

Navigating identity after independence: Portuguese men in nineteenth-century Brazil

Transitando entre identidades após a independência: homens portugueses no Brasil do século XIX

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ABSTRACT

In 1870, at age 11, Antônio Gonçalves de Carvalho left Portugal to follow his father to Brazil. The back and forth crossing of the Atlantic would become as central for Antônio's life as it had been for his father and would continue to be for his son. The close reading of unexplored primary sources reveals how Portuguese and Brazilian nations merge into a syncretic identity expressed in Antônio's words: "I came to life in my parents' *idolized* land, and I wish to leave life in my children's *adored* land". What can serve as a basis for national identities? The Carvalho family's documents offer the possibility of a new perspective on a question that historiography has conventionally approached via race, ethnicity and religion. By decentering the usual categories and considering emotions instead, this work suggests that feelings of belonging may be a matter of practice rather than destiny.

KEYWORDS

Collective identity; Microhistory; Emotions; Affective practices; "The returned Brazilian"

RESUMO

Em 1870, aos 11 anos, Antônio Gonçalves de Carvalho deixou Portugal para seguir seu pai com destino ao Brasil. A travessia do Atlântico se tornaria tão central para Antônio quanto fora para seu pai e continuaria sendo para seu filho. A leitura atenta de fontes primárias inexploradas revela como as nações portuguesa e brasileira se fundem numa identidade sincrética expressa nas palavras de Antônio: "Vim para a vida na *idolatrada* terra de meus pais, e desejo deixar a vida na *adorada* terra de meus filhos". O que pode servir de base para as identidades nacionais? Os documentos da família Carvalho oferecem a possibilidade de um novo olhar sobre uma questão que a historiografia tem abordado convencionalmente por meio de raça, etnia e religião. Ao descentralizar as categorias usuais e considerar as emoções, este trabalho sugere que os sentimentos de pertencimento podem ser uma questão de prática e não de destino.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Identidade coletiva; Micro-história; Emoções; Práticas afetivas; "Brasileiro de torna-viagem"

INTRODUCTION

In 1870, at age 11, Antônio Gonçalves de Carvalho left his mother and siblings in Portugal to follow his father to Brazil. The back and forth crossing of the Atlantic would become a reality in Antônio's life as it had been for his father and would continue to be for his son. In entering the twentieth century, this family's history reveals the Portuguese and the Brazilian nations merging into a syncretic identity expressed in Antônio's words: "I came to life in my parents' *idolized* land, and I wish to leave life in my children's *adored* land" (Ribeiro, 2010, p. 118).

The historiography has drawn attention to the unique mixture of coherence and adaptability of the Portuguese Nation since early modern times¹. Although nowadays the term "nation" is automatically associated with the political idea of "nation-states", it is worth keeping in mind that this word evolved from its medieval use to designate foreign university students to the early modern reference to foreign merchant communities. The Portuguese nation stands out among the other nations of that period to the point of being simply referred to as *the nation*, or "*a nação*" in Portuguese. As Francesca Trivellato (2009, p. 43) explains, "for much of the sixteenth century secular and religious authorities as well as ordinary people were suspicious of the expression 'the Portuguese nation' (or simply *nação*, in Portuguese) because they doubted that all the Portuguese living in Antwerp, southwestern France, and Italian cities such as Ferrara, Ancona, Venice, and Florence were really Catholic". Besides the suspicion towards the Portuguese New Christians, the uniqueness of "the nation" was also related to their presence in every corner of the world and their social coherence despite the geographical dispersion. Whereas the first two aspects result from the Portuguese overseas expansion started in the fifteenth century, the last one requires further examination. How to explain their noteworthy coherence?

In a study of "the nation's" diaspora between 1492-1640, Daviken Studnicki-Gizbert (2007, p. 75) suggests that "affection and concern closed the gap of separation". It means that, beyond religion and kinship, the Portuguese may have maintained themselves together because of their emotional connections. Even when physically separated, the members of the Portuguese communities shared a mutual interest in their emotional well-being. As the author explains, "letters were a proxy for the flow and engagement of personal conversation" (Studnicki-Gizbert, 2007, p. 75). Thus, it implies that transoceanic communication media could be part of the answer to the Portuguese collective identity and social coherence. Moreover, as technology evolved, especially with steamships carrying correspondence and people in much higher speed, the outstanding Portuguese social coherence would still be noticed in the late nineteenth century.

Another emotional aspect that characterized early modern Portuguese communities was their feeling of pride. Trivellato (2009, p. 44) notes that "the 'men of the nation' (*homens da nação*) hardly concealed their sense of pride and superiority. Their self-perception had a socioeconomic component: they were 'men of affairs' (*homens de negócios*) whose fortunes were linked to international commerce and finance". It is an important insight for the study of the Portuguese identity and social coherence in the nineteenth century.

The Napoleonic invasion, the independence of Brazil, and the civil war were disruptive events that impacted Portugal's social and economic structures. As a result, the new steamships brought two different types of people to Brazilian ports: those coming on business and those fleeing poverty. Yet, they looked the same at departure, both were poor men looking for better opportunities. Only the future could tell them apart. Complex circumstances would transform their initial hope into either nationalistic pride or forgetfulness, depending on their socioeconomic success.

¹ Some authors like Studnicki-Gizbert use the words 'coherence' and 'cohesion' interchangeably. However, I believe that 'cohesion' implies homogeneity, which does not represent the Portuguese identity so well. Therefore, I utilize the collation 'social coherence' according to Loyal Rue's definition: "And by 'social coherence' I mean an acceptable level of collective order and stability, a sense of security, solidarity, predictability, and communion of purpose" (Rue, 1994, p. 127).

After 1850, the Portuguese would play a prominent role in both retail and wholesale trade in Brazil, notably in the food and the textiles and clothing industries. However, they would also be a significant part of the nascent proletariat, especially in Rio de Janeiro, where they competed in the labor force with slaves, ex-slaves, and their descendants. Artur Vitorino (2009) claims that a Portuguese immigrant's future depended, to a large extent, on the condition he entered the country, whether as a free worker or indentured servant ("engajado"). Paula Cypriano (2009), however, observes that being part of the business elite "did not necessarily mean having arrived in Brazil on more favorable terms". She refers to life trajectories that have shown that most Portuguese fulfilled their dream of upward mobility only after years of hard work and disciplined savings (Cypriano, 2009, p. 163).

Rich or poor, the Portuguese in nineteenth-century Brazil distinguished themselves from other immigrants in one particular aspect: they rarely brought their families. Since colonial times, Portuguese men who came to the new land were single or had left their wives at home. Based on the analysis of baptism data for a rural locality in Rio de Janeiro, Manolo Florentino (2002) confirms the overwhelmingly male migratory flow from Portugal. About 15% of the parents registered in that locality were born in Portugal, and 90% of those were male (Florentino, 2002). Some argue that "it was less common to find the register of a Portuguese who would emigrate with the family, as the idea of coming to Brazil was to work and become rich in order to, later, return to one's homeland" (Sarmento, 2008, p. 252).

Thus, the hope for the future and the memories of homeland bonds are both central to the Portuguese experience overseas. Not coincidentally, these are also central to the definition of "saudade" – which has been considered as an untranslatable emotion word since the fifteenth century and became a symbol of the Portuguese identity (Neto & Mullet, 2014; López, 2011; Silva, 2012). The Lusophone people proudly argue that no other language dedicates a noun to the feeling of missing someone or something. Oswaldo Truzzi and Maria Izilda Matos (2015) show that the emotional ties synthesized in the word "saudade" are very present in letters of immigrants as late as in the twentieth century.

This continuity with the sixteenth-century emotional practices reinforces my conviction that the answer to the question of the Portuguese identity and social coherence lies in the field of emotions. The way I have chosen to approach this topic is Microhistory. Although expecting to reach only a specific answer, this microhistorical research is motivated by a very general question that exceeds my interest in the history of Portugal or Brazil: *What holds people together, providing them a collective identity?*

Existing scholarship seems to agree that race, ethnicity, religion, class, and gender, in variable degrees, are among the foundations for collective identity. As these categories are assumed to be the foundation for group solidarity, Atlantic and Jewish historiographies, for example, have approached this question predominantly via race, ethnicity, and religion. In the present work, I do not deny the appealing, explanatory power of master narratives built around these categories. However, I suggest that there are limits for such a framework in cases where these analytic categories do not reflect "categories of practice"² in the hands of social actors to organize their daily lives. By decentering the usual categories and considering emotions instead, this work aims to show that feelings of belonging may be a matter of practice rather than destiny.

The purpose of this work is to explore, from a micro-perspective, what occurs in geographically dispersed collectivities that can explain their social coherence. Thus, it is worth mentioning that collective identity requires a

² In simple terms, 'categories of practice' are what common people use in everyday life to make sense of their world. They are in relation with 'categories of analysis', which are theoretical constructs. For more on this topic, Brubaker & Cooper (2000, p. 4) note that although, by definition, categories of analysis such as 'race', 'ethnicity', or 'nation' are "experience-distant categories", they may become categories of practice too. This possibility is in accord with Pierre Bourdieu's conceptualization, who explains that "constructed classes [categories of analysis] can be characterized in a certain way as sets of agents who, by virtue of the fact that they occupy similar positions in social space (that is, in the distribution of powers), are subject to similar conditions of existence and conditioning factors and, as a result, are endowed with similar dispositions which prompt them to develop similar practices" (Bourdieu, 1987, p. 6).

dual definition, pointing to the exterior, where there is “otherness”, and to the interior, where there is “sameness”. As a complement to the “codes of difference” that define the “*negative bond between collective identities*” (Lorenz, 2008, p. 26), here I am interested in what strengthens the *positive bond within* the community³. If the first sort of bond is often “embedded in power struggles” (Lorenz, 2008, p. 26), I hypothesize that the latter is embedded in affective practices.

The way I have access to this research’s main primary sources illustrates the habit of many people to share their memories around the table over long dinners with family and friends. On one of those occasions – where the senior members of a family tell and re-tell old stories full of *saudade* –, I was a guest in the home of a friend’s parents. As a very curious outsider, I asked so many questions that it prompted my friend’s father, named Antônio Luiz after his great-grandfather, to let me know about “the Carvalho family book”.

In 2010, Antônio Gonçalves de Carvalho’s great-grandson (Antônio Luiz’s cousin) made available to family and friends a collection of historical documents, both private and public, about the shoe factory founded by Antônio’s father, Adão, in 1856 (Ribeiro, 2010). In addition to business documents and notarial records, this rich collection encompasses family letters, poems, travel accounts and photographs. A close reading of these unexplored primary sources could shed light on the mechanisms that have held “the Portuguese Nation” together since early modern times and seem to have continued onwards through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

ADÃO: A PORTUGUESE IN BRAZIL

Adão Gonçalves is the one who started the Carvalho family. On March 31, 1831, at Vila Boa de Quires, Penafiel county in Portugal, peasants José Gonçalves and Maria Joaquina gave birth to their son Adão⁴. Thanks to his baptism godfather – Father Joaquim José de Carvalho – he would receive the surname “de Carvalho” and pass it on to his four male children, and these, to their own descendants regardless of gender. This is the origin of a branch of the Carvalho family of Rio de Janeiro, which, in the second half of the nineteenth century, founded the supposedly first mechanized shoe factory in Brazil – the *Fábrica de Calçados Adão* (Ribeiro, 2010, p. 174).

Adão seems to have been the only one of his family to distance himself from Penafiel, venturing across the Atlantic. His parents and grandparents had lived in the localities of Targinha (parents), Quebrada (paternal grandparents), and Quires (maternal grandparents), all within a few kilometers of each other. Thus, his ancestry, both paternal and maternal, were linked to the same small portion of land in the North of Portugal, which extended for a radius of fewer than seven kilometers from the center of the parish of Vila Boa de Quires. They were “all from this said parish”, as informed by Adão’s baptism certificate (Ribeiro, 2010, p. 57).

The same parish saw, on the 4th of November 1833, the birth of Engrácia d’Almeida. Her mother, Anna d’Almeida, and her maternal grandparents were from the localities of São Sebastião and Caniva de Baixo, both belonging to the parish of Vila Boa de Quires. The paternal grandparents of Engrácia, however, were from the parish of Santo Isidoro de Riba Tâmega, less than 7 km from Quires. The region had suffered a lot from the French invasion in 1809. According to family reports, Anna d’Almeida, “at the age of three, together with the whole family and servants”, found refuge in the caves at Quinta do Paçal, which belonged to the Church until being expropriated in the 1830s (Ribeiro, 2010, p. 93).

According to the same source, “Engrácia became the owner of the property where the family hid to escape the fury of the French” (Ribeiro, 2010, p. 94). The Quinta do Paçal’s location – “it was close to Livração” (Ribeiro,

³ Emphasis by the author.

⁴ According to the birth certificate, photographic reproduction of the original document in Ribeiro (2010, p. 57).

2010, p. 94) – was not far from the place of origin of Engrácia's paternal grandparents (Santo Isidoro). Therefore, I imagine that Sebastião, Engrácia's father, may have been one of the children who remained hidden for three days inside the caves, with their mouth covered "so as not to hear the cry" (Ribeiro, 2010, p. 95). The atrocities committed by the French on Portuguese soil which forced Anna's family to flee their lands possibly brought her closer to the man who would later become her husband. In other circumstances, Anna and Sebastião would have married people from their respective parishes.

We don't know when Adão and Engrácia met, nor when they married. The fact is that both were from the same parish of Santo André de Vila Boa do Quires, county of Penafiel, the bishopric of Porto. Adão may have gone to Brazil in 1850, carrying the young Engrácia's image in his memory. Adão was driven by the belief in better opportunities overseas, especially in Brazil's bustling capital, associated with the news of the first successful "Brazilians". This was how the people in Portugal referred to the emerging class of bourgeois who, after independence, would try to occupy the space left by the Portuguese aristocracy in the former colony.

The tranquility, or even immobility, of country life in Portugal had been shaken, first, by the Napoleonic invasion (1808-1809), then by the civil war that attacked the foundations of the "landlord system on which the Church's land power was based" (Ribeiro, 2010, p. 63) (the 1830s). Thus, the world that saw Adão being born in 1831 was no longer the world in which his parents and grandparents lived. He would no longer be as attached to the land as his family had been. The sea called to him, however far he was in the hinterland between Douro and Minho.

Adão, however, was not an immigrant. Despite having launched himself to the new continent, he kept a firm footing in Europe. In 1853, the first daughter of his marriage with Engrácia was born. She was named Maria and was born on April 9 – coincidentally exactly 20 years before Maria da Graça, the couple's eighth daughter, was born. Adão's comings and goings to Quinta da Mulra – a residence the couple acquired in the village of Paredes, about 6 km from the Church of Santo André in the center of Quires – were punctuated by their children's conception. There were ten in total, although the fifth daughter, Maria Virgínia, was born in Brazil. We do not have information on the precise date of birth of all children. Still, we can estimate that, during the almost 30 years of marriage, Adão and Engrácia managed to maintain sufficient contact for, every two years on average, a new baby to come into the world.

The rhythm would only be interrupted between the birth of Antônio, in 1859, and of Maria Virgínia, in 1865. During this period, Adão left Portugal, raising suspicions about his moral behavior in Brazil. Did he have an extra-marital relationship? The use of prostitute services was seemly acceptable. But a permanent affair could threaten the family's stability. Engrácia, then, carried by the "winds of doubt" (Ribeiro, 2010, p. 56), "falsified the authorization document [to travel, women needed authorization from their husbands] and came to drag the man back to Portugal"⁵.

During her stay in Rio de Janeiro, Engrácia gave birth to Maria Virgínia in October 1865. On December 20 of that year, the newspaper *Correio Mercantil* informed about the baptism of "the legitimate daughter of Adão Gonçalves de Carvalho and D. Ignácia [Sic] de Almeida", at the Matriz do Santíssimo Sacramento Church⁶. The May 25, 1867 edition of *Correio Mercantil* brought the sad news of the death of "João, son of Adão Gonçalves de Carvalho, from Rio de Janeiro, 19 days. Newborn tetanus"⁷. Nothing is mentioned about the baby's mother.

⁵ Personal communication from Antônio Luiz Carvalho, via Whatsapp, on November 13, 2020.

⁶ *Correio Mercantil, e Instructivo, Politico, Universal*, 1865, p. 2 (section "Estatística da cidade"). <http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/217280/25633>

⁷ *Correio Mercantil, e Instructivo, Politico, Universal*, 1867, p. 2 (section "Estatística da cidade – Obituario"). <http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/217280/27686>

The family currently knows little about Maria Virgínia. Although the girl appears in a photo with her siblings in Portugal (Ribeiro, 2010, p. 68), the family members to whom I had access believe that she remained in Brazil. Ignoring the evidence from the Rio de Janeiro's newspaper that reported on the baptism of "the legitimate daughter of Adão"⁸, one of them even considered the possibility of the girl being the daughter of the alleged lover⁹. The little knowledge the family in Portugal had about what happened to Adão and Engrácia in Brazil leads me to believe that the couple had no relatives in Rio de Janeiro. This seems to explain why they would have chosen the Portuguese merchant Hermenegildo Nunes Cardoso as the godfather of their Brazilian daughter.

Cardoso was an active participant in the associative movement in Rio de Janeiro in the second half of the 19th century¹⁰. However, such information, as far as I know, is not in the family documents. I discovered this fact in the Brazilian National Library's digital collection by searching for information about Adão's activities during the 1860s. This is how I came across a "publication on request" on the front page of the *Jornal do Commercio*. The article was addressed to Mr. Adão Gonçalves de Carvalho and signed by Hermenegildo Nunes Cardoso on March 14, 1868. Apparently, Adão had "an idea lately to be put into practice" and his daughter's godfather denied him support. Resentful, Adão began to treat him coldly, causing Engrácia to do the same. In response, Hermenegildo "stopped going upstairs to his home; I [he] still continued to go to Mr. Adão's business house"¹¹. It was then that, one day, Adão sent an employee to Hermenegildo's house to pay off a small debt. The gesture was understood as a break. From that moment on, the two Portuguese *compadres* would publicly express their resentment in the newspapers of Rio de Janeiro.

The documents to which I have access do not indicate anything about Adão's activities before his arrival in Brazil. It is impossible to know if he had acquaintances to help him with his installation in the country. I could not find any reference to possible help from charities in the records made available by Ribeiro either. Only the name of the Frenchman Jean Baptiste Breissan appears in the family's reports. He is presented as the "leather dealer who helped and encouraged" Adão to open a shoe shop in 1856 in Rio de Janeiro (Ribeiro, 2010, p. 30). According to this account, Breissan reportedly offered "credit and moral support" (Ribeiro, 2010, p. 30). In contrast to Hermenegildo's fragile friendship, which broke up as soon as he denied support for Adão's initiative, the friendship with the Frenchman Breissan would survive Adão's own death. In 1884, "Engrácia, domiciled in Portugal, was represented by J. B. Breissan & C., that is, by Jean Baptiste Breissan", in a partnership with her son Antônio (Ribeiro, 2010, p. 30).

Jean Baptiste was the son of Hilaire Breissan, "shoe shape maker from Paris, residence on 60 S. José Street"¹², where he had established since 1839 when he arrived in Rio de Janeiro. As a newcomer from France, Hilaire announced in the *Jornal do Commercio* his large assortment of "all sorts of tools for the manufacture of footwear"¹³. Three years later, the immigrant would receive his family at the port of Rio. His wife Ursule Virginie Breissan, accompanied by a son, brought on board the ship *Beaujeu* their luggage consisting of "9 boxes of offal, and 2 boxes of furniture, 1 object of confectioners"¹⁴. Unlike Adão a decade later, Hilaire Breissan had decided to start a new

⁸ *Correio Mercantil, e Instructivo, Politico, Universal*, 1865, p. 2 (section "Estatistica da cidade"). <http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/217280/25633>

⁹ Personal communication from Antônio Luiz Carvalho, via Whatsapp, on November 13, 2020.

¹⁰ In mid-nineteenth century, it was required to officially register the creation of all sorts of associations, such as beneficent, religious, philanthropic, ethnic, scientific, educational or related to sports, theatre, celebrations and leisure (Jesus, 2007, pp. 144-170). For evidence of Hermenegildo's participation, see: Biblioteca Nacional do Brasil. BNDigital. *Correio Mercantil, e Instructivo, Politico, Universal*, 1861, ed. 0205 (Nova Aurora); *Diário do Rio de Janeiro*, 1869, ed. 0343 (Sociedade União Beneficente das Famílias Honestas); *Jornal do Commercio*, 1867, ed. 0121 (Caixa de Socorros de D. Pedro V).

¹¹ *Jornal do Commercio*, 1868, p. 1. http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/364568_05/13473

¹² *Jornal do Commercio*, 1839, p. 4 (section "Annuncios"). http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/364568_02/11046

¹³ *Jornal do Commercio*, 1839, p. 4 (section "Annuncios"). http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/364568_02/11046

¹⁴ *Jornal do Commercio*, 1842, p. 4 (section "Movimento do porto – Entradas no dia 20"). http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/364568_03/3402; *Jornal do Commercio*, 1842, p. 2 (section "Commercio – Importação"). http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/364568_03/3404

life in Brazil, leaving Europe behind. This did not mean, however, that he had severed relations with his native country. In addition to the footwear supply business, Breissan was dedicated to exporting coffee to France¹⁵.

Where would Adão have acquired the skills to open his “small hand-made shoe shop”? A short biography published in 1928 in the magazine *Veritas* said that he had worked “several years in various workshops until in October 1856, with a strong desire to prosper, [and with] some savings obtained with great sacrifice”, he managed to start his own business (Ribeiro, 2010, p. 24). It is likely that Adão learned the trade as a shoemaker working for Hilaire Breissan. Supposing that Adão was more or less the same age as Jean Baptiste Breissan, it is reasonable to think that living together made the two men friends, turning Adão into almost part of the family. I even wonder if the name given to his daughter born in Brazil, Maria Virgínia, was a tribute by Adão to his friend’s mother, Ursule Virginie. In this context, we can understand the “credit and moral support” that Adão received from Jean Baptiste when he became a partner at Breissan & Filhos (Ribeiro, 2010, p. 30).

There is no doubt that Adão prospered. Gradually, from a hand-made shoe shop, his enterprise turned, twenty years later (1876), into a mechanized factory – first “moved by foot power” and, soon after, “powered by a gas engine” (Ribeiro, 2010, p. 24). With the name of Fábrica de Calçados Adão, the company’s share capital in 1874 was almost 20 thousand contos de réis, of which 15.5 thousand contos de réis belonged to Adão¹⁶.

Profits made in Brazil for more than 25 years allowed Adão to invest in land in Portugal. After acquiring Quinta da Mulra, which would become the base location for the family founded by Adão and Engrácia, new land was purchased and added to the land patrimony over the years. An 1871 deed testifies the purchase of “a sort of bush” to be added to the Quinta. The price of 63 mil-réis was paid “in good coins of money of gold and silver” (Ribeiro, 2010, p. 63). The land purchased amounted to just 100 grams of gold¹⁷. To give the reader an idea, the factory’s value in 1874 was equivalent to almost 18 kilograms of gold¹⁸. Considering the exchange rate in November 2020, the Fábrica de Calçados Adão started with share capital equivalent to nearly 1 million and 200 thousand dollars¹⁹.

Adão and Engrácia were part of a new class that emerged in Portugal and “faced agriculture with a new entrepreneurial mindset, investing money in new agricultural processes and new cultures” (Ribeiro, 2010, p. 63). Adão, son of “peasants”, became “landowner” in Portugal and “industrialist” in Brazil. The two roles reinforced each other. Although we wish for peace, we must recognize that wars created the conditions for Adão’s initiative to result in economic and social ascension. In Portugal, the civil war and the extinction of religious orders disrupted the aristocracy and liberated land for the emerging classes at a very low cost. In Brazil, the Paraguayan war (1865-1870) expanded the market for Adão’s products, as his company became a supplier for the Brazilian army (Ribeiro, 2010, p. 49).

The sources prove the financial success of the Fábrica de Calçados Adão. In 1877, Adão was forced to return to Portugal due to a serious illness – probably an “apoplectic shock” like the one that put him in a wheelchair and led to his death in 1880²⁰. When they terminated the company’s partnership agreement in February 1877, the last of the minority partners to leave received about 16 contos de réis for his share, which was 2 contos de réis

¹⁵ *Jornal do Commercio*, 1848, p. 2 (section “Commercio – Exportação”). http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/364568_03/13083

¹⁶ Note that 1 conto = 1 million réis. Mil-reis/dólar = 1,91 (1871); 1,74 (1874) (Moura Filho, 2010, pp. 31-34).

¹⁷ In 1854, Portugal adopted the gold standard with a proportion of 1,000 réis = 1.62585 grams of fine gold. The gold standard was maintained until 1891 (for further information, see: <https://www.moedanumismatica.com/portugal/>).

¹⁸ The value of 10 thousand Brazilian réis was equivalent to 8.96 grams of gold. Therefore, the proportion of the homonymous Brazilian currency was 1,000 réis = 0.896 grams of gold (Caffarelli, 2002, p. 82).

¹⁹ Exchange rate on November 22, 2020: 1 XAU = 1.872,06 USD.

²⁰ Death certificate, photographic reproduction of the original document in Ribeiro (2010, p. 58).

in 1874 (Ribeiro, 2010, pp. 26-29). This shows that, before it completed three years, the company's market value increased eight times! Was Hermenegildo Nunes Cardoso wrong in not supporting his friend's ideas?

Thus, when the company was dissolved in 1877, the fourth son of the couple Adão and Engrácia – Antônio, then only 18 years old – assumed “all ‘Assets and Liabilities’ in individual form” (Ribeiro, 2010, p. 29). With his sick father's return to Portugal, it was up to the young Antônio Gonçalves de Carvalho to manage the family's property in Brazil. He was solely responsible for a fortune equivalent to 144 kilograms of gold – or approximately 10 million US dollars (reference November 2020).

ANTÔNIO: A “BRAZILIAN” IN PORTUGAL

On March 24, 1859, Quinta da Mulra welcomed the fourth baby from Engrácia's fertile womb. The boy was named Antônio. As he was male, he was honored with the surname “de Carvalho” previously offered by Father Joaquim José de Carvalho to Antônio's father, Adão Gonçalves. The boy spent his childhood years alongside his three (only slightly) older siblings and, probably, his maternal grandparents, in the small village in Portugal's hinterland. As soon as he started to walk, his father traveled to Brazil on business. Soon after, his mother would follow him across the Atlantic, leaving the four kids behind. Family reports confirm that her husband had a lover in Brazil. Supposedly, the woman was a seamstress who would later follow Adão to Portugal, where he would have opened a studio for her to work²¹. But on March 11, 1869, Adão and Engrácia returned to Quinta da Mulra, still in time to celebrate Antônio's tenth birthday. With his parents back, Antônio gained a new sister – Maria Virgínia, then four and a half years old.

Unfortunately, Antônio's experience with the whole family together was short-lived. In just 18 months, he would be leaving his homeland. At only eleven years of age, that “iron boy”²² would be left alone in Rio de Janeiro. Interestingly, his name is not on the *Patagonia* steamship passengers' list published in the newspaper *Diário do Rio de Janeiro*. Only his father's name is among those who left on September 13, 1870. There is not even a mention of “a son” traveling with Adão – which was usual when minors accompanied their parents. Was Antônio among the “365 passengers in transit”²³?

We know that Antônio Gonçalves de Carvalho actually embarked on that steamship. He left his own account of his arrival in Rio de Janeiro, which is part of the family archive that Ribeiro edited (Ribeiro, 2010, p. 116). This source lets us know that, just four days after arriving in the city, Adão employed the son at the Armazém de Fazendas owned by Dias da Silva & Cia. After finding a job for his son and taking care of his own business – like signing a contract with the Portuguese shoe trader, Antônio Ferreira Azevedo²⁴ –, Adão returned to Portugal on March 7, 1871²⁵.

Thus, not even having completed 12 years of age, Antônio was alone in such a big city across the ocean. He was just a boy, but he was already responsible for his livelihood as a grown man. At the Armazém de Fazendas located in the city center, Antônio learned the first lessons in the discipline of urban work. It must have been very different from working in the countryside, an experience he had undoubtedly lived, if only as an observer.

²¹ Personal communication from Adão Ribeiro to Antônio Luiz, via WhatsApp, on November 13, 2020.

²² Antônio's reputation is of being a boy as strong and resilient as iron (Ribeiro, 2010, p. 112).

²³ *Diário do Rio de Janeiro*, 1870, p. 3 (section “Movimento do porto”). http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/094170_02/26419

²⁴ *Diário do Rio de Janeiro*, 1870, p. 2 (section “Noticiario – Contratos”). http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/094170_02/26610

²⁵ *Diário do Rio de Janeiro*, 1871, p. 1 (section “Noticiario – Passageiros”). http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/094170_02/27021

Furthermore, Antônio's first job was also very different from that of a family home. Unlike so many Portuguese traders who lived on top of his stores and workshops – as Adão lived –, Antônio's boss, Manoel José Dias da Silva, lived in the sophisticated neighborhood of Laranjeiras²⁶. Although he was also Portuguese, Manoel's economic success allowed him to keep his home away from his store located in the Brazilian imperial court's bustling commercial center. For Antônio, Mr. Dias da Silva was probably nothing more than a name on the sign at his workplace. After two years aware of the impersonality of the world of work, Antônio left that job.

What would Antônio have done when he was not working? Information found in the newspaper *Correio do Brazil* leads me to imagine that the lonely teenager could have taken advantage of the moment of freedom to venture along the coast of the western side of the Atlantic. In the newspaper section concerning the movement of the port, there appeared the sailboat *Aurora Feliz*, leaving for the port of Angra dos Reis, carrying "several kinds [of goods] and empty casks" and a single passenger, the Portuguese named Antônio Gonçalves de Carvalho²⁷. The date of the alleged trip is compatible with the period that Antônio himself claims to have withdrawn from Dias da Silva's store and remained unemployed for eight days. After the week off, Antônio realized that "having no relative at this time who could shelter [him]", he turned to one of his father's friends, Antonio Valentim do Nascimento, who employed him at another firm's fabric and ready-made clothing store (Ribeiro, 2010, p. 116).

Valentim Nascimento was a member of the *Sociedade Portuguesa de Beneficência* (Portuguese Charitable Society). Institutions like this welcomed newly arrived immigrants, gave them support and guidance²⁸, but did not replace the family's warmth and coziness. Ribeiro says that Antônio, "once asked about his life, replied that what burdened him most in his early teens was loneliness. No friends, distant parents, no family contact in the city or country he lived in" (Ribeiro, 2010, p. 112). He stayed in his new job, the fabric and ready-made clothing store named *Ao Leão de Bronze*, for about two years. It was then that, because of a "disagreement with a partner", he "said goodbye" (Ribeiro, 2010).

The words that Antônio chooses to tell his story do not allow us to say whether he was fired or if he quit. The fact is that Adão was already back in Brazil, and "he was not satisfied, so much so that he told me [him] to go find a job in another house" (Ribeiro, 2010, p. 116). Adão's business was no longer a workshop. His new shoe factory already employed hundreds of employees. However, because he was not "satisfied" with Antônio's behavior in his previous job, he refused to hire the son in his own company. However, having nowhere to go, Antônio went "working at his house, until he decided to admit [him] as an employee" (Ribeiro, 2010, p. 116).

Migrating from commerce to industry, Antônio, at the age of 15, started to learn about the nascent Brazilian footwear production. But the boy would have very little time to learn from his father because, in just over two years, Adão would definitely return to Portugal. In his native land, he died in the same year that his grandson, named Adão after him, was born (1880). That was how young Antônio, only 21 years old, saw the beginning of "his great toil". He "had to attend to the well-being of two families": one of his mother and siblings, in Portugal, and the other that he was beginning to build in Brazil (Ribeiro, 2010, p. 117).

The social ascension initiated with Adão, in 1850, continued with Antônio, who even received the honorary title of Commander of a religious order (Ribeiro, 2010, p. 133). In 1882, when he was 23 years old, Antônio was already president of the "Mutual Aid Society Protective of Shoemaker Artists"²⁹. We do not know the degree of education that Antônio had. Yet, we can infer that the level of instruction has increased at each further generation of the Carvalho family. Adão may have arrived in Brazil, in 1850, as one more illiterate peasant from Portugal. His

²⁶ *Almanak Administrativo, Mercantil e Industrial do Rio de Janeiro*, 1876, p. 766. <http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/313394x/40414>

²⁷ *Correio do Brazil*, 1872 (section "Movimento do porto"). <http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/239100/1198>

²⁸ See, for example: Jesus (2007) and Sousa (2007).

²⁹ *O Apóstolo*, 1883, p. 3 (section "Secção noticiosa – Imprensa"). <http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/343951/8265>

daughter's godfather suggested that Adão had recursed to third person whenever he needed to express himself in writing, failing to read the texts before signing. Hermenegildo explicitly acknowledged that Adão "did not have the principles that develop man's intellectuality"³⁰.

His children, on the other hand, seem to have had access to the literacy that their father lacked. For Antônio to be employed in the high-end commerce of Rio as soon as he stepped in the city, it is almost certain that he already mastered reading, writing, and arithmetic. Some historians suggest that, in the mid-nineteenth century, there was an increase in private instruction in Portugal with the purpose of providing the skills necessary for future immigrants to get clerk jobs (Cypriano, 2009, p. 166). Later as a grown man, his letters show grammatical correctness in elegant calligraphy. Evidence for the higher level of education also reached by Adão's other children is in the fact that "three of the sons-in-law of Adão and Engrácia graduated in Law at the University of Coimbra" (Ribeiro, 2010, p. 105).

Back in 1879, while contracting more shoemakers to sustain the growth of the Fábrica de Calçados Adão, Antônio contracted marriage in Brazil with Maria Gasparina Ferreira³¹. The couple had 12 children. Like his father, Antônio balanced business and family life between Brazil and Portugal through frequent trips. But unlike Adão, Antônio, whenever possible, "was accompanied by one or more children" (Ribeiro, 2010, p. 119). These were certainly new times.

In just three decades, the world that Antônio lived in was very different from what Adão had experienced. While the father probably had never visited any place besides Brazil and Portugal, his son took every opportunity to visit new countries. Antônio's travels were driven by more than the need to take care of his family or business. In 1900, he took his mother (and business-partner) Engrácia to France to visit the Paris Universal Exposition. Soon after, he put his firstborn son, also named Adão, in charge of the business. Antônio would then visit places like the USA, Canada, Cuba, Haiti, Venezuela, Colombia, Mexico, Italy, and Russia. According to his great-grandson Ribeiro, he even visited "Jerusalem and Rome, and in this one, he was received by Pope Leo XIII" (Ribeiro, 2010, p. 123). So, in his early forties, and with a fortune that his peasant grandparents would never have been able to imagine, Antônio took the opportunity to visit the world. After all, as the Portuguese poet Fernando Pessoa, recalling the Latin wisdom, used to say, "navigating is necessary"³².

CONCLUSION: NAVIGATING NATIONAL IDENTITIES

Transatlantic travel was a mark in Antônio's and his father's lives. However, they did not give up establishing roots on mainland – one in Brazil, the other in Portugal. The children of Adão who remained in Portugal received the various houses built on the land acquired around Quinta da Mulra, which, in the end, was inherited by the youngest son, Antônio Augusto. The "Brazilian" and older son, Antônio, was tasked with erecting a version of the Portuguese Quinta in the tropics. He spared no effort to reproduce the home's charm as a place for the family congregation in the country where he raised his own children.

Although Antônio lived on Rua da Glória, in a sophisticated neighborhood yet close to the city center and his factory, he built a refuge at the foot of the Tijuca Forest. The *Chácara da Tijuca*, as it became known, was located in one of the suburbs of the city of Rio de Janeiro. There the mountain climate brought it closer to the sensation of

³⁰ *Jornal do Commercio*, 1868, p. 1 (section "Publicações a pedido"). http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/364568_05/13473

³¹ *Gazeta de Noticias*, 1879, p. 2. http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/103730_01/5643

³² Version of the phrase attributed to the Roman general Pompey, "Navigare necesse, vivere non est necesse" (for further information, see: <https://www.uc.pt/navegar/>).

the interior of Portugal, from where the family originated. They say that Antônio had done so much in his project that “the first residential elevator in Rio de Janeiro was installed in this house” (Ribeiro, 2010, p. 117).

Antônio had many years to enjoy the Chácara da Tijuca and the family celebrations housed in that inviting place. A photograph from 1908 shows 40 people lined in front of the house. They were Antônio’s children, grandchildren, and friends. In another photograph, the house appears as the scenery for the 50th anniversary of Antônio and Maria Gasparina, in 1929. The number of people on the photo almost doubled with one more generation added. When Antônio died in Rio de Janeiro at age 84, he had succeeded in founding a profitable company that operated for more 30 years after his death and a united family that goes on honoring his memory until today.

I suggest that time and the presence of local ‘caregivers’ – be them institutions or individuals, for material or emotional support – are two variables that contributed for the Portuguese to settled down and give up on the plan to return home. My theory can be tested in Adão and Antônio Gonçalves de Carvalho’s cases. While the father established a business in Brazil but never really settled there, the son never established residence in Portugal. Although transoceanic travelling was a practice common to both Adão and Antônio, their timing and circumstances may indicate why only one of them became a “returned Brazilian”³³.

When Adão first travelled to Brazil, he was already an adult and possibly engaged to get married. Therefore, he had a large repertoire of emotional memories from his homeland, which could serve to reinforce his familial bonds and sense of moral obligation. Upon his first arrival in Brazil, he was able to get a job where he developed the skills to succeed in the profitable craft of shoemaking. Adão had the moral and financial support from the Breissan family, who was not Portuguese but French. This fact reminds me of Studnicki-Gizbert’s (2007, p. 73) conclusion that common nationality was no guarantee of personal familiarity and trust³⁴.

Adão supposedly received caring attention from a Brazilian lover as well. These apparent details suggest that care involves bonding, no matter where it comes from. Despite the vivid memory of his life in Portugal, and the possibility of him feeling *saudade*, the amount of care that Adão found outside the Portuguese community could have imposed risks for his return. However, his relatively rapid economic success allowed him to return very soon to Portugal. Thus, it had a counterbalancing effect by providing opportunity for physical proximity with his wife and relatives. In two years, he was already back to his village to conceive his first child.

Nevertheless, Adão cannot be considered as a typical “Brazilian of returning-journey”. He did not go back once and for all. After his first return trip to Portugal, he maintained an average of one return-travel every two years, going back and forth between Portugal and Brazil about ten times in twenty years. It was a pattern of travels common to businessmen, like the Baron of Alto Marim, a Portuguese banker who “submitted two passport applications in a very short space of time. The first is dated 18 October 1890 and the second was signed on 16 June 1891” (Cosme, 2009, p. 404).

As João Ramalho Cosme (2009, p. 404) remarks, “this example proves the existence of a mobility dynamic between Portugal and Brazil, which has an underlying business logic, which cannot be framed as a migratory movement”. Unlike the stereotype of the successful immigrant that returns after long years to his home country, Adão was a kind of cosmopolitan businessmen who enjoyed every opportunity, no matter where it was, until falling ill and die. This aspect of his personality could also impose risks to social and familial coherence if it was not for Engrácia’s attitude of caring for their marital relationship.

³³ Translation for “Brasileiro de torna-viagem” (Brettell, 2003, p. 60).

³⁴ “But what did this national identity really mean for merchants contemplating the creation of a new commercial partnership? Questions of personal familiarity and trust would have loomed foremost in their minds, because these were indispensable qualities in the exercise of long-distance trade. Common nationality was no guarantee of either” (Studnicki-Gizbert, 2007, p. 73).

Antônio was a different case. First, he left his country younger than Adão did. Therefore, he had a smaller repertoire of memories from Portugal. Consequently, had less emotional memories to feed his feeling of *saudade*. In addition, for been a child, he might not have felt so intensely the obligation of returning. Yet, he never failed his moral commitment to care for his mother and siblings. The second factor is that he married in Brazil (probably to a Brazilian woman). There, very young, he met someone with whom he had the opportunity to build a family life as the one he was prevented from experiencing in Portugal. This fact reduced his chances of feeling *saudade* of the country where he was born. In his letters written when travelling abroad, he did demonstrate that he felt that emotion, but it was felt mainly for the people that he left in Brazil and the country itself.

In 1911, for example, he travelled in Europe for three months and maintained correspondence with his eldest son, named Adão after the child's grandfather. In a letter sent from Paris to Rio de Janeiro, Antônio told him about the travel plans, which included to visit the 'International Exhibition of Industry and Labor', a world's fair held in Turin, Italy. He closed the letter with regards "to all our relatives and friends" and, finally, with a very personal and unusual declaration of *saudade*: "assist many *saudades* of this father of yours" (Ribeiro, 2010, p. 132)³⁵. I have never seen a collation that joins *saudade* and the verb "to assist" together. After visiting the world's fair, Antônio wrote a postcard in which he expressed a certain feeling of pride for Brazil: "I visited the exhibition which is beautiful and is in a very picturesque place. The Brazilian pavilion is beautiful. It is the best of South America" (Ribeiro, 2010, p. 132)³⁶.

Antônio was born in 1859 in Portugal and died in 1943 in Brazil – his "children's *adored* land" –, as he had wished. The eighth of his twelve children, born in 1895, was named Luiz Gonçalves de Carvalho. As a Marist brother, he was known as Luiz Severino. The young Catholic died at age 28, but left dozens of letters. Ribeiro reproduced some of them into his own book (Ribeiro, 2010, pp. 79, 135). We do not have access to the letters sent by Antônio, but Luiz's responses reveal the kind of affective practices that bonded father and son. One of these practices is sending gifts to the religious brotherhood of Luiz. In a letter, he thanks for the "very rich and delicate statue, image of the Immaculate Virgin", by saying, "simply, but sincerely, a 'thank you very much' as a son should say to an extremely loving parent" (Ribeiro, 2010, p. 135)³⁷. A close reading of those letters suggests that, more than gifts, Antônio sent to Luiz the message that he would go to extremes for his son. This is evident in the description of many gifts and in Luiz's word choice "*extremoso*" to refer to his father, meaning someone capable of extreme acts for love.

The increase in educational level in the period of just one generation may help explain the transformation in the ways parents and children expressed care and concern for each other. The fragmentary accounts that arrive to us about the relationship between Adão and Antônio suggest distance and discipline. Note Adão's reaction when Antônio lost his job. On the contrary, the correspondence exchanged between Antônio and his children, reveals proximity and affection.

Regarding his emotional relation to places and nations, the words that Antônio chose to refer to Portugal and Brazil are quite revealing as well. While his parents' country is *idolized*, implying distance and fantasy, his children's country is *adored*, suggesting proximity and intimate reality. Thus, Antônio's identity seems to be an intermediate case – a hybrid – between the Portuguese who, after being successful, returned definitively to Portugal, and those who settled in Brazil for good for being unable to fulfill their dream of getting rich and successful.

³⁵ "...assista muitas saudades deste teu pai". Transcribed by the author from the photocopy of the letter.

³⁶ "Visitei a exposição que é bella e está em um lugar muito pitoresco. O pavilhão brasileiro é lindo. É o melhor da Sul America". Transcribed by the author from the photocopy of the postcard.

³⁷ "...riquíssima e mimosa estátua, imagem da Virgem Imaculada", [...] "simplesmente, porém sinceramente, um 'muito obrigado' como um filho deve dizer a um pai extremoso". Translated by the author from the letter.

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