



Anais do Museu Paulista: História e Cultura Material

ISSN: 0101-4714

ISSN: 1982-0267

Museu Paulista, Universidade de São Paulo

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**Uma trajetória sinuosa: o Museu Paulista e as apropriações  
da *Fundação de São Paulo*, de Oscar Pereira da Silva<sup>1</sup>**

Anais do Museu Paulista: História e Cultura Material, vol. 27, e16d2, 2019

Museu Paulista, Universidade de São Paulo

DOI: 10.1590/1982-02672019v27e16d2

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# A sinuous path: Museu Paulista and the appropriations of *Fundação de São Paulo*, by Oscar Pereira da Silva<sup>1</sup>

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1590/1982-02672019v27e16d2>

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**ABSTRACT:** The article analyzes the painting *Fundação de São Paulo*, did by Oscar Pereira da Silva in 1907, from the perspective of its relationship with the Museu Paulista, where it is on exhibition since 1929. Taking the painting as a statement, the intention is to situate it within its contexts, highlighting its re-significations, which arise from the multiple perceptions regarding what was affirmed by its image content. By exploring the relationship between the painting and the Museu Paulista, it will be demonstrated that Oscar Pereira da Silva's objective was to represent the embryonic act of the city and of the *Paulistas* and transform his work into a significant historical narrative document. However, the difficult insertion of the painting in Museu Paulista's narrative made this achievement full of tensions. By analyzing important moments in the painting story, such as the addition to the Pinacoteca de São Paulo's collection, the transfer to Museu Paulista, its appropriation by the Faculty of Law's stained glass windows and by the materials commemorating the IV Centenary of São Paulo, this paper will demonstrate that the passage of time associated with its musealization renewed and evidenced its social appropriation, enabling its integration into the imagery both of the city and of the state of São Paulo.

**KEYWORDS:** Museums. Imagery. Historical painting. Oscar Pereira da Silva. Museu Paulista.

**RESUMO:** O artigo analisa a tela *Fundação de São Paulo*, feita por Oscar Pereira da Silva, em 1907, sob a perspectiva da sua relação com o Museu Paulista, local em que foi exposta desde 1929. Tomando a tela como um enunciado, pretende-se situá-la em seus contextos,

1. The article is the result of Master's research funded by the São Paulo Research Foundation (Fapesp), grant No. 2010 / 02865-0.

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evidenciando as suas ressignificações, advindas das múltiplas percepções em relação ao que seu conteúdo imagético afirmava. Ao explorar a relação entre a tela e o Museu Paulista, será demonstrado que o objetivo de Oscar Pereira da Silva era representar o ato embrionário da cidade e dos paulistas e transformar a sua obra em um documento significativo da narrativa histórica. Porém, a difícil inserção da tela na narrativa do Museu Paulista fez com que essa conquista fosse repleta de tensões. Ao analisar momentos importantes na trajetória da tela, como a sua inserção na Pinacoteca do Estado, a sua transferência para o Museu Paulista, a sua apropriação nos vitrais da Faculdade de Direito e nos materiais das comemorações do IV Centenário de São Paulo, será demonstrado que o transcurso do tempo associado à sua musealização renovou e notabilizou sua apropriação social, possibilitando a sua integração ao imaginário paulistano e paulista.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Museus. Imaginário. Pintura histórica. Oscar Pereira da Silva. Museu Paulista.

In 1991, a dilemma that had lasted for almost 30 years, related to the paintings *Partida da Monção*, by Almeida Júnior, and *Descoberta do Brasil* and *Fundação de São Paulo*, by Oscar Pereira da Silva, was finally over. Museu Paulista<sup>3</sup> or Pinacoteca do Estado<sup>4</sup>? The impasse occurred because these paintings were listed in inventories of both institutions. Indeed, the three paintings had already been exhibited in both museums, which generated this confusion.

The conclusion reached on this occasion was that they belonged to Museu Paulista. To prove the ownership of the paintings, the institution's management presented a report with transcription of excerpts from the *Revista do Museu Paulista*, from the procurement book and from the Secretariat of the Interior's official letters, capable of showing which institution owned the paintings. Thus, it claimed that Museu Paulista had lent the works in 1905, and because of that they had been transferred "to be exhibited at the rooms of the School of Arts and Crafts of this Capital, where it would compose the Pinacoteca's nucleus in 1911."<sup>5</sup> Thus, the report ended the controversy.

However, the supporting documents related to *Fundação de São Paulo* were inconsistent. First, because they were based on a procurement book that was not in the institution's possession, in addition to the fact that it did not know its whereabouts; thus, it could not be consulted. Since it was inaccessible, the excerpt in that book was not transcribed and the date and content of the document were not presented, unlike what was done in relation to the other two paintings. Second, because it was alleged that the three works were transferred to the Pinacoteca in 1905, but such date is prior to the date of execution of *Fundação de São Paulo*, as the report itself indicated in the description of the painting.<sup>6</sup>

These inconsistencies highlight the inaccuracy of the information on this work. It was believed that it had belonged to the Museu Paulista from its conception, a statement justified by the fact that it is a historical painting, a genre very present in this institution and often considered more appropriate to the history museum than to the art museum.<sup>7</sup> Some studies also indicated that it had been ordered by the state government,<sup>8</sup> a reasonable conclusion in view of its theme, considered appropriate to the Museu Paulista's proposal, which was responsible for the elaboration of an illustrated narrative of Brazil's history that precisely highlighted the events that occurred in São Paulo or undertaken by *Paulistas*.<sup>9</sup>

However, unlike what was thought and the justifications for claiming its permanence at the Museu Paulista, the painting was not directed to this institution as soon as it was acquired. On the contrary, it traveled a sinuous path until it was exhibited at this institution and transformed into a visual document of São Paulo's

3. The Museu Paulista was inaugurated on September 07, 1895 as a museum of Natural History and representative milestone monument of the Independence. In the period of the Independence Centenary, in 1922, the institution's historical character was reinforced. New collections were formed, with emphasis on the History of São Paulo. The internal decoration of the building was carried out, with paintings and sculptures presenting the History of Brazil in the Lobby, Stairway and Noble Room. <<http://www.mp.usp.br/history-of-the-museu-paulista>>

4. Pinacoteca de São Paulo is a museum of visual arts with an emphasis on Brazilian production from the nineteenth century to the present day. Founded in 1905 by the São Paulo State Government, it is the city's oldest art museum. The Pinacoteca's original collection was formed with the transfer of 20 works of art from Museu Paulista of University of São Paulo by some of the city's foremost artists. <<http://pinacoteca.org.br/es/pina-2>>

5. History of the paintings elaborated by Maria José Elias. Ofício nº GD/008 90/MP. Pinacoteca de São Paulo's collection.

6. Item 3 of the report states "*Fundação de São Paulo*, by Oscar Pereira da Silva, oil painting, 1909, 3,400 x 1,850m." Although this document indicates that the work was dated 1909, it was completed two years earlier, in 1907, as it will be shown later.

7. The Pinacoteca's collection was formed by means of the transfer of paintings from Museu Paulista. Some studies indicate that the division

criterion was based on the notions of “historical painting” for the Museu Paulista’s collection, and “artistic painting” for the paintings transferred to the Pinacoteca. Refer to Heloisa Barbuy (2007, p. 143). In the dispute process to identify to which institution the three works belonged, this same criterion is indicated, as it will be seen later.

8. Ruth Tarasantchi elaborated an exhibition and a book about Oscar Pereira da Silva. Regarding the painting, she states: “*Fundação de São Paulo* is also a large-proportion painting (185 x 340 cm), ordered by the State Government”; Tarasantchi (2006, p. 81).

9. “Paulista” is the name given to the residents of the Brazilian state of São Paulo.

10. Meneses (2003, p. 27).

11. Mirian Rossi states that São Paulo’s artistic scene enjoyed a privileged condition in the national scenario, even ahead of the federal capital, as there was a growing movement of exhibitions with considerable competition and full financial success; Rossi (1998-1999, p. 86).

12. Regarding the period that Oscar Pereira da Silva was in France, refer to Formico (2012).

origin. This process was full of tensions and obstacles arising from multiple perceptions of what was affirmed by its image content.

By analyzing the painting as a vector of meanings that mediated social practices and conveyed interpretations of the past and discourses,<sup>10</sup> the article aims to highlight how the visual discourse of the work influenced its musealization, exposure and divulgation. Through examination of the relationship between the painting and the Museu Paulista, it will be demonstrated that Oscar Pereira da Silva’s objective of proposing a new initial milestone of the historical narrative, representing the embryonic event of the city and of the *Paulistas*, would be an arduous achievement. It is possible to evidence, by exposing the appropriation and re-signification of *Fundação de São Paulo* throughout its trajectory, that a painting initially difficult to be inserted in the narrative of a historical museum became a widely diffused visual document of the city’s beginning and main reference for this historical event in the social imagery.

## BETWEEN SCORN AND INADEQUACY: A PAINTING FOR THE HISTORY MUSEUM

*Fundação de São Paulo* was not the result of a public order, but a bold bet made by Oscar Pereira da Silva with the intention of inserting and projecting himself in São Paulo’s artistic circle. The painter, who was born in São Fidelis, Rio de Janeiro, settled in São Paulo in 1896, a city with economic and artistic activities in full development, and which provided ample opportunity.<sup>11</sup> Due to his talent and training at the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts, in Rio de Janeiro, and at the École des Beaux-Arts, in Paris,<sup>12</sup> he aimed at having more prominent projection and being recognized as a history painter, genre considered the most prestigious and capable of guaranteeing high-visibility public orders. To achieve this goal, he decided to give visibility to São Paulo’s embryonic act, the most thriving city in Brazil at the time, by making a large-proportion picture with his own resources. His objective was that the work was acquired by the Museu Paulista, a museum dedicated to both natural history and fatherland history, therefore an ideal place for a historical painting.

For this genre of painting, artists usually relied on visual and textual documents that supported their visual solutions related to episodes or characters considered historical. Documents were the basis for the paintings to be considered a representation of reality, figured in a realistic intention or in accordance with solutions that built a decent and adequate view of the past. Thus, historical paintings were

recurrently seen as representations of the “truth” and, when musealized, became “windows to the past,” fulfilling their didactic mission by enabling thousands of citizens to observe the former times. They were, and are, privileged means for the materialization of the famous statement of Eugène Viollet-le-Duc’s<sup>13</sup> – “voir c’est savoir” – which guided much of the history musealization processes in the nineteenth and part of the twentieth centuries. Therefore, history museums were the most convenient places to receive these paintings, used as a support for historical narratives and as a mechanism for the construction of myths and heroes.

In order to elaborate his painting, Oscar Pereira da Silva conducted research and sought to support it by historical documents,<sup>14</sup> so that the visual discourse elaborated was in consonance with what intellectuals and historians proposed. Thus, the image could become a visual document of São Paulo’s beginning, and the Museu Paulista would be the most appropriate institution to make it possible. It is noteworthy that, shortly before elaborating *Fundação de São Paulo*, the artist sought to strengthen his ties with the museum. In 1906, he donated a painting, known as *Guerreiro Carajá*,<sup>15</sup> which was well received by acting director Rodolpho Ihering. He considered it “an invaluable bounty” that would be used to adorn the ethnographic room.<sup>16</sup> Shortly after the donation, *Correio Paulistano* newspaper reported that Oscar Pereira da Silva was working on a historical painting. Then, it can be considered that, for him, donating *Guerreiro Carajá* was useful to prove his artistic talent and to be always remembered and seen in the great state history museum, predicting that this would contribute to selling his historical work to the institution.

The artist had already obtained space at the Museu Paulista with the painting *Descobrimento do Brasil*, made in 1900. The work, however, was only acquired two years after its completion and the painter had to send two petitions to the Chamber of Deputies<sup>17</sup> suggesting its procurement, and significantly reduced its value<sup>18</sup> for the deal to be concluded. The painting was widely praised by critics<sup>19</sup> and recurrently mentioned to prove the artist’s talent, who was recognized by the state when a large-proportion historical painting of his authorship was acquired and exposed at the museum. However, in 1905, it was transferred to the Pinacoteca do Estado together with *Partida da Monção*, by Almeida Júnior. Then, when Oscar Pereira da Silva started painting *Fundação de São Paulo*, around 1907, *Descobrimento do Brasil* was no longer on exhibition at the Museu Paulista.

Assuming that a theme about São Paulo’s past would be more attractive for the history museum, and expecting that this institution would house a large-proportion painting of his authorship, Oscar Pereira da Silva started the onerous and risky task of painting *Fundação de São Paulo*. A magnificent portray of an episode of São

13. The expression means “to see is to know.” Viollet-le-Duc affirms that “le meilleur moyen de développer l’intelligence et de former le jugement, car on apprend ainsi à voir, et voir c’est savoir”. Viollet-le-Duc (1978, p. 302).

14. In January 1907, it was reported that the artist had studied antiquities and colonial traditions, besides conducting research at the *Museu do Estado* and *Escola Normal de São Paulo*. It is indicated that the objective was to “acquire more in-depth knowledge” to do his historical picture. *Correio Paulistano* newspaper (1907, p. 3).

15. The whereabouts of *Guerreiro Carajá* is unknown, since it is not part of Museu Paulista’s collection nor of Pinacoteca de São Paulo’s collection. The work is cited in Museu Paulista’s documents, such as the *Relatório Anual de 1906, Lista de objetos oferecidos ao Museu, Inventário nº 6* [1906 Annual Report, List of objects offered to the Museum, Inventory No. 6], 1916, but there is no mention of the painting in subsequent inventories. In the *Guia da seção histórica do Museu Paulista* [Museu Paulista’s historical area guide], the work is quoted as belonging to Room B-12, dedicated to Brazilian ethnography. Taunay (1937, p. 105).

16. Correspondence of November 12, 1906, folder 84, USP Museu Paulista’s collection.

17. The petitions occurred in 1900 and 1901; refer to Annals of Chamber of Deputies, ALESP.

18. In the first petition, the artist’s request was rejected on the grounds that the amount requested was too

high, then the artist reduced the price of the work from 12:000\$000 to 8:000\$000.

19. *Correio Paulistano* newspaper (1906, p. 2).

20. Salgueiro (2002, p. 3-22).

21. Ferreira (2002, p. 94).

22. Regarding the painting *Primeira Missa no Brasil*, refer to Coli (2005).

23. *Revista do IHGSP* (1895, p. 3).

Paulo's history, which had not yet been the subject of a large-proportion painting, was a way of attracting the attention of São Paulo's authorities and obtaining more space at the Museu Paulista. The turn of the century was a good time to portray regional issues, because with the advent of the Republic, Rio de Janeiro lost the monopoly of the creation of official art, as the federalist regime made state governments engage in the initiative of hero worship and regional history. The past became the target of artists in states such as São Paulo, Rio Grande do Sul or Pará, with a clear pedagogical meaning: teaching to the mostly illiterate population the great events of regional and local history that, at that time, were forged as evidence of the protagonism of these states or their capitals in the nation's destiny.<sup>20</sup>

In São Paulo, founders of the Historical and Geographical Institute of São Paulo (IHGSP) were responsible for revisiting nationality milestones, rewriting national history, recreating the past, grounding myths, ordering facts and singularizing characters based on a new protagonist: the new *Paulista*.<sup>21</sup> Similarly, artists would be responsible for creating images consistent with this discourse. If the theme of *Descobrimento do Brasil* did not meet these requirements, since the event had no relationship with the *Paulistas*, a painting dedicated to São Paulo's embryonic act would certainly meet.

Besides choosing the appropriate subject and elaborating a document-based work, the artist chose to follow a well-known compositional model, which was Victor Meirelles' *Primeira Missa no Brasil* (figure 1), painted in 1860. The imagine parallels between the works are evident, not only because they follow the same thematic model of the meeting of indigenous people, Portuguese laymen and clerics, symbolizing an inter-ethnic contact mediated by faith, but also because of the obvious similarity in the compositional model and in the distribution of elements in the painting, since the religious act is surrounded by a centripetal force that disposes all the elements around it.<sup>22</sup>

Seeking to refund the milestone established by Meirelles' painting, and following the IHGSP rule that stated that "São Paulo's history is Brazil's history,"<sup>23</sup> Oscar Pereira da Silva painted *Fundação de São Paulo* (figure 2). This representation placed the miscegenation as the basis for São Paulo's racial identity, reserving a position of superiority to the Portuguese and natural warrior qualities to the native. Contact between indigenous people and Europeans is devoid of any conflict or violence, especially due to the emphasis placed on Jesuit catechesis and the act of blessing. The city that had its beginning as a Jesuit mission was, therefore, a predestination of urban conviviality by submitting the "different" to the founding symbolic act.





Figure 1 – Victor Meirelles, *Primeira Missa no Brasil*, 1860, oil painting, 268 x 356 cm, Museu Nacional de Belas Artes's Collection [National Museum of Fine Arts] / IBRAM / MinC, Rio de Janeiro.



Figure 2 – Oscar Pereira da Silva, *Fundação de São Paulo*, 1907, oil painting, 185 x 340 cm. USP Museu Paulista's Collection, São Paulo. Photography: Helio Nobre.



24. *A Vida Moderna* (1907, w.p.).

25. *O Estado de...* (1908, p. 1).

26. “Pátio do Colégio” is the name given to the historical Jesuit church and school in the city of São Paulo, Brazil. The name is also used to refer to the square in front of the church. The Pátio do Colégio marks the site where the city was founded in 1554.

27. Von Ihering (1907, p. 215). The article had already been presented at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition in the USA, in 1904, and published in English in *O Estado de S. Paulo* newspaper in 1906. However, the version translated into Portuguese was published on the *Revista do Museu Paulista*, issue VII, which, according to Stauffer, was only distributed in the second half of September 1908, thus reaching the Brazilian public in the days following the news about the complaint in Vienna. Stauffer (1959, p.176).

28. It is the current *Museu*

In December 1907, *Fundação de São Paulo* was completed and, in order to divulge and sell it, Oscar Pereira da Silva adopted several strategies. The first one was to exhibit it at a prominent place, such as the luxurious and cosmopolitan Progredior restaurant. He sent an invitation to *O Estado de S. Paulo* newspaper, which had important characters from the *Paulista* elite as owners, writers and subscribers, and personally invited the president of the state of São Paulo, Jorge Tibiriçá. His exhibition drew the attention of several newspapers, and his work was reproduced in *A Vida Moderna* magazine,<sup>24</sup> which increased its dissemination. Newspaper critics urged the government to buy the painting and direct it to the Museu Paulista. However, these recommendations were unsuccessful, as the exhibition did not result in the sale of the work. Insisting on the importance of the painting as a historical document, in July 1908 the artist sent a petition to the Chamber of Deputies, suggesting, in vain, that the State should acquire the painting to add it to Museu Paulista’s collection.<sup>25</sup>

Jorge Tibiriçá, president of the state of São Paulo, had ignored the artist’s invitation to his exhibition, showing complete disinterest in the work. The painter’s choices to represent São Paulo’s inaugural act did not seem to please the ruler, who had been involved in the demolition of the chapel of the *Pátio do Colégio*,<sup>26</sup> evidencing a hostile relationship with the Catholic Church and, above all, with the Society of Jesus. In addition, the option to portray indigenous people in harmonious coexistence with the colonizers also faced resistance. During his government, Tibiriçá had to deal with indigenous people who represented an obstacle to the expansion of crops to the west of the state.

Moreover, on September 8, 1908, the XVI Congress of Americanists began in Vienna. On this occasion, Brazil was accused of exterminating indigenous tribes in the newly created colonies in the South of the country. To make the situation worse, in September 1908, an article by Herman von Ihering, Museu Paulista’s director, was published on the *Revista do Museu Paulista*, issue VII, in which it was claimed that the *caingangues* [indigenous people] were a hindrance to the colonization of the regions of the state where they lived and that the only choice for the tense contact would be their extermination.<sup>27</sup> This controversial stance led the museum’s director to be accused of inciting the extermination of natives. Certainly, these controversies were a major obstacle for the acquisition of the painting, as desired by Oscar Pereira da Silva. It would be difficult to sell a painting representing a peaceful gathering of indigenous people and Europeans to an institution whose director was appointed as an advocate of indigenous extermination.

Considering that the representation elaborated by Pereira da Silva met resistance to its acquisition and exhibition at the Museu Paulista, the artist began to

highlight other meanings of the work instead of its documentary character, and changed the strategies he had previously used. Focusing on the religious nature of his painting, in August 1909 the artist held a new exhibition at the Episcopal Palace in São Paulo.<sup>28</sup> It was supported by a significant part of the press, and the painting was reproduced on the *Santa Cruz* Catholic magazine.<sup>29</sup> The artist also sought to strengthen political ties and took advantage of the fact that Tibiriçá's mandate was over and Albuquerque Lins was the state's president, and received the then Secretary of the Interior, Carlos Guimarães, in his studio.<sup>30</sup> He started then participating in intellectual and political circles, becoming an IHGSP's member. He sent a new petition to the Chamber of Deputies on October 5, 1909, in which highlighted the aesthetic values of the painting, suggesting its acquisition for the Pinacoteca.<sup>31</sup> This time, the painter's effort was not in vain, as the Secretary of the Interior's opinion favored the acquisition of the painting in November 1909.

Unlike what was originally expected and proposed by the newspaper critics and the artist himself, the work was not destined to the Museu Paulista but to the Pinacoteca do Estado. Much of the initial collection of this institution was formed with paintings from the Museu Paulista.<sup>32</sup> The Pinacoteca's collection should be composed of works of artistic vocation and exemplary character, since the institution had the function of forming the aesthetic taste for future generations. It would also be a place of learning for artists, then an essential factor was the aesthetic quality of the paintings as well as the diversity of the artistic genres, and historical paintings should also make up the collection. For the work, however, belonging to the Pinacoteca meant emphasizing its artistic and formal aspect, that is, its plastic quality, and belonging to the Museu Paulista would highlight its historical and documentary value.

Its acquisition and musealization<sup>33</sup> at the Pinacoteca was of great importance for the painting. Evidence of this fact is the significant increase in orders of large-proportion works that Oscar Pereira da Silva start receiving.<sup>34</sup> Thus, it fulfilled the function of making its author recognized, and he obtained privileged space in São Paulo's artistic circle. Another relevant aspect was the publication of the image of *Fundação de São Paulo* on the cover of the *Correio Paulistano* newspaper on January 25, 1910 (Figure 3), along with the article on the city's anniversary. In the same year, it was published again on *Santa Cruz* magazine.<sup>35</sup>

After the inaugural moment, however, the painting stopped receiving attention of the press. During the period that it remained exposed at the Pinacoteca, there are a few references found about the work.<sup>36</sup> Therefore, it can be said that the painting did not conquer the centrality desired by the artist and had its documentary value softened by being exposed at an art museum. In addition, since the Pinacoteca had

*da Cidade de São Paulo's* headquarters.

29. *Santa Cruz* (1909, p. 6).

30. *O Estado de...* (1909, p. 7).

31. Petition sent by Oscar Pereira da Silva to the State Congress on October 5, 1909, ALESP.

32. Regarding the Museu Paulista's artistic gallery and the formation of the Pinacoteca, refer to Nery (2015).

33. As André Desvallés and François Mairesse demonstrate, musealization is the operation of extracting something from its natural and cultural context and giving it a museum status. Objects are separated from their original context to be studied as representative documents of reality that they helped to construct, that is, they become testimonies of reality. Musealization is therefore not merely the transfer of an object to the museum's physical spaces, but a change in its status as it takes on the role of evidence and becomes a source for study and exhibition. Desvallés; Mairesse (2013, p. 56-58).

34. The artist was required to make panels for the Theatro Municipal de São Paulo in 1911; paintings for the Church of Santa Cecília in 1913; and the paintings *A colheita e o beneficiamento de algodão* and *O desembarque do café no Porto de Santos*, which he painted in 1916 for the Luiz de Queiroz College of Agriculture, in Piracicaba. He also obtained significant orders from Museu Paulista, such as several portraits, in addition to the historical paintings *O Príncipe D. Pedro e Jorge Avilez a bordo da Fragata União* and

*Sessão das Cortes de Lisboa.* Regarding Museu Paulista's orders, refer to Lima Jr. (2015).

35. Refer to *Santa Cruz* (1910).

36. Two reproductions of the painting were found in the *Ilustração Brasileira* magazine, published in the city of Rio de Janeiro. On January 20, 1922, it was reproduced along with a text about the history of São Paulo. In January 1923, it was reproduced in color. On this occasion, its aesthetic attributes and the rigorous technique employed by the artist were highlighted. However, its documentary value was not mentioned.

37. The painting was on the same page as a portrait of José de Anchieta, the image of *Glória Imortal aos Fundadores de São Paulo* monument and a photo of the *Pátio do Colégio*. Fundação de São Paulo. *O Estado de...* (1929, p. 8). Page illustrated by rotogravure.

smaller attendance and less prominence in relation to the press, the visibility of the work was certainly affected. In 1929, however, there would be a new possibility to gain prominence, as it would be transferred to the Museu Paulista.

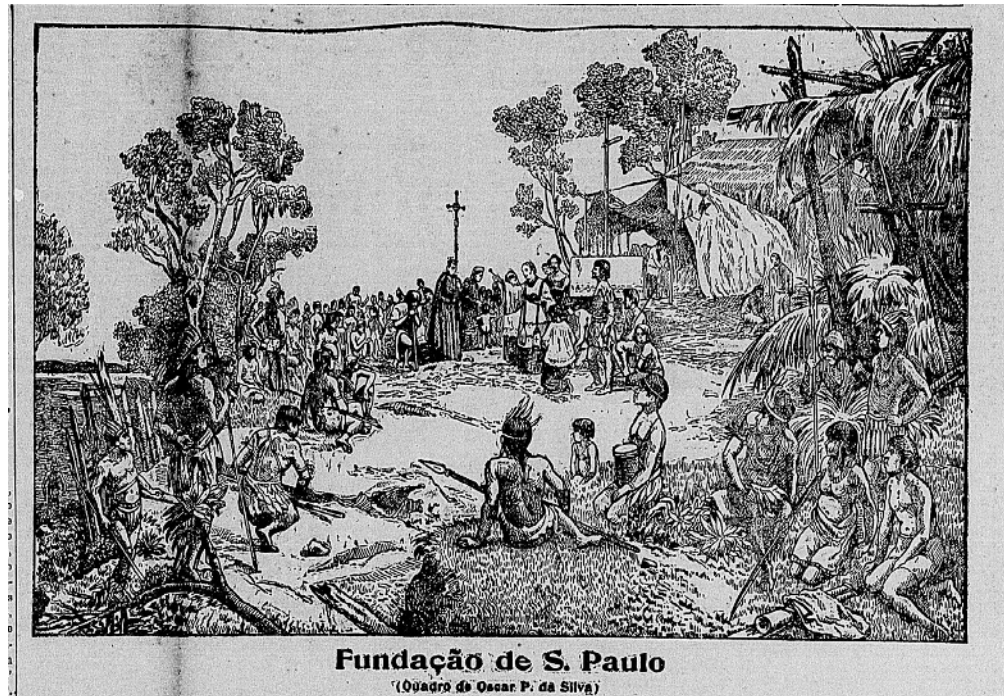


Figure 3 – *Correio Paulistano* newspaper, January 25, 1909, p. 1.

## FROM NON-SUITABLE TO OPPORTUNE: THE PAINTING IN THE NARRATIVES OF MUSEU PAULISTA AND FACULTY OF LAW

On January 25, 1929, the publication of the image of *Fundação de São Paulo* on the *O Estado de S. Paulo* newspaper (figure 4) removed the work from its oblivion. On the same page that brought other references to the historical event,<sup>37</sup> the painting once again received attention for its documentary value. Shortly after this publication, the painting would be transferred to the Museu Paulista and, thus, would have a new opportunity to be recognized as a relevant document of São Paulo's past, being added to São Paulo's historical narrative. The moment seemed right, as the museum had undergone a major transformation.

Afonso Taunay took office as Museu Paulista's director in 1917. The replacement of the zoologist by the historian revealed the intention of the state



government of São Paulo to give a new profile to the institution, highlighting its historical character, especially due to the preparations for the celebrations of the centenary of Independence. The place where the museum was, the fact that it was built as a memorial for independence,<sup>38</sup> and the project of urban transformation of the Ipiranga hill, with the construction of a large sculptural ensemble in honor of September 7, 1822, planned to be completed in 1922,<sup>39</sup> were more than enough reasons for the Museu Paulista to be remodeled so as to emphatically fit into the orbit of these commemorations, making it a natural science museum.



Figure 4 – *O Estado de S. Paulo* newspaper, January 25, 1929, p. 8.

Thus, the new director completely reorganized the institution, broadly developed the historical section, assembled unpublished documents for research on São Paulo's and Brazil's histories, acquired portraits of famous figures in the country's history, and gradually obtained the fundamental elements for iconographic arrangement. The visual narrative was the great support of Taunay in the historical composition of the museum, because, as Ana Claudia Brefe indicated, the images and the way in which they were arranged were responsible for reconstructing the space, endowing it with meaning.<sup>40</sup> The organization of the rooms sought to demonstrate the importance of São Paulo's past for Brazil's history from the point of view of its founding moment: the *bandeirantes*.<sup>41</sup> Therefore, the then state of São Paulo would be, in its remote past of captaincy, a center that would generate and disseminate nationality, unifying all building's decoration under the aegis of an evolutionary conception of history.<sup>42</sup> The starting point of this narrative was the

38. Building that houses the Museu Paulista, built by Tommaso Guadenzio Bezzi to be a memorial monument to Brazil's Independence. Refer to Oliveira (1995).

39. For the celebrations of the centenary of Independence in São Paulo, an international public competition was held to erect a sculptural monument on the banks of the Ipiranga, which was won by the Italian Ettore Ximenes. In addition to the sculptural work, there was prediction of reformulation of the garden that borders the museum and the opening of a large avenue, connecting the Ipiranga hill to the city center, forming a monumental axis. Monteiro (2017).

40. Brefe (2005, p. 102-103).

41. "Bandeirante" is the name given to the parties of explorers that traversed inaccessible highlands, capturing Indians for slaves and searching for precious metals and stones, during the first two centuries of Brazilian colonization.

42. Mattos (1998-1999, p. 142-143).

43. Ofício 159, State Secretariat of the Interior, dated April 3, 1929.

44. Correspondence dated April 27, 1929. USP Museu Paulista's collection (emphasis added).

45. Even in the budget requested for the transfer of the works, the description is as follows: "Removal, special packing, transportation and new adaptation and arrangement at the Museu of the large painting 'A partida da Monção,' which is at the Pinacoteca do Estado. Transportation and arrangement of two smaller paintings."

46. The donations that the museum received were described in the session called "bounties" in the annual report.

47. *Correio Paulistano* (1929, p. 10).

48. *O Estado de...* (1930, p. 6).

49. Portraits of Joaquim Bonifácio do Amaral, Viscount of Indaiatuba (1815-1884), coffee farmer and Liberal Party politician, who was councilor city and deputy governor of São Paulo; Counselor Bernardo Avelino Gavião Peixoto (1829-1912), who was deputy and president of the province of Rio de Janeiro, and Brigadier Bernardo J. Pinto Gavião Peixoto (1791-1859), who was twice president of the Province of São Paulo.

*bandeirante* expeditions, which had a remarkable presence in the hall and staircase of the museum. The inevitable arrival point of the scenic path was Pedro Américo's painting, *Independência ou morte*. However, there was a gap about the moment before the *bandeirantes*, which was a very convenient opportunity for Oscar Pereira da Silva's painting.

In April 1929, the then Secretary of Interior Affairs, Fábio de Sá Barreto, sent an official letter<sup>43</sup> to the Pinacoteca do Estado requesting the transfer of three works to Museu Paulista: *Partida da Monção*, by Almeida Júnior, and *Descobrimento do Brasil* and *Fundação de São Paulo*, both by Oscar Pereira da Silva. The reason, according to Taunay, was "the huge difference in the frequency of visitors between the Pinacoteca do Estado and that of our Institute." With *Partida da Monção*, the director composed a room dedicated to river expeditions. Oscar Pereira da Silva's paintings, however, were never mentioned in the correspondence between Taunay and Fábio de Sá Barreto, besides being received with indifference, as evidenced in the letter from the museum's director to the Secretary of the Interior:

I received a bill from School of Arts and Crafts sent to this Secretariat regarding the transportation of 'Partida da Monção' and two more large paintings from Pinacoteca do Estado to Museu Paulista.

The bill is right indeed. By verbal order of Mr. Secretary of the Interior I was assigned to plan together with the School the removal special packing transportation new adaption and re-arrangement at the Museu of the three large paintings which the bill is referred to.<sup>44</sup>

Taunay refers to the works as "two more large paintings," without even mentioning their titles, a fact that is recurrent in other documents.<sup>45</sup> Moreover, in the 1929 annual report there is no mention of the works, as they were not mentioned with regard to the museum's acquisitions, the "bounties"<sup>46</sup> received or the inaugurations of the rooms that took place that year. A common practice was the press divulgation of new museum's rooms opening, which happened with the *Sala das Monções*<sup>47</sup> and also with the inauguration of amphorae containing water from the main Brazilian rivers.<sup>48</sup> However, the transfer and addition of these works to the Museu Paulista's collection were not mentioned.

*Fundação de São Paulo* was placed in Room A-15 (figure 5), dedicated to the city's past, in which it was intended to reconstruct the old aspects of the city of São Paulo. In this room, there were portraits of São Paulo's politicians,<sup>49</sup> a portrait of José de Anchieta, and a carved column from an altar of the Church of the *Pátio do Colégio*. There were also small pictures of the city of São Paulo's spaces and

public places, such as *Jardim da Luz*, *Largo de São Francisco*, *Largo do Ouvidor*, *Rua da Boa Morte* and *Velho Mercado*. The city was presented through blueprints, drawings and panoramas, in addition to the large plaster model made by the Dutchman Hendrik Bakkenist, representing São Paulo in 1840. Thus, it can be seen that there was a clear priority for the representation of the city in the nineteenth century, with a small number of objects related to the colonial period. It focused mainly on the city's spatiality, present in the street drawings, maps, blueprints and, above all, in the model. The Catholic Church appeared in a secondary plane, represented only by the portrait of Jose de Anchieta and the remaining column from the Church of the *Pátio do Colégio*.



Figure 5 – Museu Paulista's Room A-15. Dedicated to the past of the city of São Paulo, photography, ca. 1930. Source: USP Museu Paulista's Archival Collection.

In Taunay's organization, there was another room dedicated to the city's past, Room A-11, in which documents from the colonial period were arranged, such as the minutes of the Chambers of Deputy and its General Register, from 1562 to 1882, codices recalling the facts considered relevant in São Paulo's history. There was also a collection of city blueprints and various maps. There were paintings representing the metropolis' buildings and missing places, such as the Chamber of



50. Taunay describes the painting as follows: "Large painting by Calixto, with a surface of over eight square meters, *A Grande inundação das várzeas* in 1892, today unrealizable, and precious document of the time," leads us to believe that he refers to the work that is known today by the name of *Inundação da Várzea do Carmo em 1892*. Taunay (1937, p. 76). The painting is currently called *Inundação da Várzea do Carmo*.

51. "Mameluco" is a Portuguese word that denotes a person of mixed Amerindian and European ancestry, very common in

Deputy of São Paulo in 1628, *Rua da Imperatriz* in 1858, *Largo da Misericórdia*, among others. The painting *A grande inundação das Várzeas*, by Benedito Calixto, was also in this room.<sup>50</sup> Thus, it can be seen that Room A-11 had a different connotation from Room A-15. Although both had paintings with street scenes and important points of the city, the first emphasized the historical aspect, especially by the documents exhibited there. Room A-15, in turn, prioritized the city's spatial aspect, reconstituting it, as it can be seen from the subtitle that Taunay himself attributed to the room – *essay of reconstitution of the city's aspects in 1840*.

Exposed in the room where the city was the great protagonist, the role played by the Jesuits was reduced to a mere intermediary of the process of the village's settlement, and Oscar Pereira da Silva's painting was solely responsible for representing the city's settlement. Its evocative and pedagogical role was, therefore, limited and decontextualized, since it ceased to perform the originally proposed function, which was to represent the primordial and embryonic event, not only of the city in the territorial aspect, but of the genesis of São Paulo, of the *Paulistas* and, by extension, of Brazil as a whole.

The out-of-place insertion of *Fundação de São Paulo* can be explained, again, by its image content, which presented a discourse contrasting to the exhibition project elaborated by Taunay, which mentioned and praised the union of the indigenous people with the Europeans, but practically omitted the Church and the Jesuit missionaries' action. The possibility that *Fundação de São Paulo* could be seen as the initial moment of Taunay's narrative proved inconceivable and would become even more difficult due to the new paintings to be installed in the museum's entrance hall.

In the 1930s, four portraits by Wasth Rodrigues were acquired: *D. João III*, *Martim Afonso de Souza*, *João Ramalho* and *Tibiriçá*. These paintings intended to evoke the beginning of colonization by representing the authorities who determined the conquest of São Paulo's lands and also the patriarchs of the *Paulista* elite families. The paintings were placed in the museum's entrance hall, along with the statues of the pioneers Antonio Raposo Tavares and Fernão Dias Paes Leme, made a decade earlier, in 1922, by the Italian artist Luigi Brizzolara. Such paintings became the starting point of Taunay's narrative, as they represented the first settlers and precursors of the *Paulistas*, *mameluco*<sup>51</sup> and *bandeirante*, the pioneer of the territory synthesized in the figure of the mestizo child who appears with João Ramalho and Tibiriçá.

Figures like Martim Afonso de Souza, João Ramalho and Anchieta disputed, in historians' and politicians' speeches, the title of city's founder. Nevertheless, from the 1920s, when the political-economic *Paulista* hegemony started being challenged,

there was a great investment in identifying São Paulo as the core and builder of Brazilian nationality. Thus, historians linked to the *Paulista* Republican Party – Alfredo Ellis Jr., Afonso Taunay and Alcântara Machado – propagated their own version of São Paulo's identity. Thus, the figure of the *bandeirante* occupied a place of undeniable prominence and João Ramalho definitely assumed the position of true founder of the *Paulista* lineage, precisely because he was considered the "first *bandeirante*." In contrast, the Jesuits started being attacked and gradually left in a secondary position in relation to the other founding myths.<sup>52</sup>

Following this premise, the entire narrative created at the Museu Paulista gave a peripheral role to the Church and the Christian faith, and the missionary action during the colonization period was largely omitted. There were very few references to the Jesuits in this institution, and none of them had been acquired on Taunay's own initiative.<sup>53</sup> This is considerable evidence that the protagonism attributed to Catholicism by Oscar Pereira da Silva in his great historical work faced problems and disagreements in relation to the events and figures selected by Taunay to compose the story told at the Museu Paulista. Even without being in evidence, belonging to this museum contributed to the notoriety of *Fundação de São Paulo*, as it gained a much larger projection than it had when was at the Pinacoteca, and since then the historical dimension linked to it has been highlighted, and this is why it has been widely reproduced since the 1930s.<sup>54</sup> An exemplary case was its reproduction in the Faculty of Law's stained glass windows, whose building started being renovated in 1932.

Complaining that the faculty building was devoid of the "requirements necessary for the operation of a higher education institution" and that "it lacks the nobility of the architectural lines, which requires such a building," Alcântara Machado, the institution's director, proposed a renovation to the place in 1931.<sup>55</sup> He pointed to the inadequacy of the old convent building, which did not have conditions of hygiene and comfort, besides needing more space and more adequate rooms. In January of the following year, the renovation was approved, based on Ricardo Severo's project, Portuguese architect engineer, successor to Ramos de Azevedo in his office. Construction began in 1932 and lasted until the 1940s.<sup>56</sup> As Octavio and Grola indicated, the renovation, which eventually turned into a complete demolition of the old convent and the construction of a new building, was aimed not only at expanding the facilities and ensuring health, but also at combating the institution's negative view and inserting it in the "new times."<sup>57</sup>

Since the Faculty of Law was considered a key institution in the country's construction, including the republican regime, São Paulo's intellectual and political elite considered its modernization urgent. Modernity, however, should not be apart

colonial Brazil, especially in the São Paulo district.

52. Ferretti; Capelato (1999, p. 13).

53. The only iconographic representations that made reference to the Jesuits were two portraits of Anchieta, one exposed in Room A-15, and another made by Benedito Calixto, in Room A-10. There were also two letters written by José de Anchieta, and documents related to him, such as biographies and canonization processes. Taunay (1937, p.88); Moraes (2008, p. 214); Brefe (2005, p. 255-256).

54. Taunay himself emphasizes this aspect of the painting, when describing it at Room A-15 "It has to be noted in this room the large painting by Oscar Pereira da Silva: *A fundação de São Paulo, a 25 de janeiro de 1554*, popularized by frequent reproduction." Taunay (1937, p. 88).

55. *Revista da Faculdade de Direito* (1932, p. 165).

56. No piece of news that indicated the construction conclusion was found. The Legislative Assembly report for 1943 indicates that the works were in phase of completion. *A Vida Administrativa* (1943, p. 196). In the Severo & Villaes engineering office's documentation, there is proof of payment from the Directorate of Public Works, dated December 1946. *Ramos de Azevedo architecture office's collection*, USP FAU Library.

57. Octavio (1999, p.177); Grola (2012, p. 88-91).

58. Grola, op. cit., p. 140-141.

59. Ibid., p. 178-181.

60. Severo (1938, p. 22).

61. There were commemorative plaques for the poets Fagundes Varela, Alvares de Azevedo and Castro Alves, and also with phrases by Joaquim Nabuco and Rui Barbosa.

62. Regarding *Casa Conrado's* stained glass windows, refer to Mello (1996, p. 178-184).

63 Octavio (1999, p.190-191).

from tradition. The new building designed by Ricardo Severo followed neo-colonial style parameters, a trend that emerged in the early decades of the twentieth century, which sought to affirm Brazilian nationality through the search for the roots of our architecture, taking back elements of the constructive art of the colonial period. In constructions of the present, there was introduction of representative motifs of the past.<sup>58</sup> The architectural style adopted denoted the attempt to affirm the institution as relevant element in the nation's history, constituting itself as a symbolic space of consolidation of nationality, which sought to legitimize the role of academia in the nation's formation.<sup>59</sup>

The idea of a connection with the past is also very visible in the decision to maintain *Pátio das Arcadas* [Arcades Courtyard], the traditional center of the first Law Academy, around which the "architectural plan of the new building"<sup>60</sup> would be developed, as Severus announced. The building itself should become a kind of colonial art museum, which would fulfill the role of perpetuating the characteristic types of the Brazilian architectural tradition. The configuration of this museum space was noted not only in the architectural elements, but also in the building's ornamentation. Portraits of teachers and D. Pedro I and D. Pedro II; the statue of José Bonifácio, the Younger; bronze plaques with reference to the old arcades; commemorative plaques;<sup>61</sup> Professor Julio Frank's tomb, and the *Pátio das Arcadas* itself configured elements of exhibition of a faculty-museum. Nevertheless, the key element of this museum configuration is the series of stained glass windows, made by *Casa Conrado Sorgenicht*,<sup>62</sup> which appear in sequence on the staircase.

On the ground floor, there are references to the building itself and the constitution of the faculty, and the central stained glass window represents a memory of the old convent, as it was in the nineteenth century, when it already housed the Law Academy, along with the Franciscan churches. It is flanked by two allegories: Philosophy and Jurisprudence, which represent the foundation of legal thought that supports the nation. These images refer to the allegories of Rafael Sanzio on the ceiling of the Vatican's *Stanza della Segnatura*.<sup>63</sup>

On the first floor, the triptych of windows represents the *Paulista* genesis (figure 6). The central stained glass window is that of Oscar Pereira da Silva's painting, *Fundação de São Paulo*, which is accompanied by Almeida Junior's *Partida da Monção*, and an image of the *Pátio do Colégio* in the nineteenth century. The image of the center represents the city's foundation and the *Paulistas'* genesis, mediated by the Catholic faith and somehow synthesizes the lateral stained glass windows, which are extensions of the first. *Partida da Monção* evokes the conquest of the western territory made by waterways and undertaken

by the *Paulistas*, whose origin was already indicated in the representation of January 25, 1554. The other represents the place where the city was founded already transformed into a city of the nineteenth century and also makes reference to the state's administrative and political headquarters, because in that period the place was where the Government Palace was settled. The narrative proceeds to the third floor, where there is the stained glass window representing Pedro Américo's *Independência ou Morte*, symbolizing the nation's birth, whose act of bravery had occurred on São Paulo's soil.

64. Regarding interpretation about Vatican's images, refer to Wind (1937/1997, p. 69).

65 "Centro Acadêmico XI de Agosto" is the

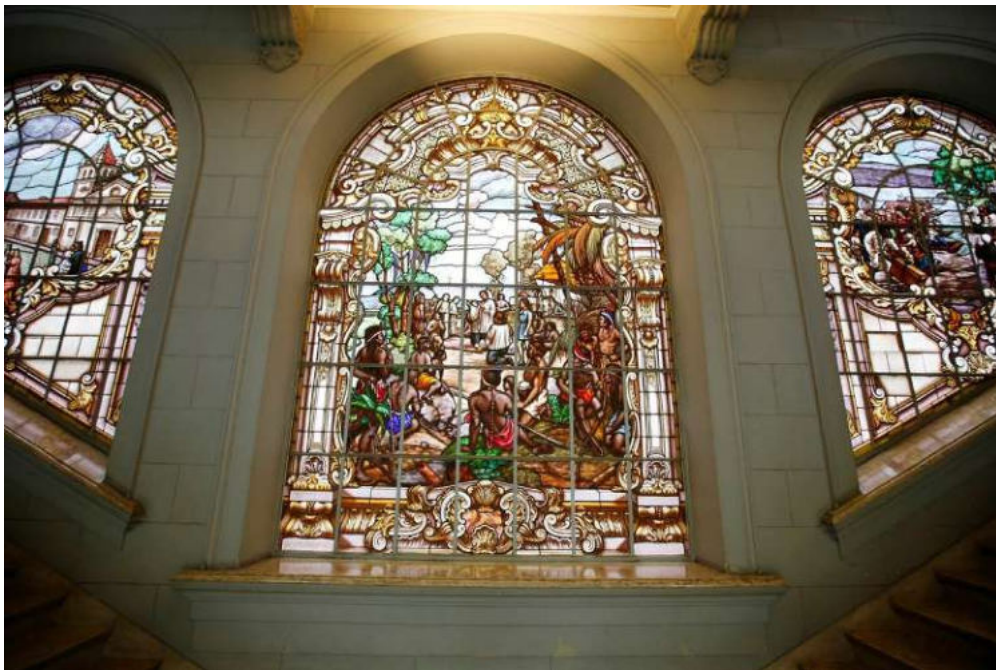


Figure 6 – Casa Conrado Sorgenicht, Faculty of Law's stained glass windows, ca. 1940. Photography: Marcos Santos/USP Images, August 18, 2015.

The third floor is correlated to the ground floor by the allegories in the lateral stained glass windows, whose references are images of Rafael Sanzio belonging to the Vatican's *Stanza della Segnatura*, on the wall intended to exemplify Jurisprudence. They are composed of two female figures considered cardinal virtues; the one on the left represents Fortitude and the one on the right, Temperance. Next to them there are angels symbolizing the theological virtues. Next to Fortitude is Charity, and with Temperance is Hope.<sup>64</sup> Finally, the central stained glass window of the third floor is the symbol of the Faculty of Law, represented by the Law of the Twelve Tables juxtaposed with the scales and the sword.

representative body of the Faculty of Law's students.

66. Faculdade de Direito (1941, p. 35-42).

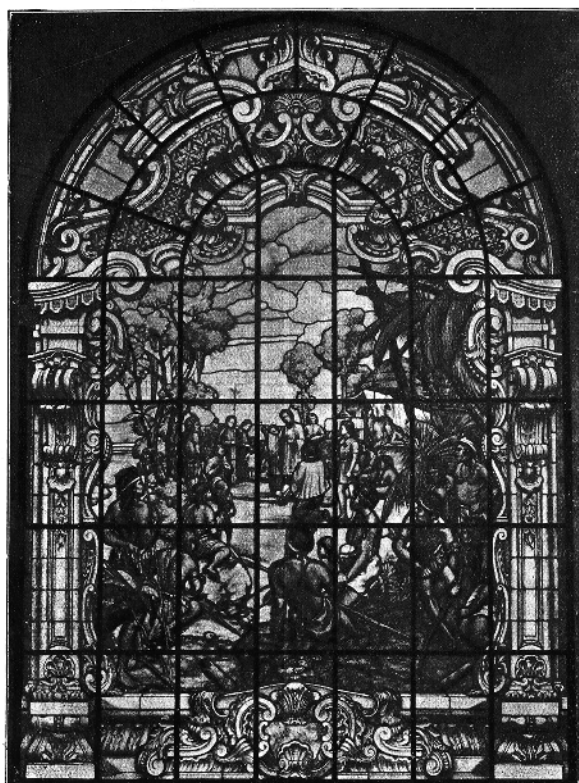
67 Regarding the painting

The visual narrative reproduced there has a clear reference to the Museu Paulista, as images of three works from its collection were used, which gave strength to the whole, especially for its documentary character, since, symbolically, it is a "window to the past." The trajectory created through stained glass windows integrates the National History with universal values, verified by references to the classic ideals of images alluding to the Vatican. In this narrative, the nation's history starts from São Paulo's founding and culminates with the Brazilian political emancipation, and it is built by the paintings *Fundação de São Paulo*, *Partida da Monção* and *Independência ou Morte*, but if in the Museu Paulista the origin is associated with miscegenation, represented by the portraits of Tibiriçá and João Ramalho, in the Faculty of Law the genesis is the blessing gave on January 25, 1554, whose image was conceived by Oscar Pereira da Silva.

In this faculty, which had a vital relationship with the Catholic Church, since it was installed at the Franciscan convent, an image in which the clerics play a central role is quite opportune to shape the city's embryonic act and the narrative developed there. With this, *Fundação de São Paulo* gained visibility and prominence, because in addition to decorating the building of the institution that intended to be a symbol of modernity and tradition, it represented the primordial act of the story narrated there.

In 1941, *Acrópole* magazine published an article from the *Centro Acadêmico XI de Agosto*,<sup>65</sup> together with images of the Faculty of Law after renovation.<sup>66</sup> One of the pages of the magazine brought an advertisement of the *Casa Conrado* and the image chosen to compose it was precisely the stained glass window representing the painting *Fundação de São Paulo* (figure 7). It is interesting to note, however, that there is an error in the title of the painting, which was called *A Primeira Missa no Brasil*. The mistake leads to confusing São Paulo's history with Brazil's, transferring the event that occurred in Bahia to São Paulo. The error also highlights the compositional similarities between the works of Oscar Pereira da Silva and Victor Meirelles and emphasizes the importance of the religious act, contrary to what happened with the painting in the Museu Paulista's Room A-15. However, a fundamental characteristic of this representation, which was to be the inaugural moment of São Paulo and its people, was also lost here. The intrinsic relationship with the city and the *Paulistas* was an aspect that would be fully established a few years later, with the IV Centenary of São Paulo.





*A fotografia ao lado, reproduzindo  
"A Primeira Missa no Brasil"  
é de um dos muitos e bellissimos vitraes  
collocados na Faculdade de Direito de  
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End. Teleg.: **FIP**

Figure 7 – *Acrópole* magazine, 1941. USP FAU's Library Digital Collection.



*Fundação de São Vicente*, refer to Oliveira (2018).

68. The work, inaugurated in 1925, has its image reproduced in January 25 on several newspapers from 1925 to 1953. On *Folha da Manhã* in 1925, 1926, 1927, 1929, 1930, 1931 and 1942. On *Folha da Noite* in 1932, 1933 and 1936. On *Correio Paulistano* in 1927, and on *Estado de São Paulo* in 1929, 1941, 1944, 1945 and 1949. On the other hand, during this same period, Oscar Pereira da Silva's painting was not reproduced until 1929, as previously indicated.

69. Meneses (2002, p. 138-140).

70. From the 1940s onwards, proposals were made for the reconstruction of the Jesuit complex of the *Pátio do Colégio*, since it had been greatly modified and the Secretariat of Education was installed there. On January 21, 1554, law was signed by Governor Lucas Nogueira Garcez establishing the return of the site where the *Pátio do Colégio* was settled to the Society of Jesus. Refer to Lima (1998-1999).

## AN IDEAL URBAN IMAGE: FUNDAÇÃO DE SÃO PAULO DIVULGED AND DISPUTED

Being exhibited at the Museu Paulista since 1929 made *Fundação de São Paulo* receive more attention and have its documentary value highlighted. However, because it was not central to the museum, since it was not part of the main axis of the narrative constructed by Taunay, and for being installed in a room that obfuscated its meanings, the work had not become the founding milestone of São Paulo and of the *Paulistas*. In addition, this position was disputed with other references, such as the portraits of Martim Afonso de Souza, João Ramalho and Tibiriçá, installed in the Museu Paulista's hall, and which were often used to represent São Paulo's beginning and, above all, the *Paulistas'* beginning. Benedito Calixto's *Fundação de São Vicente* was another work that was very frequent in references related to the first villages and the beginning of colonization in the captaincy.<sup>67</sup> Regarding the missionary process, the portrait of Anchieta was widely disseminated. In addition to the references within the museum, there were those outside it, such as Amadeo Zani's *Glória Imortal aos Fundadores de São Paulo* Monument.<sup>68</sup>

The year 1954, however, would make Oscar Pereira da Silva's painting gain importance, in view of the commemorations of the IV Centenary of the city of São Paulo's founding, a crucial moment for the symbolic affirmation both of the city and of the state of São Paulo through evocation of the past. The painting image became emblematic during these celebrations, as its formal attributes were configured as "potential vectors of affective content," capable of leading the image to a process of "iconization," as postulated by Ulpiano Bezerra de Meneses.<sup>69</sup> In the 1950s, the Catholic Church returned to prominence in the historical narrative, which presented the city as predestined for Christianity from its inception, and following a logical and natural path toward progress. The emphasis on the religious nature was evident, for example, in the valuation of the *Pátio do Colégio* and the proposals for its reconstruction, made in 1954.<sup>70</sup>

Pereira da Silva's painting found, then, the possibility of playing a privileged role, since it represented São Paulo's initial act, in convergence with the interpretation of many historians related to Catholic memory, politicians and most of the media. The painting placed the Jesuits as central point, although Tibiriçá and João Ramalho were also there. The image, therefore, reconciled various characters and became very opportune to be used in different means related to the celebrations.

An example of the importance of the Church and Catholicism for São Paulo is visible in the advertisement of the *Semp Rádio e Televisão S.A.* (figure 8). The image refers to the scene created by Oscar Pereira da Silva, although quite re-

interpreted, as it has more modern contours. However, it represents the same action that is in the painting – the act of blessing – and the same posture of the central characters, which makes the association very evident. In the text, faith and religion are mobilized to justify and legitimize the city's growth and the good result of the miscegenation that originated the *Paulista*:

The celebrations that beautify São Paulo due to its IV Centenary of founding also signify an act of Faith. From its very first moment São Paulo was settled for a Faith purpose. Faith in the temple-school-workshop that was not built, Faith in the mixture of three races that founded a tropical civilization, Faith in the future of the ground and the people that, like an upward spiral towards tomorrow, signalizes the world to come!<sup>71</sup>

71. *O Estado de...* (1954, p. 66).

**25 DE JANEIRO  
DE 1954**



As comemorações que engalanam São Paulo na passagem do seu IV Centenário de fundação, significam também um ato de Fé. A própria São Paulo, desde o seu primeiro momento foi um propício de Fé. Fé no templo-escola-oficina que então se ergueu; Fé na mescla de três raças que fundamentaram uma civilização tropical; Fé no amanhã da terra e do povo, que como uma espiral ascendente rumo ao futuro sinaliza a estrada do porvir!

SEMP - Rádio e Televisão S.A., pioneira da rádio-escopção e da televisão nacionais, neste festivo momento, a sua Fé nos destinos da Pátria, aquela expressão de confiança no povo que é de São Paulo.

"a cidade que não cresce no mundo!"



SEMP - Rádio e Televisão S.A.  
Avenida Liberdade, 545 - São Paulo - Brasil



PROJETO DA NOVA FÁBRICA EM SÃO CAETANO DO SUL - SÃO PAULO

Figure 8 – Semp Rádio e Televisão S.A.'s advertisement, *Fundação de São Paulo*, January 25, 1954.

72. Lofego (2004, p. 29).

73. Quarenta (2009, p.184).

74. Moura (1994, p. 231-246).

75. *Folha da Manhã* (1954, p. 9).

76. *Ibid*, p. 5.

The reference to *Fundação de São Paulo* is most evident in the *Empresa Brasileira de Relógios Hora's* advertisement (figure 9). It brings the central nucleus of Oscar Pereira da Silva's painting and a native in the foreground, who is different from those that appear in the pictorial representation, but similar to the reader who, like him, contemplates the past scene. Silvio Luiz Lofego states that, in the celebrations of the IV Centenary, the projection of the future came from the past, then it needed to live up to the aspirations of the present.<sup>72</sup> Therefore, it was essential to rework the city's history, restructuring its foundations. Ednilson Quarenta demonstrates that the founding image has been increasingly circumscribed to Anchieta and Nóbrega, as opposed to other symbols used in the past.<sup>73</sup> After all, it was a matter of commemorating precisely what had happened on January 25, 1554, an event in which the protagonists were undoubtedly the Ignatian founders of the new mission. As Esmeralda Moura pointed out, the advertisement associated glory and fascination of the past with the interest of the urban-industrial sector, and the image of the city's birth became increasingly inseparable from the Christian tradition and, especially, from Anchieta.<sup>74</sup>

This effort of associating past with present is visible in the *Monções Construtora e Imobiliária S/A's* advertisement (figure 10), in which the central scene of Oscar Pereira da Silva's painting appears next to the portraits of Anchieta and Nóbrega and a photo of a "Modern São Paulo." The advertisement states: "Evocation of the past... exaltation of the future!" The advertisement, without mentioning the missionaries, highlights the *bandeirantes'* action, indicating that "It is in the past of its 'Bandeiras,' São Paulo, that the best certainty of its magnificent future is found, seen in the splendor of its present!"<sup>75</sup> Thus, it started from the founders' image, passing through the *bandeirantes'* achievements in order to finally reach the *Paulistas*, considered the *bandeirantes'* children, who did not care about these limiting lines, since the direction of expansion at that time was vertical: "Towards sky and infinite space, without any limit other than that of intelligence itself!"<sup>76</sup> Alone, the *bandeirante* myth could no longer encompass all reconciliation with the past. Therefore, it was necessary to resort to the "true" *Paulistas* originated from the Portuguese "race," as well as other important characters of the *Piratininga* past, such as the natives. Thus, the image created by Oscar Pereira da Silva was ideal.

Besides being present in the advertisements, other means also used the painting in commemorative objects for the celebration. The tray made by the company *Metalma* (figure 11) reproduced the picture. In some cases, the reference is subtle, such as the porcelain plate (figure 12), which has a partial reproduction of the painting, since part of the scene is covered by the image of José de Anchieta. On the edge of the porcelain there are images of buildings significant to São Paulo's history, such as the *Pátio do Colégio*, the old See

Cathedral, the municipal palace and the city's coat of arms heading the whole. The Goodyear calendar (figure 13) used a pin-up image made by Vicente Caruso, who was responsible for adapting to Brazil this American style of female figure. The calendar brings a girl in party dress unveiling the city of São Paulo's landscape, where it is possible to see iconic buildings such as *Martinelli Building*, *Altino Arantes Building*, known as "Banespão," and *the Banco do Brasil building*. The curtain, embraced by the model, is the flag of the state of São Paulo and, in the background, there is a painting with clear reference to Oscar Pereira da Silva's work.

**o segredo dos Paulistas:**

**não perder tempo!**



Olhem o passado, aquela hora que assinalou a fundação de São Paulo, o instante maravilhoso em que bugres empenchados espiavam curiosos a celebração da primeira missa no Planalto. Hoje, transcorridos quatrocentos anos, podemos ajuizar exatamente a significação desse fato. É uma lição que nos ensina que não devemos perder tempo... Que cada um de nós tem a sua parcela de responsabilidade quanto ao futuro de São Paulo. O segredo do extraordinário progresso de nossa terra não tem sido outro que o trabalho com todas as suas imposições: pontualidade, divisão e aproveitamento máximo do tempo. Prosseguir, pois, nesse mesmo critério, é contribuir decisivamente para a maior grandeza de São Paulo, grandeza para a qual a Empresa Brasileira de Relógios "Hora" S.A. julga vir contribuindo também — e tem nisto o seu melhor galarão.

**EMPRESA BRASILEIRA DE RELÓGIOS**  
**"HORA" S.A.**

QUATRO SÉCULOS DE VIDA, TRABALHO E PROGRESSO SOCIAL  
UM QUARTO DE SÉCULO DE RELÓGIOS ESKA NO BRASIL

FOIHA DA MANHÃ, DOMINGO E SEGUNDA-FEIRA, 24 E 25 DE JANEIRO, DE 1954 - ATUALIDADES E COMENTÁRIOS - II - Pag. 9

Figure 9 – *Empresa Brasileira de Relógios Hora*, *Folha da Manhã's* advertisement, January 24-25, 1954.





## EXALTAÇÃO DO FUTURO!

No passado das tuas "Bandeiras", aí está, São Paulo, a melhor corteza do teu futuro magnífico, ante-visto no esplendor do teu presente!

Terra dos Bandeirantes, os ciclôpicos gigantes cujas botas marcaram as coxilhas... deixaram rastros na Amazônia... afundaram-se pelo litoral... e compassaram o oeste da Pátria Brasileira... as tuas singulares virtudes permanecem hoje ainda mais palpitantes do que ontem pois, si os "Bandeirantes" tiveram o seu progresso limitado pelas divisas da Pátria ou pelas espumas do mar, aos seus filhos de hoje, os paulistas, não mais importam essas linhas, resolutos a fazer-te crescer e expandir no sentido vertical, rumo aos céus e aos espaços infinitos, sem outro limite que não o da sua própria inteligência!

Fonte perene de estímulo à iniciativa, às realizações e ao civismo, és um esplêndido monumento homenageando o trabalho e o dinamismo dos teus próprios filhos.

E a Monções, cujo nome propositalmente evoca uma das tuas mais caras epopéias, neste teu dia de glórias, em que, há quatrocentos anos do teu berço, engatinhas os primeiros passos na senda luminosa do futuro, rejubila-se, felicitando-te e felicitando-se, porque tem crescido e crescerá contigo, marchetando o teu busto de imponentes conjuntos arquitetônicos, nos quais a família paulistana tem encontrado o sonhado "lar próprio". Parabéns, São Paulo, querida!

## MONÇÕES CONSTRUTORA E IMOBILIÁRIA S/A

**DIRETORIA:** Dr. Sylvio Brand Corbô - Diretor-Presidente  
João Artur de Jesus - Diretor-Superintendente  
Aurelio Jureld Artacho - Diretor-Tesoureiro  
José de Castro Tibiricé - Diretor-Geral



Vista da moderna São Paulo, vendo-se ao fundo o Catúmbio Veloz

## A CONTRIBUIÇÃO DA MONÇÕES PARA O PROGRESSO DE SÃO PAULO

### 2.790 Residências já entregues e em construção:

64 residências em Vila Pompéia • 330 residências na Cidade Monções • 66 fazendas apartamentadas no Edifício Pirelli • 40 apartamentos no Edifício Duque de Caxias • 80 apartamentos no Edifício Pacembú • 300 apartamentos no Edifício Visconde • 300 apartamentos no Edifício Piazullo • 300 apartamentos no Edifício Itaipava • 300 no Edifício Hortolândia • 300 no Edifício Vitor Star (Gostoso) • 300 no Edifício Bandeira (Gostoso) • 300 no Edifício Dona Veridiana Prado • 120 no Edifício Jansê Honoré • 120 no Edifício Ardeles • 200 no Edifício Louvre • 120 no Edifício General Jardim Guepessa para 800 carros - 54 lojas

Área construída: cerca de 500.000 m<sup>2</sup>  
Número de Operários em Serviço - 2.548

Figure 10 – Monção Construtora e Imobiliária S/A's advertisement, *Folha da Manhã*, January 24-25, 1954, p. 5.



Figure 11 - Commemorative tray of the IV Centenary of São Paulo, 1954, tin 33 x 45 x 2 cm, *Metalma*. USP Museu Paulista's Collection, São Paulo. Photography: Helio Nobre.



Figure 12 - Commemorative Plate of the IV Centenary of the City of São Paulo, 1954, Mauá, *Porcelana Mauá S/A*, 27 cm in diameter. USP Museu Paulista's Collection, São Paulo. Photography: Helio Nobre.





Figure 13 - Vicente Caruso, Goodyear Calendar, 1954. *Folha de S. Paulo*, August 10, 2014.

The newspapers also published texts by historians about São Paulo's history. Images of paintings and statues, mainly belonging to the Museu Paulista, accompanied the texts. *O Estado de S. Paulo* newspaper, in its 160-page special edition, published a profusion of images that told the history from before São Paulo's founding to the Republic, using images such as Watsh Rodrigues's *João Ramalho e filho* and *Tibiriçá e seu neto*; Benedito Calixto's *Fundação de São Vicente* and *Domingos Jorge Velho*; Oscar Pereira da Silva's *Fundação de São Paulo*, *Aclamação de Amador Bueno* and *Combate dos Botocudos em Mogi das Cruzes*; Almeida Junior's *Partida da Monção*, and Luigi Brizzolara's Raposo Tavares statue.

*Gazeta* newspaper presented a more synthetic narrative, which began with *Fundação de São Paulo*, along with the text “*Há quatrocentos anos São Paulo amanhecia (1554-1954)*” [Four hundred years ago São Paulo has dawned] by Titio Livio Ferreira. On the following pages, it was possible to see Almeida Junior’s *Partida da Monção*, Oscar Pereira da Silva’s *Combate dos Botocudos em Mogi das Cruzes*, and Aurélio Zimmermann’s *Pouso no Sertão*, along with the text “*Bandeiras e Monções*,” [*Bandeiras and Monsoons*] by Almeida Magalhães. The text “*Quatro séculos de governo da cidade*” [Four Centuries of City Government] by Silveira Peixoto, came next to a painting by José Wasth Rodrigues, *Paço Municipal*. There was also an IHGSP’s text, without indication of authorship, in honor of the three-year anniversary of Amador Bueno acclamation, entitled “*Amador Bueno, Rei do Brasil*” [Amador Bueno, King of Brazil], along with the painting *Aclamação de Amador Bueno*, by Oscar Pereira da Silva.<sup>77</sup> Finally, there was an article entitled “*Um altar da pátria às margens do Ipiranga*” [Fatherland’s altar on the banks of Ipiranga], with the image of Ettore Ximenes’ *Monumento à Independência*.

With these texts and images, the commemorations of São Paulo were not limited to the event of the city’s founding, but they extended from the colony to Independence and Republic, trying to show how the *Paulistas* had been paramount for the nation’s destinies. For this purpose, Museu Paulista’s images and the iconographic narrative elaborated by Taunay were very adequate and efficient. And in this ephemeris in which January 25, 1554 was inescapable, Oscar Pereira da Silva’s painting became a very convenient conception. Being added to the Museu Paulista’s collection contributed immensely to the construction of a social memory in which *Fundação de São Paulo* became the quintessential image of the origin of the city of São Paulo, surpassing other references such as Antônio Parreiras’ painting on the same theme.<sup>78</sup> Amadeu Zani’s monument, so divulged in previous years, lost ground to Oscar Pereira da Silva’s work.

Although *Fundação de São Paulo* was in evidence on the occasion of the celebrations of the IV Centenary, it remained out of the public eye. In 1954, the Museu Paulista spent the entire year closed for renovation, and the institution lent part of its collection for the historical exhibition that took place at Ibirapuera Park. Oscar Pereira da Silva’s painting, however, was not among the works lent. One reason for this absence may have been that in that same year the painting underwent a restoration process. Without its participation in the exhibition and with the Museu Paulista closed, access to Oscar Pereira da Silva’s painting was decidedly compromised. However, this did not prevent it from playing a decisive role in the representations used during the celebrations of the city’s anniversary, only through

77. With regard to this list, the only painting that does not belong to the Museu Paulista’s collection is Oscar Pereira da Silva’s *Aclamação de Amador Bueno*, currently placed at the *Palácio dos Bandeirantes*, headquarters of the State Government of São Paulo.

78. In 1913, the then mayor of São Paulo, Raymundo Duprat, ordered to Antônio Parreiras and received a painting with São Paulo’s founding theme. The painting is at São Paulo City Hall.

79. Resolução nº 1,505 dated October 18, 1963.

80. Ofício nº 638/63. Pinacoteca de São Paulo's collection.

81. Almeida Júnior' paintings were: *Fuga do Egito*; *Batismo de Jesus*; *Cristo na Cruz*; *Paisagem Fluvial*; *Paisagem do sítio "Rio das Pedras"*; *Tabatinguara antiga* (Tabatinguara bridge); *Retrato de loca*; *Retrato de D. Joana Liberal da Cunha*; *Mosqueteiro*; *Violeiro*; *Nbá Chica*; *Cabeça de caipira*; *Amolação interrompida*; *Picando fumo*; *Caipiras negaceando*; *Apertando o lombilho*; *Cozinha caipira*; *O importuno* (inopportune visit); *A pintura* (allegory); *Peixoto Gomide*, Dr. Francisco Eugênio Pacheco Silva; *Manoel Lopes de Oliveira*; *José Manoel de Mesquita*; Dr. Euzébio Stevaux. There were also objects from Almeida Junior collection: canvas, easel, paint box, stool, the last palette, plaster mask. And there were paintings described as belonging to the "Museu Paulista's fine arts collection": *Sera* (oxen and sheep), by Ruggero Panterai; *Retrato de José Ferraes de Almeida Junior*, by Paulo do Vale Junior; *Cabral*, by Eliseu Visconti; *Camões lendo os Luziadas*, by Carneiro; *Figura representando uma moça*, by H. Bernadelli; *Conselheiro Dr. Antonio Moreira Barros*, by S. Escolá, and a decorative panel, by H. Bernadelli. Refer to Ofício nº 211/72,

reproductions. Nevertheless, other works and other symbols could have been mobilized in this campaign, but the choice fell on *Fundação de São Paulo*, which, as it was seen, was appropriate to redirect historical interpretations in which the Jesuits and the Catholic synthesis gained strength and contemporaneity.

Even *Fundação de São Paulo* representing a discomfort to Taunay at the time of its transfer, reason why it was never integrated into the discursive core of the exhibition on São Paulo and national history, the course of time renewed and made its social appropriation remarkable. It was its addition to the Museu Paulista's collection and its exposure to the public for two decades which enabled its resumption in the 1950s as a view of São Paulo's origin and an explanation for its grandness in the present. With *Fundação de São Paulo* inserted in the social imagery as a visual document of the city's beginning, its belonging to the Museu Paulista was seen as coherent and unquestionable. However, this situation would change some years later, when the Pinacoteca requested that the work should return to its collection.

In 1963, a resolution was approved by São Paulo's government, which established "that the paintings belonging to the Pinacoteca do Estado and that were at other government departments should be sent to it."<sup>79</sup> Therefore, on November 11, 1963, the then director of the Pinacoteca, Túlio Mugnaini Otelo, sent an official letter to the Paulista Museum's management requesting the return of three paintings that appeared in the patrimonial register, but were not in the Pinacoteca's collection: *Partida da Monção*, by Almeida Júnior, *Descobrimento do Brasil* and *Fundação de São Paulo*, both by Oscar Pereira da Silva.<sup>80</sup>

The response of Mário Neme, the Museu Paulista's director, was strongly opposed to the Pinacoteca's request, and he decided to claim works<sup>81</sup> that were in the possession of that institution, but that, according to him, belonged to the museum. He tried to demonstrate that *Partida da Monção* and *Descobrimento do Brasil* had been acquired in 1901 and 1902 respectively, transcribing excerpts from the *Revista do Museu Paulista* containing this information, and indicating on which page of the procurement books they were mentioned. The director also reported the comings and goings of the paintings, which were moved in 1905 to the Pinacoteca and, in 1929, returned to Ipiranga [Museu Paulista], according to him, to be inserted "in historical contexts of great significance," what occurred "with success" during Taunay's management. He justified therefore that the return of the works had occurred for the purpose of serving the narrative constituted at Museu Paulista on the occasion. He mentioned the opening of the *Sala das Monções* and added: 'The idea of being more appropriate, implicit in this fact, is what surely inspired the

subsequent devolution of *Descobrimento do Brasil* to the museum, as well as the delivery of O. P. da Silva's *Fundação de São Paulo*.<sup>82</sup>

It should be noted that, when referring to *Descobrimento do Brasil*, he used the word "devolution," while for *Fundação de São Paulo* he used "delivery." Therefore, he did not claim that this painting belonged to the Museu Paulista, but justified its addition to the collection by saying that it would be used in "historical contexts" and thus would be "more appropriate" than it was in the Pinacoteca. Their justifications, however, were not sufficient, and in October 1972, the chief of staff of the Secretariat of Culture, Sports and Tourism, Aldo Nilo Losso, insisted that the three paintings should return to the Pinacoteca, stating that they had been "lent" as a result of renovations to the property intended for it. Since the building was restored and adapted to "properly house all its collections," he requested urgent devolution of the works.<sup>83</sup>

The dispute continued in the following years. On the one hand, the Museu Paulista's director claimed that the paintings had been acquired "with own funds and before the creation of the Pinacoteca" and that the institution had "documents and evidence" that proved that all the works – the three paintings and the 37 pieces that were in the Pinacoteca – belonged to its "historical and artistic inventory."<sup>84</sup> Even without evidence that *Fundação de São Paulo* had been acquired for the Museu Paulista, the director includes it as an item of that institution. On the other hand, the Pinacoteca's management insisted on the return of the three paintings and the permanence of the other pieces in its collection. In 1975, Alfredo Gomes, the then director of the Pinacoteca, announced that the problem needed a solution and concluded by saying:

The harmonious understanding at the supreme governmental level is the best recommendation to find the desired formula [...] in order to maintain the representativeness of historical significance in the Museu [Paulista], and leave the one of primordial pictorial nature in the Pinacoteca do Estado, favoring, in both centers of culture, homage rendered by São Paulo and Brazil to the immortal artists, creators and motivators of beauty, especially in highlighting the great compatriot painters.<sup>85</sup>

Following this proposal, *Fundação de São Paulo*, *Descobrimento do Brasil* and *Partida da Monção* should remain in the Museu Paulista, while the other 37 pieces should stay in the Pinacoteca. Once again the criterion of "historical" and "artistic" was established to differentiate the two institutions. The dilemma, however, was not solved and a new attempt to recover the three paintings which were in the Museu Paulista was made in 1989. In view of the insistence of the Pinacoteca's management that the works belonged to it and request for their devolution<sup>86</sup> with the

dated October 31, 1972, page 3.

82. Correspondence to the University of São Paulo's Rector on March 5, 1964, page 1-3. Pinacoteca de São Paulo's collection.

83. Ofício G.S. nº1872/72d dated Outubro 24, 1972. Pinacoteca de São Paulo's collection

84. Ofício nº 211/72 dated October 31, 1972 (emphasis added in the very document). Pinacoteca de São Paulo's collection.

85. Ofício 02465/73-SCET. Pinacoteca de São Paulo's collection.

86. Certificate of October 31, 1989.

justification of need to regularize the situation before the Court of Auditors, the Museu Paulista's director, Ulpiano Bezerra de Meneses, presented a history elaborated by Maria José Elias, which intended to definitively prove the ownership of the works. The arguments were similar to those presented in 1964 and supported by the *Revista do Museu Paulista* and the procurement book. However, unlike the other paintings, there was lack of documents to prove the acquisition of *Fundação de São Paulo*:

3.1 – Acquired by the State Government in 1909 and recorded in procurement book no. 6, p. 474, (no. 1), no. 7, p. 66.

Note: This Procurement book and some others of the Museu Paulista, due to internal dismembersments and institution's bond alterations, were removed to other state administrative archives; research on their location is currently in progress for subsequent return request.

3.2 – Removal from Museu Paulista to be exhibited at the Pinacoteca do Estado, on dates and under conditions presumably identical to items 1.2 and 2.2, but which cannot be explained due to the absence of the book mentioned above.<sup>87</sup>

The presence of the painting in the Museu Paulista's collection was so pertinent that, in fact, it was believed that since acquisition it had been intended for its collection. This presumption was fueled by the fact that it is a historical painting and for being part of the social imaginary concerning São Paulo's beginning. For a long time, it had been understood as a visual document of the event represented by it, as well as other works of the same museum. In 1990, it was no longer interpreted as a 'window to the past,' but as an early twentieth-century document that was a vector of meanings and an important source enabling understanding of when it was produced and consumed, as Ulpiano Bezerra de Meneses himself had postulated.<sup>88</sup> With this new meaning, its presence at this museum was adequate. For this reason, it and the other two paintings were taken from the Pinacoteca's inventory, becoming integral parts of the Museu Paulista's collection.

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The relationship between *Fundação de São Paulo* and the Museu Paulista was marked by tensions and, therefore, the work went through a sinuous trajectory until being recognized in that place. In 1907, it was conceived with the aim of representing a historical document of São Paulo's founding to be exhibited at the

Museu Paulista, but its visual discourse contrasted with the thought and positioning of the then director of the museum, Hermann von Ihering, who saw it as inadequate and incompatible with the institution. In 1929, its transfer was considered appropriate in view of its artistic genre, widely used by the then director of the institution, Afonso Taunay, to re-elaborate its historical section. However, the visual proposal, again, met resistance in the narrative proposed by Taunay, and then its entry and exposure at the institution was absolutely silenced. Being in the museum, however, was enough for the work to be understood as a historical document and used as a “window to the past,” being used to support narratives, as in the Faculty of Law’s stained glass windows and the material produced for the IV Centenary of the São Paulo’s Founding. The painting gradually gained centrality and became the visual document par excellence of São Paulo’s beginning. This justified the dispute between its permanence at the Museu Paulista, even without evidence, and the Pinacoteca’s requisition to have it back in 1963. Its re-interpretation as a historical document of the early twentieth century ensured that, in 1990, it was taken from the Pinacoteca’s national heritage book and confirmed as integral part of the Museu Paulista’s collection.

Since then, the painting has remained in this institution, as a monument with renewed status of historical document. Since 2007 it has been part of a long-term exhibition called *Imagens Recriam a História* [Images Recreate History], focused on the problematization of historical paintings as representations, necessarily understood from their conception and social appropriation.<sup>89</sup> Following these signs, this paper intended to demonstrate that the painting is effectively a vector of meanings that impacted its destiny and its various appropriations throughout this sinuous and triumphant journey.



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Article presented on 8.6.2018. Approved on 2.20.2019



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