

Beginnings of literary press in Rio Grande do Sul – The history of the newspaper “*O Guayba*”

DOI: 10.1590/1809-5844201622

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Abstract

The Literature dominated the printed media in Rio Grande do Sul in the second half of the 19th century. In total, there were about 70 similar publications circulating at the time. The first one, launched in 1856, was *O Guayba*. In this article, we intend to recover the history of this newspaper, which circulated for two years in Porto Alegre. The analysis will have as the theoretical basis the Cultural History. The methodological approach of the research will be based on the model proposed by Robert Darnton to the study of forms, in other words, it addresses the communication circuit that involves the object – its materiality, stakeholders and its relationship with society. The *O Guayba* was a pioneer newspaper, in which took place the ideas of the main representatives of the first local romantic generation. Many important names in the history of the press in Rio Grande do Sul had their first professional experience in its pages. The insertion of reading in the city’s daily life is one of its legacies. **Keywords:** History of Journalism. Literary press. History of journalism in Rio Grande do Sul. Journalism and Literature.

Literature on horseback

A true military camp. Thus Baumgarten (1982, p.13) defines Rio Grande do Sul in the 18th and 19th centuries. This permanent state of war, blended to country life activities, greatly contributed to characterize the *gaúcho*. According to the author, this situation would also be one of the circumstances responsible for the state’s minor cultural development until then. Rio Grande’s people, in the second half of the 19th century, were heirs to an endless number of battles.

Literary production would also develop late. The permanent state of war contributed to it, as well as the Province’s isolation, its lack of schools and low schooling rate of the peoples who formed the state. “A war-ridden, sparse population in Rio Grande were also late to obtain the benefits of schooling. Learning was remotely useful for these people: from warriors they were born and warriors they needed, not scholars and dreamers”, explains Cesar (1971 – Our translation).

In this paper, we look towards the 19th century to study the birth of literary press in Rio Grande do Sul, by analyzing its first newspaper – *O Guayba*. The study is based on Cultural History and on the model proposed by Robert Darnton to study press, aiming to understand the communication circuit that involves the object – its materiality, participants and connection to the society.

Press and the first newspaper

Press arrives in Rio Grande do Sul during the first phase of the state's literary history (1737 to 1834), marked by the circulation of oral Literature (CESAR, 1971). It happened in Porto Alegre, in 1827, a period in which farming economy came to relative stagnation and the local affluent class, constituted of farm owners and dried beef producers, noticed their political subordination to the power center in Rio de Janeiro. Contradictions between province and court were renewed in the context of liberal reaction to the absolutist government of D. Pedro I. The first state newspaper, *O Diário de Porto Alegre*, comes into existence in this scenario (RÜDIGER, 2003, p.18).

As Rüdiger (2003) states, the newspaper is a governmental publication, sponsored by the province governor Salvador José Maciel. The level of development of the state society began to increase economically, politically, and socially. The capital had grown from 6 thousand inhabitants in 1819, to 15 thousand in 1830. Civilization conditions improved, and the newly formed reading public needed to be taken into consideration. Thus, the first newspaper in Rio Grande do Sul was an official medium that conveyed governmental publicity and published administration acts – to provide this reading public with “trustworthy” information. Its editor, the Portuguese writer Lourenço Júnior de Castro, was responsible for shaping and playing the political-administrative game. At any rate, the path for new papers to come up was opened henceforth.

Before the 1835 Revolution was declared and the official press properly launched, a few newspapers came about and are considered its predecessors. They defended, in opposite sides of the trenches, ideas that would feed the conflict. According to Reverbel et al. (1968), it can be said that this press prepared the revolutionary movement – their very well written texts would have seriously influenced public opinion.

The rise of the book

It is interesting to observe the cultural changes that take place in a short period, just over a decade, in the state. During the Farrroupilha Revolution, started in 1835, Rio Grande begins to experiment a strong intellectual agitation, as shown by the rapidly proliferating

newspapers, poets and the adoption of more advanced principals by its citizens. The second period pointed out by Cesar (1971) would thus begin, in 1834, with the release of the first book – *Poems offered to Rio Grande ladies*, by Delfina Benigna da Cunha, and would end in 1856 with the birth of *O Guayba* newspaper, object of our study.

According to him (1971, p.69-70) the state print media, in the period that goes from the installation of the first press (1827) until the Piratini Constitution (1843), registers a political vibration closely followed by preoccupations of literary order in some of its main centers, including the state capital, Porto Alegre. Ideas were the engine to action not only for the children of the land, but also for men and women come from other places.

[...] intellectual life, in that period, did not fail to bloom here and there – modest waterholes that in 1868 would form the roaring stream of the *Partenon Literário*. In this period, gauchos gave an excellent testimony of themselves. They minded their weapons, but did not forget to cultivate their spirit. Literarily they produced little, which was much, given the limited resources available to them. They wrote verses, made journalism, cultivated narrative and episodic history (CESAR, 1971, p.70 – Our translation).

Therefore, a state of literary uneasiness coincides with the political turmoil. On either side of the revolution, *farroupilhas* and *caramurus* bear weapons and quills to defend their objectives. The role of the press, in this context, is fundamental. As a base to exercise symbolic power, newspaper pages from the period register, interpret, and spread the ideals that move the conflict.

Cultural movements begin to develop from the second half of the 19th century on. Press and Literature come about with great force, especially in the phase between the 1850s and 1880s, when literary papers and associations dedicated to produce and study Literature proliferate. The paper *O Guayba*, study object of this work, issued from 1856 to 1858, brought together the first romantic generation in Rio Grande do Sul. Its importance, to Baumgarten (1982), lies in the fact that it created a model of literary press with innumerable followers in the state, and contributed to develop literary life in the province.

An analysis under the light of Cultural History

History is reinterpretation. We relate to the past through narratives whenever it is impossible to recover it exactly as it happened. As Paul Veyne (1998) points out, history is not just a series of events, but the narrative of this series of events. Such impossibility is not a privilege of history – even by using the most refined methods of investigation, regardless of the field of study, researchers cannot access ontological reality itself, only reality's phenomena (SANTOS, 2001, p.32).

Historiography, as Certeau (2010) teaches, bears in its very name the paradoxical relationship of two antinomic terms: reality and discourse. Its job is to articulate those terms, and where such bond is unthinkable, to make *as if* it articulated them. As Ricoeur (1961, p.226) well defines:

History is indeed the realm of inexactitude. This is not a useless discovery; it justifies the work of the historian. It justifies all of their uncertainties. Historical method cannot be more than an inaccurate method.

(...)

History wants to be objective, but cannot be. It wants to relive, but can only rebuild. It wants to make things contemporary, but at the same time must reconstruct the distance and depth of historical detachment.

(...)

Such difficulties are not method flaws, they are well-founded mistakes (Our translation).

It does not mean that researchers write about facts that never happened, or at least did not happen that way; it means that the researcher, as a subject, is always present in any analysis performed. The researcher has to aim at the objectivity horizon, which must not hide the fact that history is also a social practice. As Le Goff (2003) underscores, it is legitimate to observe that the reading of world history is articulated upon the will to change it.

This article is part of the research project *19th Century Literary Press in Rio Grande do Sul – Texts and contexts*, in which we intend to study periodicals issued in the state during that period, and gave Literature privileged space in their pages. We aim to understand the plural meanings of the texts that circulated at the time and how readers related to them. We want to see how ideas were conveyed through such texts and how they influenced readers' behaviors. We want to meet these writers-journalists who were pioneers in building a literary environment in the state, and find out how they did their work.

Literary press and its communication circuit

This research's methodological approach will be based on the model proposed by Darnton (2010, p.127) for the study of printed media. His model derives from the basic premise that some effort from the researcher is necessary to see the object as a whole, to understand the communication cycle that makes it live. "The parts don't acquire their full meaning while unrelated to the whole", he explains (2010, p.127).

Darnton's proposition is appropriate, since this investigation aims to understand the history of literary newspapers from Rio Grande in the 19th century through their processes

– production, content and reception. The author suggests an analysis of the communication circuit that involves the object, that is, its materiality, the characters involved and its relationship with the society.

According to Barbosa (2010), the model defined by Darnton as communication circuit encompasses the path that goes from text producers until the different ways the public takes hold of these messages. To observe what was produced, by whom, for whom, with what consequences to the society, is the master line of the author’s proposal. “It is necessary to unveil who wrote in these periodicals, what strategies they applied to reach a broader audience –allures, values, and strategies evoked in their discourse -, how these companies worked, and how their texts reached the public”, the author clarifies (2005, p.104 – Our translation).

In order to understand the history of the state’s literary press in the 19th century within this model, we employ research techniques that are fundamental to access key moments in the circuit. These techniques are bibliographical research, content analysis, and documentary research.

Through bibliographical and documentary research, we aim to study the society and context of the time, to unveil the literary and journalistic moment in Rio Grande do Sul, to find out who were the characters involved in the production process, and get a glimpse of readers’ reality. Content analysis of the period’s main publications allows us to understand the themes approached, the journalistic and literary genres employed, and track down the vestiges left about the authors and readers of those texts. As Ricoeur (1990) reminds us, this happens because text only becomes complete with the reading itinerary – therefore, it is a conjoint production by the author and the reader.

Literature is given a newspaper

The first literary periodical in Rio Grande do Sul, *O Guayba*, was launched on August 3rd 1856, and was issued until December 26th 1858. It was printed in the workshops at Tipografia Brasileira-Alemã¹ (German-Brazilian Typography), came in a 30 x 20 format, eight pages, and was issued on Sundays. Its yearly subscription costed 12\$000 and had to be paid beforehand by trimester. The collection available at the Hipólito José da Costa Communications Museum has been digitalized, within the scope of the research project that encompasses this article, and is available for survey at www.ufrgs.br/jornaisliterarios.

¹ The German-Brazilian Typography was located on New Street, currently Andrade Neves Street, downtown.

Figure 1 – Cover of the 10/19/1856 issue



Its editors were Carlos Jansen, who also owned the Typography, and João Vespúcio de Abreu e Silva. In Ferreira (1975, p.13-16 – Our translation) we have access to the presentation text published in the paper's first issue, from which we selected the excerpt below:

Press, however, is its [intelligence's] most faithful incarnation, its most legitimate representative – it is the major theater of its fights. The book is the wise man's intelligence thinking; the pamphlet is the politician's intelligence facing the shallow sea of passions; the newspaper is the people's intelligence advocating their interests and claiming their rights.

This is why press is the apostle of liberty and thought: it is intelligence in written form, it is the emancipated people, and armed freedom.

This is how we understand the elevated mission of press, however hopeless and unpretentious of us following its triumphant career.

If today we, green warriors, come amidst the publicity brawl, it is to shout a warning cry to the silent villages of youth, and wake up this multitude of hopeful youngsters whose intelligence now bloom to the reviving rays of talent, shaking them from the apathy that numbs them, from the disbelief that vexes them, from the idleness that spoils them, revealing them what they can accomplish and showing them the passing time and the impending future.

In the same text, the directors acknowledge both the strength and frailty of their combat, fought in the field of letters. *O Guayba*, according to them, would open its pages to intelligent essays, it would be a pastime for the public. And they protest: they wish to be a neutral entity in the provincial politics. They refute, therefore, to advocate partisan or personal interests; they mean to speak of the people, showing them their rights, teaching them their duties. It is important to highlight this stance. However impossible to be fully accomplished, the neutrality discourse already appears at this moment, in 1856, a period marked by party-political Journalism. The new literary and news-focused Journalism that gains body in the second half of the 19th century would, then, specialize in spreading news and discussing current topics, as Rüdiger (2003, p.60) shows.

According to the author, the shaping of a bourgeois mentality favored the diversification of present journalistic conceptions, making room to new values, such as news veracity and editorial impartiality, which contributed to broaden the newspaper-reading public. Consequently, manifestations of neutrality become ever more common, as seen on *O Guayba's* presentation text – along its way, however, the paper adopts more explicit positions towards several topics.

Men and women of letters

Several promising names of the time gathered in *O Guayba*'s newsroom, such as: Félix da Cunha, Pedro Antônio de Miranda, Miguel Meirelles, Rita Barem de Melo, Zeferino Vieira Rodrigues Filho, João Capistrano Filho, Catão Damasceno Ferreira, Eudoro Berlink and Furtado Coelho, among many others. As Ferreira (1975, p.17) points out, the number of collaborators was large, and their presence was constant in the paper pages. A typically local publication is thus configured, reflecting quite strongly the preoccupations, tendencies, and preferences in that environment. Nevertheless, it did not fail to contemplate outside influences, especially romans-feuilletons translated from French and English originals, such as Alexandre Dumas and Frederick Marryat, or nationals, such as Reinaldo Carlos Montoro². “Generally, its pages of poetry and prose are original productions by writers and poets from the Province, mostly immature, but who already look for their own voice and give active course to their attempts on dominating writing through the newspaper”, the author underscores (1975, p.17).

The first romantic generation in Rio Grande do Sul would have its means of expression in the pages of *O Guayba*. Contemplation, melancholy, sadness and relinquishment took the place that used to belong to more genuinely regional aspects. According to Cesar (1971, p.153), we had in Rio Grande do Sul, a *Casimirian*³ current even before Casimiro de Abreu himself. With *O Guayba*'s group, local Literature began to acquire a definite shape. Consequently, local poets and writers began to appear as a group, united by common ideals and aspirations. Affinity with the romantics from the Center and North of the country was visible, even in the unfortunate identification as a “school of young dead”, since most died prematurely.

The newspaper's founders were Félix Xavier da Cunha, Carlos Jansen and João Vespúcio de Abreu e Silva. Félix da Cunha took office as a province congressman in 1856. In addition to being a politician, he was also a journalist, poet, writer, and lawyer. He held a Bachelor Physical Science and Mathematics degree, and served in the Paraguay war. He was a member of the military Engineering corps, and director of the railways Central do Brasil, Pernambuco and Porto Alegre-Uruguaiana. He helped to organize the Liberal Party in Rio Grande do Sul (FRANCO, 2010). He began to write poetry at a very young age, but as time went by, he moved on to partisan Journalism (CESAR, 1971, p.155).

Carlos Jansen was editor in chief, and owner of the workshops where *O Guayba* was printed. He was a naturalized German, born in Cologne. He arrived in Brazil in 1851,

² In the collection of *O Guayba* available for research at the Hipólito José da Costa Communications Museum (Porto Alegre, RS) there were published the novels *Cherubino and Celestino*, by Alexandre Dumas; *Cain, the pirate*, by Frederick Marryat; *The pale maiden*, by Reinaldo Carlos Montoro, a Portuguese writer who came to Brazil as a teenager.

³ Poet Casimiro de Abreu's Romanticism is marked by feelings of longing, melancholy, and childhood nostalgia. In addition, his work features nationalism and homeland exaltation.

hired by the government as a mercenary soldier to fight in the Paraguay war. His fluency in Latin allowed him to quickly learn Portuguese, and become a writer and journalist. He married Rita de Araújo e Silva in Porto Alegre, and reached the position of province congressman (REVERBEL et al., 1968). He wrote the novella *O Patuá*. As Laytano (1974) remembers, his *writing craze* made him go to gazettes, publish schoolbooks, translate, visit short-lived magazines and periodicals, famous or minor magazines, and join daily and weekly newspapers in both German and Portuguese with his head held high from his vast experience. Later, in the 1860s, Félix da Cunha and Carlos Jansen would work together again in the newsroom of *O Mercantil*, directed by Cunha.

Beside Carlos Jansen, the journalist and romantic poet João Vespúcio de Abreu e Silva appears as editor. Born in Bahia, where his Rio-Grande-born father was deployed with his family, he married in Porto Alegre in 1861 and died in October of the same year at the age of 31. He was a professor in Pelotas, administrator of the general revenue bureau in Bagé, secretary of Public Instruction (a subject he frequently approached in the newspaper), administrator of the general postal service in the province, and province congressman for the Rio Pardo region. He was a sitting member of the first History and Geography Institute when it was founded. He worked, for a time, at a few newspapers in Rio de Janeiro, where he went in search of a weather less aggressive to his feeble health. Called by his peers the *Poet of Solitude*, after one of his poems, João Vespúcio de Abreu e Silva lived a life of illness. During his time as a poet in Porto Alegre, he was not wholly familiar with the province's cultural life. He felt lonely and helpless. Through a great effort of will, he managed to breach some of the indifference surrounding him. His poetry is somber and gives away little or nothing of the southern landscape (CESAR, 1971, p.154-155).

It is important to highlight the role of Rita Barem de Melo as the female representative of local romanticism. She signed her poems as *Jurity*, a pseudonym referring to the wild bird with a melancholy song. Born in 1840 in Porto Alegre, she had her verses published in the paper when she was 16 and 17 years old. According to Cesar (1971, p.158-159 – Our translation), she yields a pure, soft voice: “The small poetic work of this washed out, unfortunate, provincial woman, showers us with melancholy, given the force with which she expresses weakness – helplessness, loneliness, seclusion”. She came from a poor background, and the subjects of her poems were unrequited love, motherhood, and death.

Gomes (2015) points out that *O Guayba* establishes an unconventional way of presentation in the local press when it gathered a group willing to participate as writers, readers, or even members of the community, concerned with the creation of a historic-literary legacy of the memory of the Province's habits. “This group builds an alternative route to insertion in the public space, that is, another path of political action in the capital of Rio Grande, once literary periodicals are the means through which social actors engaged on

social matters seek to manifest without the need of strict partisanship”, the author highlights (p.48 – Our translation).

Gender diversity in the paper’s pages

A Porto Alegre still oblivious to industrial growth stands out in *O Guayba*’s issues. Public education was a new thing, and mainly devoted to boys’ tutoring. Girls and young women were usually homeschooled, and the most instructed ones usually developed a taste for Literature. Thus, literary newspapers represented an invaluable cultural service, as Hohlfeldt (2003, p.257) points out. They inserted readers into a broader universe, while making reading a daily habit.

But what were the topics approached in these newspapers? What did they talk about? What were the concerns of the men and women who worked to fill their pages with ideas? To plunge in *O Guayba*’s texts we use content analysis, as proposed by Bardin (1977). We catalogued every issue available for research at the Hipólito José da Costa Communications Museum⁴. There are 183 texts in all, spread throughout 26 issues, between the years 1856 and 1857⁵.

The paper came out weekly, usually eight pages long. Though some texts appeared as loose material, editors already showed some concern about organizing the contents, dividing it into sections. Some of these sections were regular in nearly every issue analyzed. It is the case of the segment called *Magazine*, which brought reports from daily life in Porto Alegre, in a true blend of genres. Articles, notes, poetry, reader’s letters (duly answered), and quizzes, could be found there. The space also housed some discussions about the Journalism made at the time, especially by *O Guayba* itself. The section is signed by *O Freguez*, a pseudonym to Pedro Antônio de Miranda, as revealed by Ferreira (1975, p.23).

Poetry is the leading genre, and the section *Poetic Album* was dedicated to it. Melancholy, forlornness, unrequited love, and nostalgia, are typical to the poems published in *O Guayba*, showing its strong bond to Romanticism. Some space was dedicated to profiles of prominent people in the history of Rio Grande do Sul, like the text dedicated to the life of the Viscount of São Leopoldo, published in the section *Biographies*, present in only three of the assessed issues.

⁴ The Hipólito José da Costa Museum is an institution under the Rio Grande do Sul State Culture Office. Its newspaper archive encompasses more than 3 thousand titles. There are more than 50 thousand copies in all. Information can be obtained on the website www.museudacomunicacao.rs.gov.br.

⁵ The issues analyzed were scanned and will be made available for examination in a page that belongs to the research Project, still under construction. The programs Microsoft Excel and IBM SPSS were used for cataloguing.

Figure 2 – The section *Poetic Album* reunited the dominant genre in *O Guayba*.
Page from the June 28th, 1857 issue



However, roman-feuilleton was the paper's real star. It was a phenomenon born in France a few decades earlier, and rapidly spread across the world. Present in Brazil since the late 1830s, the genre was launched in Rio Grande do Sul, probably, by *O Guayba*. The *installment novel* was always published at the end of the issue, in the section *Novels and Novellas*. A few editions actually brought more than one novel, which is not a small accomplishment for an eight-page publication. They were usually translated by the editors themselves from foreign originals. In the analyzed copies we found: *The outcast* (unidentified author); *Diary of a young wife* (translation, unidentified author); *Cherubino and Celestino* (editors' translation of the French novel by Alexandre Dumas); *Unseen* (translation of the work by French author Alphonse Karr); *Cain, the pirate* (translation from the English original by Frederick Marryat); *Alice* (unidentified author); and *The pale maiden* (by Reinaldo Carlos, a Portuguese resident in Brazil).

Tales from the city and their narrator

Chronicles from Porto Alegre were always present in *O Guayba* through articles, poems, and the section *Magazine*. They were found in every studied issue. Dinners, fashion, theater plays, religious events, paving, and the little misdemeanors of a blooming town are described in intelligent, ironic texts. In the January 18, 1857 issue, we learn from *O Freguez* that there is a lady, on *Twangy's Alley*⁶, who supervises the education of girls between 14 and 25 years old, and picks them up from the suburbs. This information is followed by a brief accusation from the author: "I swear that if I were a policeman I could very well inquire about the means this honored creature uses to illustrate these pure and innocent daughters of nature"⁷. That is because *Twangy's Alley* was a notorious gathering place for prostitutes in the city. The funny names of alleyways in Porto Alegre take over the paper: *Mortal Sins*, *Well Alley*, *She-Brigadier Street*, *Lyceum Alley*, and others.

Morality and good manners are also in the agenda, as left clear by the demand, from the same author, published on February 15, 1857:

I wish Mr. Inspector of the block between the streets Right (Mixed, as I call it) and Bella would explain us the reason why he allows a contemporary *Mesalina* to shock the neighborhood's chaste ears with her conversations to her lovers. See, we are not in Rome, let alone Rome under Claudio's rule⁸.

⁶ *Twangy's Alley*, currently Caldas Júnior Street, was named after a tavern owner, Francisco José Azevedo, who spoke with a twang and went to live there among the prostitutes who swarmed the alley (FRANCO, 1998).

⁷ We kept the original spelling of the words, according to the text published in *O Guayba*, on January 18, 1857, year II, n° 3, p.22 – Our Translation.

⁸ We kept the original spelling according to the text published in *O Guayba*, issued on February 15, de 1857, year II, n° 7, p. 53. The reference to Claudio's rule, Roman emperor from 41 to 54 A.D., is due to his wife, Valeria Messalina, known for her extra conjugal affairs.

Figure 3 – Roman-feuilletons are presented to readers in Rio Grande do Sul on the page *Novels and Novellas*. February 15th, 1857 issue

O GUAYBA. — 55 —

Romances e Novellas.

CHERUBINO E CELESTINO.
POR
Alexandre Dumas.

Esta traducção, propriedade do Guayba, não poderá ser reproduzida sem prévia licença do Editor.
(Continuação.)

Antonio estava extenuado de fadiga : havia dois dias e duas noites que não descansava. Procurou uma sombra, fez um travesseiro com um feixe deervas, envolveo-se em seo manto, e dormio á somno solto até que o acordáram para jantar.

O jantar d'esse dia foi como o da vespera — muito delicado em caça. Antonio notou a mesma regularidade na distribuição, a mesma abundancia d'agoa, e a mesma falta de pão.

No dia seguinte os mesmos incidentes se renováram : ainda decorreo outro dia sem haver nenhuma mudança na maneira de viver. Emfim, em seis dias Antonio tinha comido sempre ás mesmas horas, sem que pudesse adivinhar porque meio milagroso se renovavam as provisões.

Na manhã do setimo dia, Antonio pensativo foi passear pela extremidade do rochedo que olhava para o mar : via que não lhe restavam senão vinte e quatro horas para descobrir um segredo que ha sete dias procurava em vão fazel-o. Apenas lançou os olhos pelo valle, descobrio o maldito coronel no mesmo lugar em que elle tinha jurado voltar, com o oculo assentado, e tendo perto de si o gordo doutor. Pelo movimento que fez o coronel descobrindo-o, Antonio vio que o tinha reconhecido ; depois passou o oculo ao coronel, que olhou por sua vez e fez um signal de cabeça, como para dizer : — tendes razão, coronel ; é elle sem duvida alguma.

— Sim, sim, não errastes, dizia Antonio entre si ; é o imbecil, é o tolo de Antonio. Depois olhando com uma attenção particular para as bellas arvores que rodeavam o grupo, que o considerava com tanto cuidado, perguntava qual devia escolher para ser mais agradavelmente enforcado. Estava mergulhado nestas reflexões quando sentio baterem-lhe no hombro ; voltou-se rapidamente e vio o capitão em pé detraz d'elle.

— Eu te procurava, disse Jacomo.
— Eu, capitão ?
— Sim, é a tua vez.
— A minha vez ? perguntou Antonio.
— Sim, sem duvida, — a tua vez.
— Para fazer o que ?
— Boa pergunta ! para ir á provisão.
— Ah ! exclamou o bandido.

— Vamos, despacha-te, disse Jacomo : vês que teos camaradas te esperão alli em baixo. Os olhos de Antonio seguirão a direcção indicada pela mão do capitão, e vio effectivamente dois de seos camaradas, que lhe fizeram um signal com as cabeças.

— Estou prompto, disse Antonio, e foi unir-se á elles sem perder tempo. Adiantarão-se então os trez em silencio para um lado do rochedo cortado tão perpendicularmente, e com tal altura, que o coronel tinha julgado inutil shi collocar uma sentinella. Chegados á beira do precipicio, e em quanto o considerava com a tranquillidade de um montanhez, um de seos companheiros, desviou-se um pouco, remecheo em uma moita, tirou um sacco e uma corda, e chegando-se para Antonio, lhe pendurou o sacco no pescoco, e passou-lhe a corda por debaixo dos bracos.

— Que diabo ides vós fazer ? perguntou este que começava á inquietar-se com tal cerimonia. Um dos homens deitou-se então sobre o ventre de maneira que sua cabeça sómente excedesse a linha do precipicio.

— Faz como eu, disse então elle para Antonio.

Antonio obedeceo e se collocou ao lado de seo camarada.

— Vês tu aquella arvore ? disse-lhe mostrando com o dedo um pinheiro que nascia pelas fendas do rochedo, vinte pés abaixo d'elles e á mil pés acima do fundo do valle.

— Sim, respondeo Antonio.

— Detraz do pinheiro não descobres uma cavidade ?

— Sim, respondeo Antonio.

— Ora bem ! nessa cavidade ha um ninho de aguia ; nós te descereamos até o pinheiro, tu o agarrarás com uma mão e com a outra procurarás no ninho e o que achares porás no sacco.

— Como ? os filhotes ? Perguntou Antonio.

— Não, a caça que o pai e a mãe lhes trazem e da qual comemos trez quartos e elles o resto.

Antonio agitou-se alegremente.

— E quem teve esta idéa ? perguntou elle.

Unusual facts, like the expectation of a comet passing over the city, were subjects to several issues of *Magazine*. “It is told that, on the 13th, a gastronomist unmatched in the planetary system will come to us, and will swallow us all (I don’t know if for lunch, dinner or supper)”⁹, *O Freguez* warns. It informs, with its characteristic irony, that the old will become young, that mature ladies will cling to the first man who comes near them, that congressmen will become senators, and Paris will trade places with Porto Alegre. Three issues later, after dedicating many lines to the comet that ended up not coming, Pedro Antônio de Miranda clarifies to readers that a comet is a goldmine to a journalist: “The most mediocre phantasy can draw material from it to heat up five or six issues of their paper”¹⁰.

Theater plays also had their assured space, whether as targets of hard criticism or unrestrained compliments. So was the case of *Captain Paul*¹¹, production played in Porto Alegre in October 1856, based on the text by Alexandre Dumas, which was a hit in France and Brazil as a roman-feuilleton. *O Freguez*’s theatrical review was unprecedented in Rio Grande do Sul. According to Martins (1978), Pedro Antônio de Miranda would have been born in Porto Alegre on November 14, 1843. That meant he was 13 and 14 years old when he collaborated on *O Guayba*. He graduated as a teacher at the capital’s normal school. He was a primary teacher in Santa Maria and São Borja, and founder and principal of a primary school in Itaqui (cities in Rio Grande do Sul’s countryside). He was also a lawyer established in Porto Alegre and Uruguaiana, and notary in Pelotas and Itaqui. His journalistic career developed in the capital, as we well know, and in Pelotas. He published reviews, chronicles, poems, prose poems, humor verses, and almanacs.

Readers of both sexes

The texts published weekly in *O Guayba* allow us to glance at the readers to whom they were destined. Many times editors mentioned comments, letters or actions from readers and subscribers. It is clearly a newspaper dedicated to both men and women. When it publishes, on July 19, 1857, an article from a reader identified as *The Incarned*, harshly criticizing women’s behavior, *O Guayba*’s editors include a brief introduction to the text as a trigger warning to female readers, reminding them that the paper reserves “the best part of its columns” to women. Feminine education, by the way, appears as an important subject in the paper, although not aiming to emancipate women, rather than improving their skills as mothers and housewives, as the ones responsible for shaping men of character.

Our Translation.

⁹ *O Guayba*, year II, nº 21, May 24, 1857. Original spelling was kept. Our Translation.

¹⁰ *O Guayba*, year II, nº 25, June 21, 1857. Original spelling was kept. Our Translation.

¹¹ *Captain Paul* was the first roman-feuilleton published in Brazil, in 1838, on *Jornal do Comércio*, from Rio de Janeiro.

Figure 4 – The comet was talked about in the May 24th, 1857 issue



Male readers, in addition to being mentioned in several texts, also send letters to the paper, as did Manoel dos Monturos in the January 25, 1857 issue:

Wounded from the most hurtful feeling, Mr. Manoel dos Monturos gives word that Saturday past, at noon, his horse became!!!...

Pasture of death! victim of nothing.

And since it's found uninterred until now, he begs you the grace of accompanying its cadaver before it turns to skin and bone, to the place appointed by the City Hall. We are nothing in this world¹².

The letter is targeted to the district inspector, but Pedro Antônio de Miranda anticipates that the reader should carry the horse on his/her back, since inspectors are not quite fond of bad smells, that is, little would do to help him. In his irony, he suggests that, next time, the horse be buried still alive.

On that same day, on the *Magazine* column, a letter send by the slave Pai Xico draws attention:

You who write so much stuff in the paper, won't make me captive black to grab us for to make soldiers. If my relative is on the market is soiling all this beach, and white man on up on the hose window. Will you do it, Mr. Freguese, I'll be very thank you.

A fair number of contemporary researchers studies the participation of slaves as soldiers in several conflicts during the XIX century, such as the Farroupilha Revolution, and the Paraguay War. Seduced with the promise of freedom after the war, or taken by force, captive blacks surely engrossed the troops. Pai Xico did not want to become a soldier. But *O Freguez* explains that there is no choice. To him or any other. He says:

“If even I, former employee, uselessly shouted with a few others – I am priest – I am G. N. – I will be employed – I am inspector of the block. – Nonsense! stories! We were all being hit. Take solace, my good black, from being considered a citizen like us for some time”¹³. Pedro Antônio de Miranda himself served in the Paraguay War years later (MARTINS, 1978, p.30).

Subscribers were also constantly awarded with novel collections, always printed at the German-Brazilian Typography. From the same presses came the Folhinha Rio

¹² Our translation.

¹³ Our translation.

Grandense, sent as a gift to *O Guayba*'s subscribers (HOHLFELDT, 2003, p.69). Reading public, as Gomes (2015, p.49-50) states, came in great part from high school, both students and teachers. "The fight in which literates from the southern province engaged aimed at the conquest of young local minds for the literary work", the author highlights (p.52 – Our translation). Among the aimed readers are those involved in the typographical work, even illiterate ones, because they are those who hear, interestedly or not, word from the streets; commerce owners, who read the papers and make them available for their customers; public and private teachers, who are also collaborators and heralds of these periodicals; public administration servers, politicians, judges, physicians, apothecaries, and other professionals whose activity cannot do without reading and writing (p.63).

Considerations

The analysis of *O Guayba* and the communication circuit that brought it to life was part of the *Literary Press in Rio Grande do Sul in the 19th century – Texts and Contexts* research Project. In it, we found a pioneering newspaper, which for the first time offered its pages to writer and poets of its time. They were young, very young, and came to form a group whose contributions would go beyond those pages printed at the German-Brazilian Typography. Influenced by Romanticism, they left aside country life concerns and committed to the pains of forbidden love, the despair of separation, the childhood nostalgia, and redemption through death.

Its influence in the province's journalistic life was profound, not only representing the birth of a branch that would strengthen until the end of the century, but the first professional experience of names that would later appear in great newspapers of that era, making history in the press, and also, in some cases, in political activity.

Turning reading into a daily activity is definitely its most important legacy. In a city where books were a luxury product, the circulation of Literature in newspapers significantly broadened the universe of readers. Some of these readers we could glimpse in the paper's texts were: girls and women, to whom a great part of the columns are dedicated; men, who sent letters to solve practical matters, or elaborate articles to assert their place in the society; and even the slave, who not only read the paper, but helped to write it.

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Received on: 08.20.2015

Accepted on: 05.14.2016