

Fundação de São Vicente, by Benedito Calixto: from the order to the exhibition at Museu Paulista (1898-1939)

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ABSTRACT: This article presents hypotheses about the trajectory of *Fundação de São Vicente*, by Benedito Calixto, a painting incorporated to the Museu Paulista collection after the Vincentian celebrations of the IV Centennial of the Discovery of Brazil. For this, the processes of ordering, donating it and its definitive acquisition are recovered, as well as the senses of its display in the exhibitions elaborated by Hermann von Ihering and Afonso Taunay for the Museu Paulista.

KEYWORDS: *Fundação de São Vicente*. Benedito Calixto. Hermann von Ihering. Afonso Taunay. 4th Centennial of the Discovery of Brazil Museu Paulista

RESUMO: Esse artigo apresenta hipóteses a respeito da trajetória de *Fundação de São Vicente*, de Benedito Calixto, pintura incorporada ao acervo do Museu Paulista após as comemorações vicentinas do IV Centenário do Descobrimento do Brasil. Recobram-se, para tanto, os processos de sua encomenda, doação e aquisição definitiva, bem como os sentidos de sua exibição nas exposições elaboradas por Hermann von Ihering e Afonso Taunay para o Museu Paulista.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *Fundação de São Vicente*. Benedito Calixto. Hermann von Ihering. Afonso Taunay. IV Centenário do Descobrimento do Brasil. Museu Paulista.

INTRODUCTION

After being solemnly inaugurated during the celebrations of the IV Centennial of the Discovery of Brazil, the painting *Fundação de São Vicente* (oil on canvas, 385 x 192 cm, 1900) (figure 1), by Benedito Calixto, was incorporated to the collection of the Museu Paulista in November 1900, being appropriated by the successive museographic projects held during the twentieth century.

Elaborated in large format, the canvas represents the contact between Martim Afonso de Souza, Tibiriçá and Caiubi mediated by João Ramalho and Antônio Rodrigues, as well as the Piqueroibi tribe, distant and suspicious of the ongoing negotiations, which foresaw the foundation of the São Vicente captaincy and marked the beginning of the Portuguese-American colonization, on January 22, 1532.

The foundational scene was the second historical painting to be incorporated to the Museu Paulista collection, preceded only by *Independência ou Morte* (oil on canvas, 760 x 415 cm, 1888) (figure 2), by Pedro Américo Figueiredo de Mello. These two episodes marked the participation of São Paulo in the early occupation of the territory and in the political independence. Representing them in monumental paintings was the raw material for the construction of a celebratory visual narrative about the history of the Brazilian nation that should be seen from the museum's exhibition, at the beginning of the republican regime.

Figure 1 – Benedito Calixto. *Fundação de São Vicente*, 1900, oil on canvas, 385 x 192 cm. Collection of the Museu Paulista of the Universidade de São Paulo. Reproduction: Helio Nobre.



The broad dimensions of historical paintings, according to Jacques Thuillier, made the rooms of the monumental buildings of the public administration or of the history museums, if not the only ones, at least the most likely destinations possible. In this sense, the project of King Louis-Phillippe d'Orléans for the palace of Versailles, where the *Musée de l'Histoire de France* was established in 1837, whose proposal, observed Victor Hugo, was to offer a “framework of history”.²

2. Poulot (2009, p. 169).

3. Smith (1988, p. 15).

4. Decree n° 249... (1894), article 4, chapter 1.



Figure 2 – Pedro Américo Figueiredo de Mello. *Independência ou Morte*, 1888. Oil on canvas, 760 x 415 cm. Collection of the Museu Paulista of the Universidade de São Paulo. Reproduction: Helio Nobre.

This “framework” referred to by the writer was a narrative carried out by paintings representing the most significant episodes and characters for the nation's history to be collectively and celebratively viewed, making it possible and palatable to sew a common political project based on the past.³

Between 1893 and 1894, at the beginning of the republican regime, the state congress voted and instructed the creation of the Museu Paulista. In addition to the formation of the natural history collection, the institution should also be concerned with the pedagogical teaching of homeland history through the collections of objects and paintings, provided for respectively by articles 3 and 4 of Decree-Law No. 249 of July 26, 1894: together with *Independência ou Morte*, the paintings that would later be exhibited at the Museu Paulista should represent “country customs” or “historical scenes”.⁴

Although the institutional policy justifies the incorporation of São Vicente Foundation in the Museu Paulista collection, it is essential to reconstruct the processes of its commissioning, musealization and exhibition. If understood, these conditions

5. Cf. Alves (2001); Brefe (2005); Carvalho (2014); Lima Junior (2015); Marins (2007); Monteiro (2012); Moraes (2008); Nery (2015); Pitta (2013); Piccoli (2016).

6. Meneses (1990, p. 45).

7. *Revista do Museu...* (1902, p. 3).

8. Marins, op. cit., p. 87.

contribute to the mapping of the political agents that influenced the formation of the first public art collection of the State of São Paulo, as well as the curatorial appropriations of the work in the exhibitions.

Finally, it is necessary to point out that the history of the formation of the art and history collection during the management periods of the malacologist Hermann von Ihering (1894-1916) and the engineer Afonso Taunay has been a concern of the recent historiography on the Museu Paulista, having received, for example, contributions from A. C. Brefe, P. C. G. Marins, F. R. Moraes, M. C. S. Monteiro, F. M. Pitta, P. Carvalho, C. R. Lima Junior, P. Nery and others.⁵

Even though the *Fundação de São Vicente* canvas has not yet been observed in its specificity by the specialized literature, it was during the exhibition "Benedito Calixto: Memória Paulista", at the Pinacoteca of the State of São Paulo, that Ulpiano TB Meneses suggested the potential held by the painting to document the political, cultural, artistic and intellectual universe with which the painter Benedito Calixto dialogued at the end of the 19th century, and whose plastic choices would be the prism for understanding the late-nineteenth-century São Paulo imagination,⁶ not limiting the work of art to "aesthetic fact", as proposed by Vejo.

The first mention of the painting as part of the Museu Paulista collection appears in the report on the activities of 1899 and 1900. It says that it had been purchased from Benedito Calixto by the "Commemorative Commission of the 4th Centennial of Brazil" for 10:000\$000 (ten *contos de réis*).⁷ Although punctual and recurrently mentioned, the relations between the painter and the initiatives of this association remain poorly known (eg Alves, Monteiro and Nery). Marins drew attention to the temporal and spatial asymmetry between the episode represented by Calixto and the occasion that enabled the commissioning and inaugural display of the painting: the celebrations of the IV Centennial of Discovery.⁸

THE 400 YEARS OF THE DISCOVERY OF BRAZIL

In the nineteenth century booklet, the main Brazilian capitals organized celebrations to commemorate the quadricentennial anniversary of the arrival of Cabral's expedition to Porto Seguro. The official celebration was held in the federal capital by the "Association of the IV Centenary of the Discovery of Brazil", organized and presided by Benjamin Franklin de Ramiz Galvão. To increase membership and raise more financial resources, 1,104 representatives of the association were

nominated throughout the country, although the largest sums were offered by the ministerial offices and by the President of the Republic.⁹

Despite this clearly centralizing movement, commissions have been organized in some states to simultaneously accomplish the same purpose. In Bahia, for example, the programming was the role of a commission, nominated directly by the state president and formed by members of the Bahia Geographic and Historical Institute (IGHB, founded in 1894), and was entirely concentrated in Salvador.¹⁰

In the city of São Paulo, the celebrations of the Discovery received appreciation from the Historical and Geographic Institute of São Paulo (IHGSP, also founded in 1894) in the solemnities of the session of May 3, 1900. The celebrations were held in São Vicente, and fully organized by the Commemorating Society of the 4th Centennial of the Discovery of Brazil.

The Commemorating Society was officially founded on the night of July 23, 1898. The authors of the initiative were public men of politics and commerce in the cities of Santos and São Vicente. As a main intention, the *Statutes* provided for the construction of a public monument in Largo Treze de Maio (now Praça 22 de Janeiro). If, however, the celebrations carried out in the rest of the country led to the celebration of the four centuries of the arrival of the Cabral expedition, the Discovery acquired a completely different outfit in São Vicente.

Unlike the commissions that organized the commemorations in Bahia and Rio de Janeiro, which inaugurated public monuments in the honor of Pedro Álvares Cabral's memory, the Vincentians foresaw their perpetuation "[...] the gratitude of the present Vincentian generation to the founders of the Captaincy of São Vicente."¹¹ Therefore, the primary cause was to celebrate the colonial history of São Paulo and, above all, the local history itself: tributaries of the men of the colonizing expedition led by Martim Afonso de Souza, the Vincentians of 1900 tried to assert themselves symbolic and politically by the regional elites and the state presidency.

In addition to the monument, the *Statutes* also provided for the publication of a collection of photographs, a historical, artistic and literary anthology and, as part of the celebrations, organizing an exhibition "[...] of art and archeological objects concerning the life, uses and customs of our ancestors, publications of everything that can serve as an element for the study of our homeland history".¹² Therefore, it should be noted that the historical painting was not predicted as part of the plan. It was not until April 1899, when the Commemorating Society was busy publishing its initiative in *O Estado de S. Paulo* newspaper, that the intention of "commissioning a historical panel representing the landing of Martim Affonso

9. Cf. Wanderley (1997).

10. Cf. *Revista do Instituto...* (1900).

11. *Estatutos da Sociedade...* (chapter I, art. 1º, § 2º, p. 2).

12. *Ibid.*, p. 2.

13. *O Estado de...* (April 8, 1899, p. 1).

14. *Ibid.*, p. 1.

15. *Cidade de Santos*, 14 jul. 1899, p. 1.

16. *Id.*, July 9, 1899, p. 1.

17. Law nr. 686..., Sep 16. 1899. Chapter I, art. 7º, § 10º: "For the solemnization of the celebrations of the 4th Centenary of the discovery of Brazil, in S. Vicente - 30:000\$000."

18. *Cidade de Santos*, March 22, 1900, p. 2.

de Souza on January 22, 1532, in the littoral of S. Vicente, according to the historical legend", was mentioned.¹³ The association circulated a letter of convocation to the Paulistas, in which the appeal to the patriotic sentiment, using the same grammar of intents already elaborated and disseminated through the *Statutes*, was the stimulus for them to render

[...] their generous help in proportion to the resources of each, in favor of the great idea conceived. With this little effort, we will make it clear that there is still, alive and unbreakable, in the soul of the present generation, the same heartfelt love with which our forefathers so magnified this homeland, which they so strongly bequeathed to us. It is needless to emphasize the importance of this attempt in relation to the history of our country and the glorification of those who consecrated themselves to the establishment of this great nationality, for which the brightest future is reserved to the coexistence of the American peoples. Thus, the Commemorating Society of the 4th Centennial, certain that its patriotic ideal will be welcomed, confidently addresses the people of São Paulo, requesting their valuable support, so that the projected commitment becomes reality.¹⁴

The invitation marked by the high-sounding rhetoric, to convince the nobility of the cause, aimed to project the Commemorating Society beyond the local fairs and raise financial contributions to the program. Judging, however, from the balance sheet published in the *Cidade de Santos* newspaper three months later, this did not materialize. Of the total of 1,850\$000, only 550\$000 did not come from donations from Sao Paulo (200\$000), Itanhaém (100\$000) or Santos (1:000\$000).¹⁵

Despite the efforts of the commission headed by Gregório Innocencio de Freitas, president of the Commemorating Society,¹⁶ the intervention of state senator José Cesário da Silva Bastos was necessary for the approval of 30:000\$000 (thirty *contos de réis*) by the Congress for the 1900 commemorations.¹⁷ The subsidy was not sufficient, and still in 1899, other commissions were formed, in charge of obtaining more resources. Thus, on the eve of the celebration, the newspaper *Cidade de Santos* presented the subscriptions raised by Jorge de Sá Rocha, Antonio José da Silva Bastos and Oscar Ribeiro, in which the participation of the commercial elite in Santos is mostly detected, as shown in the table¹⁸ below:

"Donations raised by the directors Oscar Luiz Ribeiro and Antonio José da Silva Bastos to help build the monument."	
Value	Donors
500\$000	Telles, Quirino & Nogueira; José Caballero; Julio Conceição; Naumann Gepp & C. Limited; Bento de Souza & C.
200\$000	Olegario Paiva; Augusto Leubá & C.; The City of Santos; Vicente Teixeira Marques Zerrenner Büllow & C.; Theodor Wille & C.; Eduardo Johnston & C.; Queiroz Barros & Irmãos; João Procopio & C.; Augusto Hacherott.
100\$000	Paulino Ratto; Francisco de Paula Ribeiro; Antonio Luiz Ribeiro; Antonio Carlos da Silva; Palemom Gomes; Souza Santos & C.; Almeida Mello & C.; José Maria Botelho; Miranda & C.; Antonio Domingues Pinto; Souza Queiroz & Amaral
50\$000	Alexandre Martins de Oliveira; Alves Felix & C.; José Bernardes de Oliveira; Rios & Ferreira; Viriato Correia da Costa; A. C. Guimarães; H. A. Reippert; Leoncio Ratto; Leão de Moura & C.; Rosas & Campos; E. J. de Campos; Coronel José Carlos da Silva Telles; Guilherme Voos; Geraldo Leite & C.; A. C. Bezerra Paes; Jacintho Pimentel; L. Mello & C.; Freitas & Negrão; Moura Almeida & Araujo.
"Donations raised by the commission member, Mr. Jorge de Sá Rocha":	
Value	Donors
200\$000	Meyer, Barbosa & C.; Salles, Toledo & C.; Estanislau do Amaral & C.; Penteadó & Dummont; Coutinho & Ferreira; B. Ribeiro; Hard Rand & C.; Raphael Sampaio & C.; Maia & Ribeiro; A. Fiorita & C.; Associação Commercial; Companhia Lupton
100\$000	L.C. & F.; Oliveira Vieira & C.; Silva Araujo & C.; Leal & C.; Arruda Machado & C.; Prudente F. da Silva & C.; an anonymous donor
50\$000	Zeferino Lourenço Martins; Araujo Tavares & C.; Thomaz Irmão & C.; João Jorge Figueiredo & C.; Silva Cunha & C.; Jacob Levy Netto; J.H. Thompson; An anonymous donor; Monteiro de Barros & C.

The fourth centennial of the Discovery of Brazil was appropriated by the elites of Santos and S. Vicente to celebrate (and regain) the local participation in São Paulo's colonial history and, in our interpretation, was not intended to compete with the celebration organized by the federal government in Rio de Janeiro: the participation of cruiser Andrada and the solemn landing of the Navy authorities in São Vicente bay indicate the legitimacy of the local festivities recognized by the capital.¹⁹

The reconstitution of the interests and prerogatives of the Commemorating Society was a necessary condition for problematizing the commission of *Fundação de São Vicente* and the services of painter Benedito Calixto in planning the 1900 celebrations. Inaugurated at the opening ceremony of the Historical and Archeological Exhibition, the work was an attraction of the 4th.

20. Cf. Meirelles (1892). Private collection of Celso Calixto Rios, to whom I thank for allowing the consultation.

21. Cf. *Dossier of the payment...*

Centennial and remained on display between April 20th and May 31st. Let's look at the conditions agreed between Calixto and the association.

CALIXTO AND THE CELEBRATION OF THE VICENTINE PAST

A historical painting depicting the landing of the Portuguese navigator Martim Afonso de Souza and the founding of the Vicentine captaincy was planned by Calixto since 1892, as indicated by the letter sent to him by Victor Meirelles on June 8 of that year. In addition to encouraging the completion of the painting, Meirelles sent a suggestion for the compositional plan²⁰ The celebration of the IV Centennial of Discovery was the opportunity found by Benedito Calixto to concretize his artistic interpretation about the solemn episode of Vicentine history. The elaboration of a large-format historical painting, in addition to contributing to the projection of the artist's career in the late nineteenth century, combined with the intent of the local elites to symbolically promote the southern coast of São Paulo with the presidency of the State of São Paulo.

It is likely that the commissioning of the canvas was agreed in the early 1899, shortly before the first publication in the newspaper *O Estado de São Paulo*. The conditions were detailed in the letters sent by Calixto on July 3, 1903 to José Leite da Costa Sobrinho and Antonio Militão de Azevedo, respectively the first secretary and the treasurer of the Commemorating Society.²¹ Both had identical content: to collect the ten contos de reis owed to him by the (already extinct) association. This is precisely why Calixto is obliged to state the obligations attributed to him, clarifying the ordering conditions of the *Fundação de São Vicente*. Let us take the letter sent to Militão de Azevedo as example:

Illustrious Mr. Antonio Militão de Azevedo,

For the sake of my rights, I plead with you, as a founding partner and the treasurer of the "Commemorating Society of the IV Centennial of the Discovery of Brazil in S. Vicente", to hereby declare to me:

1°. Is it true that this Society, as soon as it began its work, commissioned me a historical painting "Fundação de São Vicente"?

2°. Is it true that this painting was previously agreed for the sum of ten contos de reis (10:000\$000), while I remained obliged to render my services for free to this Society, as I actually did, not only in the planning organization and assistance for building the com-

memorative monument, forming drawings of the multiple details, repeatedly going to S. Paulo to supervise the execution of various ornamental steps, the sculptor's workshop and the foundry of Mr. J. Niel, each time it was about modeling and welding together the various sections of the monument?

3°. Is it true that, according to an agreement, I still formed, for free, the drawings for diploma, letterheads, medals etc, in addition to the ornamentation and decorative plaques for the hall of Rink and for Theatro Guarany, every time public conferences were held?

4°. Is it true that, on the occasion of the inaugural celebrations, I have also rendered my free services to the Festivities Commission, making drawings and working for a long time, almost two consecutive months, on these services?

5°. Is it true that I have also rendered services for the installation of the Archeological Exhibition which was then held at Escola do Povo, planning and working on everything in agreement with the State Government envoy, Mr. Alberto Loefegren, and the respective Commission?

6°. Have I satisfactorily fulfilled all the clauses to which I have bound myself with that Society by virtue of all that I have done?

7°. How much, in the end, was the amount that this Society gave me, as a payment for the said painting?

I ask you to authorize me to make of your answer the use that suits me.

With respect and consideration,

Benedicto Calixto

S. Vicente, July 3, 1903

Except for the amount received by Calixto, the others were confirmed by both recipients and subsequently registered in a notary's office and attached to the dossier sent to the São Paulo State Government in August 1905. The initial three statements lead to a reinterpretation of the "order", and even about the convenience of this term to qualify the relationship established between the painter and the Commemorating Society.

It is evident that the acquisition of the art work would be a counterpart to the services described by Calixto, such as the ornamentation of the monument and the elaboration of the decorative plan for the streets and halls where the association would meet or promote public conferences, in addition to the letterhead of diplomas and other officially issued documents. The ten contos of réis agreed upon were a payment for the historical painting, but, above all, for the various activities to which he would have been dedicated during the Vicentine celebrations of the IV Centennial, consonant with the Commemorating Society's interest in extolling the foundation of the captaincy of S. Vicente.

22. Calixto, March 2, 1901.

23. *O Commercio de...* Nov 11, 1900, p. 1; Cf. *O Estado de...*, Nov. 11, 1900.

24. Decree nº 249... July 26, 1894, art. 4º, chap. 1.

25. Nery, op. cit., p. 61-62.

26. Ibid., p. 68.

It is probable that Calixto was attentive to the incorporation of works of art into the Museu Paulista exhibition, as we have already mentioned. For this reason, it would be reasonable to consider that the conditions for the provision of these services had been accepted as part of a triple strategy, which enabled the execution of a large-format historical painting, to inaugurate it in a highly visible public commemoration and in sequence, send it to the only public museum in the state of São Paulo at the time. After all, less than a year after the programs were finalized, he wrote to Belmiro de Almeida, his former colleague at the *Académie Julian* in Paris, regretting the difficulties faced by the distance from the artistic production center, which reinforces the hypothesis about the formulation of an agreement that concatenated Calixto's most immediate interests with those of the Commemorating Society, making the painting understood as a symbolic resource brokered by both the painter and the association for the attainment of their respective interests.²²

After the inauguration during the opening ceremonies of the Historical and Archeological Exhibition on April 20, 1900, the canvas remained on display until May 31, and then, was allocated at Benedito Calixto's studio or at the headquarters of the Commemorating Society. To our knowledge, it was mentioned again on November 11 in *O Estado de S. Paulo* and in *O Commercio de S. Paulo*, informing of its donation to the Government of the State of São Paulo by the Commemorating Society, and which would be exposed since the previous day in "room nr. 11 "(B11) of the Museu Paulista.²³

Article 4 of the Decree-Law No. 249, which instructed the formation of the Museu Paulista's collection of paintings, provided for the incorporation as a result of public purchases or donations received by the São Paulo State government.²⁴ The data presented by Pedro Nery show that only four of the 13 paintings received until 1900 had been the result of donations, prevailing acquisitions of works by artists such as José Ferraz de Almeida Junior, Berth Worms and Pedro Alexandrino.²⁵ The *Fundação de São Vicente* was marked by the specificity of having been donated by a private association and later acquired by the government.²⁶ Thus, before we stick to the exhibition of the painting in the exhibitions planned by Hermann von Ihering (1900-1916) and by Afonso Taunay (1917-1939), it is appropriate to examine in detail the dispute between Benedito Calixto and the Commemorating Society.

IMPASSES OF MUSEALIZATION: FROM DONATION TO DEFINITIVE ACQUISITION

27. Cf. Von Ihering, Nov. 12, 1900.

28. Ibid.

29. *Ofício da Sociedade...* Dec. 11, 1900.

The confirmation of the truthfulness in Calixto's statements by Costa Sobrinho and Militão de Azevedo makes it possible to infer that the purchase of the *Fundação de São Vicente* for ten contos de réis would be a counterpart to the various services and functions performed by the painter, such as the elaboration of the decorative plan for the festivities, the follow-up visits to the foundry of the monument and the mounting of the Historical and Archeological Exhibition, which allows to qualify and better understand the conditions of "commissioning". The documents sent to lawyer Aquilino Amaral testify to Calixto's claims for payment, formally initiated by letters to the representatives of the former association, extinct soon after the end of the celebrations.

In a formal letter to Bento Bueno, Secretary of Interior Affairs, Director Hermann von Ihering informs the arrival of *Fundação de São Vicente* and its exhibition in room B-11 by choice of Calixto, who probably accompanied the transportation, unpacking and assembly of the work.²⁷ In that same letter, he also requested the secretary to send a copy of the letter that formalized the Commemorating Society's donation to the government of the State of São Paulo, which evidenced the unofficial entry of the painting to the Museum collection.²⁸ More than a month later, Bueno sent a letter, sealed and signed by Gregório Innocencio de Freitas:

With the utmost consideration, I have the honor to make known to you that the Hon. Dr. José Cesario da Silva Bastos was authorized by the Board of this Company to deliver to the Hon. State Government of your State, the grand historical canvas representing the Foundation of the Captaincy of S. Vicente, the *cellula mater* not only of the State of São Paulo, but of the Brazilian Homeland, which was painted by the national artist B. Calixto by order of this Society to commemorate the Fourth Centennial of the Discovery of Brazil [...] The President, Gregorio I. de Freitas.²⁹

Mediated by José Cesário da Silva Bastos, speaker of the Commemorating Society and state senator until 1898, the donation of *Fundação de São Vicente* to the state president is, in our interpretation, an essentially political act of bringing the interests of local elites closer to the state government, in continuity with what had already been claimed by the choice to celebrate the Martim Afonso expedition in the context of the IV Centennial of the Discovery. A painting that represents the foundation of the Vicentine captaincy, therefore, aligns with the discourse discarded by the letter,

30. Thuillier (1993, p. 8).

31. Calixto, March 2, 1901.

32. Calixto, July 29, 1903.

33. Costa Sobrinho, July 25, 1903.

34. Calixto, July 29, 1903.

taking it as the epicenter of the formation of São Paulo and Brazilian territory, hence the use of the metaphor of *cellula mater* mobilized by Freitas.

Calixto colluded with the donation of the canvas to the Museu Paulista and, according to our hypothesis, that was precisely his intention, especially if he had in perspective that, according to Jacques Thuillier, the great history paintings were destined for the monumental buildings of the public administration, among which were the museums.³⁰ In the late nineteenth century, the Museu Paulista was the possible space for artists to have visibility and recognition, and yet, Calixto evidences this concern early in March 1901, when he regrets his feeling of isolation in a letter to Belmiro de Almeida.³¹ Having a historic painting of his own on display at the state museum was reason enough (and even desirable) to agree to the donation even before he was paid for it. He states in his report to lawyer Aquilino do Amaral that the Commemorating Society's board had committed to request a supplementary amount from the State Congress to repay the debt, which would not have actually occurred, causing him to resort to the first secretary and the treasurer.³²

Both attested that the painter had fulfilled the responsibilities foreseen in the commemoration of the IV Centennial. It is Costa Sobrinho, however, who informs about the conditions of the payment due, stating that it would be made:

[...] in case the amounts were received from the members, and by public subscription, which unfortunately did not happen, having the Society been able to give you only the sum of three contos and six hundred thousand, and therefore could not complete the said full payment of the ten contos de reis.³³

In the view of the first secretary, Calixto should accept the 36% of the initially agreed amount as payment. Militão de Azevedo's reply was in the same direction as that of his former colleague of the society, which led Calixto to request authorization to register his answers in the notary's office, setting up and sending the dossier to Amaral (and later to the Chamber) on October 20, 1904, explaining that

the Society only handed me 3:600\$000, and after making the solemn exposition "and taking possession of the painting, asked me permission to make delivery of it to the State Government, telling me that he would request an amount from the State to solve the deficit and obtain the rest of the amount. In view of the financial state of the Society, I had very good hopes that this would really happen, however, the directors of that Society did not move, and the Government's assistance was never requested, despite my constant complaints. In no way have I thought of giving up this debt today and the right that I have over this painting which is in the Museu Paulista.³⁴

Thus, according to Costa Sobrinho, Calixto would receive the remaining 6:400\$000 only if the amount were collected by public subscription, a criterion that deviates from the intentions communicated to the painter to make a new request to the state government. This dissonance gave rise to the dispute, after all, the price that had been agreed for the canvas had been 10 contos de réis, regardless of the source of the Commemorating Society's financial resources, and there were no counterparts that were not the proper accomplishment of the functions and services by the painter. Finally, the 3:600\$000 were considered as a fair compensation for the activities performed by Calixto in the organization of the IV Centennial.³⁵ The painter also wrote to Hermann von Ihering, requesting a copy of the Commemorating Society's letter of donation, proof that no reservations or mention had been made of the debt. The director answered the request: "I send to you the copies of the formal letters referring to your magnificent canvas "Fundação de S. Vicente", by which you will verify that the painting was given to the Government without any condition".³⁶

On August 16, 1905, Calixto finally filed a request with the Chamber of Deputies, requesting that the government intervene for the definitive acquisition of the work or, at its limit, for its return:

[...] That Society, founded for a transitional purpose, dissolved, after the festivities were over, without having paid the price of the commissioned painting. Since the one who signs hereunder is the head of a household, who lives solely on the benefit of his art, it is not fair that the State, today the owner of this painting, fails to pay the artist who painted the value which, in your opinion, is judged reasonable, given the artistic merit of the work, which, to be said without pride, was honorably judged by the eminent master Victor Meirelles and is recognized by all as satisfactorily corresponding to the matter it represents. The following assignee hereby requires that, upon hearing the Government of the State, and through the legal procedures, the payment claimed may be authorized, as is the case of justice, since the Commemorating Society no longer exists, that made the donation to the Government, without having paid the price of the donated object, and therefore, not its owner. Health and Brotherhood. São Vicente, August 16, 1905. Benedicto Calixto.³⁷

The request was sent to the Accounts and Finance Committee a week later.³⁸ The minutes of the ordinary sessions of the second semester of 1905 make it possible to reconstruct the course of deliberations in details, especially in the context of the initial discussions for the 1906 Budget Law, which provided for 15:000\$000 for the purchase of works of art to compose the São Paulo State Art Gallery.³⁹

The Committee of Accounts and Finance authorized the Fundação de São Vicente to be acquired for 8:000\$000.⁴⁰ The same committee asked a few days later that the amount be corrected to 5:000\$000 during the 75th ordinary session,

35. Ibid.

36. Cf. Von Ihering [*Carta de Hermann ...*].

37. Cf. Commission of Accounts and Finance of the Chamber of Deputies of the State of São Paulo (1905).

38. *Annaes da Câmara...* (1905, p. 162).

39. Ibid., p. 521.

40. Ibid., p. 563.

41. Ibid., p. 621.

42. *Annaes do Senado...* (1905, p. 571). The statement for this year reports spending of 5:500\$000 on the Art Gallery: cf. *Relatório da Secretaria da Fazenda do Estado de S. Paulo*, 1906, p. 18-19 and p. 60-61.

43. Cf. Cardoso de Almeida, Dec. 9, 1904.

44. Brefe, op. cit., p. 90, n. 4.

45. *Guia pelas Collecções*, op. cit., p. 102-104.

alleging an error motivated by haste in deliberations.⁴¹ At the 92nd session of the state Senate, on December 9, the amount was confirmed, and in 1906 Calixto received 5:000\$000 (five *contos de réis*) as payment for the canvas.⁴²

Thus, the painting was definitively incorporated to the public collection of the State of São Paulo. Note that the Chamber authorized the acquisition in the same week that José Cardoso de Almeida, then Secretary of the Interior, issued the order to transfer the works of the Art Gallery, allocated at the Museu Paulista, to the Lyceum of Arts and Crafts.⁴³

In addition to *Independência ou Morte* and the historical portraits on display in room B-8, the *Fundação de São Vicente* was part of the tiny set of historical paintings that remained on display at the Museum after 1905, remaining exposed in room B-11, where it had been allocated in November 1900 by Calixto's choice, until Afonso Taunay's changes in 1917 to set up a new showroom. It is reasonable to suppose, in this sense, that the remaining paintings had different regulations than the ones that had been transferred, belonging to the Museum's history collection.

The remaining large-format paintings depicted significant episodes of São Paulo history and represented the beginning of the colonization and territory expansion after the founding of the Vicentine captaincy and the proclaimed Independence in the Ipiranga area, which celebrated São Paulo's participation in the fabric of the Brazilian nation, both in the colonial period and in the formation of the politically independent state.

According to the Museu Paulista Guide for Collections, published in 1907, Calixto's canvas shared the space of room B-11 with the geology and paleontology collections, which caused some resistance to Hermann von Ihering's policy regarding the collections of history during the time he was in charge of the administration of the museum, and was even the raw material of the accusations made by his successor regarding the dissonance of the exhibition set.⁴⁴ Although the painter's personal will discards the idea that the whole set was thought at random, it is imperative to present hypotheses about the criteria that made it possible to display a historical painting in a natural history exhibition.

THE SENSES OF FUNDAÇÃO DE SÃO VICENTE IN THE MUSEU PAULISTA (1900-1939)

The 1907⁴⁵ Guide informed the visitors of the Museu Paulista about the collections and objects that could be found in each room of the building: the zoology

ones were distributed in the rooms. B-1 to B-6, B-10, B-14 and B-15. The ethnographic collections could be visited in rooms B-12 and B-16, the latter being the Carajás Indians. In room B-11, which housed the collections of mineralogy and paleontology, was the *Fundação de São Vicente*. The numismatic collection was exhibited in room B-13 and the historical collections were allocated in rooms B-8 and B-9. After the 1905 transfer, Pedro Américo's historical painting became the only object on display at the Hall of Honor, or room B-17.⁴⁶

Ana Maria de Alencar Alves⁴⁷ and Fábio R. Moraes⁴⁸ demonstrated Hermann von Ihering's criteria for the formation of the Museum's historical collection, but it should be mentioned that rooms B-8 and B-9 and the Hall of Honor were part of the central body of the museum and that, although the access to them was differentiated (being the first two rooms by the staircase behind the lobby, and the Hall of Honor directly by the main staircase) and therefore aroused criticism of the director's alleged contempt for the history collections, they were probably placed there precisely for their potential to attract visitors to a particular space in the building, outside the main circuit, following the guidelines offered by George Brown-Goode.⁴⁹ In any case, Calixto's painting had been allocated in room B-11.

In addition to the foundational scene, on the walls were paintings of geysers and geological formations. In cabinets 49 and 50 were samples of Brazilian rocks and from other places; Taubaté's bituminous schist (oil, kerosene and paraffin raw materials), the Sorocaban marble, a collection of iron products from Ipanema, in São Paulo State, and copies of diamonds.

Cabinets 48 and 51 housed the paleontology collection, characterized by the Guide itself for its "notorious poverty" regarding fossils found in Brazil and especially in São Paulo: in cabinet 48, the "*Mesosaurus tumidus*" fossil shared space with "Mesozoic fish" and "Devonian period shells". The number 51 was home to the "numerous fossils from several parts of the world," in which the "copies of the famous reptis Plesiosaurus, Mystriosauus, and Ichthyosaurus" were highlighted.⁵⁰

The Guide thus offers a description of the typology of objects on display in the room in which Calixto decided to exhibit the *Fundação de São Vicente*. It did not contain objects or collections that directed the visitor to establish an immediate correlation with the historical painting. What justified the allocation of *Fundação de São Vicente* in room B-11 would be the homology of meanings between the geology and paleontology collections and the episode represented by Calixto: the natural and historical formation of São Paulo and Brazilian territory. This relationship can be understood by what had been predicted in the normative instruction that regulated the institutional purpose of the Museum: to produce and disseminate knowledge of

46. Ibid.

47. Cf. Alves, op. cit.

48. Cf. Moraes, op. cit.

49. Brown-Goode (1895, p. 34).

50. *Guia pelas Collecções*, op. cit., p. 102-104.

51. Decree n° 249 of July 26, 1894, art. 2°, chap. 1.

52. Alves, op. cit., p. 139.

53. Wanderley, op. cit., p. 157-158.

54. Von Ihering, 12 nov. 1900. The document is registered with number 91 in the Book of Registration of Protocols Sent from the Museum, p. 30-31.

55. *Ofício da Sociedade...*, 11 dez. 1900.

the natural history of the South American continent, Brazil and São Paulo from zoology and “*natural and cultural history of man*” [our emphasis].⁵¹

According to Alencar Alves, the History and Natural History collections of the nineteenth-century museums were mobilized to elaborate a narrative about the “natural history of man”.⁵² In this same perspective, in books such as Francisco de Varnhagen's *História Geral do Brasil* (1854), the history of man is preceded by the description of the geography and geology of the territory: it is a tradition replicated in the *Quadro Histórico da Província de S. Paulo* (1864), by José Joaquim Machado de Oliveira (main interlocutor that Benedito Calixto mobilizes in *Villa de Itanhaem*, 1895) and in “*The History of São Paulo taught by the biography of its most notable figures*” (1895), by Tancredo do Amaral, professor of the Normal School of the Republic Square.

Moreover, as Marcelo da Rocha Wanderley demonstrated, the exaltation of the natural environment was a rhetorical topos of the ufanist discourse present among the actors of the Discovery celebrations, as a counterpoint to the distrust related to the newly established republican regime and the crisis faced by Campos Salles government.⁵³

Commissioned by the Vicentine Association, with a similar function to the one in Rio de Janeiro, nature occupies a central role in the composition of *Fundação de São Vicente*, with the coast being the “gateway” of the European civilization and São Vicente Bay the place where the indigenous and the Portuguese met to formalize the settlement agreement.

The choice of Benedito Calixto⁵⁴ to allocate the historical painting in room B-11, therefore, is because it is necessary to celebrate, at the same time, the first and peaceful meeting between European and Native Americans and, above all, the mediating agency that the southern coast of São Paulo detained in this process, doubly enthroning civilization in complementary ways. In this sense, the choice of the painter was in line with the intentions of the Commemorative Society, especially if we take the metaphor used by Gregory I. de Freitas, that the Captaincy of S. Vicente was the “first forming cell of the Brazilian nation”. The painting has the potential to celebrate the historical formation of the territory, while the other collections of room B-11 informed about its natural constitution.⁵⁵

Thus, room B-11 housed objects that, jointly exposed, informed the visitor about the physical formation of the Brazilian territory and at the same time celebrated the Portuguese colonization beginning from the coast, thus reaffirming the project of the Commemorating Society in reminding the Vicentine protagonism in the history of Brazil and, above all, of the State of São Paulo.

After 1905, with the transfer of the Artistic Gallery, *Independência ou Morte* and *Fundação de São Vicente* were the large-format historical paintings displayed

in the rooms of the Museu Paulista. In addition to the portraits of room B-8, the scenes of São Paulo's history made up a "commemorative pantheon", a policy aligned with G. Brown-Goode's propositions in *The Principles of Museum Administration*: every city should have a historical collection representing their memorable episodes and men who had taken part in them.⁵⁶ These were exactly the conditions of Articles 3 and 4 of Decree-Law No. 249, which provided for paintings by "illustrious men" and "issues of history".⁵⁷

This would also explain the transfer of the paintings *Partida da Monção* (oil on canvas, 390 x 640 cm, 1897), by José Ferraz de Almeida Júnior, and *Pedro Álvares Cabral's First Landing in Porto Seguro* (oil on canvas, 190 x 330 cm, 1900), by Oscar Pereira da Silva, acquired by the state government and incorporated to the Museum, respectively, in 1901 and 1902.⁵⁸

The scenes did not record the actions of "illustrious" historical characters, such as *Partida da Monção*, nor the participation of São Paulo in the origins of the Brazilian nation, as in the case of Oscar Pereira da Silva's work, which interprets the arrival of the Cabralin expedition to the Bahia coast, in 1500. The paintings *Independência ou Morte* and *Fundação de São Vicente*, in contrast, reported the actions of Dom Pedro I and Martim Afonso de Souza, beyond the solemnly evoked episode in each of them.

In February 1917, engineer Afonso Taunay was commissioned to direct the Museu Paulista following the short management of Armando Prado, who succeeded von Ihering after his resignation in May of the previous year.

Von Ihering's controversial resignation certainly influenced A. Taunay's speech about the situation found there. The main accusation made to the former director was about the mismatch between the development of the natural history collection and of the homeland history collection, the latter not very expressive and dependent on donations.⁵⁹

The criticism not only reached the acquisition policy, but also the choice of rooms B-8 and B-9 for its exhibition. As mentioned earlier, it is likely and possible that von Ihering anchored himself in Brown-Goode's guidelines on the need to direct visitor flow to the less visible sections of the building.

Once commissioned, he was responsible for redesigning the exhibitions for the centennial of Independence commemorations, of which the planning began in 1919. He designed the exhibit program of the Museu Paulista from the historiography of the IHGSP, focusing on the pioneering and monsoon action as the agents of territorial expansion, besides being himself the author of a major work on the history of São Paulo of the seventeenth-century, of the flags and of the cultivation of coffee.⁶⁰

56. Brown-Goode, op. cit., p. 34.

57. Decree nº 249 of July 26, 1894, art. 4º, chap. 1.

58. Cf. Nery, op. cit.

59. Brefe, op. cit., p. 89.

60. Cf. Makino (2002/2003); Brefe, op. cit.; Lima Junior, op. cit.

61. Cf. *Relatório de Atividades...* (1917?).

62. Hooper-Greenhill (2000, p. 23).

63. *A Federação*, May 25, 1887: Among the archeological objects that the late dr. Rath had in his interesting collections, bought lately by the Sertorio de S. Paulo Museum, the sword and armor of Martim Affonso de Souza, the founder of S. Vicente, the first colonial nucleus in Brazil. The sword bears the name of the daring Portuguese navigator and dates from 1530."

64. Brefs, op. cit., p. 92.

65. Cf. Alves, op. cit.; Moraes, op. cit.

The original design foresaw that the decorations for the Independence Centennial would be concentrated in the lobby, staircase, Hall of Honor and rooms B-7, B-8, B-9 and B-10, which are located in the central body of the monument-building and those immediately adjacent to them. It would therefore be reasonable to infer that the accusations were one more rhetorical resource for departing from the old purposes of the Museu Paulista, as well as a propaganda of what was intended than von Ihering's administrative and/or scientific irresponsibility.

In any case, the re-elaboration of the exhibitions began in 1917 with the inauguration of the rooms A-7, which exhibited the botany collection, and A-10, dedicated to the first historical exhibition organized by Taunay, initiating a curatorial inflection that would consolidate over the following decades. It was precisely to this room that the *Fundação de São Vicente* was transferred, giving it a new semantic layer. The director appeared scandalized by the previous site of the work, treating it as inadmissible, as he reported to the Interior Secretary in 1918:

Another fact demonstrates the abandonment of the so-called "historical collection". It is hard to explain, for example, why a canvas depicting the Foundation of S. Vincent would hang above a cabinet of minerals in the room of mineralogy and geology, almost four meters above the floor. Nothing or almost nothing in the Museu Paulista reminded the past of São Paulo.⁶¹

By having to divide the spectator's attention with ore and fossil collections, the historical painting that represented the foundation of the Captaincy of Sao Vicente would not have its potential fully valued, which would justify the changes he proposed. Finally, room A-10 was opened on December 25th. It featured historical portraits, archival documents, and cartographic representations of the history of Sao Paulo and Brazil. Taunay regrouped a once dispersed ensemble, thereby building new visual meanings about the past.⁶²

This process included dismantling the old rooms of the historical collections, B-8 and B-9, which were criticized for the apparent lack of organization criteria: while the former exhibited pieces of furniture, personal effects and historical portraits and in the B-9 there were the armor and sword that would have belonged to Martim Afonso de Souza, among other armaments.⁶³ Even though they resembled "deposits of antiquities or curiosities" in Taunay's view,⁶⁴ von Ihering had established criteria for the acquisition or refusal of objects offered for the Museu Paulista's history collection, as Alves and Moraes demonstrated.⁶⁵

Thus, the exhibition focused on the historical experience of São Paulo was a “real necessity”, since “nothing there could make us think of national or regional traditions”.⁶⁶ When assuming the position, Taunay resumed recording monthly activities in *Chronicas do Museu Paulista* and documented a portion of the assembly process for room A-10.⁶⁷ In June 1917, Taunay moved the paleontology and geology collections to room A-13 and by now he probably has already relocated *Fundação de São Vicente* in room A-10. In November, the historical portraits of Bartolomeu de Gusmão, Father José de Anchieta and the explorer Domingos Jorge Velho, all painted by Calixto, were reunited in the same room A-10. It is also possible to detect, through *Chronicas*, the dynamics of orders for copies of old maps and documents with other institutions, such as a map of D. Luis de Céspedes García Xería to the archives of the Indies in Seville, which arrived at the museum on the eve of the opening of the exhibition.

The records provide insight on specific procedures rather than a procedural view about mounting the exhibition. Anyway, room A-10 is an eloquent example of the new curatorial guidelines of the Museu Paulista, which call the history collections to a definitive protagonism. Inaugurated on December 25, 1917, the exhibition received 1,200 visitors,⁶⁸ a number probably reached due to the advertisements circulated, for instance, in *Correio Paulistano*:

The next 25th of this month, at the Museu Paulista, another exhibition room will open to the public, on the ground floor of the building, in the gallery of the right. Consecrated to the history of S. Paulo, there you can see historical pictures, many maps of the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and documents related to the colonial times, from the explorers’ movement to the independence, to writers, chroniclers, etc. Around the room there are 46 geographical maps, 27 of the sixteenth century, 10 of the sixteenth century and nine of the eighteenth century.

Of these, 39 refer to South American and Brazilian cartography and 7 especially to São Paulo. By this collection, one can get an idea of the evolution and of the geography of our continent, from the map of Juan de la Cosa, dated from the year of the discovery of Brazil to the one of the “Courts”, in 1750, official demarcation chart of the territories of the crowns of Portugal and Spain, by virtue of the Treaty of Madrid. Traced by Portuguese, Spanish, Italian, French, Dutch and Flemish, English and German cartographers, they form a valuable collection brought together by the illustrious Baron of Rio Branco, whom Mr. Dr. Nilo Peçanha, at the request of the Museum Board, kindly offered him. Among the maps of S. Paulo, copied by Brazilian and European archives and libraries, a very interesting one is especially that of d. Luiz de Céspedes, Xería, dating from 1628, the oldest cartographic sketch of lands of the Paulista hinterland, the letters of Fra Giuseppe di Santa Teresa, of 1698; two original letters copied from the British Museum of the eighteenth century, a map of the demarcation of São Paulo and Minas territories of Captain General d. Luiz Antonio de Sousa Botelho and Mourão, Morgado de Matheus, in 1766, and after all the excellent map of São

66. Cf. *Relatório de Atividades...* (1917?).

67. *Chronicas do Museu...*, p. 26-29.

68. *Ibid.*, p. 29.

69. *Correio Paulistano*, 24 dez. 1917, p. 2.

70. Anderson (2008, p. 241).

Paulo littoral raised at the end of the 18th century by the colonel of the Royal Corps of Engineers João da Costa Ferreira. Above these various maps are placed the four historical paintings of Benedito Calixto: "The foundation of S. Vicente", and the portraits of Anchieta, Domingos Jorge Velho, Bartholomeu Lourenço de Gusmão, already existing in the Museum and so appreciated by the public. They are now in a better position to be closely examined, receiving better light. On three large showcase-tables in the center of the room are exposed several interesting codices and sparse documents, obtained thanks to generous donors like Mrs. Drs. Washington Luis, Silva Leme and the late Dr. Augusto de Siqueira Cardoso, among others, and the valuable collaboration of Mr. Dr Adolpho Botelho de Abreu Sampaio, Director of the State Archivo. Thus, it gathers inventories of illustrious explorers, a confidential letter from the Viscount by Martim Affonso de Sousa, 17th and 18th century business accounts, lists of gold extracted and sent from the wilderness, mine routes, eighteenth-century letters between managers and friends, registration of royal letters, and official acts, notary log books, autographs of notable personalities, pioneer writers, men of the government, etc., several documentary pieces, in brief, referring to the various phases of São Paulo life, in the period from 1550 to 1822. Among the greatest curiosities exposed, it is worth to remark, for instance, the autograph of the first decree, perhaps signed by D. Peter I after September 7; a confidential letter from the Viscount of Barbacena; captain general of Minas, to the government of S. Paulo State, communicating him the discovery of the State of Minas Gerais conspiracy. For the commodity of the public, almost all the documents were translated, with some biographical information completing this interpretation, in general about the persons to whom the documentary pieces refer.⁶⁹

Although it was published in a large newspaper in the state capital, the text reproduced above was entirely taken from the report sent by Afonso Taunay to the Interior Secretary to report the opening of the room. To construct a historical narrative, the director mobilized documents, maps, portraits and the *Fundação de São Vicente* painting, whose semantic stitching is the historical formation of the South American, Brazilian and Paulista territory.

Cartographic representations instruct the viewer about the intertwining of the conditioning factors of the political history and the physical dimensions: in this angle, Taunay aims to consolidate a genealogical-evolutionary approach of the territory from the state of São Paulo. As instruments of power legitimation, maps had the political function of building concrete territorial units, documenting the possession and permanence of a people over a given physical space. This procedure brought the possibility of drawing a historically situated "political-biographical profile".⁷⁰

The choice of the documentary body allows us to infer that the prism through which the process in question should be observed was that of the diplomatic agreement, in which the construction of the territory would be an essentially peaceful integrative action. The agents of this story were "remarkable personalities, bandeirantes (explorers), writers, men of the government", with the highlights for Martim Afonso de Souza and D. Pedro I, whose biographies represented the

foundation of the first captaincy and the proclamation of the nation's independence. It should be noted, however, that the year 1550 follows the arrival of the Society of Jesus with the expedition of Tomé de Souza in 1549, and the opening of the school that gave birth to São Paulo de Piratininga in 1554 by Fathers Manoel da Nobrega and José de Anchieta.⁷¹

Anchieta was among the "illustrious men" portrayed by Benedito Calixto for the Museu Paulista's historical collection, and during the administration of Hermann von Ihering, the portrait was exhibited in room B-8 and remained there until November 1917, when Taunay transferred it to room A-10 together with those of Father Bartolomeu de Gusmão and of Domingos Jorge Velho, all painted by Calixto.⁷²

The portraits elaborated by Calixto and transferred by Taunay represent prominent figures for the history of São Paulo colonial period: Father José de Anchieta was the catechizer of the Indians in the Piratiningano village, and Father Bartolomeu de Gusmão was the inventor of the aerostat, besides recovering Alexandre de Gusmão, the diplomat responsible for the Treaty of Madrid (1750). Marins noted that Domingos Jorge Velho's portrait was the first artistic representation of a bandeirante (explorer) incorporated to the Museu Paulista's collection.⁷³

The displacement of these portraits to room A-10 holds an important semantic inflection that deviates from the original purpose of the 1894 legislation. Room B-8, from which they were taken, featured the figures portrayed as holders and carriers of a moral asset that should be seen, celebrated, understood and reproduced by the citizens of the nascent Republic.⁷⁴

Associated with cartography and official documents, however, the portraits acquire another meaning: "illustrious men" are mobilized by their agency in the construction of the national territory and, therefore, allocated in a set of objects capable of communicating this relationship. The exhibition revokes the contemplative posture and provokes a necessarily relational perception of the meanings, in which the biography, while still conveying the moral values mentioned, is no longer sufficient. We may also note that the *Fundação de São Vicente* articulates the exhibition arrangement, together with the historical portraits: this was Taunay's intention, as he himself reported to the Interior Secretary in 1918: "I have **attached to them** a collection of documents and geographical maps" (our emphasis added), a decision formally justified by the need to improve its lighting.⁷⁵

Thus, these characters were broached by their participation in the history of São Paulo and Brazil, becoming the vehicles of the narrative of the historical process that director Afonso Taunay intended to build visually. The centralized position of

71. Martim Afonso de Souza was associated with the foundation of the first settlement of Piratininga in 1531. Von Ihering (1895, p. 9).

72. Cf. *Relatório de 1917...*, op. cit.

73. Cf. Marins, op. cit.

74. Hooper-Greenhill, op. cit., p. 23.

75. *Relatório de 1917...*, op. cit., p. XVI.

Calixto's work guaranteed some sovereignty over the set of objects, and it is in this sense that the problem of its displacement to room A-10 deserves to be visited.

In an exhibition of cartography and documents, the painting came to carry another meaning that was not evident: aligned with the maps and historical portraits, the canvas lost the uniqueness it had in room B-11, where there were only collections of geology and paleontology.

From an episode to be celebrated, the foundation of the Vicentine captaincy became integrated into a broad historical process that reiterates São Paulo's participation in the formation of the Brazilian territory. Thus, if the idea of *cellula mater* had been transmitted since 1900, on the occasion of the 4th Centennial of the Discovery of Brazil, it is by the exhibition in room A-10 that it is effectively enunciated, making Calixto's canvas a nodal point in the narrative that Taunay intended to build for the Museu Paulista.

The agreement between the indigenous and Portuguese authorities, in our interpretation, is what allows us to articulate the diplomatic meaning of the formation of the national territory and to reiterate the oldness of the São Paulo leadership in the history of Brazil, from the foundation of the first regular colony to the proclamation of the politically independent state. Already far from the brief period of hegemony in the federal government, the perrepeista elite sought in the solidity of history the arguments to justify their place in the federation, being the museum run by Taunay one of the lines of force to meet this demand. Represented as a diplomatic act, the meeting of Martim Afonso de Souza, Tibiriçá, Caiubi and João Ramalho, Calixto's painting maintains a timely eloquence regarding the reiteration of pacifism that marks the ongoing political relations in the foundational scene, meeting Taunay's narrative project.

When inaugurated, room A-10 conveyed a powerful visual articulation, where *Fundação de São Vicente* received a central and prominent place (figure 3). It was the director's first step towards valuing the history collection, according to his criteria, and the beginning of the narrative focused on São Paulo's protagonism in the construction of the memory of the Brazilian nation.

In 1922, in the context of commemorating Independence, room A-10 received the incorporation of the *Carta Geral das Bandeiras Paulistas - General Charter of São Paulo Bandeiras* (exploring expeditions) (2.63 mx 2.33 m), authored by the director himself (figure 4). It would be crucial to note, for our purposes, that this object was placed precisely on the opposite wall to the one on which *Fundação de São Vicente* was hung. This spatial arrangement, where the painting appears in front of the map that illustrates the territorial expansion based on the Bandeiras,



Figure 3 – *Fundação de São Vicente* in room A-10, in 1937. Collection of the Museu Paulista of the University of S. Paulo. Photo: Helio Nobre.



Figure 4 – *Carta Geral das Bandeiras Paulistas*. Room A-10, 1937. Collection of the Museu Paulista. Photo: Helio Nobre.

consolidates a dialectical relationship that takes the Vicentine coast as the anteroom of the seventeenth-century bandeirante epic: the portrait of Domingos Jorge Velho, in this sense, was allocated to the right side of the Charter, which allows us both to infer the resignification of the character as a metonymy of the Paulista expeditions, and not just as a destroyer of Quilombo dos Palmares.

With the assembly of room A-10, Taunay restored the sense of *cellula mater* of the captaincy of S. Vicente, conveyed since 1900 by the Commemorating Society, but also gave it a procedurally representative importance in relation to a wider chain of objects, revoking the celebratory episodic potential that room B-11 invoked during the management of its predecessor. In room A-10, the sixteenth century has a secure, albeit limited, place in relation to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which play a major role in the museum's narrative by the bandeirante agency in the consolidation of Brazilian territory starting from São Paulo, from where the captaincies of Mato Grosso, Goiás, Minas Gerais and Rio Grande do Sul would have been dismembered. In any case, it is possible to note the concern to contemplate all the phases of formation of the Brazilian territory, beyond the colonial period: as we could see, the chronological beacons that guide the exhibition of room A-10 are precisely the foundation of the São Vicente captaincy in 1532 and the consolidation of the Brazilian border with Bolivia, in 1903, by the Baron of Rio Branco.

After the inauguration of room A-10, Taunay began planning the exhibition for room A-11, where a narrative about the history of the city of São Paulo should appear: until 1922, both represented the history at the Museu Paulista. According to the Guide to the Historical Section of the Museu Paulista, of 1937, the place exhibited examples of the City Chamber between 1562 and 1882, as well as paintings representing the evolution of urbanism.⁷⁶

The vision about history should therefore begin with the historical formation of the city and of the territory of São Paulo. In both, the visitor was invited to go through four hundred years of history. In 1922, in conjunction with the Hall of Honor, the lobby, and the ornamentation of the main staircase, Taunay inaugurated five other rooms, planned between 1919 and 1922: A-12, A-13, A-14, A-15 and A-16. We will not discuss the plans for the centennial of Independence. Finally, it should be mentioned that the lobby of the building, which gives access to room A-10, received, in 1922, two panels representing the King of Portugal, D. João III, and Martim Afonso de Souza, colonizer and founder of São Vicente. In the 1930s, the panels of João Ramalho and Tibiriçá were also placed there, characters that founded the Captaincy of São Vicente, from where the bandeirantes would depart shortly thereafter. The statues of

Fernão Dias Paes Leme and Antonio Raposo Tavares were commissioned to Luigi Brizzolara and were also present at the centennial celebration.⁷⁷

In 1929, Taunay requested that the painting *A Partida da Monção* (The Departure of the Monsoon) returned to Museu Paulista, and was promptly allocated to room A-9, dedicated to the eighteenth-century monsoons in Sao Paulo. The Pinacoteca director, however, also sent the canvas of *Primeiro Desembarque de Pedro Álvares Cabral em Porto Seguro* (Pedro Alvares Cabral's First Landing in Porto Seguro), by Oscar Pereira da Silva, which Taunay chose to exhibit in the room of the "old São Paulo iconography", A-12.⁷⁸

Although not aimed at a full analysis of the decorative program, the relationship between *Fundação de São Vicente* and subsequent exhibition spaces is evident. It is the landing of Martim Afonso de Souza and the founding of the captaincy of São Vicente that drives the chain of the historical narrative that should be viewed from São Paulo. Taunay resizes the uniquely celebrated semantics fulfilled by the canvas in von Ihering's exhibition by inserting it into a continuous expository narrative that guarantees the effectiveness of the valorization of the historical process that should be seen and learned at the Museu Paulista. Although the panels of the characters present in the historical painting appear in the museum's lobby, it is the relational arrangement with maps, portraits and the General Charter of the Paulista Bandeiras (from 1922) that made *Fundação de São Vicente* crucial in the homologation of the official memory of a Brazil inaugurated and built from the territory of São Paulo.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Once incorporated into the collection of the Museu Paulista, the *Fundação de São Vicente* painting was lined with layers of meanings throughout the first four decades of the twentieth century: it sought to demonstrate how the allocation and the display of the canvas in room B-11, between 1900 and 1917, associated the formation and natural occupation to the historical colonization of the Brazilian territory from the Vicentine coast. Moreover, it corresponded to a political and celebratory project carried out at the IV Centennial of Discovery by the elites of Santos and São Vicente, to which Calixto was aligned, and from which the Museu Paulista became a receiver and diffuser after 1900, imputing to this semantic homology an evident political and self-referential meaning.

77. Makino, op. cit., p. 172-173.

78. Monteiro, op. cit., p. 104-105; *Guia pela Secção...*, op. cit., p. 80.

Already in the context of mounting the historical exhibition of room A-10 by Afonso Taunay, the canvas was appropriated as an essential part of a set of historical maps and official documents that intended to subsidize a narrative about the formation of Brazil based on diplomatic agreements, from the 16th to the 20th century. If the idea of "*cellula mater*" has been updated since the Commemorating Society, the foundation of the captaincy of São Vicente acquires a new relational meaning to the expansions of the 17th century Bandeiras of São Paulo, as the "anteroom" of the Bandeirante epic. The commissioning condition of the work, therefore, contributes to the mapping of the context and the pressures faced by the painter Benedito Calixto, as well as his agents: the donation and subsequent acquisition by the state government allow us to infer the dynamics of interest groups at the end of the nineteenth century based on the musealized historical painting, in which the Santos and Vicentine elite intended to be represented in the still crawling republican regime, mobilizing local history as a symbolic resource for the reaffirmation of its political place.

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