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A Certain Brazilian Identity in the Itamaraty Palace

Abstract

The Itamaraty Palace, headquarters of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was conceived in the period between 1959 and 1970, after the inauguration of the new capital, Brasília (1960). Although Brazil was living a political and economic crisis at that period, the construction of the building was executed as originally planned in the architectural project. It is considered a model of modern Brazilian architecture due to its integration with urbanism, architecture, landscaping, furniture design and oeuvres. Among those involved, we can highlight important names of Brazilian material production, such as Oscar Niemeyer, Burle Marx, Sergio Rodrigues, Maria Martins, among others.

The building's main program, elaborated by the ambassador Wladimir Murтинho, refers to the creation of internal environments which allowed the development of the international diplomatic ceremonial. Nevertheless, the narrative of a modern Brazilian identity is articulated in the formal conception and space solution of the building, provided by the communication capacity established through the material history of Brazilian culture - colonial to modern.

In this way, we intend to reflect on the material culture and its communicative use in the elaboration of a concept of identity desired by the Brazilian diplomatic corps of this period. The translation into materiality of an image of modern Brazil inserted in an international context is presented by the promenade architecturale in the palace that, in a certain way, becomes a museum with political intentions, due to the institutional character of the building. Finally, we will try to reflect on the Itamaraty Palace under the conception of modern architecture which is associated with the representation of a national identity in Brazil.

The paths to the Itamaraty Palace

Architecture, as a project, has its own field of knowledge that involves the understanding of the architect's design procedure, its formal solutions. However, it is not new that architecture is a complex knowledge that dialogues with many disciplines and can be analyzed from several angles. Consider, for example, the relationship between architecture and politics, economics or culture. The use of architecture as a material source is still a possibility of confrontation for historians, so accustomed to reading textual sources. However, understanding the architectural design with the use of other sources¹, can broaden the discussion of both the project in architecture as well as the relationship with other social vectors. Thus, it is possible to reflect on the construction of political history using architecture as source, but also to think about how the architectural object was conceived in a certain political and social context.

The Itamaraty Palace is the result of a series of design processes of several professionals, among them the architect Oscar Niemeyer; Ambassador Wladimir Murтинho, representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MRE) and responsible for drafting the program; Joaquim Cardozo, calculating engineer; Olavo Redig, architect and head of the Heritage Conservation Service of Itamaraty; Milton Ramos, internal architect of Itamaraty; Burle Marx, landscaper; Sergio Rodrigues, Joaquim Tenreiro, Bernardo Figueiredo and Karl Heinz Bergmiller, responsible for the design of furniture. The political, economical and architectural culture conjunctures made possible the materialization of this building that is the result of the reflective dimension of the project that encompasses the design of the building - a palace - and the visual and identity perception of the modern architecture developed in Brazil.

For this, a native expression was assumed that, according to Recamán, "liberated our self-consciousness to the point of imposing on us the creation of a proper modernism, which in a way denies the modern as a universal phenomenon, in its always national occurrence"², once that Modern Architecture presupposes the design of a universal solution, the ultimate consequence of the union between technique and function, two fundamental parameters for the understanding of

modern design. Roberto Segre, in his article about Oscar Niemeyer, reflects and advances in the discussion about the universal and the local, an issue that so much bothered Max Bill in talking about Brazilian architecture:

"As the Italian critic Giulio Carlo Argan accurately demonstrated, the type was a constant throughout the history of universal architecture, conceived as a computer system and rational in the organization of social functions, in the application of constructive elements; or expressive of aesthetic statements that arise from psychological, physiological and symbolic components of the human being. Once defined the geometric particularity of the composition, the symmetry, eurhythmia, harmony, modulation, character, hierarchy, monumentality that were constant throughout the history of Western architecture, in particular in classical vocabulary. The Modern Movement liberated itself from some typological norms that identified closed formal solutions; but in the plastic freedom obtained in the works of the twentieth century, the essence of these principles remained. Niemeyer did not reject them, and his radical formal innovations did not abandon the typological schemes of the classical tradition, which served as a basis for the unprecedented formal solutions that characterized some of his works. In this sense, he assumed the conceptual values contained in the thematic and functional typologies used without falling into the trap of the model, as repeated in nineteenth-century historicist architecture, and in the examples of International Style in the twentieth century."³

Brasília is the culmination, at the same time it marks the exhaustion of the hegemonic slope of modern architecture in Brazil, known as the *Escola Carioca* [Rio school], from Rio de Janeiro. In addition, it is a work that makes possible the understanding of modern Brazilian aesthetics, as Ronaldo Brito pointed out in his article about Lúcio Costa⁴, since it is the historical synthesis between the patriarchal state and an aesthetic avant-garde that had an institutional basis to materialize its aesthetic design. Also, for Otília Arantes, Brasília is the historical and formal synthesis of aesthetic questions that have been discussed since the *Semana Moderna de 22* [Modern Week of 22], with the experience of the Ministry of Education and Health (1936):

"If in the 1930s one can speak of a 'desire of Brazilians to have a modern architecture', with state sponsorship and everything, it is in 1950s that it becomes truly emblematic of a modern Brazil - again at stake, the backdrop of the national debate: passage from colony to nation, symbolically in its fullest rhetorical plenitude, in the foundation of a capital."⁵

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs belongs to the institutional group of ministries and, therefore, should have the same design of the other ministries, aligned perpendicularly to the *Eixo Monumental* [Monumental Axis]. That is, the same formal solution would indicate buildings with the same meaning and use in the urban plan of Brasília. However, such a formal typology, as Bruand has noted, does not occur:

"Originally, Lucio Costa's plan envisaged that all ministries would be identical; nowadays, those responsible for Brazilian diplomacy did not accept the proposed standard building and rightly observed that they could not be content with the block for the administrative services"⁶

For the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were designed buildings with a specific design, which differs from a type ministry. In addition to its specific activities, this difference causes a subtle passage between the *Praça dos Três Poderes* [Three Powers Square] and the *Esplanada dos Ministérios* [Esplanade of the Ministries].

From the outline of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the official opening of the building, as Itamaraty Palace, in 1970, there were 11 years and several events: Congress of Art Critics (1959), inauguration of Brasília (1960), the end of Juscelino Kubitschek's government (1961), political crisis and military government (1964), economic crisis and finally the inauguration of the new headquarters of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (1970) in the Medici government.

The change from the carioca neoclassical⁷ palace to the palace in Brasília was a possibility of modernization, not only of space, but also of its institutional structure, attentive to the new demands of the country's diplomacy and development. In addition, it would imply the consolidation of Brasília as a political and diplomatic:

"The move from Itamaraty to Brasília led to the adoption of a series of measures aimed at modernizing its operating structure. The era was one of pioneering enthusiasm, nurtured by the conviction that there was a historic moment and that there was a unique opportunity for a general reorganization of the Secretary of State. The Decree No. 283, dated December 26, had already been canceled to erase the lights of 1969, which had determined the adaptation of the system for the movement of diplomatic and administrative personnel to the special conditions imposed by the transfer of the Secretary of State to Brasília."⁸

The Itamaraty Palace project is a square shaped composition with a continuous rhythm of arches and, unlike the other palaces, there is no distinction between the facades. The volumetric body rests in the water mirror, which causes the reflection of colonnades and arches, creating an "island palace", as the architect himself noted, aware of his work: "Only in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs I acted different, desirous of demonstrate how easy it is to please everyone with a correct, generous, but common solution, dispensing with greater understanding and sensitivity"⁹

The sequence of arches and colonnades create a beautiful play of light and shadow. The internal glass body is internally displaced from the 15 colonnades that support the equidistant full arcs, with a radius of 2.8m, except for the extreme rays that have 2,497m for the visual correction of perspective, which the Greeks knew so well. It is not only the visual correction solution that the architect will seek in the past, according to Rossetti:

"The module M is 6m, and Murtinho recalls that" ... 12 by 12 meters ... is a proportion of the Italian palace ... "within which the dimensions of the minister's office are inscribed, the wall plans of the social halls or the *Ponto de Encontro* [Meeting Point] of Mary Vieira. While symbolic value subordinates other design decisions, the relationships between structural truth and the building can be gauged through the rigorous construction of Palace plans. Niemeyer designs a plant that organizes its program in three floors, organizing its spaces according to the 6x6m plot. The areas are derivations of these dimensions, such as: 3x6m, 6x4.5m, 6x9m, 12x30m, 18x18m. "¹⁰

The former Ministry headquarters was also used as an element of reflection for the project:

"The arches of the main facade, which opened on balconies to the urban landscape of Rio de Janeiro, became a garden terrace, opening onto the Esplanade of the Ministries. The frontage aligned with the street is transformed into an arcade on a mirror of water that surrounds the whole building. It is also common to both buildings the existence of an atrium that values the stairs, ranking the environments that it connects: Noble Hall, Ballroom, Banquet Hall and other halls. Instead of the imperial palms, in Brasília there is a row of buritis and aquatic plants in gardens that were designed by Burle Marx. Also, in the care of the internal spaces the concern of articulating old furniture and works of art but including modern furniture and contemporary works remains. Add to these equivalences the establishment of the Cabinets of the Minister and of the First Secretary in distinct wings, keeping the Cabinet of the Minister in a square plan."¹¹

The internal environment was constituted by a collection of palacial furniture, old and modern, where national characteristics, functionality and ergonomics were considered in the choice and design of the furniture.

"During the construction of Brasília, Oscar Niemeyer invited several architects and designers to design furniture for the *Arcos*, *Alvorada* and *Planalto* palaces. The occupation, the equipment and the interior decoration of the elegant buildings of Brasília, with its diversity of administrative use, was also an essential aspect in the Niemeyer project. The furniture and the interior arrangements should match the strength of that architectural revolution, which was certainly not just external. Appropriate reception was necessary for the officials, heads of state and dignitaries who visited and worked in the federal capital. Among the designers who contributed to the furniture design in Brasília, the following stand out: Joaquim Tenreiro, Sergio Rodrigues, Sérgio Bernardes (1919-2002), Karl Heinz Bergmiller, Jorge Zalszupin (1922-), Jorge Hue and Bernardo Figueiredo."¹²

The project runs through the development of the unitary conception between classic and modern, always attentive to the type of ceremonial that will be developed in its spaces. In this way, it was necessary visually to articulate the universal, since the building is the seat of an institution with international purposes and parameters, with the local, since it was desired the presentation of a national identity. This representation has as its maximum the balcony, from where it is possible to visualize the *Plano Pilot* [Pilot Plan] of Brasília.

The visual construction of the Brazilian identity

In 1942, *Brazil Builds - Architecture new and old exhibition*, held at the Museum of Modern Art in New York (MoMA), as well as the catalog of the exhibit, by Philip Goodwin, consecrate internationally the production of modern Brazilian architecture. In 1956, Giedion's preface and Henrique Midlin's own *Modern Architecture in Brazil* elaborate the idea that "there is something irrational about the development of Brazilian architecture",¹³ because of the quality and speed with which the architecture was developed between the years 1920s and 1940s. Such analysis will endure as canonical in the elaboration of the historiography of the architecture.

The exhibition and catalog reported that the combination of elements such as the use of local material, sunshine and control of sunlight with brise-soleil, reinforced concrete, free-standing plant, piloti and our precarious social condition were responsible by the creation of the inseparable relation between originality and a project of articulation between modernity and tradition: modernity that arrives by Le Corbusier, from the constructive side of the modern movement with the tradition of colonial architecture, the legitimate of our material past. As we can observe:

"Brazil soon went ahead on her own. Her great original contribution to modern architecture is the control of heat and glare on glass surfaces by means of external blinds. North America has blandly ignored the entire question. Faced with summer's fierce western sun, the average office building is like a hot-house, its double-hung windows half closed and unprotected. The miserable office workers either roast or hide behind airless awnings or depend on the feeble protection of Venetian blinds, feeble because they do nothing to keep the sun from heating the glass. It was curiosity to see how the Brazilians had handled this very important problem that really instigated our expedition."¹⁴

In a sense, the Itamaraty Palace remains different from what "the national character of Brazilian modern architecture has ceaselessly sought in its resourcefulness and colonial reference"¹⁵, and it seems to us that its conception of Brazilian differs from that posited by Lúcio Costa elected certain elements of our colonial past. Well-finished example of such thoughts is the Ministry of Education and Health (1936). In the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, it tried to elaborate and construct an idea of Brazil geared mainly to the foreigner, in which a certain material production was chosen. In an interview with the Public Archive of the Federal District for the project "Memory of the construction of Brasília", Wladimir Murtinho reports the specificity of the program and the need for a space used for representations:

"Because we are connected to the ceremonial part, about which I have told you, and we are very attached to the communications part ... that is, we live in roles, we have very little public, which is something very strange, unlike the other ministries, there is no public, when I discussed this subject that there was no public, people: "But can not be? How come there is no public?" No, there is not! Because we have a minimal group of people, which are the diplomats who come to talk, but this is very few compared to the dimensions of any other ministry, there is no process, there are no parties that come to look for matters. Yes, there is only this dialogue with the foreign diplomatic corps. "¹⁶

The response to the program of the international diplomatic ceremonial is given by the integration between works of art, furniture, architecture and urbanism. With reception rooms, meeting rooms and cabinets that fit the ceremonial, Brazilian modern identity is presented by the visuality of objects. The course is the key to understanding the program and its narrative. For this, the internal environment was constituted by a collection of palacial furniture, old and modern, where national characteristics, functionality and ergonomics were considered in the choice and design of furniture. Thus, it was necessary to articulate the universal, since the building is the seat of an institution with international purposes and parameters with the presentation of a national identity.

Such identity elements are present at all times in "half-open, half-enclosed spaces, which guarantee an even greater interior-exterior continuity than in the previous palaces"¹⁷, such as Burlle Marx's landscape design with more than 80 species of tropical plants, the cerrado and the Amazônia, the marble floor of Minas Gerais and the marble pressed on the wall of the Espírito Santo. The sobriety, desired for a building headquarters of the diplomatic institution, and national elements are revealed through stones, carpets, fabrics, glass, trellis, marble and granite; and of the works of national or Brazilian artists such as Athos Bulcão, Alfredo Volpi, Bruno Giorgi, Frans Krajcberg, Franz Weissman, Maria Martins, Mary Vieira, Iberê Camargo, Ione Saldanha, Rubem Valentim, Sérgio de Camargo and Tomie Ohtake. In a continuous space, works of art, furniture and tapestries are present always.

The reflection on the national identity is a phenomenon typically of country with colonial past. The elaboration of this idea began with political independence in the late nineteenth century. In Latin America, it was necessary to articulate ideologically an axis that liberated the then colony of the metropolis. For that, concepts were created that would homogenize that society so disparate, socially and culturally. Of course, there were several reflections, both in the political and in the cultural field. Within the scope of literature, Antônio Cândido, relating literature and society:

"If it were possible to establish a law of evolution of our spiritual life, we could perhaps say that all of it is governed by the dialectic of localism and cosmopolitanism manifested in the most diverse ways. Now the premeditated and sometimes violent affirmation of literary nationalism, with effulgences to create. Even a different language; now the declared conformism, the conscious imitation of European standards. This is given in the programs, because in the deep psychological plane, which governs the production of works more effectively, we almost always see a smaller scope of oscillation, defining a smaller distance between the two extremes. And beyond the ostensive intention, the work results in a more or less happy compromise of expression with the universal standard "¹⁸

The search for a cohesive identification and in dialogue with Europe has also occurred in architecture and, as we have seen, modern Brazilian architecture is often associated with the State, when a national scale project is desired. As Carlos Alberto Ferreira Martins pointed out in his reflection on the assembly of the history of modern architecture in Brazil, based on *Brazil Builds - Architecture new and old exhibition*, held at The Museum of Modern Art in New York (MoMA) and in the catalog of the exhibition, by Philip Goodwin:

"His fundamental contribution was undoubtedly to inaugurate a narrative argument between the" originality "- and consequent international recognition - of Brazilian architecture and its identification with a project of articulation between modernity and tradition, sustained and supported in the expansion and necessity of ideological assertion of the Vargas state apparatus. "¹⁹

In writing about the history of Brazilian diplomacy, Rubens Ricupero thinks about the political intentions and national formation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs: "at least in the intention will try to insert the thread of diplomacy in the seamless web of national life of which it is inseparable "²⁰. Certainly, Wladimir Murtinho realized that the change of headquarters to Brasília allowed the demonstration of power of the Ministry, because:

"The transfer of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is another necessary measure. But, due to its special conditions, we think that this ministry urgently needs to build its headquarters building in Brasilia, and for this, in the current budget, a budget of 400 million cruzeiros, sufficient for the beginning of the works. Without the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Brasília will not have the definitive category of the capital of the country, just considering the international significance of embassy presence in this city."²¹

Until 1970, the consolidation of Brasília as capital was uncertain. Despite the inauguration of the capital in 1960, the first ministry to be fully transferred from Rio de Janeiro to the new capital, was the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. More than a physical change and consolidation of the new capital, the construction of the Itamaraty Palace was carried out from a selection of the material production produced in Brazil, affirming certain interests, in the tone of something collective. Let us remember the political crisis in which Brazil lived with the government of the Military Dictatorship and the necessity of affirming a cohesive country. Such a visual construction of the Brazilian identity privileged the Escola Carioca, the old one and the immigrants. Rubens Ricupero states that "the starting point is invariably an idea of a country that is intended to be projected ... every idea of country results in an ideological construction"²² and this process is certainly facilitated using architecture:

"In the ministerial palace in Brasília," Minister Waldimir Murtinho said, "nothing will be used that is not produced by Brazilians with Brazilian materials. The palace was designed by Oscar Niemeyer and is being run by Milton Ramos. The designers of the furniture are the Brazilians Tenreiro, Sergio Rodrigues and Bernardo Figueiredo. The gardens will be designed by Burle Marx who also made the cards for the tapestries that will be performed by Colaço, Nicola and décors. Even the cutlery, in silver and obeying modern design, are being manufactured in Brazil"²³

At the beginning of the architectural promenade of the Itamaraty Palace, we observe the sculpture of Mary Vieira with 230 pieces of aluminum, whose spiral movement dialogues with the helicoidal staircase, such sensation is amplified by the massive blocks of marble, with the garden of Burle Marx, and the wall of Athos Bulcão, formed by several vertical trapezoids. The loose sculptural staircase in helical form offers an internal perspective of the building and the exterior.

Among the social environments, in which we highlight the union between the old and the modern, we have the "Sala Cândido Portinari" with two baroque angels, the "Sala Brasília", a hall for 180 people with the gold metal chairs by Joaquim Tenreiro and a tapestry divided in five parts with representation of the cerrado, executed by the atelier Norberto Nicola, from the card of Burle Marx. The "Rio de Janeiro Room" for smaller receptions, with 36 seats, usually used as the farewell room to foreign ambassadors, with engravings, mostly from Rio de Janeiro. Thus, the constitution of a continuous space is the result of the architectural design that makes possible several uses and arrangements of salons, according to the need of the event.

After walking the three floors, with materials and works that, at any moment, use the narrative of a past of Brazil, it is on the balcony, the maximum point of socialization, where we see the present of the modern space: the Esplanade of the Ministries, the National Congress, the Planalto Palace, the Federal Supreme Court and the Palace of Justice. The Itamaraty Palace is the postcard of Brazil:

"It's built on several levels, it has the ground floor where people wait, then the people are more tiered on the mezzanine floor, on the first floor, and finally we have the large halls that are on the second floor. The palace works very well. There are other foreign ministries that have large halls, but none have these facilities with these dimensions. Because in general, large receptions are given in presidential palaces, or in royal palaces. It is this special case of ours that derives, as I said earlier, from the republican tradition, it is unique."²⁴

In *Octavio Paz and the labyrinth of Latin America*, Júlio Pimentel points to the construction of identity as an idea backed by specific interests:

"The idea, not by chance, was already in two of the greatest writers that Latin America had: Machado de Assis, in the incredible *Instinct of nationality*, of 1873, and Jorge Luis Borges, mainly (but not only) in his writings subsequent to identity can only exist in two conditions: either it is natural (and in that sense it does not involve any discussion or problematization, it remains only to assume and accept it), or it is a construction offers no possibility of absolute and definite mirror, does not "identify", for it does not make anyone identical with the other or the model)."²⁵

More than classifications of identities, reflection on national identity is a way of thinking about the political use and ideological arrangements that use architecture as a material expression and communication. The intricacies of its construction which, certainly, collide and is recreated with the social agents.

Notes

1. In this research we used articles from newspapers, interviews and letters.
2. BARROS, Luiz Antonio Recamán. *Por uma arquitetura brasileira*. Dissertação de Mestrado. FFLCH-USP, 1996. p. 37. It is a free translation.
3. SEGRE, Roberto. Oscar Niemeyer. “Tipologias e liberdade plástica” in: *Tributo a Niemeyer*. Roberto Segre (Org.) Viana & Mosley, Rio de Janeiro; 1ª edição, 2009. p. 165. It is a free translation.
4. BRITO, Ronaldo. “Fluida modernidade” in: *Um modo de ser moderno. Lucio Costa e a crítica contemporânea*. CONDURU, Roberto; NOBRE, Ana Luiza; KAMITA, João Masao; LEONÍDIO, Otavio (Orgs.) São Paulo, Cosac Naify, 2004. p. 245. It is a free translation.
5. ARANTES, Otília. “Esquema de Lúcio Costa”. Ibidem. p.101. It is a free translation.
6. BRUAND, Yves. *Arquitetura Contemporânea no Brasil*. São Paulo: Perspectiva, 1999. p 197. It is a free translation.
7. The headquarters of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs remained in this building, project of José Maria Rabello, from 1889 to 1970. It is now the Historical and Diplomatic Museum of the Itamaraty Palace and has a collection of rare original editions of foreign travelers on nineteenth-century Brazil, a collection specialized in International Relations and International Law, as well as a map library.
8. CASTRO, Flávio Mendes de Oliveira. *Dois séculos de história da organização do Itamaraty (1808-2008)*. Brasília: Fundação Alexandre de Gusmão, 2009. p. 540. It is a free translation.
9. NIEMEYER, Oscar. “Depoimento” in: *Módulo n.09*, pp. 03-06, fev.1958. It is a free translation.
10. ROSSETTI, Eduardo. *A arquitetura do Palácio Itamaraty (1959-1970)*. p.6. It is a free translation.
11. Ibidem. p.6. It is a free translation.
12. SANTOS, Maria Cecilia Loschiavo. *Móvel Moderno no Brasil*. São Paulo: Olhares, 2015, p. 87. It is a free translation.
13. GIEDION, S. “O Brasil e a arquitetura contemporânea” in MINDLIN, Henrique E. *Arquitetura moderna no Brasil*. 2000. p.17. It is a free translation.
14. GOODWIN, Philip. *Brazil Builds. Architecture new and old 1652-1942*. New York, MoMA, 1943. p.81.
15. BARROS, Luiz Antonio Recamán *Oscar Niemeyer: forma arquitetônica e cidade no Brasil Moderno*. Tese de Doutorado. FFLCH-USP, 2002 p.226. It is a free translation.
16. MURTINHO, Wladimir do Amaral. *Depoimento – Programa de história oral*. Brasília: Arquivo Público do Distrito Federal, 1990. It is a free translation.
17. BRUAND, Yves. *Arquitetura Contemporânea no Brasil*. São Paulo: Perspectiva, 1999. p. 199. It is a free translation.
18. CÂNDIDO, Antônio. *Literatura e sociedade*. Rio de Janeiro: Editora Ouro sobre Azul, 2006. p.118. It is a free translation.
19. “Há algo de irracional..., notas sobre a historiografia da arquitetura brasileira” Carlos Alberto Ferreira Martins in: *Textos fundamentais sobre história da arquitetura moderna brasileira (vol.02)*. São Paulo: Romano Guerra, 2010. It is a free translation.
20. RICUPERO, Rubens. *A diplomacia na construção do Brasil (1750-2016)*. Rio de Janeiro: Versal, 2017. p.34. It is a free translation.
21. MENDES, Manuel. *O cerrado de casaca*. Brasília: Thesaurus, 1995. p.34 It is a free translation.
22. RICUPERO, Rubens. *A diplomacia na construção do Brasil (1750-2016)*. Rio de Janeiro: Versal, 2017. p.31. It is a free translation.
23. “O Itamarati refuta crítica” in: *Jornal O Estado de São Paulo*, em 27 de setembro de 1956. It is a free translation.
24. MURTINHO, Wladimir do Amaral. *Depoimento – Programa de história oral*. Brasília: Arquivo Público do Distrito Federal, 1990. It is a free translation.

25. PINTO, Júlio Pimentel. *Octavio Paz e o labirinto da América Latina*. História Revista (UFG), v. 13, p. 411-424, 2009. It is a free translation.

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Karen Matsuda holds a degree in History (2014) from the Universidade de São Paulo (USP). Her previous research (2012), financed by USP, explored the first voyage of Le Corbusier to South America in 1929 which was part of the exhibition “Le Corbusier, 1929” at Centro Universitário Maria Antônia (CEUMA – USP), curesed by Rodrigo Queiroz and Hugo Segawa. Her second previous research (2014), financed by Fapesp, explored the concept of poison in travelers' reports which was part of the research “Old fears in the New World: the sciences and venomous animals in Brazil from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries”.

Currently, she is a MA student at the same institution, where she studies the design procedure of Itamaraty Palace as well as the narrative of a Brazilian identity articulated in the formal conception and space solution of the building.