

Communication Circuits of the Brazilian Press in the 19th Century: Perspectives About the New Moment

Circuitos Comunicacionais da Imprensa no Brasil do Século XIX: Olhares Sobre o Momento Inicial^a

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ABSTRACT

The article discusses the first moments of the press in Brazil, pointing out two movements: the creation of the first daily newspaper of the country, *O Diário do Rio de Janeiro*; and the communicational circuits of the press from the Imperial capital to the inland provinces and the opposite, in the 1820s, revealing the communicational flows, counterflows and dialogues. To exemplify the forming communicational circuits, we use as object of observation the first year of circulation of the Minas Gerais newspaper *O Universal* (1825). We show the crystallizations about the story of the press that might be object of historiographic review when the perspective is on this historical universe.

Keywords: Newspapers, history, 19th century, *Diário do Rio de Janeiro*, *O Universal*

RESUMO

O artigo reflete sobre os momentos iniciais da imprensa no Brasil, abordando dois movimentos: o aparecimento do primeiro jornal diário do país, *O Diário do Rio de Janeiro*, e os circuitos comunicacionais da imprensa da capital do Império para as províncias do interior e destas para o Rio de Janeiro, na década de 1820, mostrando fluxos, contrafluxos e diálogos comunicacionais. Para exemplificar os circuitos comunicacionais em formação, tomamos como objeto de observação o primeiro ano de circulação do jornal mineiro *O Universal* (1825). Busca-se mostrar que cristalizações sobre a história da imprensa podem ser objetos de revisão historiográfica quando o olhar comunicacional se debruça sobre esse universo histórico.

Palavras-chave: Jornais, história, século XIX, *Diário do Rio de Janeiro*, *O Universal*

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ALTHOUGH IT IS a kind of consensus to recognize the expansion of newspapers from 1820 onwards as part of the movement of formation of public opinion that used periodicals to echo ideas about the political moment at the time, in the studies on the historical press of the period it is possible to frequently identify two editorial classifications regarding such publications: gazettes and newspapers. However, other types should be added, including daily newspapers, which, as we will see throughout the article, have specificities in relation both to gazettes and to newspapers.

The gazettes were those that turned a virulent opinion, an explicit political position, into the meaning of their publications, in addition to disseminating other national and foreign information (what today we call the news). On the other hand, the newspapers were those that had the mission of clarifying, with the objective of bringing light to readers, with subjects divided into scientific, literary, and artistic themes, among others, with a clear tendency to disseminate scientific knowledge. But there were still those that were primarily concerned with everyday issues, publishing notices and the most varied pieces of information, on demand from the readers themselves. This differentiated content was published, above all, in the daily newspapers, which began to circulate in the Court in 1821. Therefore, even at the beginning of the press in Brazil, it is possible to observe at least three models of regular dissemination of printed matter, and the most common were gazettes and newspapers¹.

The informative and commercial press would only change with the debates on independence, a decisive factor also for the proliferation of periodicals, multiple pamphlets, leaflets and printed matter intended for propagation of political ideas. Gradually, the press moved away from the model of the old regime gazettes, and opinion newspapers proliferated, which would fight fiercely to win public opinion, obtaining supporters who identified with them and who became systematic readers of the same publication. However, the Court daily newspapers were inspired by the editorial organization and the symbolic value of the old gazettes, which remained as a journalism model.

In this article, we deal with the beginning of the boom in the printed word in Rio de Janeiro (Barbosa, 2013), moment at which there was formation of real communication networks in the city, from 1820 to 1829, and of the Court with the inland provinces, when literate circles interconnection took place (Morel & Barros, 2003, p. 47). Thus, we seek to reflect on the following processes: the initial circulation of daily newspapers in Rio de Janeiro, showing what differentiated them from other periodicals with a longer period of time between one issue and another; and the communication circuits formed between the Court periodicals – observed from the *Diário do Rio de Janeiro*,

¹ Silva (2007), when studying the *Gazeta do Rio de Janeiro*, states that at the beginning of the nineteenth century, readers knew how to differentiate between a gazette and a newspaper: the gazette had the role of disseminating national and foreign news, while the newspaper should be more erudite, displaying the comprehensive knowledge of its editor. Morel (2009, p. 154) further clarifies that, at the beginning of printed production in Brazil, the concept of an “illustration press” would be predominant and related to the idea of enlightening propagation of sciences, arts of thought and human progress. Thus, alongside gazettes and daily newspapers, other types of periodicals were also published, with many pages, with texts that nowadays we would call the scientific popularization (*O Patriota*, which circulated between 1813-1814, is one example). There was also a desire, with this movement, to improve printing techniques.

first daily newspaper to circulate in the city –, and also between provincial newspapers and capital newspapers and vice versa, particularized from analysis of the first year of circulation of *O Universal* (1825), from Minas Gerais.

While in the Imperial capital the dominant pieces of news were from the city itself or from abroad (based on information sources that systematically included the republication of news from European newspapers), in provincial newspapers it was more frequent to republish news that had previously been reported in the Court. The flow of information, therefore, had a singularity: from abroad to the capital and from the capital to inland. It can also be seen that both provincial and Court newspapers brought references and long excerpts already published in the cities where they were originally printed. Therefore, there was an expressive dialogue between the Court press and the provinces, and vice versa. Although the flow of news was exponentially greater from the Imperial political center towards the provinces, there was also a flow of information from the provinces to the Imperial city's periodicals.

Looking at the beginning of the nineteenth century presupposes interpreting and imagining scenarios that bring many surprises. In relation to the publication of the first daily newspaper in the country, the *Diário do Rio de Janeiro*, we verified the daily creation of a web of meanings of the printed word, which reached an audience that also included those belonging to the *various classes* and that began to build a permanent dialogue with the newspaper². Part of this process is described below, aiming at unveiling the modes of production and the administrative and editorial practices of the publication. We take the *Diário* as an example, not so much because it was the first daily newspaper to circulate in the country, but because it established a series of actions to get closer to its possible readers and which resulted in its immediate success, as we will see in the first part of the article.

DIÁRIO: MANY VOICES IN THE URBAN SCENE

In the days before the publication of the first issue of *Diário do Rio de Janeiro*, a box was left for anyone who wanted to place advertisements and pieces of news, in a very visible place in Manuel Joaquim da Silva Porto's bookstore, located on Rua da Quitanda, on the corner of Rua São Pedro, in the busiest spot of Rio de Janeiro.

The strategy preceded the publication of the first daily newspaper launched in Brazil. Unlike other publications already circulating in the city³ and even in other provinces and all those that also appeared in 1821 – year that saw the beginning of what can be defined as the explosion of the printed word –, the *Diário* would be on the streets every day, and therefore needed material to fill

² Analyzing the list of subscribers to *Gazeta do Brasil* – a total of 693 –, classified by the editor himself in socio-professional categories, Morel and Barros (2003, pp. 41-44) show that 10% of the public was composed of a group qualified by the newspaper editor as from the “various classes”, which leads authors to divide the public of the periodicals into those who were targeted by them and those who actually existed. However, the reading public increased in the period 1820-1830.

³ In 1821, the year in which the *Diário do Rio de Janeiro* started being published, the following periodicals circulated in the city: *Gazeta do Rio de Janeiro* (1808-1822); *O Amigo do Rei e da Nação* (1821); *O Bem da Ordem* (1821); *O Conciliador do Reino Unido* (1821); *Despertador Brasileiro* (1821); *O Espelho* (1821-1823); *O Jornal de Anúncios* (1821); *A Malagueta* (1821-1822); *Reverbero Constitucional Fluminense* (1821-1822); and *Sabatina Familiar dos Amigos do Bem-Comum* (1821-1822). In 1822, the following appeared: *O Constitucional* (1822); *O Compilador Constitucional, Político e Literário Brasileiro* (1822); *Correio do Rio de Janeiro* (1822-1823); *O Regulador Brasileiro* (1822-1823); *O Papagaio* (1822); *Macaco Brasileiro* (1822); *A Verdade Constitucional* (1822), and *O Volantim* (1822) (Biblioteca Nacional, 1965).

its four pages from Sunday to Sunday, invariably. The box with contributions from readers would be collected at 4:00 pm, and the promise was that the following day these contributions would be inserted in the newspaper at 8:30 am, “as promptly as possible, and with all reasonable impartiality” (Diário do Rio de Janeiro, 1821, para. 3).

The “plan for the consolidation of a useful and curious DIARIO in this City” (Diário do Rio de Janeiro, 1821), which announced its publication on June 1, 1821, presented the planning for distributing subjects in its four pages. The first page would bring the “meteorological observations, made the day before at seven in the morning, at noon, and at five in the afternoon”. which corresponded to the “hours of sunrise, passage of the sun through the meridian, and sunset” and, then, at the time of the tides (“high and low tides in this Port”) (Diário do Rio de Janeiro, 1821, para. 2). Those pieces of information were considered “useful”. The second page would display the public’s writings: “Any and all private advertisements or news (convenient and lawful to be printed) including public entertainment and spectacles, which will take place on each of the days” (Diário do Rio de Janeiro, 1821, para. 4). Besides, in the case of the first issue, all people that wanted to “assist in this very useful work and make use of it” (Diário do Rio de Janeiro, 1821, para. 3), were asked to put their advertisements in the box at the bookstore from May 30th, in order for the purpose of collecting writings to be achieved. Nothing would be charged for that.

It is possible to observe some clues about the predominantly narrated sense of time in this letter of intents directed at possible readers. The hours of the day were fundamental to define not only the city’s light and shadow scenario, marked by day or night, but also the weather that could strike it. The tidal movements added one more piece of nature information, essential for regulating everyday life. Dawn, afternoon and dusk marked the flow of life, as well as the tidal movements, in a city where activities around the dynamics in the ports had multiple meanings: news, varied information, the economic world and political life, going to and coming from distant places.

In the plan, the promises regarding the precise time also stood out. In order for the newspaper to be published at 8:30 am, people should leave the writings in the box until 4:00 pm. From there, the production process began, throughout the night. After separating the writings by themes, it was necessary to choose the ones that would appear in the newspaper and their order. The next day, the information would appear divided into rubrics: *Mail*, *Private News*, *Published Works*, *Loss*, *Sales* and, finally, public entertainment and shows, usually information about performances at the *Real Teatro de São João*. The small headings that preceded the information varied from issue to issue.

When announcing the undertaking, typographer Zeferino Vito de Meireles⁴, *Diário* editor, highlighted in the first line of the plan that he was “convinced of the utility of a daily newspaper for the public” (*Diário do Rio de Janeiro*, 1821, para. 1).

The word “diário” in the title of the periodical appears from the first issue superimposed on the image of a winged angel playing a trumpet, in a clear allusion to the mythological figure of the Apocalypse, which announces the eruption of something deeply transformative and also summarizes what the metaphor of the diffusion of printed words means to the *Diário*: to announce widely (as the sound propagation) the arrival of the *public voice*, also referring to the Roman mythological allegory⁵. The ideas and information that would circulate were added to the transit of goods across the city. The everyday information placed in those pages by the readers had an exchange value and acquired a new meaning for the communicational expansion in other expression webs, represented by the periodicals.

Dividing the writings sent by the public into advertisements and private news shows that the difference between these two types of text was perceived not only by the editor, but also by the public. The advertisements were about sale of slaves, houses, farms, and several other products that owners would like to trade, in addition to lost and found of the most different natures, including, and highlighted, slave escapes. Private news, on the other hand, referred to information about arrival and departure of ships, arrival of correspondence or other varied pieces of information, and about which one realized the need to expand their reading circuit to the public space. In other words, while the advertisements were directly related to the pecuniary issue, the news amplified a particular fact for a larger group. Professionals who wanted to be known, works that were being printed, ships about to leave and that were receiving shipments, and establishments and their commercial practices were among the many subjects of private news, which were always enunciated by the verbal expressions “it becomes public knowledge” or “it is made known”⁶.

The clues from the nineteenth century show that the success of the *Diário* was immediate. A month after its first edition, each issue was edited with eight pages and, in July 5, the editor announced that the Royal Press was not able to regularly print more than a thousand copies. He informed that the *Diário* had reached more than 800 subscriptions and, in view of this fact, it was not possible either to increase the number of copies for new “subscribers” or to put the periodical to “be sold to the public”. Increasing the number of copies could lead the Royal Press to stop “sensibly its own service” (de Meirelles, 1821a, p. 31)⁷.

Limited space and the public’s demand for information to be inserted obliged the editor to inform in the next edition that he had failed to insert

⁴ Portuguese born in Lisbon, he has worked at the Royal Press Typography since its foundation. According to Blake (1883-1902), the first position of the founder of the *Diário do Rio de Janeiro* in the Royal Press was that of manual work in the workshop. Subsequently, he was a kind of controller of graphic works, including pointing out “spelling errors”, and finally Royal Press deputy administrator. Pires (2008), when recovering the *Diário* founder’s career, states that the numerous functions with which he was involved during his work in the Royal Press reveals characteristic traits of an intellectual profile, at the dawn of the nineteenth century, and he was an active producer of the culture-society relationship. When he died in 1822, a victim of an attack, he was replaced in the newspaper’s editorial board by the French-born typographer Antonio Maria Jourdan (Biblioteca Nacional, 1997).

⁵ PHEME, she who initiates and further communication.

⁶ Although not concerned with distinguishing the typology of the texts published in the periodical, Pires (2008, pp. 89-94) makes a detailed analysis of the themes included in the *Diário* from 1821 to 1825, showing that those related to slavery predominated, also revealing the emphasis given to the announcements of the Police Administration and Senate and the Government notices, as well as to public speeches of D. Pedro I soon after independence. There were also texts that demanded resolutions of the most diverse daily problems. The predominance of themes referring to slaves leads the author to qualify the newspaper as a “slave counter”: there were always many advertisements of fugitive slaves (usually under the rubric *Loss*); sales and purchases of slaves; slaves that were found; slave auctions; wet nurses offer, and slave rent.

⁷For comparative purposes, we bring some data on the number of subscribers to other periodicals that circulated in the 1820s in the city of Rio de Janeiro: *Gazeta do Brasil*, in 1827, announced a total of 693 subscribers, while *Atalaia da Liberdade*, in the previous year, reported having 180 subscribers in its third issue (Morel & Barros, 2003, p. 35).

⁸Despite the announcement, the next and subsequent issues of the periodical continued to cost 40 réis, and the price of the subscription remained at 640 réis per month. We do not know the reasons why the increase did not take effect, but the transformations in production and administrative processes (“work simplification” and more points to deliver news and advertisements) may have been decisive for the daily price to be maintained.

“many of the aforementioned Advertisements and News” and that he would include them in order of arrival. To act with “impartiality”, he would, from that moment on, number the texts received, which would also make it easier to justify if the text was not published. In the same announcement, he also said that there would be increase both in the number of pages of the periodical and in the subscription price, which would go from 640 to 960 réis per month. Besides, the single copy of the *Diário* (public sale) would cost 60 réis instead of the previous 40 réis (de Meirelles, 1821b, p. 39)⁸.

Despite the initial difficulties, the *Diário* announced in the edition of July 9th that it had managed not only to publish more copies, but also to put more boxes at commercial establishments, even in regions far from the city’s heart, using pharmacies. Since the edition of June 4th, Zeferino had expressed his desire “to be able to divide the City into different Districts of reasonable length, where there would be the respective Boxes, and the indispensable servants for the prompt and regular service of the *Diário*” (de Meirelles, 1821c, p. 55). Now he was pleased to inform that the periodical would be offered for sale at seven new points and that there would be also boxes for advertisements and news to be delivered: all this in “pharmacies, in which a Box of the *Diário* is constantly exposed to the public, and the *Diário* is also sold” (de Meirelles, 1821c, p. 56). The wider periodical circulation was due to the “simplification of the work”, which would have allowed “printing a greater number of daily copies” (de Meirelles, 1821c, p. 56). From that date on, the *Diário* and its boxes for receiving advertisements and news could be found in two pharmacies on Rua da Quitanda, one on Rua dos Ferradores, one on Rua dos Barbonis, one in Largo das Laranjeiras, one in Cidade Nova, and one on Rua do Mata Porcos. Thus, the area where the newspaper circulated across the city was considerably expanded, both towards the north and the south.

Readers were also informed about the limits of the seven districts where the *Diário* circulated and the number of subscriptions in each of them was presented in detail: 398 in the first; 295 in the second; 152 in the third; 122 in the fourth; 13 in the fifth, which was out of downtown, since it comprised the area from Chafariz da Glória to Botafogo and Largo das Laranjeiras; 40 in the sixth, in the opposite direction, including Cidade Nova, Gamboa and Costão da Saúde, and, finally, four subscriptions in the seventh district, which comprised São Cristóvão, Engenho Novo, and Engenho Velho. Pharmacy owners received 5% monthly from all subscriptions in their districts and from the individual periodicals sold. Subscriptions totaled a thousand distributed copies (de Meirelles, 1821d). The editor’s strategy, which also explains the ever-increasing number of subscriptions, was to publish, with priority, advertisements and private news from subscribers.

Thus, with just over one-month circulation, the periodical reached the impressive mark of more than a thousand copies sold per day. In addition, the strategy adopted by Zeferino of scattering boxes to receive writings from the public indicates engagement in a lasting dialogue with readers, who became initially linked to the periodical because it provided a service that could only be offered by a means capable of making their demands public. The solution to the problem was often divulged by the newspaper itself as “advertisement resolution”.

The expansion of the private voice to the public space, making it known to a wide range of people, and the positive results of this action – readers complained intensely and their ads were not published – built the meanings of the public word in the city and, at the same time, made periodicals essential for their readers. The printed word value also expanded the territories of the speech beyond the immediate interlocutor. Public demand, their advertisements and news spread through the newspapers on the city’s streets far beyond what the eye could see. Therefore, multiple transits of the printed word were established. Through the printed word, it was possible to know the price of goods; find advertisements for the purchase and sale of various things, used or new; buy, sell or exchange slaves, and also learn about many other subjects related to local trade. The periodical allowed people to learn about publications printed in the city, arrival of ships to the ports, and some government official acts. It was a mosaic of information perceived as useful to the reading public’s daily life.

BETWEEN THE *VINTÉM* AND THE BUTTER (AND THE “MULEQUES”)

Five years after its first issue, the *Diário do Rio de Janeiro* was qualified as a *fashionable periodical* by other newspapers circulating in the city. The nicknames by which it was known, *Diário de Vintém*⁹ or *Diário da Manteiga*¹⁰ spread far beyond Rio de Janeiro. Qualified as a “friend of all people of this city”, “the newspaper of the rich and the poor”, “broker of all big and small businesses, of all daily transactions of life” (“Revista dos Diários desta Courte”, 1827, pp. 26-27), the *Diário* aroused passions, criticism and polemics. However, for some, the popular epithets revealed disrespect for the newspaper: “But is there anyone who does not get stunned by seeing the opposition that Mr. Minister of War begins to express to the advertisements in the *Diário do Rio de Janeiro*, which is called the *Diário de Vintém* or *da Manteiga* by some *with little decency* [emphasis added]?” (Um do Brasil, 1828, p. 1449).

Discussing the reasons for its popular names is not within the scope of this article. It doesn’t matter if “vintém” came from its cheap price and “butter” from the recurrent advertisement of the product in the periodical¹¹. The point is that

⁹Old money used in Brazil.

¹⁰Butter

¹¹On the construction of the *Diário do Rio de Janeiro* in historiography as merely an advertisement newspaper and the criticism of this interpretation, as well as the fact that the denomination has been linked to the newspaper price, as cited by Sodré (2011), and the controversies surrounding the nomination, refer to: Pires (2008). As for *Diário da Manteiga* being related to the most frequent product in the current list of published goods, which is not a consensus, refer to: Marendino (2016). In our understanding, the name issue gives rise to a deeper reflection than know the true reasons for the denominations. The objective here is to understand the periodical as a vehicle for the diffusion of the Enlightenment in the tropics, which is a highly relevant perception.

¹²In 1830, in a text from a student of the Legal Course in Olinda, the newspaper was referred to as follows, in a periodical from Pernambuco: "It will only publish its minor advertisements (which give it a few "vinténs") arrivals and departures, buying and selling (except butter, because since they named it Diário da Manteiga the editor has never written butter in the Diário again)" (Freire, 1830, p. 718). *O Verdadeiro Liberal* describes it: "Diário de vintém – it is a periodical of appropriate literature, useful to the businessman, and to the literate, the military and the priest; it is the newspaper in vogue" ("Espírito dos Periódicos", 1826, p. 3).

¹³In the original: "Dès l'aube matinale, le *Diário do Vintém* et le *Jornal do Commercio* se disputent le dessous des portes, et se glissent sans bruit dans la demeure des commerçans que l'amour du gain éveille aux premiers rayons du jour. Le déjeuner n'est bon, il n'est vraiment complet, que lorsqu'on a savouré la lecture des articles variés et piquants du *Diário* des moleques, ou du *Vingtain*, dénominations qui caractérisent l'esprit, la substance et le prix du journal".

¹⁴*Muleques* were how the slave boys – aged between 7 and 18 years – were known. "Whoever lacks two Mozambique Nation *muleques* who are still poorly educated in the language of white people, go to the Parish of Irajá at the Luiz Manoel Farm, who, giving the signs, will receive them; these *muleques*, are the same ones that were announced in the Diário of Tuesday, January 15, 1822, and as the said *muleques* are free and there is no prison in the place, they may escape or die as one has been very sick, the risk is taken for nothing, and there are expenses" (Diário do Rio de Janeiro, 1822, pp. 51-52).

popular names, which indicate jocularly and, at the same time, the population proximity to the periodical, have spread fast. "Vintém" and "butter" weren't just a bunch of private advertisements and news. Its public significance went beyond this service to which many claimed to be in debt, even going so far as to consider the newspaper "the indispensable entertainment for morning tea" ("Revista dos Diários esta Corte", 1827, p. 27)¹².

When referring to the habit of reading newspapers at the time, the French periodical *L'Echo de l'Amérique du Sud* characterizes the editorial singularity of the multiple newspapers produced in the city in the late 1820s and the sharing of existing readers. Reading that began at dawn, with the dispute between *Diário do Vintém* and *Jornal do Commercio*, when they were placed at the subscribers' doors.

At dawn, the *Diário do Vintém* and the *Jornal do Commercio* dispute the underside of the doors and slip silently towards the home of the merchants whose love of gain awakens in the first rays of the day. Breakfast will not be good, nor truly complete, if you do not enjoy reading the varied and spicy articles of the *Diário dos moleques* [emphasis added] or *do Vintém*, denominations that characterize the spirit, substance and price of the newspaper¹³. ("Lecture des Journaux", 1827, pp. 3-4)

This is the first time that the newspaper is referred to as "diário dos moleques". Was it an allusion to the paperboys¹⁴? Or just an insult used by Pierre Plancher, founder of *Spectador Brasileiro* and its successor, *Jornal do Commercio*, to refer to the periodical, as we will see later?

Next, *L'Echo de l'Amérique du Sud* characterizes the city's newspapers: *Aurora Fluminense*, "which from now on surely will choose an earlier time"; *Diário Fluminense*, "with its decrees, its various ordinances and its foreign news"; *Ástrea*, which "is the politicians' favorite reading at dinner"; and *Gazeta do Brasil*, which reaches its subscribers "at the usual time of tropical thunderstorms". At dusk, readers "amuse themselves with jokes and the spiritual epigrams of the *Espelho Diamantino*", "the prosecutor of the jury translated the joyful monkey into justice", and finally, the *Écho de l'Amérique du Sud* reaches the subscriber shortly after dinner, and "we'd like to think he won't leave it aside to take a nap"¹⁵ ("Lecture des Journaux", 1827, p. 4).

More than the temporal marking of life by the delivery of periodicals with their characteristic times (morning, afternoon, and evening), the description shows the specificities of each publication and the recognition of the textual multiplicity offered to the public. Controversies between newspapers are also indicated in the text. After all, *Diário do Vintém* (or *da Manteiga*) and *Jornal do Commercio* disputed more than doorsteps since the time of the *Spectador Brasileiro*.

Because it is constant to all citizens the irrecoverable damage that the *Diário da Manteiga* usually causes in publishing the Lottery prizes, due to the many errors, serving only as annoyance and disorders and not being useful; it is therefore requested that the Board of the Santa Casa de Misericórdia instead of divulging them daily in the imposter *Diário*, publish a general printed list only at the end of the drawing, as usual in all Nations. (*O Spectador Brasileiro*, 1824, p. 4)

Thus, in addition to *Diário de Vintém* and *Diário da Manteiga*, *Diário do Rio de Janeiro* was also called the *Diário dos Muleques*, a name that has not been carried over from the past to the present. That was how its great rival, Pierre Plancher, founder and editor of *O Spectador Brasileiro* and, later, of *Jornal do Commercio*, referred to it.

It seems that the rivalry stemmed from the fact that the *Diário* published the public's advertisements and pieces of news for free, while *O Spectador* charged 40 réis per published line, as the *Diário* editor's response to the criticisms from the competing newspaper shows:

What Mr. Plancher resents is that everything is published here for free, and it can be published in his *Spectador* in clear characters, for the minimum of 40 réis for each line; but we started this task long before Mr. Plancher has made or has been obliged to make the decision about being our fellow citizen, and the people of this city, who encouraged us in it, and who are more judicious than Mr. French Brazilian, think it's better to make their advertisements for *free* using our bad characters, than put money in his beautiful page. (“*Observações do Redator*”, 1824, p. 92)

The letter from a reader who, under the pseudonym “Um Amigo da Verdade” [Friend of the Truth], expresses his disappointment at the *Diário do Rio de Janeiro* because it had published a piece of political news, also reveals the impolite way in which Plancher, a competitor of Zeferino Meireles and Antonio Jourdan, referred to the journal. “It was a shame I have read in the *Diário do Rio de Janeiro*, or as the *great PP Spectador* [emphasis added] would say, *dos moleques* [emphasis added], (which despite everything is worth a thousand of its lying papers), a political piece of news that displeased me for two reasons” (Um Amigo da Verdade, 1825, p. 517). Subsequently, he explains the reasons for being disappointed over the fact that the periodical inserts politics into its narrative plots. “First, because I disliked seeing that excellent and very useful newspaper getting involved in politics”, and, secondly, “I was disgusted with the same news, not only it was very false, but also because it was evidently included in that newspaper so that *it would have a greater circulation among the population* [emphasis added]” (Um Amigo da Verdade, 1825, p. 517).

¹⁵In the original: “dorénavant elle choisira, san doute, une heure plus matinale”; “avec ses articles d’office, ses décrets, ses diverses *portarias* et ses nouvelles étrangères”; “lecture favorite des politiques à l’issue de leur diner”; “C’est à l’heure ordinaire des *trevoadas* du tropique”; “se divertissait naguère des plaisanteries et des épigrammes spirituelles de l’*Espelho Diamantino*”; “le promoteur du jury a traduit le joyeux *macaco* en justice” e “et nous aimons à penser qu’il ne les dispose pas à faire la sieste”.

What does this short excerpt allow us to conclude about two key questions for understanding the *Diário* as a public word in Rio de Janeiro in the early 1800s? First, that the denominations that remain in time refer to the way in which, in general, the “population”, or readers, referred to the periodical. The nicknames received by the *Diário* demonstrate its dissemination in society in an amplified way through and easier and current name, close to the majority’s real life: “vintém” and “butter” are emotional, affective names, metaphors that synthesize different perspectives. In turn, *Diário dos muleques* is a qualifier that was addressed to the editors of the publication, an insult (and that probably was not the only one) and did not designate the periodical.

The second point refers to the content of the publication, also expressed by the anonymous reader: editing private news and public advertisements transformed the periodical into something important for readers, and deviating from this path, by “getting into politics”, it meant ceasing to be a “very useful newspaper”. On the other hand, including in the newspaper the polemics, the verbal insults, the public position taking in the arena of debates that proliferated throughout the city was the certainty that they would reach the “population”. The *Diário* was, in fact, the “newspaper in vogue” in Rio de Janeiro in the 1820s.

The communication circuits, developed in the city itself, and which appear in the pages of the *Diário*, show the importance of the public’s constant dialogue with the newspaper for its survival (and immediate success), since it was through the readers that the pieces of information (news and advertisements) were inserted in the publication. Application of some administrative formulas, such as the need to subscribe to the newspaper to publish news and advertisements, was one of the reasons for the explosion of periodicals. But the success of the *Diário* cannot be attributed to this practical reason alone: publishing topics of daily interest to readers made it indispensable for their lives. This did not free it from polemics, in taking explicit positions, always around a printed word re-signified in multiple ways on the streets.

COMMUNICATION CIRCUITS IN PRINTED-WEB DIALOGUES

From the point of view of the focus of this paper, as it has already been emphasized, we are also interested in analyzing the transits, circuits and communicational dialogues of the Court newspapers with provincial ones, seeking to unravel not only the ways in which they were constituted, but also the meanings they produced. For this, we deal specifically with the 1820s, focusing on the years 1825 and 1826. We examined, on the one hand, some newspapers that circulated in the Court (*Diário do Rio de Janeiro*, *O Spectador*

Brasileiro, *Diário Fluminense*, *Ástrea* e *O Verdadeiro Liberal*) and the explicit references they made to *O Universal* (1825-1842), the only periodical that circulated in the Province of Minas Gerais for most of the year 1825¹⁶. On the other hand, we analyzed the editions of *O Universal* of 1825 to detect some of these movements of the news from the provinces towards the capital and vice versa.

In its first issue, *O Universal* editor explained its purpose and the need to write in order to “transmit the most interesting news, which comes to my attention” (*O Universal*, 1825a, p. 1):

As the *Companheiro do Conselho* is due to end soon, and the illustrious editors of the *Abelha* will not continue to publish their periodical for now, I found myself in need of writing to transmit the most interesting news, which comes to my attention. No other correspondence will be published in it, except those dealing with objects in general and not containing personalities, because my aim is public enlightenment and not to arouse hatred among citizens. I will always prefer the publication of Laws, Decrees and Ordinances, because although these objects do not please as much, as they should, their dissemination is of first necessity, and all citizens should seek such important knowledge. (*O Universal*, 1825a, p. 1)

In the opening excerpt of the first issue, which, although unsigned, was authored by Bernardo Pereira de Vasconcelos¹⁷, founder and editor of the periodical, it is clear that the public did not aspire to official public information that would be prioritized in the publication, qualified as essential. Therefore, there was the intention, even if it was only in the order of desire, not to stimulate polemics, since the purpose was “public enlightenment and not to arouse hatred among citizens” (*O Universal*, 1825a, p. 1).

Throughout the year, *O Universal* republished, countless times, the news that had previously appeared in the capital periodicals. In the second edition, in July 20, it published: “Ouro Preto, July 19th. Yesterday afternoon the *Correio do Rio de Janeiro* arrived, *very barren of news* [emphasis added]. From some Gazettes that *we read hastily* [emphasis added], we give the public the extract of what we found most interesting” (*O Universal*, 1825b, p. 6).

Then, there was a summary of some pieces of information collected from the Court periodicals: recognition of the independence of the Empire of Brazil; some information about the arrival in Rio de Janeiro, in July 5th, of the English ship carrying one of the Empire’s commissioners in London; arrival of troops in Montevideo, Uruguay; issuance of ministerial orders for elections for deputies and senators in the northern provinces; and the murder of the government minister of Lima, announced by “respectable letters from Santiago de Chile

¹⁶The first issue of *O Universal* is dated July 18, 1825. There, the reason for the appearance of the periodical is explained: to fill the gap left by the end of *Abelha* (1824-1825) and by the imminent end of the *Diário do Conselho do Governo da Província de Minas Gerais*, whose final edition, of just one page, circulated on November 14, 1825, informing the establishment of the General Council of the Province, in December 1st, which caused the organ to lose its function (“Sessão Extraordinária do Dia 14 de Novembro” 1825). *O Patriota* was created in 1825; however, it stopped circulating that same year. On the press in Minas Gerais in the period, refer to, among others: Moreira (2011) and Silva (2011).

¹⁷An important politician of the Empire, he began his political career in the Government Council of the Province of Minas Gerais, fighting the diamond concession, including the fierce campaign he made for *O Universal*, in 1825. He was a deputy in the first Legislative Chamber of the Empire (1826). He was also a senator and minister at several ministries in the Empire of Brazil (Piñeiro, 2014).

with reference to others from Lima” (*O Universal*, 1825b, p. 6). It concludes: “Nothing is said about the reasons that will serve as a pretext for committing this horrible action, and it is only said in the letters that the murderers were arrested” (*O Universal*, 1825b, p. 6). There are no references to the periodicals from which the information was taken, contrary to the subsequent issues.

In these editions, in addition to the transits that appear explicitly in the information reproduced, we also observe the complex circuit of information at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Ships that docked in Rio de Janeiro brought a lot of printed matter (including the European gazettes) and letters bearing the truth in postal bags, since they could be qualified as *respectable*. The content, with information that transfigured normality, presumed in abnormality – the murder of a minister from a neighboring country, for example –, then came to the attention of the editors of the capital newspapers. From then on, it was transformed into printed letters in newspapers, which were then transported to other locations and reached the hands of editors in those cities.

From one day to the next, fulfilling, therefore, the ideal of urgent information, present in the gesture of the editor of *O Universal*, he had to read “hastily” the capital’s gazettes. After this quick read, he had also summarized hastily what he found most interesting to his readers.

We see, therefore, the emergence of a time governed by the speed possible in journalistic production at the beginning of the nineteenth century: from one day to the next, it was necessary for editors from different cities to read the capital gazettes and compile excerpts from information they considered to be of interest to the public. In the editor’s opinion, there were few interesting pieces of news from those gazettes received by *O Universal*: after all, the mail that had arrived from Rio de Janeiro the day before was described as “very barren of news”.

Evidently, the temporality that made urgency a frequent reference was not just a result of being in a hurry to disclose facts that had already occurred, many times weeks or months ago. Speed seems to indicate a productive way of newspapers from that initial moment – showing a temporality typical of the news dimension – as well as the need to include a plurality of information. Hence the compilation of many gazettes, from many places, in a mosaic of a world that allowed people to see (or foresee) new temporal nexuses.

Dialogue with the reader, common in the early nineteenth century, was constant in the pages of *O Universal*. In these letters, whose authorship was obscured by the anonymity of pseudonyms, there were those that praised the editor’s choices and others that complained about the content of the publications. In them, we can still perceive the last stage of a complex communication circuit: the meeting with the public.

This circuit often began on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean, when periodicals were loaded onto ships, arrived to Rio de Janeiro and were republished in the Court periodicals. Later, they were sent, via post service, to other cities, along difficult paths and impassable roads, full of quagmire and dangers that surrounded pedestrians, as those who carried letters between villages on foot were called, while couriers carried the mailing bags on the animals' back.

The mailing bags contained a large amount of correspondence – letters from all over the city and other printed matter intended for individuals – and carried the seal of the coat of arms of the Empire, remaining sealed until their destination. They were then delivered to the home of the person responsible for distributing the local mail, so that they could be collected there later by the recipients. In some urban centers, the size of the city, as was the case of Ouro Preto, made it impossible for residents to notice the arrival of the mailing bags. Fireworks were then used at the branch, announcing the arrival of the letters (Oliveira, 2010; Rodarte, 1999; Rosário, 1993).

The provinces that gave the Crown the greatest profit were those with the greatest number of mail routes, such as Minas Gerais. In the early years of the nineteenth century, there was strong interconnection between Rio de Janeiro and Pernambuco, Bahia, and Minas Gerais (Rosário, 1993, p. 68). From Rio de Janeiro, mail departures to Minas took place every Tuesday at 18:00 in the summer and at 17:00 in the winter. Regarding the types of correspondence that arrived in the city, letters ranked first (52% of the total); second, newspapers and other printed matter (35% of the total); and, finally, official correspondence (13%) (Rodarte, 1999).

During 1825, *O Universal* published daily news from several Court periodicals, from which it transcribed long excerpts or made small extracts, and the Court periodicals also published news that were originally brought by the newspaper. There were, therefore, flows and counter-flows of information in a bidirectional way in these communicational circuits.

The greatest dialogue of *O Universal* occurred with Pierre Plancher's *O Spectador Brasileiro*. From it, *O Universal* transcribed letters, news from abroad, gazettes from localities in Latin America and imperial decrees that had originally been published in the Court periodicals. *O Universal* editor also announced to readers, with enthusiasm, the fact that *O Spectador* founder had offered him "his excellent periodical free of charge, from which I extract so many extracts for my periodical" (*O Universal*, 1825c, p. 134).

The launch of a new periodical in 1825, *O Patriota Mineiro*, which had a short duration, was greeted with enthusiasm, as it was politically aligned with Bernardo Pereira de Vasconcelos' positions. In turn, those in opposition were criticized. Thus, *O Patriota Mineiro* was given all the praise, and it was

recognized for “the relevant services it provides to our homeland. . . . The vast and profound knowledge of this classic writer, his impartiality, his courage and his unchanging eloquence have made him seek in this and in the neighboring provinces with a rare eagerness”. (“Patriota Mineiro”, 1825, p. 187). When, still in 1825, the newspaper stopped circulating, *O Universal* assumed in public the commitment to fight against opponents, because at that time there were no others:

¹⁸Paraopebano was the pseudonym of a man from Minas Gerais who criticized the positions of *O Universal* in letters sent to the *Diário Fluminense*. By the indication provided by the newspaper itself, he started, later, to sign as “Amigo da Verdade”.

Finally, the Paraopebano¹⁸ resurrected as Amigo da Verdade; and his antagonists, with *Patriota Mineiro* as the most prominent, no longer exist. *O Universal* will make every effort to cut off the heads of this Hydra of Paraopeba! Come Mr. Amigo da Verdade; the battery is ready and I enter excited in the fight. (“Ouro Preto, 9 de Dezembro de 1825”, 1825, p. 252)

The effervescence of the works of *Typographia Patrícia*, which, in Ouro Preto, was responsible for transforming periodicals and other typographic products into printed matter, was reported in detail at the end of that year, producing a valuable summary of the growing printing activity in the city. Under the title “Typographic News”, it is stated that 1825 was the year in which the *Typographia* had worked the most and published “the highest [amount] of periodicals” (“Notícia Tipográfica”, 1825, p. 286). The list was composed of 82 issues of *Abelha do Itacolomy*; 12 issues of *Companheiro do Conselho*; 13 issues of *O Patriota Mineiro*, and 22 issues of *Diário do Conselho do Governo*. In addition to these periodicals, Comendador Gomide’s *Tratado de Educação Física* (Treaty of Physical Education) was also printed, and, finally, 72 issues of *O Universal*, “the only one that remains among so many writers” (“Notícia Tipográfica”, 1825, p. 287).

If *O Universal* made use of many periodicals to publish information from various parts of the country and the world, the newspaper also appeared, albeit in a smaller volume, in the pages of the Court newspapers. Letters from its editor asking for disclaimer, other correspondence and extensive extracts from the news were published, including everyday information, such as the consequences of the storm that hit Ouro Preto on December 22, 1825. The news, which was originally published in the edition of December 26th of *O Universal*, was transcribed literally 20 days later by *O Spectador*:

In the 22nd day of the current month, a rare case took place in this city. The day dawned clear and pleasant, a little hot, but the heat was modified by a cold wind, and it was almost one o’clock when the weather began to change and the day darkened, and it seemed it was going to rain; a few minutes and it began to rain

heavily, accompanied by horrible and thunderous thunder, and it felt like waterfalls were falling from the sky; an impetuous wind drove the rain with such force that no roof in the whole city was unharmed; this horrible storm of water and wind lasted quarter of an hour and suddenly stones started to rain down, leaving the inhabitants dismayed and filled with terror. . this storm lasted almost two hours, the biggest that has been seen here, according to the oldest in the country. (“Ouro Preto, 26 de Dezembro”, 1826, p. 4)

Thus, transcribing information that had been “extracted from *O Universal*” or indicating at the end of the text the name of the periodical that had originally published it, we noted in the years 1825 and 1826, in the Court newspapers, the publication of seven extracts/references from *O Universal* in *O Spectador Brasileiro*, five in *Diário Fluminense*, four in *Ástrea*, one in *O Verdadeiro Liberal* and one in *Atalaia da Liberdade*, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Extracts from and references to *O Universal* in other periodicals

Newspaper	Date	Published news
<i>O Spectador Brasileiro</i>	08/31/1825	Plan for the extraction of diamonds in this and more Provinces of the Empire (“Plano para a Extração...”, 1825)
<i>O Spectador Brasileiro</i>	10/31/1825	Two words from the Paraopebano (“Duas Palavras ao Paraopebano”, 1825)
<i>O Spectador Brasileiro</i>	11/4/1825	Letter from the “Amigo do Presente” [Friend of the Present] (O Amigo do Presente, 1825)
<i>O Spectador Brasileiro</i>	11/7/1825	Letter from Universal in response to Mr. Paraopebano (O Diretor Geral, 1825)
<i>O Spectador Brasileiro</i>	11/5/1825	Letter from a reader who defines himself as a “reader that read the newspaper for free” about the news of “Agoas Virtuosas da Villa da Campanha da Princeza” and transcription of the reader’s article (“Apontamentos, e Notícias das Agoas...”, 12 outubro, 1825)
<i>O Spectador Brasileiro</i>	1/16/1826	Thunderstorm in Ouro Preto, December 26th (“Ouro Preto, 26 de Dezembro”, 1826)
<i>O Spectador Brasileiro</i>	3/1/1826	Transcription of an article in which <i>O Universal</i> denounced a copy of a text published in the periodical by the newspaper <i>Atalaia da Liberdade</i> (O Redator, 1826)
<i>Diário Fluminense</i>	8/25/1825	Bernardo de Vasconcelos requests insertion of letter contradicting Captain Manoel José Barboza (de Vasconcelos, 1825)

Newspaper	Date	Published news
<i>Diário Fluminense</i>	9/15/1825	Denial of the accusations made by the “Amigo da Verdade” and published in issue 17 of <i>O Universal</i> (O Paraopebano, 1825).
<i>Diário Fluminense</i>	1/19/1826	Letter from <i>O Patriota</i> addressed to <i>O Universal</i> editor (O Patriota, 1826)
<i>Diário Fluminense</i>	3/4/1826	Among the news from several periodicals received, including those from <i>O Universal</i> (<i>Diário Fluminense</i> , 1826a)
<i>Diário Fluminense</i>	3/6/1826	Letter from a reader informing that <i>O Universal</i> had published a letter accusing him of being a flatterer and asking for retraction (<i>Diário Fluminense</i> , 1826b)
<i>Ástrea</i>	11/18/1826	Information on the Government Council Convocation (“Minas Gerais, Ouro Preto, 27 de Outubro”, 1826)
<i>Ástrea</i>	11/21/1826	Information on the Government Council Convocation (“Ouro Preto, 30 de Outubro”, 1826)
<i>Ástrea</i>	11/21/1826	Letter from the reader “Tolo decimado” [Sad Fool] complaining about paying taxes (Tolo Decimado, November 5, 1826)
<i>Ástrea</i>	12/2/1826	Information on the sessions of the Council of the “Amigo da Verdade” and <i>O Universal</i> editor’s response (<i>Amigo da Verdade</i> , 1826; <i>Redator do Universal</i> , 1826)
<i>O Verdadeiro Liberal</i>	3/9/1826	Information and criticism of <i>O Universal</i> for praising the Viscount of Barbacena (<i>O Verdadeiro Liberal</i> , 1826)
<i>Atalaia da Liberdade.</i>	3/15/1826	Request to <i>O Spectador</i> to display the speech published in <i>O Universal</i> , accusing the text from <i>Atalaia</i> of plagiarism (<i>Atalaia da Liberdade</i> , 1826)

Note. Author’s elaboration

THE CIRCUIT IS COMPLETED: MEETING WITH THE PUBLIC

In nineteenth century newspapers, what we can call the “explicit public dialogue” is frequent under the rubric *Mail*. In *O Universal*, object of reflections that, based on a periodical, presuppose the logics and processes of a complex communication circuit between the Imperial capital and the inland provinces, it could not be different.

Covered by pseudonyms, with which the condition of constant and faithful reader is sometimes made explicit, the position or value judgment they maintain in relation to the periodicals is indicated, and they can be the *friend*

of the truth or the one who loves the truth, or even show the willingness to being critical of expressed propositions (“O mosquito pernिलongo” [The mosquito] and “O Aguilhão” [The Goad], for example); there are many examples of the reader’s presence and the public’s dialogue in the pages of the publications.

The editor often addresses the readers explicitly, stressing the importance of quickly transmitting the news he was aware of: “Ouro Preto, July 29. *It will take me just a moment to inform my readers of very interesting news* [emphasis added] of Sir Charles Stuart’s arrival to Rio de Janeiro. Here it is, extracted from O Spectador of the 20th day of the current [month] and [that] arrived yesterday by Mail” (“Ouro Preto, 29 de Julho”, 1825, p. 23).

In the small note that precedes the republication of the news previously published in *O Spectador Brasileiro*, which had taken seven days from Rio de Janeiro to Ouro Preto (since it had been published in *O Spectador* in July 20th, having arrived in the city on the 28th of the same month)¹⁹, there is also the perception of a time in newspapers that should have an accelerating dimension. Thus, he needed, as an editor, not to delay more than “a moment” to communicate the “very interesting news” to his readers.

In turn, readers left their impressions both of the periodical and of the editor, making it evident that they knew the processes of republication of news from other periodicals, which, through editor’s reading, gained (or not) a new interpretation and were again offered to readers.

Mr. “Aguilhão”, for example, sent a letter to *O Universal* in which he criticized the fact that the editor, according to him, only “transcribed the news from the newspapers in Rio”.

Mr. Editor of O Universal

Please tell me here in secret, because no one listens to us: *what is the purpose of writing in a newspaper? It is to transmit, what you see written in other periodicals:* [emphasis added] if so, I will also write. But even though this is the main work of an Editor, [...] *you should not confine yourself to such a limited sphere: but you have limited yourself to transcribing the news from the newspapers in Rio* [emphasis added]. Then you deserve the following rebuke: O Universal has only partially fulfilled its duty and that is why it is necessary for someone to incite you, and I will be your Aguilhão from now on. (Aguilhão, 1825, p. 46)

In the text, it is observed that “Aguilhão” was fully aware of the production processes of a periodical in the initial moments of the press in Brazil, although he criticizes the fact that the editor limited himself “to transcribing the news from the newspapers in Rio” (Aguilhão, 1825, p. 46). According to him, it was

¹⁹ Although the document, a privileged empirical source in the approach, should also be considered in its monumentality, in its intentionality in transposing times and in its predictability (among other issues) when addressing the complex issue of memory, the search for the inscription of a past moment in the pages of periodicals reintroduces as a methodological possibility to consider – with reservations – that a fundamental opening is being created to access a possibility of the past. These issues will not be addressed, as they are beyond the scope of the article.

only part of an editor's duty. The editor should go further, including other types of information, as Official Acts, for example and, above all, illustrative texts on the most varied topics, as "Lessons on elementary education", serial publication in several issues of the newspaper; "Reflections on the Treaty of Physical Education", "Reflections on Economics", among others. However, this type of content also received criticism:

Mr. Editor, continue copying those mutual teaching lessons, which, you say, *many people in suit call mute* [emphasis added] and we will see if some read, and teach youth by this method. As everything, I must tell you that one day I was with a certain Mr., who considers himself to be a great deal, and O Universal arrived, [...], and when the lesson came, he said, *Here it is the Universal with its savorless lessons; I'm bored just looking at them* [emphasis added]; I got dumbfounded and said to myself: *sad condition of an editor, if he writes against some people, they want to kill him, and at least they hurt him with insults; if they write interesting things, like you, one says that it is tedious* [emphasis added]; the remedy is to close your ears, and continue doing good for your country. (Constante Leitor, 1825, pp. 18-19)

The long lessons on topics that should enlighten the reader, as we can observe in the letter, made the newspaper "savorless" for many, while taking a position, the explicit criticism of certain people, caused revolt. For the reader, this lack of interest was, perhaps, a sign of little knowledge, and the editor was then asked not to stop publishing this type of content:

Mr. Editor, I'm curious *to see who buys the Universal, and I haven't seen a basic education teacher buying it yet* [emphasis added]; perhaps they still haven't known it, but I'll tell you how many buy your interesting periodical. *Continue writing, because there are many people in love* [emphasis added]. (Constante Leitor, 1825, p. 19)

Signing the text as "Constante Leitor" [Constant Reader] the author of the letter invoked the condition of loyalty to the periodical to give advice and, above all, to show that the criticism made was due to some readers' lack of knowledge. Finally, it indicated that this type of content had the approval of many. That is, if there were critics, there were also those who approved the publication, declaring that many were "in love" with the journal:

I have been very pleased with your excellent periodical and I sincerely say that Universal and Patriota are periodicals worthy of being read not only in all Minas, but throughout the Empire of Brazil. . . . The articles that have been included in

them, have been treated with the greatest clarity in such a way that the same positions of political economics become so intelligible that everyone understands them and everyone judges that for the good of our homeland the publication of such interesting periodicals should not be suspended. (*O Reconhecido*, 1825, p. 227)

Signing the letter with the pseudonym “O Reconhecido” [He who recognizes], in fact, the reader made a great effort to recognize the value of the periodical that made it “worthy of being read not only in all Minas, but in the entire Empire of Brazil”. This, in his opinion, was mainly due to the clarity with which the newspaper was written, which made this information easy for the public to understand. Translating issues that might otherwise be incomprehensible to the public into more comprehensible language was a highly regarded value.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This text sought to know various communication circuits of the periodicals in the nineteenth century through the narrative fringes fixed as documentary memory²⁰, in a first moment showing the several webs woven between the readers and the Court periodicals, and, in a second moment, the transits between the Court periodicals and the provinces, and vice versa (as *O Universal*, from Minas Gerais).

In the discursive fabrics inscribed in time, different communicational modes and practices of the nineteenth century newspapers emerge, in different circuits: that of the city of Rio de Janeiro, with the creation of its first daily newspaper, and the strategies – how we would call them today – adopted by the writer to transform the information (news and advertisements) sent by the public into a successful publication engine; and those of the provinces. Regarding the provinces, there are multiple circuits: the effective transit between the periodicals that left the Court towards the provinces; the news republished in the provinces and in the Court, in a bidirectional flow; the way publications reached the public; and, above all, the symbolic transits that can be seen in the dialogues with the periodicals’ editors.

The pages follow one another with impressions and meanings that readers attributed to the newspaper, as well as the uses they made of it: they asked for denials, sharpened polemics, criticized other periodicals, reported fights and confusion witnessed on public roads, doubted the interest that certain information could arouse, commented on previous correspondences and added to them sometimes exacerbated criticism, sometimes grandiose praise. The newspaper aroused public actions and reactions. There were many apprehensions of produced meaning, and

²⁰Earlier we referred to the news of the storm that had hit Ouro Preto and which was transcribed by *O Spectador*, in Rio de Janeiro, 20 days later. Evidently, the reasons for the time discrepancy can be of multiple orders: the conditions of the roads in view of the weather, or even the information of a storm in Ouro Preto not having been considered, upon its arrival, immediately, as worthy of publication. We will never know the reasons, and it doesn't matter. Important it is to understand that going from the capital to Ouro Preto and vice versa normally took a week and understand, above all, the conditions for transferring this information (*pedestrians, couriers and mules' back*), revealing specific ways of the communication circuits of the nineteenth century.

many texts added. In the beginning of the Brazilian press the newspaper was indeed a joint work that made the public also the author of this type of publication. ■

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