983 (Werner Company. 1894.* The Columbian Gallery: A Portfolio of Photographs from the World's Fairs including the chief palaces, interiors, statuary, architectural and scenic groups, characters, typical exhibits, and Marvels of the Midway Plaisance*. Chicago: The Werner Co., s/p).*

Compared to these epic examples of universal progress displayed outdoors, the Brazilian imperial carriage figures insignificantly. Unlike the golden pyramid and the Fine Arts representation, it has not been possible to ascertain who was responsible for bringing this object to Chicago and for its unappealing display design. Its reception in the United States, though, was telling of the appetite –or lack of it– for objects of

that precedence. A commentator writing for *The Columbian Gallery* was disconcerted to see the carriage exhibited at all. "The apology" for this display, wrote the reporter, was that this "Brazilian specimen belonged to an emperor that [had] flourished nearly seventy years ago, all his family having since retired from the empire business" (Werner Company 1894). The carriage was displayed indoors in unadorned and less than imposing surroundings, without ornamentation, plinth, framing, and for what it seems, no windows. The wheels were uneven, its paint was coming off, a bar was loosely left on its side. No efforts to restore this object to its former glory of royal opulence seem to have been made. As a relic –a surviving memorial of something past– the carriage had an ambivalent meaning. It granted the status of tradition and civilisation to Brazilians who had been subjects to an empire until recently. At the same time, this display certified fairgoers that the old regime was, like its carriage, representative of the old order and demoted to a corner. The *Columbian Gallery* framed empires like the ones from nineteenth-century Mexico and Brazil as "old fashioned attempts", "pompous emptiness" with a "decided un-American flavour" (Werner Company 1894).

In addition, the imperial carriage worked as a counterexample of the technological innovations and scientific advancements of the past century, symbolised by the greatest locomotive in England, also on display. This intentional contrast of modes of transport revealed what Stephen Kern conceptualises as the relative slow motion of the past set by technological innovation: "the impact of […] accelerating technologies was at least twofold: it speeded up the tempo of [people's lives] and [made] old modes of existence, transport and communication seem slow" (Kern 2003, 129-130). In a similar vein, imperialism in the Americas, albeit a part of its civilising experience, had become identified with the slow tempo, a bygone past.

CONCLUSION

In the early years of the First Republic, as diverging republican factions fought to create validating myths and symbols, the Brazilian representation mounted for the *World's Columbian Exposition* serves as a rich opportunity to investigate how and why political interests interplay with imagination, creation and design. The investigation of the Brazilian representation in Chicago reveals a contested period when different national projects were imagined and projected in the international arena. Through rewriting the national past and reimagining its future, several particular understandings of progress were displayed. The actual implication of these reimaginations were felt, for example, in Rio's late nineteenth-century urban reforms that removed poor dwellers and traditional imperial architecture from the city centre in the name of modernity and modernization. These reforms included very little in the way of public education, housing, employment, or any other aspect that could be considered socially beneficial. For a nation that aimed at attracting national investment and immigrants to colonise its territory, society was still a work in progress. Worth promoting abroad

were its immense territory, inexhaustible natural resources, and allegedly benevolent government.

The failings in the organisation of the domestic exhibition, which showed fractures in the projects and discourses of a nation under *ordem e progresso*, did little to damage the national image abroad. For the occasional fairgoer, the image of Brazil that remained in 1893 was one of a modern and revitalised nation. If Brazil did not show the latest developments in science and technology, it demonstrated accordance to the paradigms of a civilised world evidenced by its displays. Indigenous peoples were confined to the realms of anthropology, women were kept at home, Afro-descendants were erased, natural resources were considered an abundant solid source of wealth for exploiters, and government or local elites were hailed as superior, heroic men who guided their nation to a better future. This period marked a moment of dynamic national debate before the oligarchic Republic was established and a more cohesive and conservative image of Brazil was presented again at the *Louisiana Purchase Exposition* in St Louis, Missouri, in 1904.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This research has been supported by the CAPES Foundation of Brazil. The Brazilian *Museu Nacional de Belas Artes (MNBA) / Ibram* kindly authorised the reproduction of the paintings in this article (Requerimento de Autorização nº 10/2020).

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Manuscript received: 15.05.2020
Revised manuscript: 13.11.2020
Manuscript accepted: 14.01.2021