

Modernism, cultural exchange and transnationality.
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Two Portuguese magazines from the first half of the 20th Century:
***A Águia* (1910-1932) and *Civilização* (1928-1937)**

SLIDE 1

- **Presentation**

This paper looks at two magazines published in the city of Oporto from the 1910s to the 1930s, a period in which culture was deeply linked to the publication of mass circulation newspapers and magazines, which contributed to the dissemination of literary and artistic trends in thought and aesthetics, promoted by some of the most important artists and intellectuals from the late 19th and early 20th Centuries. This period coincided with great social and political changes, which led to the imposition of new governing regimes for the nation, changes that were reflected in the issues dealt with in such publications.

If the artistic contributions to *A Águia* and *Civilização* could be thought of as representative of Portuguese modernism, these magazines occupy distinct positions in this context, resulting from the different cultural and political times with which they were associated.

***A Águia* (1910-1932)**

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- **The Republican regime and *A Águia* (1910-1932)**
- **Cover of the first series, 1910 - Cristiano de Carvalho(1874-1940)**
- **Cover of the second series, 1912 - Correia Dias (1892-1935)**

A Águia began in December 1910, the year the Republican regime was established in Portugal (5 October), set up in a climate of great instability and violence, which previous events had already forecast, particularly the academic strike of 1907, which had a great impact, and the assassination of the King, D. Carlos and the Crown Prince in 1908. Republican ideas had been brewing in Portugal since the 19th Century, incited by the creation of the Republican Party in the 1870s and by the revolution of 31 January 1890, following the English Ultimatum, seen as an insult to Portugal.

The founders of *A Águia* were linked with the Republican ideas and to the cultural movement known as *Portuguese Renaissance*, begun in 1912, which adopted it as its official mouthpiece. Although the magazine was independent in its first phase (1910-1912) in its second, more important, phase (1912-1932), it became the organ for disseminating the currents of thought associated with that movement. While the members of the *Portuguese Renaissance* movement were never identified as faithful followers of the Republican Party, having always exercised a spirit of criticism and openness that transcended partisan life, their cultural ideas were intrinsically linked to the socio-political changes made possible by the new regime.

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- **Teixeira de Pascoaes** (1877-1952)
- **António Carneiro** (1872-1930)

In the creation of the *Portuguese Renaissance*, two complementary trends became apparent: one that aimed at a more effective contact with modernity and foreign influences, the other that sought to assert a national culture. It was the latter that was to become the foremost, through the figure of the writer and thinker Teixeira de Pascoaes (1877-1952), whose ideas would actually give origin to a book with the suggestive title “*Arte de Ser Português*” (*The Art of Being Portuguese*), published in 1915. Teixeira de Pascoaes and the painter António Carneiro (1872-1930) were two of the most influential names in the magazine. Pascoaes was the editor between 1912 and 1916, Carneiro between 1917 and 1919 and Carneiro together with Álvaro Pinto from 1920.

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- **Cultural context**

The artistic scope of the magazine was expressed by the inclusion of studies and in the reproduction of works of art, in the commissioning of illustrations and in art criticism. It included news and critiques of the events that introduced modernism in art and culture in Portugal. Highlights included:

- *Exposição Livre (Free Exhibition)*, Lisbon, 1911
- *I Salão dos Humoristas (1st Humorists Show)*, Lisbon, 1912
- *Exposição dos Humoristas e Modernistas (Humorists and Modernists Exhibition)*, Oporto, 1915
- *Orpheu* magazine, 1915
- *Exposição dos Fantasistas (Fantasists Exhibition)*, Oporto, 1916
- *II Salão dos Modernistas (2nd Modernists Show)*, 1916
- *Arte e Guerra (Art and War)*, 1917
- *Ultimatum Futurista às Gerações Portuguesas do Século XX (Futuristic Ultimatum to the 20th Century Portuguese Generations)* – conference by Almada Negreiros, Lisbon, 1917

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- **Symbol of the movement**
- **Headquarters of the Portuguese Renaissance, in Oporto – aspect of the revivalist façade as it is today**
- **Exhibition gallery**

The *Portuguese Renaissance* movement had as its main aim the launching of a civic education campaign expressed through three channels: *A Águia* magazine; publishing activities; and the creation of Popular Universities in several cities across the country. These actions ran parallel to the most important event in the cultural life of Oporto, the creation of the Faculty of Letters by Leonardo Coimbra, a *Portuguese Renaissance*

figure, which would be closed down during the dictatorship, at the beginning of the 1930s.

“Saudosismo”, a term that has its origins in the word “saudade”, defined the magazine’s dominant way of thinking, deeply influenced the mentality of the era, and shows modernism as it was understood within the framework of nationalism. It was a trend that sought to take stock of the values of national culture, to investigate tradition, folklore, and historic memory and is characterised by melancholy and nostalgia, but also by a certain visionary character.

SLIDE 6

- **The thinking of *A Águia* – “Saudosismo”**
- **Article on Social Art**
- **Article on the spelling used in the magazine**
- **One of the many poems and texts extolling “Saudade”**

It was intended that literary texts, essays on music, philosophy, pedagogy, art and science and social criticism texts would typify a truly Portuguese culture in which elements of naturalism, symbolism and modernism were combined, sometimes close to a form of futurism. Important names from Portuguese culture, such as the writer Fernando Pessoa, contributed articles in *A Águia*. The magazine promoted various studies that expressed its ideals well, like that of 1911 on art as a social phenomenon, and upheld a traditionalist written form that corresponded to the national identity.

These different tendencies were united in a search for the roots of Portuguese culture, in the renaissance of a national tradition and in its projection into the future. This programme of nostalgic, revivalist rebirth was not incompatible with modernity.

In one of its first manifestos, published in January 1912, Pascoaes declared:

If there were no Portuguese soul, we would have to evolve as alien souls, we would have to merge into in the amorphous mass that is Europe; (...) Portugal will not die and will create its new Civilisation, because it perceives that its soul is unmistakable, that it encloses within itself a new sense of Life, a new Song, a new Word and, therefore, a new Action.

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- **Art and Illustration**

The pictures selected from inside the magazine point to a modernist understanding in Portuguese artistic culture produced in a context of literary illustration, caricature and stylised graphic images.

Of the themes approached, we would call attention to:

Mundane scenes

Scenes of social criticism

Scenes from the world of labour

Political themes, the 1st World War being the most relevant

All the literary illustrations show an acceptance of symbolist and modernist standards.

Civilização (1928-1937)

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- **Parade of troops, 28 May 1926**
- **Political propaganda, 1933**
- **Salazar (1889-1970) and the new regime**

If *A Águia* arose from the cultural context that surrounded the arrival of the Republicans into power, the magazine *Civilização* arose out of the context of political dictatorship that resulted from the Coup of 28 May 1926, a nationalist and antiparliamentarian military rebellion that put an end to the First Portuguese Republic. The installation of the dictatorship was certainly related to the political and social instability that followed the 1st World War and characterised the whole of the 1920s, with bomb attacks and a permanent climate of insurrection.

The magazine began publication in 1928, in the year in which Salazar came to power, and during its lifetime it saw the installation of the authoritarian and repressive regime of Estado Novo (New State), which was enshrined in the Constitution in 1933.

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- **Campos Monteiro** (1876-1934)
- **Ferreira de Castro** (1898-1974)

The magazine was founded in Oporto by two Portuguese writers: Ferreira de Castro (1898-1974), author of important works of Portuguese literature that addressed social and humanitarian issues, and Campos Monteiro (1876-1934), a regional writer of popular novels.

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- **Magazine covers**

From an artistic point of view, the magazine was clearly part of the modernist movement, and relied on the collaboration of the most relevant Portuguese modernist artists: Bernardo Marques (1898-1962); Cruz Caldas (1898-1975); Carlos Carneiro (1900-1971), Roberto Nobre (1903-1969), Tagarro (1902-1931), Jorge Barradas (1894-1971), António Lino (1898-1974). It is a refined, good-humoured, gentle modernism, in which criticism, when it appeared, was subtle, since censorship meant that all material published was checked in advance.

The illustrations are very stylised and geometrical and the whole graphic appearance of the magazine represented a notable evolution compared with its predecessors in Porto. The covers had a great impact, and combined excellent formal and chromatic work with suitable topics for a magazine aimed at a wide public whose visual culture was formed by reading magazines like *Civilização*.

Notions of dissemination and popularisation marked the tone of the magazine that also aspired at being a kind of “family encyclopaedia” in tune with the dominant tone of much of the culture promoted officially.

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- **Articles on feminism**
- **Interior pages**

There were certainly critical texts and essays, but the dominant tone was more suited to a large audience, dealing with topics like entertainment, social life, cinema and the lives of the stars, sport and the gymnastics that promoted health in the people, fashion, beauty and décor, stories and graphic games for children. The great literary articles of reference that *A Águia* published were replaced, in *Civilização*, by a series of simple tales for the layman and detective stories for easy reading. Portuguese culture showed itself in this quick consumption literature, in the presence of regionalist signs, in the promotion of handicrafts and popular feasts, costumes, and in articles about ever-quaint Portuguese cities.

However, despite the obstacles that the dictatorship regime represented, the magazine did tackle some important and innovative topics, such as the series of articles on feminism by Elina Guimarães (1904-1991) "The Story of Feminism in Portugal" and the "Universal Feminist Movement", in 1930 (July to October).

Its aims, as declared in the editorial in the first edition, were to contribute to the modernisation of Portuguese society, to make it more international and cosmopolitan, but within a reference framework that did not move away from nationalism. The opening text insisted on the idea that Portugal also had very ancient civilising marks and on the idea that not everything had to be imported from abroad.

Very different in the depth of their content, and their philosophical and informative reach, the two magazines mirrored, in different contexts, a modernism of nationalist characteristics: one understood as a structuring cultural backdrop of the life of a nation; the other understood as a moralising and more defensive element.