



Modernity comes from the coast: visual conflicts in the city of Salvador/BA, 1916–1926

A modernidade vem do litoral: conflitos visuais na cidade de Salvador/BA, 1916–1926



Henrique Sena dos Santos¹ 

Jorge Cardoso Filho¹ 

ABSTRACT: The article examines how the coastal space — particularly the Atlantic shoreline of the Rio Vermelho and Barra neighborhoods in Salvador, Bahia — emerged as a key element in the city’s modern imaginary, and contributed to shaping a sensitivity that distanced itself from the perceptual and affective regimes of the colonial, slaveholding Salvador. Using photographic images of seaside life published in the magazine *A Renascença* between 1916 and 1926 as primary sources, we conduct an interpretive study inspired by iconology and historic materialism. The analysis shows that the emergence of a modern visual culture in Salvador is closely related to how representations of the sea circulated in weekly print journalism and to the erasure of traces of the city’s enslaved past.

Keywords: *image; photography; Salvador/Bahia; Renascença.*

¹Universidade Federal do Recôncavo da Bahia – Cachoeira (BA), Brazil.

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RESUMO: O artigo reflete sobre como o espaço litorâneo, especialmente da orla Atlântica, dos bairros do Rio Vermelho e da Barra, da cidade de Salvador, Bahia, emergiu como um elemento do imaginário moderno da cidade e contribuiu para a construção de uma sensibilidade que se afastava das formas de sentir e perceber da Salvador colonial e escravagista. Tomando as imagens fotográficas da vida litorânea que circularam na revista *Renascença*, entre 1916 e 1926, como fontes de pesquisa, realizamos um estudo interpretativo, de inspiração teórica na iconologia e no materialismo histórico que aponta que a emergência de uma cultura visual moderna em Salvador se relaciona fortemente com o modo como as imagens do mar circularam no jornalismo impresso do semanário e com o apagamento dos vestígios do passado escravagista da cidade.

Palavras-chave: *imagem; fotografia; Salvador/Bahia; Renascença.*

Introduction

Renascença was a significant illustrated magazine published in Salvador during the early decades of the 20th century. It was managed by the Lindemann group, initially known as *Photografia Lindemann*, established by a Swiss family that arrived in Bahia at the end of the 19th century. Featuring an extensive collection of photographs documenting social and everyday events, the periodical distinguished itself in the Salvadoran press for its contribution to visual culture. It played a role in educating readers to observe and engage with urban life, which was framed as civilized and necessary to counter prevailing representations of Bahia as a Black city, a portrayal that, according to the elites of the time, positioned the region as backward within the colonial and slave-owning imagination.

In this visual analysis of the magazine, it was observed that in numerous editions (published between 1916 and 1926), the coastline of Salvador was depicted in various forms, including urban views, individual snapshots and/or photographic reports, as well as through poems, chronicles, and travel narratives. Areas of Salvador such as Barra, Rio Vermelho, Amaralina, and Itapagipe appeared frequently in the periodical. This recurring representation raises questions about the role that these photographs and images of the sea and the city's beaches may have played in shaping the visual culture of Salvador's inhabitants during the 20th century.

The fundamental hypothesis of this study is grounded in Walter Benjamin's (1987) conception of the aesthetic reconfigurations that reproducible techniques introduce to human sensibility. His seminal essay on the work of art is particularly relevant to the phenomenon under investigation, as it addresses the transition from manual image reproduction to mechanized reproduction. Although Benjamin (1987) identifies a range of broad and ambiguous transformations (such as the alienation of authorship, the very notion of authenticity, the material durability and historical testimony of the work, culminating in the loss of aura), this analysis focuses on his observation that these changes indicate

the emergence of new historical patterns of sensibility. Specifically, they reflect a configuration of perceptual habits oriented toward objects that are spatially and humanly closer.

The abundance of landscape photographs significantly reconfigures the relationship with images. How does the experience of the city change as its coastal spaces are increasingly exposed and circulated in the pages of illustrated magazines? What meanings and experiences do these representations convey, given that they become objects not only of lived experience but also of visual enjoyment for the magazine's audience/readers? This discussion can be situated within the two patterns of sensibility identified by Benjamin (1987): one of cult (presence and singularity) and another of exhibition (meaning and fetishization).

The visibility and visibility of the sea emerged from the significance that the coastline assumed as a space for leisure and modern living, closely linked to established notions of health and hygiene. The construction of a maritime space also constituted a visual challenge, as its value is understood in relation to other images, an iconosphere of paintings depicting the coast of Salvador. These images engage in a dialogue with the visual arts tradition, initially produced by European painters and subsequently by Brazilian artists.

Thus, the images of the coastline conveyed by *Renascença* embody a dimension of survival, simultaneously revealing a modern aspect of life in Salvador while evoking the lingering presence of colonial and slave-owning experiences. To explore this issue, selected images of the Salvadoran coastline published in the magazine were analyzed in relation to certain paintings, as well as chronicles and poems also featured in the periodical. The methodological approach was inspired by Aby Warburg's (2015) procedures in the *Mnemosyne Atlas*, which involved creating visual series to highlight survivals and ambiguities in the images and, consequently, the tensions that Bahian visual culture confronted in the early 20th century. The term *nachleben*, introduced by Warburg (2015) and commonly translated as "posthumous life," "afterlife," or "survival," denotes the enduring presence of Antiquity (though historically dead) as

a phantasm that continues to influence later eras. Accordingly, particular ways of capturing bodily movement, which reveal the passions of the soul, persist from the Florentine Renaissance into the photographs of the 19th and 20th centuries, constituting what Warburg (2015) identified as a preformulated *pathos* (*pathosformel*).

The very name of the magazine in which the photographs of Salvador's coastline appeared signals this notion of survival: *Renascença* (Renaissance). What form of renaissance is evident in the pages of the weekly? Which values can be discerned in the images it circulated? Do they constitute the ghosts of another era, as suggested by Warburg (2015)? This interpretation is structured around two primary ways in which the maritime space was represented in the periodical: the visual updating of the beaches and the contemplation of the sea.

The maritime landscape between the modern and the picturesque

The modern phenomenon of the sea and the beach developed primarily between the late 18th century and the mid-19th century (CORBIN, 1989). In this context, it is important to recognize that illustrated magazines mediated the relationship between readers and preexisting maritime images, although this mediation occurred differently across various regions of the world. Consequently, although *Renascença's* publishers sought to depict a modern and innovative city through representations of the sea, this process did not unfold linearly, but rather in a dynamic and often contradictory dialogue with maritime visualities and visibilities established in the city's past.

Particularly from the rise of the Enlightenment in the late 18th century, beaches gradually transitioned from being perceived as unknown and mysterious elements to objects of analysis and reflection, thereby becoming a known domain, controlled and mastered by humans. Consequently, the maritime universe ceased to evoke feelings of repulsion, fear, or aversion, giving rise instead to new sensibilities associated with leisure, recreation, health, and contemplation (CORBIN, 1989).

In the field of visual arts, paintings of seascapes and coastal landscapes played a fundamental role in shaping and educating a particular perception of the so-called natural coastline. From perspectives that were simultaneously romantic and classical, naturalist/scientific, and historical, and under the influence of figures such as Alexander von Humboldt, Jacob Hackert, and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, painters, chroniclers, and writers, among other literate actors, traveled extensively to produce drawings, sketches, and paintings. These works sought to re-enchant the sea and beaches, portraying them as exuberant and spectacular (MATOS, 2004).

This movement, driven by Europeans traveling through the Americas and Asia, was central to a process of reinvention and rediscovery of non-European worlds as wild, natural, virgin, and primitive spaces (SÜSSEKIND, 1990; PRATT, 1999). These travelers, equipped with technical-scientific knowledge, assumed the role of classifying and revealing this nature, thereby reaffirming Europe as modern and civilized, while framing the New World as a natural realm to be explored specifically by Europeans, the only people considered capable of appreciating, contemplating, managing, and instructing others about nature, given their established mastery over it.

At least in Brazil, the predominant mode of landscape production was framed through the aesthetic category of the picturesque, which Europeans understood as:

In general terms, this was what William Gilpin advocated: beauty understood through the eyes of a painter, recognizing in the landscape the quality of being suitable for perfect reproduction on a canvas. But what did this beauty consist of? Art in England was based on the pleasures of the imagination, not as coarse as those of the senses and less refined than those of knowledge. It delighted in variety, in the repertoire of images to combine, associate, and fantasize. For the delight of vision, the superior sense in this approach, it was essential to have a variation of impressions and inputs over time. The scenes and their succession needed to possess richness and variety, qualities desired by the eye. The irregularity of forms

and silhouettes, of shadows and textures, constituted the foundation of the picturesque, providing the necessary variety and contrast, as well as effects of light. Alongside the idea that something is picturesque was a decomposition of the observed, recognizing elements that added variety, “diversifying,” or richness, “enriching” it, satisfying that eye made the protagonist, the subject of the clauses and sentences, thirsting for sensations with which to delight (PAZ, 2020, p. 153).

In the case of picturesque seascapes, the painters’ repertoire typically included rocks, plants, trees, the sea, boats, small houses, and people, the latter categorized according to commonly recognized types of an ethnic group or community. Together, these elements constituted nature as visual sensations that “present themselves as lighter, darker, variously colored patches and not a geometric scheme like that of classical perspective” (ARGAN, 1992, p. 18) and “as a source of stimuli to which correspond sensations that the artist clarifies and transmits” (ARGAN, 1992, p. 18).

In various ways, as illustrated in Figures 1 and 2, traveling artists/scientists, relying on visual representations, idealized the nature of the

Figure 1 – Near Bahia, 1835



Source: Ouseley (1852).

Figure 2 – Rugendas, Johann Moritz. São Salvador, c. 1827



Source: Bueno (2004, p. 48).

Americas. In their conceptualization of landscape, they sought to capture “the singularities of the regional physiognomy, representative individuals of a given society, in short, everything that allows the construction of a typical identification of a country or region” (DIENER, 2008, p. 71):

They contributed to constructing the picturesque America by evoking, more or less consciously, the procedures that had led to the creation of *the grand tour* stereotypes. Their journeys through very different lands and their contact with other peoples imposed on them constant decisions about what should be incorporated into their records, and what should be interpreted as truly symptomatic and representative of the identity of these places and their inhabitants (DIENER, 2008, p. 72).

Before the advent of photographs in magazines, painting established a mode of perceiving the coastline that extended beyond its function as a site for leisure activities. These landscapes reflect a perception of

the sea that is both serene and intense. Moreover, such images not only document the perspective of foreigners on the city but, more importantly, constitute a means through which this group related to Salvador. In this sense, both the paintings and the act of observing these regions effectively shaped the spatial experience of foreigners. The spaces designated for leisure and residential purposes in Salvador were thus informed by what these visitors saw, and failed to see, through mental and pictorial representations.

Alongside paintings, photographs played a fundamental role in shaping these contemplative and sensorial landscapes. Like the painters, most photographers of the period were foreigners. In this regard, the photographic views adhered to “the canons of romantic painting and landscape painting of grand panoramas, hence the use of large-format plates, which were the most suitable for this type of photography, as they produced a result close to painted views and panoramas” (MAUAD, 2004, p. 6).

Figures 3 and 4 clearly illustrate the relationship between the paintings and the photographs. In these images, as in the paintings, Barra and Rio Vermelho are depicted with a particular perspective, framing, lighting, and distribution of planes that, to some extent, adhere to the conventions of the picturesque landscape tradition.

Figure 3 – Porto da Barra, c. 1903



Source: Salvador Antiga (2025).

Figure 4 – Rio Vermelho region by Gaensly & Lindemann c. 1890



Source: Ferrez (1988).

Unlike paintings, photographs occupy different spaces due to their enhanced capacity to reproduce reality (BRIZUELA, 2012). In addition, the development of new production and marketing techniques reduced costs, expanding the audience for these images to a scale potentially unattainable for paintings, although still largely limited to the educated elite.

Through both differences and similarities, paintings and photographs dialectically sought to shape an image of the cities' beaches and coastlines as expressions of the modernity and civilization that urban development, including European-inspired buildings and streets, aimed to achieve. They also conveyed a vision of the landscape as “prodigal nature, exuberant wealth, bizarre customs, heterogeneity, mystery and distance imposed on us by the other who gazes at us from the Enlightenment perspective” (MAUAD, 2004, p. 14). In this way, photographs, in some measure,

They belong to the natural world, to that world governed by premodern beliefs about nature. And yet, as a technique that depends on an apparatus and a method conceived thanks to the advances of reason and science, photographs were also the product of the long process of rationalization (BRIZUELA, 2012, p. 15).

From the suburbs to the neighborhoods of barra and rio vermelho

these considerations suggest that the transformation of regions such as Barra and Rio Vermelho, from fishing villages to summer resorts and, later, residential areas at the beginning of the 20th century, was also constructed alongside the emergence of a modern visuality, which framed these spaces as sites of contemplation and enjoyment. In other words, paintings and photographs shaped the perception of Salvador, privileging certain spaces over others. Spending summers or residing in Barra or Rio Vermelho became linked not only to leisure but also to the capacity *to see* and *be seen*, reflecting the modernity of Salvador rather than the colonial perspective associated with the city center. This dynamic reveals a social-visual dialectic in which the modes of perceiving the city are closely intertwined with the circulation of its images.

The history of the Rio Vermelho neighborhood traces back to a period preceding the founding of Salvador in 1549. Forty years before the arrival of Thomé de Souza, the region experienced its first contact with European colonizers when the ship crewed by Diogo Álvares Correa, known as Caramuru, was shipwrecked. Throughout the 18th century, Rio Vermelho developed into a settlement, providing refuge for part of Salvador's population fleeing the Dutch invasion of 1624. It was not until the second half of the 19th century that the area began to be seasonally occupied by vacationers, who visited primarily for rest and sea bathing, an activity, at that time, largely restricted to a privileged few.

Religious festivals were also held in Rio Vermelho, the most prominent being the devotion to Our Lady of Sant'Anna, initially led by local fishermen from 1824 onward (COUTO, 2004). These festivities generally took place at the end of January and included masses and processions through the neighborhood's streets and squares. Unlike the devotion to Bonfim, which drew summer visitors to the peninsula, it was this social group, composed of families from the Bahian elite, that animated the festival in Rio Vermelho.

Barra was initially known as Vila Velha and later as Vila do Pereira. The first Portuguese occupation occurred there in the 16th century (SAMPAIO, 1949; AZEVEDO, 1959). According to Thales de Azevedo (1959), between 1500 and 1536, Vila Velha represented the first site of Portuguese settlement in the process of colonizing Brazil in the territory of Bahia. The settlement, which housed approximately one hundred inhabitants, also included indigenous people and shipwrecked Europeans. Between 1536 and 1549, the region came to be called Vila do Pereira (PESSÔA, 2017). From 1549 onward, with the arrival of the Governor-General of Brazil, Tomé de Souza, the city of Salvador was founded in a different location. Nevertheless, Barra remained occupied and retained its significance in the early years of the new city, serving as a source of construction materials.

Between the 16th and 18th centuries, Barra remained primarily inhabited by fishermen, who lived in small houses and operated their boats locally. The region retained a predominantly rural character, contributing to the city's food supply. Similar to Rio Vermelho, from the late 19th century Barra gradually transformed from a fishing village into a picturesque suburb. Initially, occupation by elite families was seasonal, primarily for summer vacations, a process occurring simultaneously with developments in Rio Vermelho, though with greater intensity. Until the final decades of the 19th century, these families rented houses and other rural properties to spend the summer. The practice of summer vacations emerged largely in the context of the Industrial Revolution, when the establishment of a regulated division of time created distinct periods for work and for leisure, rest, relaxation, and the recovery of energy. Consequently, "the separation between city and nature established by the industrial city of the 19th century had broader consequences, in particular, the diffuse procedure of taking some social activities outside the city, to places considered suitable for rest and leisure" (SECCHI, 2009, p. 202).

The transformation of a fishing village into a summer resort and later a residential area was largely driven by the gradual presence of foreigners — French, Dutch, and particularly English — who, from this period

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onward, especially following the opening of the ports, began to reside and trade in the city. The British presence introduced specific housing practices that had a profound impact on Barra and Vitória, its neighboring region, which served as the primary residential area for foreigners throughout the 19th century (ALMEIDA, 1997).

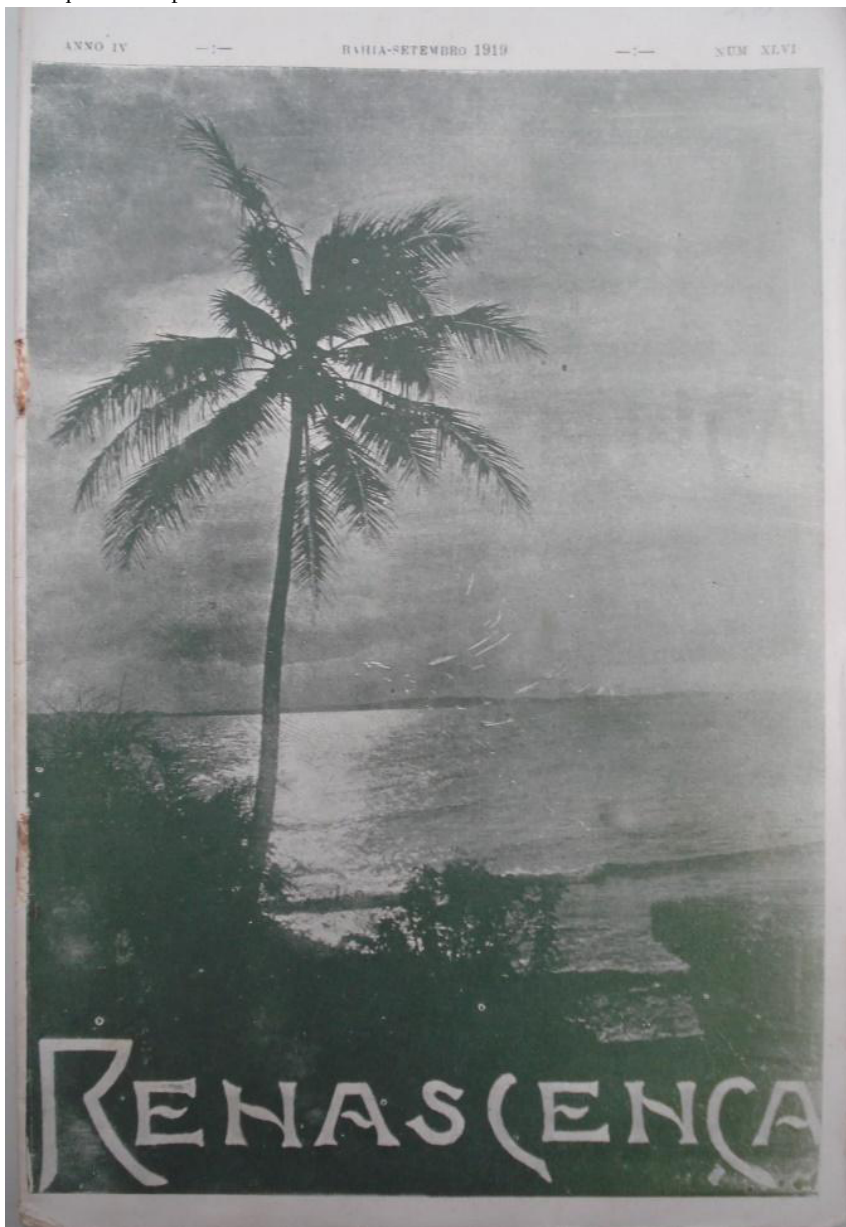
Among the new practices adopted was an emphasis on distinguishing work and living spaces. Unlike the Portuguese and Brazilians, who conceived of the city as a compact entity in which functions overlapped or were adjacent, foreigners, particularly the English, structured urban space more distinctly, defining separate areas for work, leisure, and residence. The selection of leisure and residential sites involved visual considerations, such as the ability to enjoy green spaces and sea views. There was also concern that residential areas should be cool and have clean air, isolated from the work environment, which in Salvador was perceived by foreigners as unhealthy and rife with miasmas due to the city's narrow streets and alleys.

The visual update of the beach

In covers, individual images, and photojournalistic reports, as illustrated in Figures 5 and 6, photogravures depict the sea, the movement of waves crashing against rocks, and the surrounding vegetation, particularly trees and coconut palms. Captions and titles further contribute to the picturesque construction of these images — in fact, the term picturesque is sometimes used to identify and describe specific clichés. Even the sublime appears to be conveyed in these representations. Notably, in Figure 5, the cliché of the undertow is evident, with powerful waves seemingly striking the promenade of the newly constructed Avenida Sete in the Barra neighborhood.

Urban views, such as those depicted in Figures 7 and 8, which aimed to present the coastal regions as modern spaces, also featured prominently in the pages of *Renascença*. In certain images from the series *A Bahia Moderna* (Modern Bahia), the editors, employing the photographs

Figure 5 – Cover of an edition of *Renascença*, featuring a large cliché of a picturesque seascape of Salvador



Source: *Renascença* (1919, p. 1).

Figure 6 – At the bottom of the page, a cliché capturing the phenomenon of high surf recorded on Avenida Oceânica

Renascença

VENUS ALADA



ARDE fresca de estio, no campo uma planície... agonizava o crepúsculo, lentamente, numa florescência magica de tintas, broslando a paisagem de encanto, de tonalidades violetas, oiro e oiro morte-côr... Um cheiro forte, capitoso, ascendia da terra, enchia o ambiente repassado dos dolorimentos da hora vespéral, de violinações magoadas de saúde, de suggestões acroamaticas de sereias... A viração muito mansa, sfiagosa e morna, tinha exquísitas caricias de halitos perfumados de amor, de boccas de velludo e arminho, em contactos subtilíssimos que vivificam e matam de goso, inefavelmente... voluptuosamente...

A distancia, solagava, seu eterno queixume, a clara lympha fuminea, como harpas eolias em symphonia do oceano!...

Contagiado da avassaladora dormeneia errante, olhos semi-cerrados para melhormente gesar a doce embriaguez quintessencial, absorvi-me numa infinita suavidade melancholica, senão quando, um bando estante de mocidade, illuminando tudo em torno com a luz eterna, da eterna belleza feminina, veio divinizar a hora, com o só prestigio da sua presença todo-poderosa!... E, então, senti, profundamente sentida, aquella emoção biblica, em que a terra se communicava com o céu, á feição do sonho de Jacob, e as creaturas, todo-perfeitas, mal roçavam com as plantas a impureza da terra... Bella entre as bellas, e rainha, sobreexcellia aquella de negro traje, contrastando com a alvura lyrial de sua carnção, em cuja trama, o eloquente sangue circulante, á maneira de um sol mital, imprimia um tom roseo, deslumbrante e imoar.

Vinha, entre andando e voando, rum passo lento, com ondulações de tulipa arciçada pela brisa vespéral, majestosa e radiante de esplendor e graça!

Os olhos inquietos, muito vivos e brilhantes, illuminando tudo em torno com deslumbramentos de luz primaveril, poisavam aqui e alli, na paisagem encantada, como dois passaros de sonho, para melhormente beberem a poesia divinamente esparsa...

A bocca como uma madrugada a desabrochar prestes na aurora do seu sorriso, era como um ciborio que guardava a hostia do seu beijo, muito para divinizar o miserio mortal a quem conhece a sáprema ventura de commungá-lo... Os braços, da nívea e luminosa brançura das estrellas, sobre o peito, numa attitude hieratica, monial de protecção tinham o que quer que fosse de divino ao proteger aquellos dois passaros formosos dos seus seios que timidamente tremiam ao seu contacto amigo... O seu collo eburneo, tal o collo de um cysne, ornado por um delgado fio de perolas que parecia macular aquella lyrio de innocencia, tinha os deslumbramentos da alvorada, e a belleza que um artista genial houvesse tallado... Os cabellos diademando a fronte, prestavam-lhe um aspecto imponente de rainha oriental... O seu talhe, enfim, esbelto, garboso, enrythmico era um poema vivo e palpitante de carne, com tentações magnificas de fructo prohibido.

Depois releve o passo, mansamente, harmoniosamente, abriu os braços, como asas que deabassem um vôo, remigiasssem no ar, num vago espreguiçamento de languor e sorriu...

Admirei-lhe, então, a belleza, na sua mais alta e eloquente expressão muito a ponto de confirmar, exuberantemente, o acerto de Wilde nesta passagem: «a belleza é uma das formas do genio, a mais bella talvés, porque é aquella que não precisa ser provada».

O sol crepuscular com os tentaculos multiplos do poente, cingiu-lhe o corpo, tal si quizesse engastá-lo numa garra de luz!

E, hoje, guardo, commigo, no melhor de mim mesmo, no altar intimo da minha saúde maior, a imagem fugitante dessa apprição genial de belleza que é *Venus alada* de minha terra!

Bahia, Julho de 1925.

PEDRO DE F. FERREIRA



RRSSACA — Avenida Oceânica (Colleção de A. Adeodato)

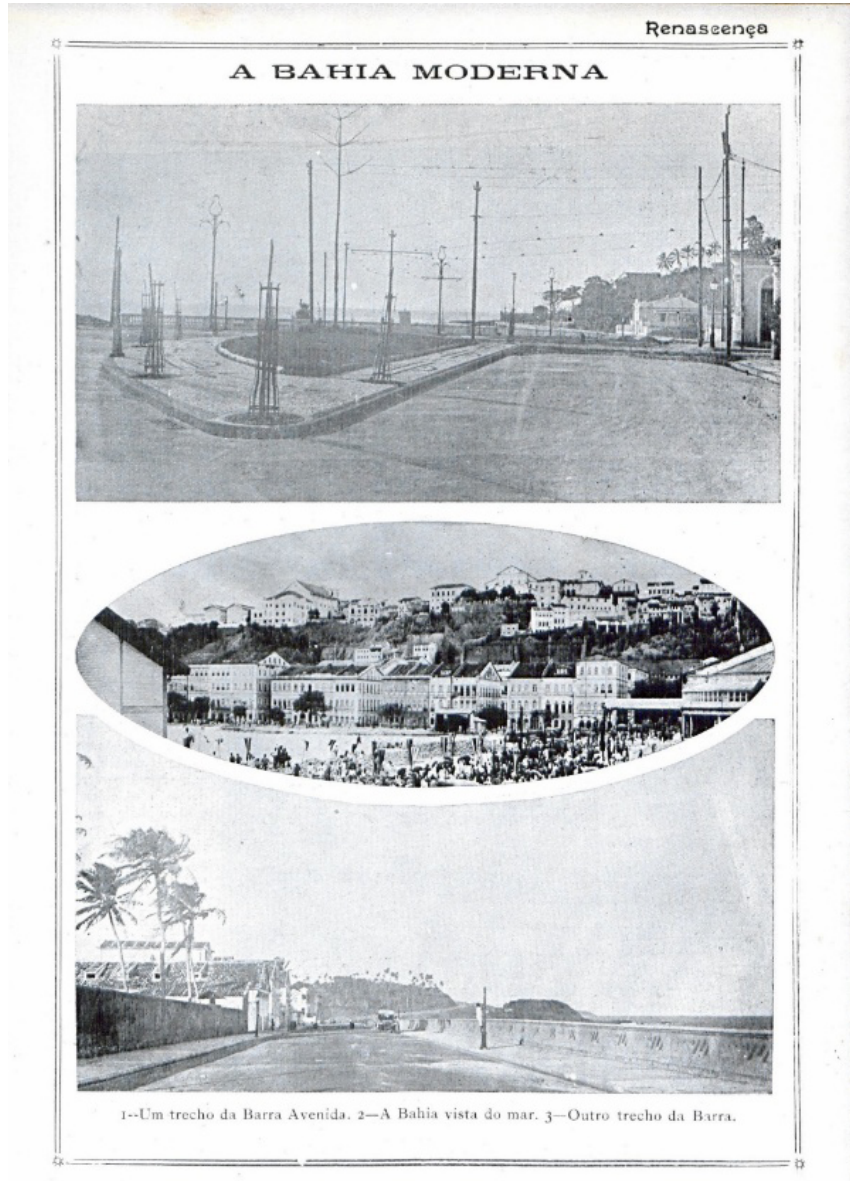
Source: *Renascença* (1925, p. 64).

Figure 7 – In the page footer, a cliché from the A Bahia Moderna series, showing a newly constructed mansion on the under-construction Avenida Oceânica



Source: *Renascença* (1917a, p. 31).

Figure 8 – Page with several clichés from the *A Bahia Moderna* photographic series. The photogravures at the edges of the page show aspects of the Avenida Oceânica renovation, also known as Barra Avenue



Source: *Renascença* (1916, p. 32).

in a manner similar to postcards, emphasized the physical and material progress of Barra, including its palaces and the Avenida Oceânica itself. This emphasis becomes particularly evident in a small photographic series entitled *Fatos e não palavras* (Facts and Not Words), in which the construction of Avenida Oceânica is presented as an unequivocal testament to the development of both the region and the city.

Thus, while *Renascença* did not visually invent Barra and Rio Vermelho as attractive locations, it played a decisive role in consolidating and popularizing this image. It is important to note that, in the 19th century, the circulation of landscape paintings and photographic views, whether individually or in albums, was largely limited to small audiences. Many paintings never circulated in Brazil, serving instead as objects of consumption for Europeans in the “Old World.” Photographs, by contrast, reached a broader audience due to their commercial circulation within the country. Moreover, the postcard format, which became popular in the final decades of the 19th century, further expanded their reach (SCHAPOCHNIK, 1998; VELLOSO, 2001). In any case, the apex of the construction of the sea as an urban landscape, one that ambiguously embodied both modernity and the picturesque, the future and the past, occurred with illustrated magazines. Through the development of a specific editorial profile, that of the variety magazine, these publications often managed to bring together photographs of diverse themes within a single edition or even on a single page, establishing themselves as a central and privileged medium for fostering visual culture.

By featuring images of people on the beach, the magazine contributed to normalizing this cultural practice. Moreover, these images, to some extent, educated social groups, potentially the urban elites and middle classes of Salvador, regarding the value of sociability and cultivated sensibilities, thereby participating in the formation of social identities. In other words, for merchants, teachers, and lawyers, social advancement and inclusion within a civilized elite involved not only consuming the magazine but also engaging with the world of sensations and possibilities it presented, which encompassed being, feeling, and appreciating the coastline.

The contemplation of the sea

This collection of images appears to be the primary means by which the editors of *Renascença* depicted leisure activities in coastal regions. Compared with representations of sea bathing or natural landscapes along the coasts of Salvador and other cities, clichés showing people strolling along the sands and rocks of the beaches, or sitting on benches facing the sea, markedly outnumber images addressing other aspects of the coastline.

A sample of just over thirty clichés related to this theme was assembled. Within this collection, certain trends are observable. The prevailing format was predominantly rectangular, with a few examples in oval or square formats. In terms of orientation, horizontal perspectives predominated, although some vertical-format images were also identified, particularly among the oval and square examples.

In terms of size, most photographs were small to medium, with the number of large images amounting to less than half that of the other formats. Unlike events scheduled for specific dates, walks along the coast of Salvador and other cities were depicted as occurring continuously throughout the year. This may partly explain the predominance of small and medium-sized images, which were distributed across multiple editions rather than concentrated in specific issues, such as those dedicated to Carnival, Christmas, or the Independence of Bahia and Brazil. Although in some pages the editors emphasized that snapshots of everyday social interactions along the coastal regions of Salvador and Bahia were important for the formation of a modern visual culture, they appear not to have applied the same approach to coverage of extraordinary events tied to specific dates.

This observation highlights another aspect of the arrangement and organization of photographs in the magazine. Among the images analyzed for the series, such as Figure 9, slightly more than half were presented alongside other photographs, which at first glance might suggest that they were organized in the form of a photo report.

A project envisioning a hygienic and healthy city in images appears to be reinforced when the accompanying captions are considered. It should be noted that none of the clichés, regardless of size, format, or orientation, contained text. Titles were rare, appearing in only four instances. In three of these, the expression *facing our Anschütz* was used, suggesting that these images were part of a series of snapshots published by the magazine as a form of editorial feature.

Captions appeared to serve as the primary support for the photographic images. While many aimed to document the presence of children and adults on promenades, benches, and rocks along Bahia's beaches, several captions also qualified the scenes portrayed. Terms such as "freshness," "clear," and "joy" were used to describe both the landscape and coastal sociability. To illustrate a series of beach snapshots, the editors noted, as in Figure 9: "It is most pleasant, in the calm stretch we are crossing, to go to Largo do Pharol da Barra to enjoy the freshness of summer, at dusk. This is what the elegant groups photographed above do" (RENASCENÇA, 1918, p. 18). On another page, as shown in Figures 10 and 11, two photographs were respectively captioned: "a graceful group enthroned on the cliffs of the Barra Lighthouse to enjoy the delightful phase of sunset by the sea" (RENASCENÇA, 1918, p. 11) and "improvised shellfish gatherers filling a stretch of beach in Quintas da Barra with movement and joy" (RENASCENÇA, 1918, p. 11). Finally, in Figure 10, the editors described a group of girls and women as "fully enjoying a clear and fresh March afternoon in the picturesque outskirts of Barra" (RENASCENÇA, 1918, p. 18).

The purpose of these captions was to convey the experience of being by the sea, its capacity to be contemplated and to engage the senses through smells, wind, the salty breeze, and other elements of the coastal landscape. Thus, the pictorial and textual representations sought not only to document activities on the beaches but also to produce an aesthetic effect for readers. Although individuals might spontaneously visit the shore, the magazine's images functioned as important mediators in fostering coastal sociability, as both clichés and captions aimed to educate readers on the significance of the sea and on how to perceive and feel its

Figure 9 – Example of a sequence of images resembling a photo report, with a title and large photogravures

RENASCENÇA

○ ○ NO PHAROL DA BARRA ○ ○

POSTAES
FEMININOS

Para a *Silenciosa*

Zelos immotivados, vulgo ciúmes, molestan os seres que foram causa insciente delles e não raro contribuem para que nestes o amor se vá arrefecendo até a completa indiferença. Sómente almas fracas se submettem a essa afronta gerada pelo capricho de um espirito doentio.

(R. Vermelho) *Agar*

Attenções demasiadas denunciam interesse mascarado. Tudo que é illimitado, transpõe certas e determinadas raías, perde a qualidade de beneficio. Desconfiai do mui muito.

* * * *Marion*

A lagrima de Alegria iróica e vivifica, a lagrima de dor suaviza e refrigera, a lagrima da Ira e do Despeito queima e corróe. A lagrima verdadeira, eruida do Prazer ou da Magua, é irmã da Perola e preciosa como esta; a lagrima falsa, oriunda do interesse ou da ambição, é bugiganga fabricada pela industria gananciosa.

* * * *Stella Mariz*



E' agradabilissimo, na quadra calmosa que vamos atravessando, ir para o Largo do Pharol da Barra gozar o frescor da viração, ao cair da tarde. E' o que fazemos os grupos elegantes acima photogravurados.

Source: *Renascença* (1917b, p. 18).

Figure 10 – Mosaic of snapshots depicting the urban lifestyle of Salvador’s residents. In the cliché at the bottom of the page, the editors highlighted a group of young people “enjoying a clear and fresh afternoon in Barra”



Source: *Renascença* (1918, p. 18).

Figure 11 – Two clichés showing children playing on the rocks at Praia do Farol da Barra

RENASCENÇA

Dançar...

Dançar... Sabes lá que de tentações diabólicas se retraem, se ajuntam, se enovellam e rolam nos cerebros dos libertinos; o sangue que reflue, os desejos que se ampliam ou se restringem, sempre, na directriz do coração para despedaçar-lhe a candura, segredar-lhe conselhos galantes, na volúpia única de acordar e desvendiar aos nervos a fúria dos seus sentires?

Poderás, nunca, avaliar a razão, do mystico encanto, inédito, que sentes ao voejar languido duns compassos de valsa, este instinctivo desejo de cerrar as palpebras, e na mesma sensação, ascender, subir, sempre a rodopiar, a valsar, sempre a valsar...

Ignoras, decerto, o cortejo de victos e de misérias que esconde a carne, que se prende aos nervos, que roreja na epiderme e reflue no sangue..

Repara: estes mil e um nadas, essas intimidades que a sociedade, num baile, permite e aprova; estes acarinhamentos, passear de braço pela cintura, íntimos conchegos ao peito, respirações a se cortarem; esses encontros de olhares

a dous palmos, rostos quasi unidos, halitos que se sentem, risos que se trocam...

Troca de impressões, a mais das vezes íntimas, que se avivam, jamais permitirias fazel a com um estranho, em outra parte...

Repellirias sem duvida.

E, no entanto, em tudo isto gostosamente consentes, feliz, por voltear, ouvindo os mais ternos galanteios, as mais insinuantes interjeições que, certo, comprehendes, mas que finges não entender...

A mão que aperta a cintura, o braço que se estende a affagar o corpo, quasi a se confundir com o teu; a dextra que aperta e sente a maciez da tua epiderme em contactos estranhos, mornos de sensualidade, tudo, tudo isso é odioso, ridiculo, nojento...

Causa odio e repugnancia... Entregas-te ao primeiro que te pede e gyras com elle confiante...

Pouco te importa saber quem seja, desde que as linhas do seu «smocking» são elegantes ou que nenhuma ruga perturba o talho do casaco... O rosto apparenta insinuancia e sympatia, os dedos pharoleiam brilhantes e os pés estão fina-



Um grupo gracioso entronizado nos alcantais do Pharol da Barra para gozar a phase deliciosa do cair do sol, à beira mar.



Improvizados marisqueiros enchendo de movimento e alegria um trecho de praia, nas Quintas da Barra.

Source: *Renascença* (1918, p. 11).

presence. In line with this approach, a poem — likely placed intentionally on a page alongside two snapshots of children walking on the rocks at Barra Beach — was designed to generate an aesthetic experience for the reader regarding the perception of the sea. Titled “*Na praia*” (On the Beach), the poem included the following verses:

Dawn and the Petals, the Hill
Little by little, it rises from the mist...
Emerging, crowned in a blush of rose

Startled Birds take sudden flight,
Their songs spilling, filling the sky with light
Along the shore, the playful sea
Stacks wave on wave in swift decree.

From foam-whirlpools that frame the view,
An island rises on the horizon's hue;
Above, the palms Sway, quiver, and bend

Tracing the air with their white-threaded blend
Flights of a bird draw near, then flee,
Appearing and vanishing gracefully

Around me, the world folds close and tight
Like a lovely nest, a cozy sight;
Above, the blue shines, pure and deep,
A sky of radiance, wide and steep.
Before me, the sea stretches, trembling, undulating

Its back along the horizon, undebating;
 Beyond, the hill, green and gay
 With trees, flowers, and melodies at play

In charming chaos, picturesque and free,
 The rocks line up along the sea...

Over the dawn-lit beach, the hill's thick, cool shade
 Spills down, challenging the golden sea,
 Where the sun hurls morning's bright cascade (RENASCENÇA, 1920,
 p. 22, our translation).

The poem appears to reflect an aesthetic concern, presenting the beach as a picturesque image rich in colors and composed of various elements arranged in graceful disorder, producing pleasurable sensations. Through the use of terminology characteristic of the picturesque aesthetic, it is possible to observe how a mode of experiencing maritime space, predominant in the 19th century, persisted in the period's imagination. The inclusion of snapshots on the same page as the poem, as illustrated in Figure 12, may represent a strategy for composing a mosaic in which text and photogravure work together to convey the sensation of being on the beach, allowing readers to vicariously experience, like the children on the rocks, the profusion of colors, sounds, and smells described in the poem.

Final considerations

Clichés, texts, titles, and captions appear to operate together in constructing an image of desire. The editors seem to have sought not merely to document the coastline of Salvador but to envision a seafront as an idealized space, tailored for an audience portrayed by the magazine as possessing

Figure 12 – Page with the poem “Na praia”, featuring two clichés showing children on the rocks at praia da Barra

RENASCENÇA

*Lindos efeitos de nossas
Marinhas — excursão a
Barra—Camarão.*



NA PRAIA

Vermelha e encarne flor, desabotôa
A madrugada as pétalas! o oiteiro
A pouco e pouco avulta do nevoeiro...
Surge, e de cor de rosa se corôa

A passarada sorprendida vôa
E canta; o azul inunda o céu inteiro.
Vê-se na orla da praia o mar fagueiro
Que ondas sobre ondas, rápido, amontôa.

De turbilhões de espuma que a emmoidura,
Uma ilha cresce no horizonte; em cima
Palmas ao vento oscilam e e estremeçam...

Bordando os ares com a nitente alvura,
Vôos de uma ave que ora se aproxima
Ou foge—mostram-se e desaparecem...

Vejo em torno de mim cerrar-se o mundo
Como um bello ninho delicioso:
Em cima, o azul esplendido, o radioso
Azul de um céu purissimo e profundo.

Em frente o mar, que o trémulo e onduloso
Dorso pelo horizonte alonga; ao fundo,
O oiteiro, verde de arvores, jocuado
De flores, de gorgeios melodioso.

Em confusão graciosa, em pittoresca
Desordem, junto às ondas se accumula
A fila dos rochedos, mar em fóra...

Por sobre o alvor da praia, a espessa e fresca
Sombra do morro se derrama e a insilla
No mar de oiro em que o sol despenha a aurora...

VICENTE DE CARVALHO



*Aspecto na
enseada da
Barra—
Pharol*

Source: *Renascença* (1920, p. 22).

refined and sophisticated aesthetic sensibilities, qualities deemed necessary to perceive and appreciate the potential of pleasurable places.

Drawing on Benjamin (1987), it can be argued that the serial repetition of beach clichés — typically in small and medium formats, horizontal orientation, featuring surfboards, benches, rocks, and groups of women and children — established a rhythm of exposure that transformed the beach from an event or cult object into a habitual experience. Following Benjamin's logic of repetition and circulation, accumulation with minimal variation "teaches to see": prescriptive captions such as "freshness," "clear," "joy," and "at dusk" function as anchors of meaning and as sensory markers, converting reading into enjoyment and enjoyment into a normative practice. In this way, the magazine transforms technical reproducibility into a pedagogy of the gaze: by multiplying equivalent images, it neutralizes the exceptional and naturalizes coastal daily life in accordance with ideals of hygiene, distinction, and domesticity.

Conversely, it can be argued that this imagistic and reproducible modernity has not entirely erased its ghosts. Drawing on Warburg (2015), the coastal iconosphere endures as a *nachleben* of nineteenth-century picturesque: the poem "*Na praia*", framing choices (horizon lines, rocky formations, vegetation, foam), and the chromatic and tactile rhetoric resonate with the *pathosformel* of contemplation established by travel painting. This picturesqueness "survives" in printed photography, shaping both the sweetness of the scene and the arrangement of bodies and affections. Accordingly, the modern beach functions as a montage of survivals, invoking the new through modes of feeling inherited from the older visual repertoire.

Finally, one may ask where the communities that historically depended on the sea were located prior to the modernizing vision promoted by *Renascença* in its visual discourse. Indigenous fishing villages, along with Black men and women, descendants of enslaved and/or freed individuals, constituted the original inhabitants of this coastline, yet they are largely obscured by the cultural imagery presented in the magazine's photographs.

These initial inhabitants maintained the closest relationship with the sea and the coastline, a relationship that Benjamin (1987) characterizes as a regime of cultic engagement with the work of art. This is not a sea of contemplation or hygiene, but a sacred sea, providing sustenance and reflecting the natural expression of ancestral relationships. In contrast, the experience of the sea depicted in the magazine's pages presents it as a public policy project, a symbol and index of health and purity for Salvador's white elites — who were depicted as needing to remove their ties and enjoy periodic repose. This perspective emphasizes the demarcation of work and leisure, action and contemplation, reflecting a logic characteristic of modern European thought.

The visual and sensory tension in Salvador's culture emerges from the persistence of the religious regime, which does not disappear but migrates to other areas of the city, particularly the shores of *Baía de Todos os Santos*, a region that would become part of the city's periphery during the 20th and 21st centuries. Bodies excluded from the modern cultural and visual project were displaced to this area, where they maintained their practices and made them visible through alternative discursive strategies, including dance and popular and religious festivals. This process can be understood, following the frameworks of Paul Gilroy (2012) and Édouard Glissant (2021), as a form of Black modernity — a topic for further investigation in a separate article.

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About the authors

Henrique Sena dos Santos: adjunct professor at Universidade Federal do Recôncavo da Bahia. PhD in Communication and Contemporary Culture from Universidade Federal da Bahia. E-mail: henrisena@hotmail.com

Jorge Cardoso Filho: faculty member at the Center for Arts, Humanities, and Letters at Universidade Federal do Recôncavo da Bahia and collaborator in the Graduate Program in Communication and Contemporary Culture at Universidade Federal da Bahia. PhD in Social Communication from the Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais. E-mail: cardosofilho.jorge@gmail.com

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