

## MATERIAL CULTURE AND MEMORY: THE QUIXADÁ AND CAPISTRANO RAILWAY STATION<sup>1</sup>

RITA CASSIA PEREIRA TÁVORA<sup>2</sup>  
ASSIS DANIEL GOMES<sup>3</sup>

**ABSTRACT:** This research is part of the project “Allegory of Heritage: Nature, techniques and cross-images of the Cearense Central backwood” (NATIMA). In this paper I intend to analyze the construction of photographic representations about the railway station of the interior cities of Quixadá and Capistrano, looking at the building of these monuments as the attempt to

<sup>1</sup> This work is part of the artistic-cultural project “Allegory of Heritage: nature, technique and cross-images of the Ceará backlands” (NATIMA), which started in February 2018. This project is part of the program of artistic initiation scholarships offered by the University State of Ceará, with FECLESC as its operating space, which aims to link research, teaching and extension. The activities carried out by this project were divided into two blocks: 1- research on the history and cultural heritage of the Ceará backlands; 2- interventions in public schools through workshops on the research carried out. These activities were performed by three fellows: Antonio Samuel; Fabricia Santos and Rita de Cassia. All members are part of the UECE/FECLESC History course, as well as the project is coordinated by Professor Assis Daniel Gomes.

<sup>2</sup> Graduating in History from the State University of Ceará - FECLESC. Email: [ritatavora21@gmail.com](mailto:ritatavora21@gmail.com).

<sup>3</sup> PhD student in History from the Federal University of Ceará. Email: [historiaassis47@yahoo.com](mailto:historiaassis47@yahoo.com).

signal the progress made by their economic elite. How were the memories of those who experienced this period and about the operation of the railway represented in these images? How, then, did the economic, political and social changes occur with the founding of the Railway Station? Finally, it was a vehicle in the nineteenth and mid-twentieth centuries as a public transport and for the flow of artisanal and agricultural production of these municipalities to the capital of Ceará, Fortaleza, for example.

**Keywords:** Railroad. Memory. City.

## INTRODUCTION

Of the municipalities contemplated in the NATIMA project, we decided to choose Quixadá and Capistrano seeking to see their railway material heritage. Faced with constant changes that have taken place, we note that there are some that mark those individuals who had direct contact with the Seasons. This mark is not only in the materiality of the buildings, but in the memories created from their various uses (CERTEAU, 1993). In this sense, we highlight the railway station as an element built to represent the progress of the localities that received it and especially the inland areas that did not contain so much development in relation to the others; as well as an element that

could provide its growth. Therefore, with their implementation we can raise questions that are exposed in the visual field (GOMES, 2016) of individuals who see this period as prosperous in relation to the previous ones.

Having contact with the photographic sources, we analyze the most diverse narratives that are weaving with the reports of moments experienced by them and how even today the mentioned are in the memory of those who somehow made some contact with those. During the elaboration of this research, we had reports of those who had some contact with the railway stations as well as those individuals who had the contact with the ideal of progress passed by the narratives that were told. In them they had the most diverse cases since flirting that happened in the embarkation and disembarkation and some ended in marriages being.

This provided the beginning of the miscegenation of families with those who arrived. New versions for the interior cities are reinvented, for example, the tragic event of the city of Capistrano in 1982, where the train from Quixadá to the capital

of Ceará turned in the city, killing two brothers from one family. The present episode marked so much that two versions have been built that still describe this fact in the city, with the coming of it had the arrival of culture more often, where a certain individual created a project that played comic books for children who would see the train ticket in Capistrano.

Among them, we highlight those of Monica's class that came to the fore when asked what memories marked the period mentioned, another highlight was that with the implementation of the same had a benefit for the education of the municipality of Capistrano, where every year there was an excursion to Juazeiro do Norte with the support of the parish priest Bernard Bourassa who got them to be first class in a blue wagon that only those who had some purchasing power at the time enjoyed.

The procedure took place with a condition that students improved reading and writing since during this period in the inner cities the education was performed with great difficulty. At the end of certain academic periods, Father Bernard was conducting an evaluation with those in the series that would

make the excursion. The proof, as many reported, was the reading and writing of some activities that the parish priest himself was keen to do to know how he was doing the development of this activity by the students.

And it is in this context that this research addresses the Quixadá and Capistrano railway stations, the first installed in the year 1891 and the second in 1890; In the face of different periods when analyzing the photographs found in the present seasons, there will be a highlight of how they were built, when they were seen as a synonym of progress by those who lived there and at the same time of delay - with their deactivation and the space being used for various purposes, for example for drug use.

## THE CROSS IMAGES

We start with the analysis of the photographs found in Quixadá and Capistrano. For this, we sought these photographs in museums, libraries and cultural entities, as well as blogs and facebook pages and the private collections of individuals residing

in cities. In this sense, we analyze the photographic representation of the railway station of Capistrano and Quixadá, seeing its architectural structure and the uses of these spaces as a meeting place and sociability - both are propagated as an image of progress. We realize this through the accounts of this period collected in both the images and the memorialist narratives that present it. In addition to this bias, we raise a question of how they are still analyzed both by individuals who experienced the time and those who had contact with the period through reports or other sources that expose it.

We see the representation of the common life (CERTEAU, 1993) of the population of Quixadá and Capistrano; We seek images that represent their daily lives, their spaces of sociability and their material heritage. Thus we chose the photograph used in this research to analyze our research object. We understand that photography is a documentary monument (LE GOFF, 1990) and a private monument (BARTHES, 1982). Finally, for Gomes, “photography must become an image where this individual character becomes a collective symbolic. It is

therefore this perspective that we will also seek to look at photographs, that is, their transformation into images ” (2018, p.01).

The images chosen were those of the Quixadá railway station that represented the arrival of President Getúlio Vargas in 1933. Analyzing the whole context of Brazilian history at this time called the *New State*, we realized that most of the individuals were wearing white clothes; Leaving the train station is a crowd that would symbolize those looking at the picture: President Getúlio Vargas’ populism. The train that is near it and the name Quixadá are highlighted in the photo as it was removed from the front. At Capistrano train station we noticed that the photo was taken only of the building highlighting its old name that was Riachão, and the photograph used was from 2007 due to the lack of sources from the year of its installation. Faced with both photos, we noticed the similarity of the architectural model and the idea of progress that both represented.

In analyzing the images worked, we note that both are representations built on a given progress of these municipalities

in a given historical moment, also using it as a synonym for modernization. According to Reis (2016), the straight lines was a symbol of modernization, especially for inland cities that in wintry periods locomotion was difficult to access. Thinking in this way, they were a way to prevent those living in it from moving to capital in times of drought and how the marketing of certain products planted in cities began to circulate to the capital to export them abroad.

From this implementation was a reference that through it would have changes to make the city stand out. Through the images we raise questions that over time with the deactivation of railroads lead us to think about the neglect of the public power about their material heritage and their exclusion from the socioeconomic daily life of these cities.

**Figure 1:** Quixadá Train Station



**Source:** Night Illustrated Magazine, October 4, 1933

**Figure 2:** Capistrano Train Station



**Source:** OLIVEIRA, José Humberto Gomes, 2007.

Finally, according to Mauad (2014), working with photographs allows us to explore them, as they are a way to analyze the periods that were recorded there, always exposing questions about their production, manipulation and propagation. Analyzing the photograph of Quixadá railway station, we realize that they expose an image of progress that was sought to disseminate with its installation.

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

In all the exposed context, the iconography comes to help the analysis of these periods when the railway stations were built for the cities mentioned above. The idea of progress that was introduced from the nineteenth century and the memories that were being permeated to individuals who had contact with these buildings.

Such factors built memories that placed this construction and the various forms of its use as an element in the construction of the image of Capistrano and modern Quixadá. This element of

identity is different from the neglect of the public power with the population of these localities - who experienced difficult times with the crisis in their economy. For example, its economic base was agriculture.

Finally, during the execution of the NATIMA project, we performed the analysis of photos that could help us to better understand how the idea of progress was built in the period analyzed.

## REFERENCES

BARTHES, Roland. A mensagem fotográfica. In: BARTHES, Roland. **O óbvio e o obtuso**: ensaios críticos III. Lisboa: Edições 70, 1982.

CATROGA, Fernando. **Nação, mito e rito**: religião e comemoracionismo (EUA, França e Portugal). Fortaleza: Edições NUDOC/Museu do Ceará, 2005.

CERTEAU, Michel de. **A invenção do cotidiano**: artes de fazer. Rio de Janeiro: Vozes, 1993.

CHARTIER, Roger. **O mundo como representação**. Estudos Avançados. v.05, n.11, jan/abr. 1991.

DIAS, Maria Odila. **Hermenêutica do cotidiano na historiografia contemporânea. Projeto História**, São Paulo. 1998.

FERREIRA, Luciana Moura. **Memória social, imaginário e representação no álbum do centenário de Sobral – 1941**. 162 f. Dissertação (pós-graduação) – Coordenação do Curso de Pós-graduação em História e Culturas, Universidade Estadual do Ceará, 2010.

GOMES, Assis Daniel. **Alegoria do patrimônio**: natureza, técnica e imagens cruzadas do sertão-central cearense. Projeto Natima: UECE, 2018.

\_\_\_\_\_. **“Faça-se luz”**: a eletrificação urbana no Cariri Cearense (1949-1972). Fortaleza: UFC, 2016.

LEBFEVRE, Henri. **La vida cotidiana en el mundo moderno**. Madrid, Alianza, 1984.

LE GOFF, Jacques. **História e memória**. Campinas: UNICAMP, 1990.

MAUAD, Ana M. Como nascem as imagens? Um estudo de história visual. **História: Questões & Debates**. Curitiba, n.61, jul./dez., 2014.

MENESES, Ulpiano T. Bezerra de. Memória e Cultura Material: Documentos pessoais no espaço público. **Estudos Históricos**, 1998, v.21, p.89-103.

PINSKY, Carla Bassanezi (Org.). **Fontes históricas**. São Paulo: Contexto, 2014.

POLLAK, Michael. Memória e identidade social. **Estudos Históricos**. Rio de Janeiro, v.5, n.10, 1992, p.200-212.

POMIAN, Krzysztof. História e ficção. **Projeto História**, São Paulo, (26), jun. 2003, p.11-45.

REIS, Ana Isabel. O sertão em linhas retas: tempo e espaço na produção do Ceará moderno. In. CÂNDIDO, Tyrone Apollo Pontes; NEVES, Frederico Castro. (Org.). **Capítulos de História social dos sertões**. Ed Plebeu Gabinete de Leitura, p. 2018, 123-139.