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The July 14 and the Cultural Transfers in the Franco-Brazilian Press at the Turn of 20th Century (1859-1922)*



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Abstract | In 1890, the traditional date of the French National Festival, July 14, was included as a Brazilian holiday after the Proclamation of the Republic in Brazil (1889). The aim of this article is to analyze how the celebrations of the 14th of July, an event symbolizing the values of the Enlightenment and the feeling of Latinity, which had a strong impact on the Americas during the 19th century, was represented in the pages of Franco-Brazilian newspapers between 1859 and 1922. The hypothesis is that this ephemeris was a date of affirmation for the French colony and became a symbol of its integration into the host country. Contrary to approaches that tend to emphasize France as a model for Brazil, the intention was to map out how cultural interactions and transfers took place between the two nations. As a result, we also noticed the widespread use of French symbols to politically legitimize the values of certain republican groups, which was used to the advantage of the French colony that was trying to establish itself in a nationalist and xenophobic environment.

Keywords | History of Periodical Press; French Immigration; French-Brazilian press; French National holiday (July 14); Brazilian Republican civic calendar; Positivism; Cultural History; Cultural transfers.

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El 14 de julio y las transferencias culturales en la prensa franco-brasileña de principios del siglo XX (1859-1922)

Resumen | en 1890, la fecha tradicional de la Fiesta Nacional Francesa, el 14 de julio, se incluyó como fiesta brasileña tras la Proclamación de la República en Brasil (1889). El objetivo de este artículo es analizar cómo las celebraciones del 14 de julio, efeméride que simboliza los valores de la Ilustración y el sentimiento de latinidad, que tuvo un fuerte impacto en las Américas durante el siglo XIX, fueron representadas en las páginas de los periódicos franco-brasileños entre 1859 y 1922. La hipótesis es que esta efeméride pasó de ser una fecha de afirmación de la colonia francesa para convertirse en un símbolo de su integración en el país de acogida. Contrariamente a los enfoques que tienden a valorizar Francia como modelo para Brasil, la intención era cartografiar cómo se producían las interacciones y transferencias culturales entre las dos naciones. Como resultado, también constatamos el uso generalizado de símbolos franceses para legitimar políticamente los valores de ciertos grupos republicanos, lo que se utilizó en beneficio de la colonia francesa que intentaba afirmarse en un ambiente nacionalista y xenófobo.

Palabras clave | historia de la prensa periódica; inmigración francesa; prensa franco-brasileña; fiesta nacional francesa (14 de julio); calendario cívico republicano brasileño; positivismo; historia cultural; transferencias culturales.

O 14 de julho e as transferências culturais na imprensa franco-brasileira na virada do século XX (1859-1922)

Resumo | em 1890, a tradicional data da Festa Nacional francesa, 14 de julho, foi incluída como um feriado brasileiro após a Proclamação da República no Brasil (1889). O objetivo deste artigo é analisar como as comemorações do 14 de julho, evento-símbolo dos valores do Iluminismo e do sentimento de latinidade, de forte impacto sobre as Américas durante o século XIX, foi representado nas páginas dos jornais franco-brasileiros entre 1859 e 1922. A hipótese é que esta efeméride passou de uma data de afirmação da colônia francesa para se tornar um símbolo de sua integração ao país anfitrião. Ao contrário das abordagens que tendem a valorizar a França como modelo para o Brasil, a intenção foi mapear como ocorreram as interações e transferências culturais entre as duas nações. Como resultado também se notou o amplo uso de símbolos franceses para legitimar politicamente os valores de certos grupos republicanos, o que foi usado em proveito da colônia francesa que tentava se afirmar em um ambiente nacionalista e xenófobo.

Palavras-chave | história da imprensa periódica; imigração francesa; imprensa franco-brasileira; festa nacional francesa (14 de julho); calendário cívico republicano brasileiro; positivismo; história cultural; transferências culturais.

The French National Holiday in Brazil – a New Republican Holiday

What about the July 14 celebrations?

They were always prepared with true filial love.

The colony elders would certainly be happy to see again certain names and dates. We could, for example, list the French who met at the preparatory session of the Santa Anna theatre: Berr, Henri Baumann, A. Nachon, Clément Lejeune (father of Mme. Moitre), G. Haas, Pierre Stoueigt, Tramu, Delforge, Lachaux, Henry Lévy, Rouchon, E. Bazin, Géraud, Fritz, Berson Léon Derénusson, Albert Lacurtes Ant. Bonniard, Deleau, Bouchaud, Paul Villon, Ch. Spitz, Farrouch, Menuisier, Fernand Dreyfus, Arthur Marie, Gambaro, Grandmasson, François Hallier, Barthel, Besnard, etc.

Here we must greet M. Auguste Petit, dean of the Colony of Rio: animated by the purest patriotism, he has been the soul of all French events for a long time.

It is said that the July 14th of the first two years of the Republic exceeded everything which had been seen before. In 1890, Marshal Deodoro himself attended. The following year, it was Floriano Peixoto's turn. That day, the Iron Marshal was at *The Fluminense Casino* (now Clube dos Diários) with his entourage.

There, a great painting represented France sitting between Law and Justice: everything was decorated with exotic plants given by M. Glaziou (then director of public gardens). The courtyard was literally full of officers.

As soon as M. Auguste Petit's choir began the march, France! France! God save France! all guests stood up as one and frantically applauded France.¹

The excerpt above was taken from the book *La France au Brésil*, edited by Bernard Frères in 1920 and authored by Etienne Brasil, an armenian who settled in Brazil at the beginning of the 20th century. He became an important representative of the French colony in Rio de Janeiro in the 1920s and 1930s, having edited the *Revue Française du Brésil* (RJ, 1932-1939) between 1933 and 1935. Therefore, it is possible to see that the book brings a lot of wrong or imprecise data which fails to survive more accurate research in other sources, something common to memorialist testimonies which historians often come across. This, however, does not invalidate the use of the source. On the contrary, it can reveal aspects of the imaginarity which interest this research. One of them precisely relates to the theme of this study: Brazilians' reception of the July 14 celebrations in Brazil, a date to essentially defend republican values at the troubled moment culminating in Emperor Pedro II's fall.

1. Etienne Brasil, *La France au Brésil* (Rio de Janeiro: Besnard Frères, 1920), 208.

It is in view of this context that Etienne's account draws our attention. He claims that the celebrations of the French National Holiday were important for both the French colony and Brazilians. It is irrelevant if they occurred according to Etienne Brasil's creative description, whose record of former settlers' memories underlined the harmony between Brazilians and the French. What matters is that the imaginary connecting the French celebrations with the Brazilian Republic, then recently proclaimed in 1889, and how this was represented in the Franco-Brazilian periodical press, source capable of giving us clues about the cultural exchanges between the two countries.

The highest Republican authorities attended the 1890 and 1891 events – military presidents Marshal Deodoro da Fonseca and Marshal Floriano Peixoto, respectively – and their entourage appeared alongside national symbols of both countries used to defend and exalt the French Republic, which Brazilians took as a model. The ceremonies described gain greater prominence since they are inserted in the context of the nascent Brazilian republic, which also needed to symbolically assert itself. Its importance was such for the French colony that, 30 years later, they were still fixed in the older generation's memory: "It is said that the July 14 of the first two years of the Republic exceeded everything that had been seen before." It thus seems that the importance of the festivities was reciprocal. On the one hand, it legitimized the national Republic, on the other hand, it valued French references and, consequently, the settlers living in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, which also fueled the political and commercial interests of France in Brazil. There was no mere copy of the French national day, it was a combination which responded to the desires of both sides, thus resulting in the curious inclusion of July 14 in the new Brazilian Republican Civic Calendar by Decree 155-B of January 14, 1890, just two months after the Proclamation of the Republic on November 15, 1889:

DECLARES THE DAYS OF NATIONAL FESTIVITY

The Provisional Government of the Republic of the United States of Brazil, considering:

- whereas the republican regime is based on a deep sense of universal fraternity;
- whereas this feeling cannot properly develop without a system of public holidays designed to celebrate the continuity and solidarity of all human generations;
- that each country must institute such holidays according to the special ties holding their destinies to the destinies of all peoples;

It decrees:

National celebration days are: (...)

July 14, dedicated to the celebration of the Republic, Freedom, and Independence of the American peoples;

(...)

Session room of the Provisional Government, January 14, 1890, 2nd of the Republic. – Manoel Deodoro da Fonseca. Ruy Barbosa. – Q. Bocaiuva. – Benjamin Constant Botelho de Magalhães. – Eduardo Wanderkolk. – Aristides da Silveira Lobo. – M. Ferraz of Campos Salles. – Demétrio Nunes Ribeiro.²

This decree lasted for the entire First Republic (1889-1930) and was suspended by Decree number 19,488 on December 15, 1930, under Getúlio Vargas' nationalist government. The celebrations to which Etienne refers were, therefore, inaugurations of this period and were not only recorded in the French memory but were also inscribed in Brazilian history as part of its national civic celebrations. Moreover, the decree also related Republican values of freedom and independence, a way to emphasize that the events of 1889 were a kind of "refoundation" of the nation, considering that, after its independence in 1822, Brazil established a monarchy. The holiday just established on July 14 would precisely be, then, the missing link between Brazil and Latin America.

Considering the importance of July 14 for the French colony in Brazil, as well as for the republican national symbology, the questions that arise are: why did July 14 become a celebration of the First Republic (1889-1930) in Brazil? Has media culture contributed to constructing this imaginary in Brazil via the periodic press? How did Franco-Brazilian printed press represent the French national holiday in Brazil? And by the French people settled in Brazil? The corpus for this research mainly includes Franco-Brazilian newspapers and magazines, memory reports and republican legislation. Brazilian historiography acknowledges the importance of the model of the French Revolution among the various groups engaged in the republican campaign, even those with different orientations, such as Jacobins and positivists, in what Brazilian historian José Murilo de Carvalho called "the battle of imaginaries," a "battle around the image of the new regime whose purpose was to reach the popular imagination to recreate it within Republican values"³.

Despite the fact that the American reference was also important in inspiring the constitution of the Brazilian Republic, the French reference was deeply present in the political culture and is not exclusive to Brazil. It was a special presence in Latin America, which set in motion the myth of a natural Latinity of Americans, so well explored by the French in their imperialist intentions on the continent. Certainly, this myth met with resistance and was questioned, even in Brazil and above all by the Germanist "Generation of 70", but this shows its strength even more. Denis Rolland investigated the potentialities and constraints of the French Model concept and the symbolic meanings of July 14 in Latin America in the mid-20th century by drawing attention to the appropriations in each context. His focus, however, was mainly

2. "Decree 155-B of January 14, 1890", in *Coleção de Leis do Brasil [Collection of Brazilian Laws], Decretos do Governo Provisório e Decisões do Governo Provisório da República dos Estados Unidos do Brasil: 1889-1891*. Col. 1, fasc. 1 (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Nacional, 1890), 64.

3. José Murilo de Carvalho, *A formação das almas: O imaginário da República* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2017), 10.

restricted to World War II and, although he offers a long-term perspective to his analysis, he more quickly refers to the period comprising the 19th and 20th centuries⁴.

Two digressions on two factors may be necessary to better situate the proposed analysis. One is about French immigration to Brazil. The other is about the power of myth to mitigate conflicts and make the differences apparently homogeneous. France in the 19th century did not experience a significant migration of its citizens to America as occurred in other regions, such as the Italian Peninsula. The number of French who searched for Brazil as a land of welcome was minimal compared to the numbers of Italians or Spaniards. Statistical data in Brazil are imprecise and unreliable, even in the 20th century and the control of foreign immigrants was also not strict, especially those who settled in distant colonies. Thus, there is no credible data on the number of French who settled in Brazil. The available indices, however, give an idea of the gulf that separates the expressive presence of other groups of Europeans in the country from the timid French immigration.

Between 1850 and the beginning of the 20th century, around 12 000 French people settled in Brazil, a proportion that increased between 1900 and 1930, with around 20 000 immigrants. In the latter period, more than 350 000 Italians and 370 000 Spaniards arrived in the country. Between 1820 and 1920, the period of the Great Immigration, there were only 30 000 French immigrants in a universe of around 3 500 000 immigrants in general. In São Paulo, between 1872 and 1895, the population was about 2% French against more than 60% Italians⁵.

It was therefore a small immigration, without subsidies like other immigrant groups. The most current theories about the process of replacing slave labor with wage labor denounce the eugenic project of the coffee oligarchies. The thesis of the lack of arms masked racism⁶ and won out over the wing of the government that defended the entry of whites as a factor of modernization and civilization of the nation. However, unlike the other groups mentioned, the French did not enter the programs of the immigration companies and the predominant entry was that of individuals (and not families, as in other cases), spontaneous displacements (without subsidy), forming a predominantly urban population, often due to political events in France.

Another digression concern to the Latin Myth. In the decolonial studies though, the term “Latin America” is seen as a result of conflicts of diverse interests. At first it was linked to the territorial notion, when America assumed, in Christian belief, the role of

4. Denis Rolland, *Mémoire et imaginaire de la France en Amérique Latine: la commémoration du 14 juillet 1939-1945* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2000); *A crise do modelo francês: a França e a América Latina. Cultura, política e identidade* (Brasília: Universidade de Brasília, 2005).

5. Monica Leite-Lessa and Hugo Rogelio-Suppo, “A emigração proibida: o caso da França-Brasil entre 1875 e 1908”, in *Franceses no Brasil: séculos XIX e XX*, eds. Laurent Vidal and Tania Regina de Luca (São Paulo: Universidade Estadual Paulista, 2009), 77; Jorge-Luis Mialhe, “A emigração francesa para o Brasil pelo porto de Bordeaux: séculos XIX e XX”, in *Franceses no Brasil: séculos XIX e XX*, eds. Laurent Vidal and Tania Regina de Luca (São Paulo: Universidade Estadual Paulista, 2009), 61.

6. Célia Maria Marinho de Azevedo, *Onda negra, medo branco: o negro no imaginário das elites século XIX* (São Paulo: Paz e Terra, 1987).

a fourth continent. The hierarchy between the three continents recognized in Christian cosmology – Europe, Asia and Africa, linked to the mythologies of Japheth, Shem and Ham – is automatically transmitted to the New World⁷. In this sense, the notion of Latin America was built under the aegis of this original myth that gave the American continent a position of subalternity in relation to the European continent.

The territorial aspect gives way to the subjective element that finds fertile ground to develop from the era of the “discoveries” in the 16th century: America would come to constitute itself as a “natural” extension of the European domains, always under the logic of warlike, economic, political, social and racial inferiority in relation to the Metropolis. Decolonial studies contest precisely this role attributed to the colonies, which, subjugated by force, were also subjugated culturally, in order to reproduce the discourse of backwardness, inferiority, non-development (or in the process of development), in other words, of the periphery:

From this point of view, contrary to what we are used to imagining, America played a decisive role in the formation of the modern world-system. It is only since the emergence of America that Europe has established itself as the geopolitical center of the world. Without the gold and silver of America, without the occupation of its lands for the planting of sugar cane, coffee, tobacco and so many other spices, without the exploitation of indigenous and slave labor, Europe would not be modern or the center of the world.⁸

Submission occurs, however, not only through violence, but also through the imposition of the idea of inferiority. In this sense, racism plays a central role in legitimizing the European reference as superior. The idea of Latinity was thus constituted as part of these colonial power relations. Arising in the Empire of Napoleon III, this notion aimed to confront both Anglo-Saxon predominance and the Monroe Doctrine and had an eminently imperialist meaning, although masked as aid and resistance to the new imperialism of the 19th century⁹. It was combined with a religious component, opposing Catholics to Protestants, which will extend to the anti-Pangermanism that gained strength after the Franco-Prussian War, rising to the same extent that nationalism was configured as a reference of power.

It was in this context, with its nationalist appeal, that the pan-Latinism of Chevalier and Napoleon III was conceived, in fact, as a French imperialist project that included the submission of the former Iberian colonies of the American continent. However,

7. Pedro de Araújo-Quental, “A latinidade do conceito de América Latina”, *GEOgraphia* 14, no. 27 (2012): 51, <https://doi.org/10.22409/GEOgraphia2012.v14i27.a13634>

8. Araújo-Quental, “A latinidade”, 58.

9. Alain Rouquié, *O extremo-ocidente: introdução à América Latina* (São Paulo: Universidade de São Paulo, 1992), 23.

if the expression *raça latine* arose with panlatinism, the concept of Latin America itself was formulated for the first time by José Maria Torres de Caicedo, a Colombian journalist and poet.¹⁰

From the point of view of the Creole elite, the concept of Latinity was often used as anti-colonial resistance, especially in relation to North American expansionism, as in the case of José Maria Torres Caicedo. While on the part of Europeans and North Americans, the term “Latino” was used as a sign of Anglo-Saxon superiority¹¹. In Brazil, although there was not (as there still is not) a sense of “Latin American” identity, the valorization of the alleged Latinity of French matrix to which Brazilians would “naturally” be linked was fed, since the middle of the 19th century, by the resistance to the former Portuguese colonial domination (which extended after the Independence officially proclaimed in 1822 in the presence of the royal family as leader of the Constitutional Monarchy that was established in place of a Republic) and to the English economic power. The ideals of the French Revolution appeared here as a symbol of colonial liberation. Added to this scenario was the cultural power that France exerted in the same century and that Brazil was particularly susceptible to due to the Francophone nature of the Portuguese court.

In this way, Latinity in Brazil is consolidated as a myth set in motion in founding moments, such as the Proclamation of the Republic in 1889, where symbols of the “natural” connection of the Brazilian nation with Latin ideals return with force. The July 14 celebrations are thus characterized by bringing the two nations together in the same harmony. A point of contact that would definitely put Brazil at the level of the so-called civilized peoples. And the transcendent element is central to this process. Raoul Girardet states that myth imposes itself in all its autonomy “constituting itself a coherent and complete belief system”¹². His definition of myth, however, is not limited to the concept that apprehends the religious phenomenon that occurs in time immemorial, or to illusion or mystification, or to its power to condense demands and incite action. It is the political connotation and capacity to order the real that interests the author:

Political myth is a fabrication, a deformation or an objectively refutable interpretation of reality. But, as a legendary narrative, it is true that it also has an explanatory function, providing a number of keys to understanding the present, constituting a cryptography through which the bewildering chaos of facts and events can appear to be ordered.¹³

10. Araújo-Quental, “A latinidade”, 65.

11. Araújo-Quental, “A latinidade”, 66.

12. Raoul Girardet, *Mitos e mitologias políticas* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1987).

13. Girardet. *Mitos e mitologias*, 13.

The question should not be whether the feeling of Latinity is more or less pertinent in the Brazilian case, because, as a myth, this is not the factor that matters for the analysis. In fact, as we have seen above, there have been various forms of appropriation of the sense of “Latin”, sometimes serving French imperialist interests, sometimes signifying precisely resistance to all kinds of colonialist domination. The question that must be asked is: how is the feeling of Latinity used in its most subjective and mystifying sense to condense both the symbolic union between these nations and to valorize the late proclamation of the Republic that finally placed Brazil in a supposed harmony with the other Latin American countries, republics since their independence?

Therefore, even with a small population, the various French colonies (which were established in the 19th and 20th centuries in some Brazilian cities) enjoyed more social and cultural prestige than other much larger immigrant colonies, which helped them to gain political and economic prestige as well. The fact that French immigrants quickly became part of the Brazilian elite, even those who arrived in a precarious situation in the country, was often in line with France’s imperialist interests on the New World continent. The various political strands that divided the French groups installed in Brazil and that found in the pages of the newspapers the privileged tribune of debates, often were annulled under an ideal of “Latinity” that these groups shared in the condition of exiles. As the idea of Italianness gained more strength outside Italy, the idea of French-rooted Latinity expanded its power to unify differences outside France.

And if the myth is important for revolutions, it also plays a mobilizing role in the constitution of the imaginary that is formed from these moments of rupture, as was the Proclamation of the Republic in Brazil. The myth does not need to be legitimized and promotes unity through symbolism, including the party and the banquet (so present in the celebrations of July 14)¹⁴. Such unity was already defended in Rousseau as a “civil religion” that provided for symbolic adherence to the social contract, composed of its own cults, rituals and liturgy¹⁵. It is the same kind of transcendental element that Benedict Anderson¹⁶ locates as inherent in the idea of nation, with all the reverence for its prominent names (saints or national heroes). On July 14, the cult of the Republic and the Nation is central, being replaced by the cult of Napoleon III and Latinity during the Second Empire, notions that will later merge in the myth: “The political and the sacred thus come to unite and, to some extent, to confuse”¹⁷.

14. Girardet, *Mitos e mitologias*, 143.

15. Girardet, *Mitos e mitologias*, 147.

16. Benedict Anderson, *Comunidades Imaginadas. Reflexões sobre a origem e a difusão do nacionalismo* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2008).

17. Girardet, *Mitos e mitologias*, 62.

From the Rolland conclusions, we can retain the emphasis on the self-affirmation of the French colonies in Latin America which saw the *Fête Nationale* as a way of resisting the loss of their ties with France. In fact, we observe this phenomenon in the celebrations prior to the Proclamation of the Republic in Brazil but it is much less effective when we assess the complex game between French and Brazilian interests in adopting the date as a national holiday. The concept of cultural transfers seems particularly useful here for us to see it more as a kind of cultural translation than the adoption of a model or in the category of “influence”: “Fundamentally, the Cultural Transfer Approach is based on the hypothesis that any cultural artifact transferred between different cultures (or cultural systems) undergoes a process of transformation, of re-semanticization, re-interpretation...”¹⁸.

The discussions which took place within Republican groups and the representation of commemorative and highly significant dates such as July 14 were common in the press at the time, especially the press published by French groups based in Brazil, acting as *passeurs culturels* in this symbolic dispute. As a methodological procedure, diachronic research of these representations was conducted mainly in periodical printed press between 1850 and 1890 – the year the Republican calendar was adopted – and includes some later reactions in periodicals published until 1922.

The French Revolution in the World and Brazil

The French Revolution was prolific in producing a rich imaginary which aimed to rally the population to this revolutionary project and, later, legitimize its ideals. The battle was also a struggle of representations which had concrete effects on society, extrapolating its hexagonal boundaries: “Symbols and myths can, by their diffuse character, by their less codified reading, become powerful elements of projection of collective interests, aspirations, and fears. To the extent that they succeed in reaching the imaginary, they can also shape worldviews and model conducts”¹⁹.

The French revolutionary calendar beginning in 1792 and the civic holidays planned therein are elements of this symbolic production, next to the flag; the Marseillaise; the Phrygian cap (a symbol of freedom); the image of Marianne (the female figure representing the Republic); the tree of freedom, with recurring and allegorical images such as “the scale, the level, the fasces, the rudder, the spear, the Gallic rooster, the lion etc. (...) A true battle of symbols, in search of the conquest of the social imaginary, took place over almost a century of history, to the taste of the revolutionary waves of 1789, 1830, 1848, and 1871

18. Stenn-Bay Jørgensen and Hans-Jürgen Lüsebrink, “Introduction: reframing the cultural transfer approach”, in *Cultural Transfer Reconsidered. Transnational Perspectives, Translation Processes, Scandinavian and Postcolonial Challenges*, eds. Stenn Bay Jørgensen and Hans-Jürgen Lüsebrink (Leiden/Boston: Brill Rodopi, 2021), 2.

19. Murilo de Carvalho, *A formação das almas*, 11.

and of monarchical and conservative reactions”²⁰. Brazilian Republicans had this repertoire at their disposal and little competition from the liberal current advocating the adoption of the American model. Its symbolism was poorer probably because the design of elites across America failed to include the popular masses in the establishment of a republic.

On the contrary, the magnitude of the repercussion of the French Revolution and the revolutionary ideals that crossed the 19th century ensured its fixation in the imagination, inspiring similar movements, even when popular participation was not great, as in Brazil where the republican propaganda grew, defended by various groups, mainly from the elite. With the proximity of the centenary of the French Revolution, in 1889, its campaign intensified. Silva Jardim, an exalted lawyer, abolitionist, and Republican activist, went on to argue that the “overthrow of the *Ancien Régime* in Brazil”²¹ coincided with the centenary and the celebrations of July 14 (that increasingly involved the French colony and Brazilians) which became a strong symbol of this struggle of representations. The references to France in the Brazilian republican campaign were many and certainly the press played an important role as a vector to create a Brazilian national consciousness, especially the Francophone one, as expected. To a great extent, we can even state that the allophone press in general played a central role in the creation of a Brazilian national consciousness that is widely used by transnational elements.

July 14 in Brazil

In France, July 14 only became a major national holiday with the Raspail Law on July 6, 1880. During Napoleon’s reign it became subversive and was replaced by August 15, Napoleon Bonaparte’s birthday, the *Fête de Saint Napoléon*, which lasted until the Restoration (1814-1830). Until the Second Empire, the date fluctuated and the celebrations had little adherence. In 1852, Napoleon III restored the St. Napoleon festivities and only after the Franco-Prussian War of 1870, the Third Republic (1870-1940) began to exalt the spirit of the republican struggle. In 1878, Voltaire’s death centenary, a great National Holiday takes place on June 30 during the Universal Exhibition²². That is the movement which arrived in 1880 and July 14 was officially established as the date to celebrate the Republican day. It refers, however, to 1790 and the Festival of the Federation, and not to 1789 and the fall of the Bastille, a date of blood and violence, images one wanted to avoid. Republican Brazil enacted its calendar of civic holidays only two months after the Proclamation of the Republic, 1890, denoting the need to legitimize a process initiated with almost no popular participation. Positivists won the discussions on the dates to be celebrated.

20. Murilo de Carvalho, *A formação das almas*, 12.

21. Murilo de Carvalho, *A formação das almas*, 13.

22. Pierrick Hervé, *Le 14 Juillet, naissance d’une fête nationale* (Poitiers: Centre national de documentation pédagogique - Centre de recherche de documentation pédagogique, n. d.), 27, <https://www.reseau-canope.fr/cndpfileadmin/pour-memoire/le-14-juillet-naissance-dune-fete-nationale/retour-aux-sources/>

Enacted by decree, the mention of July 14 soon caused controversy since European newspapers publicized that the newly established Brazilian Republic had adopted the French positivist calendar²³ due to the action of the group linked to the Positivist Church of Brazil, to which two signatories of the decree belonged: Benjamin Constant (the Brazilian, of course, whose full name was Benjamin Constant Botelho de Magalhães) and Demétrio Ribeiro. Though the Positivist Church of Brazil had few adherents, its members had great repercussion in the debate on establishing the Republic, including creating its calendar. The reaction was not at all unfounded, especially since we know that in the original wording of the decree written by Teixeira Mendes, the July 14 referred only to the French Revolution! He was the first to publish articles in the section entitled *Centro Positivista*, created by him in the Rio de Janeiro newspaper *A Gazeta de Notícias* in 1880²⁴.

Some non-positivists protested, including Rui Barbosa, then Minister of Finance, thus causing unease in the French people who saw their protests as an offense, and the Catholic Church, which considered that the text valued the separation between Church and State. July 14, however, did not always have positivist acceptance. This date already circulated in the debates of the Franco-Brazilian press even before its official institution in France in 1880, after which it became the official celebration of the French people living in Brazil, as, by the way, it did in the rest of the world. There is evidence that abolitionists were called to join the cry for “freedom, fraternity, and equality” and the July 14 celebration gained more support from Brazilians and their causes²⁵.

In other words, nationalists began to join the celebrations of the national holiday of the French colony as long as this symbology helped to legitimize the local Republican project. According to Elisabete Leal, two of the most important newspapers of the time, *Gazeta de Notícias* and *Jornal do Commercio*, registered the French festivities and the Brazilian participation. However, the aim of this article is restricted to analyzing the representations of July 14 in the Franco-Brazilian press.

July 14 in the Franco-Brazilian press before 1889

The period chosen to understand how July 14 was adopted as a holiday in Brazil begins in the 1850s, when French civic celebrations began to appear in the Franco-Brazilian press.

23. Though the accusation was not fully justified since the Positivist Church of Brazil only celebrated January 1st.

24. Elisabete da Costa-Leal, “O calendário republicano e a festa cívica do descobrimento do Brasil em 1890: versões de história e militância positivista”, *História* 25, no. 2 (2006): 68, <https://doi.org/10.1590/S0101-90742006000200004>

25. Costa-Leal, “O calendário republicano”, 74.

1850 and the *quarante-huitard*'s republicanism

Although the controversy over the adoption of the republican model in Brazil had been recurring since the end of the 18th century, it took on new contours in the mid-19th century due to political events in Europe, which also meant important milestones for positivism, which makes us consider the 19th century as an important starting point for the objectives of this study²⁶. At the same time, and as a result of the conflicts in Europe, French immigrants who participated in the revolutions which swept Europe, called *quarante-huitards*²⁷, arrived in Rio de Janeiro. They were Republican enthusiasts who found exile in the Empire of Brazil, thus forming a relatively cohesive group among the elite of the court. What could result in ideological clashes with monarchists, ended up as a relationship of respect and admiration for emperor D. Pedro II, who was considered a progressivist, and with many of its members, united around the newspaper *Courrier du Brésil* (RJ, 1854-1862), like Adolphe Hubert and Charles Ribeyrolles, reaching social prestige and competing for the spreading of Republican ideals in the midst of a monarchist government²⁸. A single reading is all it takes for one to realize that the theme is recurrent in its pages, filled with poems by Victor Hugo and republican guidelines.

Altève Aumont, a French monarchist, criticized this situation as absurd. He was a correspondent specially sent to Brazil by the *Revue de races Latines* and editor, in Brazil, of the weekly *L'Écho du Brésil et de l'Amérique du Sud* (RJ, 1859-1860), a medium of open opposition to the *quarante-huitard* in Rio. Aumont accuses the reputed Charles Ribeyrolles, collaborator for the *Courrier du Brésil* and author of the then recently released book *Le Brésil Pittoresque* (The picturesque Brazil)²⁹, of being opportunistic for calling himself a Republican and, at the same time, flattering the emperor³⁰. In the *Courrier du Brésil* pages, in turn, everything related to the Napoleonic Empire attracts criticism and mockery. St. Napoleon Festival celebrations which, as seen, was the national festival during the Second French Empire, were ridiculed by the *quarante-huitards*.

26. "The Republic, for Comte, was configured as a great carrier of hope for the social regeneration that he himself had been preaching, making possible the coalition between philosophers and proletarians", in Costa-Leal, "O calendário republicano", 67.

27. Derived from the designation for the number "forty-eight" (*quarante-huit*, in French).

28. Letícia Gregório Canelas, "Franceses 'quarante-huitards' no Imperio dos Tropicicos (1848-1862)" (Master's thesis, Universidade Estadual de Campinas, 2007), 95-97, <https://repositorio.unicamp.br/acervo/detalhe/394395>

29. Victor Frond and Charles Ribeyrolles, *Brésil Pittoresque* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographie Nationale y Paris: Lemercier, 1859-1861). Version in Portuguese Charles Ribeyrolles, *Brazil pittoresco. Album de vistas, panoramas, paisagens, monumentos, costumes, etc. com os retratos de Sua Magestade o Imperador Dom Pedro II et [sic] da familia imperial, fotografados por Victor Frond, litographados pelos primeiros artistas de Paris [...] e acompanhados de três volumes in-4º sobre a história, as instituições, as cidades, as fazendas, a cultura, a colonização, etc. do Brasil por Charles Ribeyrolles* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Nacional, 1859).

30. *Écho du Brésil et de l'Amérique du Sud*, Rio de Janeiro, October 23, 1859.

In addition to official events, the only thing to be noticed was the coldness of the small number of people present. If we believe in the approximate statistics of the French living in Rio de Janeiro, the number of our compatriots is estimated to be at least 12000 and yet, on that day, including the curious ones who are everywhere the French flag is raised, we had great difficulty in gathering a hundred French. (...) This observation, proving that St. Napoleon's Day is far from a National Festival for the French in exile, speaks in favor of good traditions.³¹

The situation changes with the growing Brazilian republican campaign and the consequences of the Franco-Prussian War, which shows how the history of the two countries was interlinked. The concept of model, then, is insufficient to explain this phenomenon.

1870 and the Franco-Prussian war

Another important year to organize our discussion is 1870: on the French side, the Franco-Prussian War revived nationalist spirits, activating the republican symbols against the Second French Empire (1852-1870) and inaugurating the Third Republic (1870-1940). Brazil saw the consequences of the Paraguayan War, the strengthening of the Army with explicit positivist inclinations, and the launch of the Republican Manifesto in the São Paulo countryside, a province which emerges as a national economic power, still under D. Pedro II's empire. The national infrastructure is also slightly modernized, including the increase in means of transportation such as the construction of railways and the adoption of new printing technologies, boosting the national publishing market, especially in large centers as the Court. Thus, not a purely political framework, 1870 reverberates the spirit of a modern era which was resized with the advent of the scientific-technological revolution, which will impact on the circulation of information and, therefore, of the imaginary, including French republican values throughout the world. The satirical newspaper *Ba-ta-clan*, published in Rio de Janeiro (1867-1871), covered, in August 1870, the beginning of the Franco-Prussian war and how the Marseillaise was sung with emotion in all Parisian theaters (including the famous Opera), as told by the French press (*La Presse*) which the *Ba-ta-clan* echoes:

La Marseillaise is the order of the day, sung in the opera in every performance and every night in every theater, as well as the stanzas of Alfred Musset, entitled *Le Rhin Allemand*. (...)

In the interval between the stanzas, one heard:

Long live the Emperor! Long live France! Long live the army! War on Prussia!³²

31. *Courrier du Brésil*, Rio de Janeiro, August 18, 1861.

32. *Ba-ta-clan*, Rio de Janeiro, August 20, 1870.

It is in this climate reported by the *Ba-ta-clan* that national symbols, such as the French anthem, gained more vitality, including in Rio de Janeiro. A few months later, on December 3, 1870, the Republican Manifesto was published in the Brazilian newspaper *A República*, in Rio de Janeiro, a movement which was part of the formation of the 1873 São Paulo Republican Party. This nationalist repertoire, increasingly exacerbated by events in Europe, spread throughout Brazil and had the French press as some of its main mediators. If the war gives impetus to republicanism, the projects in dispute both in France and in Brazil became the movement that would culminate in a symbolic war which questioned the Republic and the type of Republic to be adopted.

1878 and the Paris universal exhibition

1878 is another date which is a tipping point, In this year, the Paris Universal Exhibition is marked by patriotic and republican exaltation, honoring the centenary of Voltaire's death, an event that had ample repercussions in Brazil. On July 14, 1878, the four-page weekly *Le Gil Blas*, a satirical and openly republican newspaper written in French and published in Rio de Janeiro, describes the celebrations of July 14 in this city, in which *cariocas*³³ received São Paulo republicans for a celebratory dinner. Its editor, Émile Deleau, still writing under the *nom de plume* Fantasio, extols the seriousness of the Brazilian republican movement and places himself and his newspaper as the representatives of republican France.

Banquet offered by the Republicans of Rio to their coreligionists of São Paulo

A splendid banquet, served in the halls of the Hotel de Europa, gathered on Friday night, under the presidency of Saldanha Marinho, the Republicans of Rio with those of the Provinces. (...) The republican group is, in Brazil, a serious party which the government is obliged to consider.

The purest aspirations guide it, its ardent and youthful patriotism is always led by a healthy logic, a tolerance that has won the esteem of his most declared opponents.

This celebration, which will leave a profound memory in the hearts of all those who attended it... (...) Brazil, on this occasion, remembered 89, the day on which human rights were first proclaimed. We toast to the great French republicans, Victor Hugo and Gambetta.

Gil Blas was also acclaimed as representative of republican France in Brazil. Modern democracy, which made all men equal, made everyone brothers.³⁴

33. Carioca is someone who is born in the city of Rio de Janeiro.

34. *Le Gil Blas*, Rio de Janeiro, July 14, 1878.

Also on July 14, a speech by Victor Hugo at the Literary Congress is reproduced in *Le Gil Blas*, exhorting the role of France as an example: “France is in the public interest. France rises under the horizon of all the people!”³⁵ The following edition, of July 28, 1878, covers the events of June 30 of the Paris Universal Exhibition under the title “La Grande Fête Nationale”:

What a difference from past holidays! What a great and fruitful lesson for the future! Everyone is impressed by the contrast between the celebrations of the monarchy and Bonapartism and those of the Republic, between a people who make their own celebrations and a people who wait for all of them prepared.³⁶

Almost every newspaper covers the event with phrases like “Vive la France! Vive la République!” and includes the long poem *Le Pape* by Victor Hugo in the footer. And, very important to note, in the Brazilian monarchy the *Padroado* prevailed, that is, the Emperor was also the head of the Catholic Church. After all, although *Le Pape* seemed like a praise to the Catholic Church, it was in fact an affront to it, an anticlerical and republican piece, which was not published when he wrote in 1874. As soon as it appeared in France in 1878, it was reproduced in *Le Gil Blas*, hinting at the radicality of the republican campaign of the French group associated with Émile Deleau in Brazil and its participation in local debates.

Its attempt to link between republicanism on both sides of the Atlantic becomes even clearer when it extols the performance of Brazilian musician Carlos Gomes at the Théâtre de la Scala in Paris, conducting his famous opera *O Guarany*, a romantic play and symbol of Brazil’s long-sought national identity, being acclaimed by an audience of 5 000 people³⁷. The presence of French Republicans among Brazilians is striking, especially in the Franco-Brazilian press. This further stimulated the reception of hexagonal republican symbols. Only two years later, in 1880, the Raspail Law was enacted, making July 14 the official national day in France after Jules Grévy’s victory.

On March 18, 1883, Émile Deleau wrote in his new newspaper *Messenger du Brésil* (RJ, 1878-1884) to praise the strength that the July 14 celebrations gained in Brazil, relating this success with the growing adherence to Republican ideals. The organizing committee for the July 14 holiday, already in its third edition, was now under Louis Couty’s direction, an important name in the colony. He was associated with the debates on the substitution of slave labor in Brazil and advocated for the gradual transition to wage labor. He even states, in his 1881 book *L’esclavage au Brésil* (The slavery in Brazil), that “In Brazil, (...) the prejudice of race does not exist”. In this book there is also the well-known motto that

35. *Le Gil Blas*, Rio de Janeiro, July 14, 1878, 2.

36. *Le Gil Blas*, Rio de Janeiro, July 28, 1878.

37. *Le Gil Blas*, Rio de Janeiro, July 28, 1878.

“Brazil has no people”, referring to the lack of popular participation in the political events³⁸. As mentioned above, Republicans precisely emphasized popular engagement in contrast to the inexpressive adherence to monarchy – that, if indeed existed in France, lacked concreteness in Brazil. Thus, the mobilization of symbols should contribute to try and remedy such indifference.

Deleau states that “the division and rivalry between some French groups” in “our small colony”³⁹ in Brazil almost jeopardized the 1883 July 14 organization. Deleau reacts, arguing that the Republican cause should be everyone’s motto at this troubled moment for France. He complains that French immigrants learned the local language and forgot how to be French. July 14 appears here, thus, as an occasion to reinforce this patriotic feeling toward the native land: “‘Are you French?’ they respond invariably: [in Portuguese] Si, Senhor! [Yes, sir]!”⁴⁰ Denis Rolland had already noted that July 14 fostered in immigrants a sense of belonging, thus preventing them from being absorbed by local cultures⁴¹.

Deleau also celebrated the existing associations, including the creation of new groups such as “*la Gymnastique, le 14 Juillet, les Franc Galois*”⁴², and those which arose to strengthen the union of the French living in Brazil. However, we know that, in practice, these internal divisions in the colony will remain due to conflicts on French soil and the competing interests of the colony in Brazil. In any case, July 14 acts as a unifying moment that overcomes infighting and enables the organization of a national day which was, in general, broadly supported in the colony. An example of this union was translated into the preparations for the 1883 national festivity, which included the opening of a subscription to build a monument in honor of the French political leader Léon Gambetta, who died in 1882. He was of those who helped establish the Third French Republic and overthrow Napoleon III’s Second Empire⁴³. For Deleau, the defense of republican ideals amid D. Pedro II’s rule in Brazil was not only evident but obligatory.

To those who would like to celebrate July 14 without associating it at the same time with the name of the Republic, we will declare open merciless war, with the certainty of having with us the unanimity of our fellow citizens to help and support us.⁴⁴

38. Louis Couty, *L’esclavage au Brésil* (Paris: Librairie de Guillaumin et Cie. Editeurs, 1881), 66.

39. *Le Messager du Brésil*, Rio de Janeiro, March 18, 1883.

40. March 18, 1883.

41. Denis Rolland, *Mémoire et imaginaire de la France en Amérique latine: la commémoration du 14 juillet, 1939-1945* (Paris: L’Harmattan, 2000).

42. *Le Messager du Brésil*, Rio de Janeiro, March 18, 1883.

43. *Le Messager du Brésil*, Rio de Janeiro, June 24, 1883.

44. *Le Messager du Brésil*, Rio de Janeiro, June 24, 1883.

July 14, 1883, generates other controversies, with Brazilians complaining about participation, to which they suffer open resistance from Émile Deleau who speaks in his newspaper on behalf of the French colony, stating that the festivities had to be radically Republican and exclusively French. That same issue reports that the newspaper, whose circulation was 5 000 copies, would be distributed at the party:

NOTICE

Since the “*Messenger du Brésil*” printing press will be closed on July 14, the day of the National Holiday of France, its Sunday 15 edition will be distributed in the morning of the 14th.

This edition will be dedicated to the National Day, with a circulation of 5 000 copies.⁴⁵

The festival finally takes place and is prominently reported, greeting the good welcome of Brazilians to the French republican day⁴⁶, despite Deleau’s resistance. The following year, 1884, seemed to not have had so many conflicts and the commemorative edition was bilingual (Figure 1):

Figure 1. *Le Messenger du Brésil*



Source: The 1883 and 1884 July 14 editions of *Le Messenger du Brésil*, day of the National Holiday in France. The former is in French only, while the 1884 edition brings bilingual texts. Hemeroteca Digital Brasileira – Biblioteca Nacional.

45. *Le Messenger du Brésil*, Rio de Janeiro, July 24, 1883.

46. *Le Messenger du Brésil*, Rio de Janeiro, July 24, 1883.

On June 29, 1884, the *Messageur du Brésil* announces in “Transformation du Messageur” (The Messageur transformation) its entry into a new phase as from July 1, as it opens its front page with the section “Propagande Franco-Brésilienne”. In it, Deleau defends French nationalist exaltation and emphasizes that cosmopolitanism is the result of commercial links, cultural events, etc. and not a loss of identity⁴⁷. Rapprochement with Brazilians was increasing, probably a strategy to survive and defend French interests in Brazil. The newspaper increasingly stands as a true cultural mediator, investing in a bilingual edition whose purpose is to make Brazil better known abroad and try to establish itself as the “trait d’union”⁴⁸ between the two cultures.

Thus, when the commemorative issue of July 14, 1884 (figure 1) is published, a few days later, the publication is situated in this atmosphere of communion with Brazilians (and not rivalry, as in the previous year). Probably the new attitude of the Francophone press – which made a point of identifying itself as exclusively “French” and then changing its posture and offering itself as a mediator – the “hyphen” or “trait d’union” – had repercussions on the acceptance of the French references of positivists who instituted the civic calendar of the Brazilian Republic, proclaimed a few years later. Its symbology is one of cooperation between both countries, represented as partners, with a Brazil which amounts to the luminous condition and has France as a guide. It seems that by adopting this new orientation, publishers, now already including George Lardy as manager, were interested in providing a less political and more commercial newspaper to their compatriots, probably a survival strategy in a more competitive editorial market.

This was also the tone adopted in the new *Revue de France et du Brésil* as well as the *Almanach du Messageur du Brésil pour l’année of 1884*, both by-products of *Messageur du Brésil*, gathering the same group of collaborators, among them Brazilians, such as Ferreira de Araújo, a reputed editor of the *A Gazeta de Notícias* in Rio de Janeiro. The integration of the French colony into the Brazilian intellectual elite resulted in the affirmation of Republican values. Another example showing this transition was the new newspaper of entrepreneur A. George Lardy, who founded, alongside Xavier de Ricard, “poet, republican, and anticlerical”⁴⁹ who had fought in the Franco-Prussian War, the weekly *Le Sud Américain – organe des intérêts français dans l’Amérique du Sud* in the year after the publication of *Messageur*, whose first issue appeared on July 5, 1885 with a subtitle showing its broader ambition to be an organ for the French throughout South America.

47. Valéria Guimarães, “Imprensa franco-brasileira e mediação: Rio de Janeiro e São Paulo, séculos XIX e XX”, in *Imprensa em língua estrangeira publicada no Brasil: primeiras incursões*, eds. Valéria Guimarães and Tania Regina de Luca (São Paulo: Rafael Copetti Editor, 2017), 87-144.

48. “Hyphen” is the most appropriate translation, but here the intention is to emphasize the link between the two cultures and countries.

49. Claudio Henrique de Moraes Batalha, “Um socialista francês diante da escravidão no Brasil: Louis-Xavier de Ricard e o jornal *Le Sud-Américain*”, in *Franceses no Brasil: séculos XIX e XX*, eds. Laurent Vidal and Tania Regina de Luca (São Paulo: Universidad Estatal Paulista, 2009), 162.

As Claudio Batalha observes, these Frenchmen's stance, such as Xavier Ricard (we could add several others, including those mentioned), was ambiguous: they defended the Republic, immigration in place of slavery, federalism, and autonomy –against what they called the “authoritarian and centralist military party”⁵⁰– but, in Brazil, they defended French colonial interests. Despite this, we know that Xavier de Ricard maintained a sociability network in Brazil which included Republican Manifesto signatories, such as Lopes Trovão⁵¹, in addition to openly defending the wing more linked to the socialist tendencies of the French parliament. On July 14, 1885, *Le Sud Américain* (RJ, 1885-86) again evokes the symbol as “a universal date in the history of humanity” and publishes the coverage of the National Holiday in France and Brazil, with emphasis on programming.

Figure 2. *Le Sud Américain*, July 14, 1885



Source: Marseillaise is included in the program ending the concert organized by the Club 14 Juillet. Seção de Publicações Seriadas – Biblioteca Nacional.

50. Batalha, “Um socialista francês”, 164.
51. Batalha, “Um socialista francês”, 168.

The French symbols of the revolution, such as July 14 and the Marseillaise (which is included in the 1885 Grand National Holiday Concert program, figure 2) were used by Brazilians to try and mobilize Republicans of various tendencies and, after 1889, were part of the attempt to replace the still strongly held monarchist symbols. For the French colonies, however, they turned out to be an important weapon of social projection, previously marked by distinction but increasingly aimed at integration.

1889-1890: The nationalist integration

As the republican movement gained strength with the wide use of the French symbology of the revolution by certain involved groups, the trend was to increase this rapprochement between the French and Brazilians. But the colonies were neither homogeneous nor did things pass in a linear temporal perspective. 1885 also saw examples of this posture emphasizing the defense of French interests in Brazil, and those of French people living here. This will always appear in Francophone publications, as with another publication by P. Labarrière, the magazine *La France*:

Every Frenchman, when he leaves the realm of his private interests to take care of the Public Thing, can only have one legitimate goal: the prosperity of his homeland. This is our [goal]. We will achieve this by spreading in France the knowledge of Brazil's immense resources and fighting here for French interests.⁵²

But Labarrière will adopt another position a few years later. While his magazine *La France* seems not to have prospered, *Le Brésil Républicain*, a new newspaper under his direction, published in Rio de Janeiro between 1890 and 1897, had better luck, lasting almost a decade. We have access only up to 1890, in which we can read praise to the 1889 Brazilian "revolution" and to official initiatives aimed at integrating settlers into the national political life:

We must not forget that the proclamation of the Republic in Brazil had important consequences for us, members of foreign colonies. First of all, from a political point of view. In fact, a decree of nationalization, dated December 15, came to conquer for us the enjoyment of all civil and political rights and to absolutely equate us with Brazilian citizens. The affairs of this country have thus become ours and we are no longer allowed to remain indifferent to them (...).⁵³

52. *La France*, Rio de Janeiro, November 19, 1885.

53. *Le Brésil Républicain*, Rio de Janeiro, February 15, 1890.

Although he had also berated the process of naturalization of foreigners by the 1889 decree⁵⁴, the perspective and isolation of the colony changed, as well as the emphasis on the identity of the French. These topics increasingly overlapped with the Brazilian nationalist and Republican spirit, therefore making room for both countries to exchange national symbols. It is in this spirit that preparations for the 1890 July 14 celebrations received Labarrière's attention, who highlights insists that that year's festival should be special: "We know that the committee is struggling with unforeseen difficulties, including obtaining adequate facilities. However, the general opinion is that this next festival should have an unusual glow"⁵⁵, precisely because it occurred under already the Republic. In fact, as we saw, the party gathered the French and Brazilians, a deliberate choice, definitively relegating to the past that initial panorama in which the French were more exclusive. Despite complaining about the inaction of the organizing committee, an atmosphere of cooperation was evident as it is explicit in the newspaper *Correio do Povo*, quoted in this same note from *Le Brésil Républicain*, translated into French:

Without further information from the Committee, we translated the following statement from the July 26 *Correio do Povo*:

"Great celebrations are being prepared for July 14. In addition to the official solemnity, annually celebrated by the July 14 Committee, this year's holiday will have a popular character according to the new form of government and the feelings of the Brazilian people.

To this end, a committee composed of French and Brazilian citizens is expected to meet next Saturday (today), to which members of the press will be admitted".⁵⁶

A few years later, when the Republic was already under civil president Prudente de Morais, the *Almanach du Brésil Républicain* lastingly incorporated the Brazilian civic calendar, publishing its first edition in French, in 1895, in the *Renseignements Utiles* (Useful Teachings) section (figure 3).

54. There was much complaint about the naturalization process because it did not give foreign citizens the right to apply for public office, according to Labarrière (*Le Brésil Républicain*, Rio de Janeiro, June 23, 1890).

55. *Le Brésil Républicain*, Rio de Janeiro, July 23, 1890.

56. "Le 14 juillet de 1890", *Le Brésil Républicain*, Rio de Janeiro, July 23, 1890.

Figure 3. *Almanach du Brésil Républicain*, 1895

Jours de fêtes nationales	
1er. janvier—	Consacré à la commémoration de la fraternité universelle.
24 février—	Commémoration de la date de la proclamation de la constitution de la République.
21 avril—	Commémoration des Précurseurs de l'indépendance brésilienne, résumés en Tiradentes.
3 mai—	Commémoration de la découverte du Brésil.
13 mai—	Commémoration de la fraternité des Brésiliens.
14 juillet—	Commémoration de la République, de la liberté et de l'indépendance des peuples américains.
7 septembre—	Commémoration de l'indépendance du Brésil.
12 octobre—	Commémoration de la découverte de l'Amérique.
2 novembre—	Commémoration générale des morts.
15 novembre—	Commémoration de la Patrie brésilienne.

Source: Brazilian civic calendar published in French by *Almanach du Brésil Républicain* in French, in 1895, its first edition. Hemeroteca Digital Brasileira - Biblioteca Nacional.

Thereafter, every newspaper published in French in Brazil will give some space to the French National Holiday celebrated on July 14, regardless of its convictions in the various possible political combinations of republicanism adopted in the turbulent beginnings of the Third French Republic. On Brazilian soil, in turn, the party becomes increasingly Franco-Brazilian. There are several examples, among them Henri and Charles Morel's *Revue commerciale financière et maritime de l'Empire du Brésil* (1882-1924), an important and long-lived newspaper published for more than 40 years that changed its name to *Étoile du Sud*. As one can imagine, his influence on the colony was remarkable and his relations with the Brazilian elite were many and consistent. Also, in 1884, this commercial paper emphasized the modeling role of France and the universal Latin feeling that July 14 led to the French worldwide:

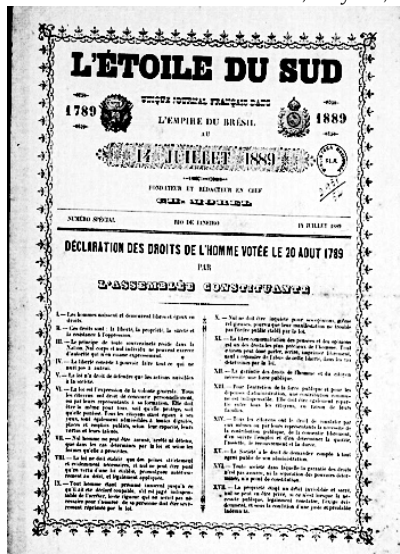
July 14!

The French scattered all over the world, we are united today in thought. Our whole soul is directed to our homeland and, in a sublime impulse, gathered under our flag, we have come to remind the world that France has no bastards.⁵⁷

57. *Revue commerciale financière et maritime de l'Empire du Brésil*, Rio de Janeiro, July 1-15, 1884.

But on July 13, 1889, under the heightened tensions which would lead to D. Pedro II's fall, the *Étoile du Sud* announced a special commemorative supplement “*Étoile du Sud du Centenaire*” (figure 4). The cover of the supplement issued the following day highlights that it was the only French newspaper on the Brazilian July 14. Indeed, no other newspaper was published in French in Brazil this year. That supplement stamped the coats of arms of the French Republic and the Brazilian Empire side by side, in a conciliatory attitude with the powers in force⁵⁸.

Figure 4. *Étoile du Sud du Centenaire*, July 14, 1889



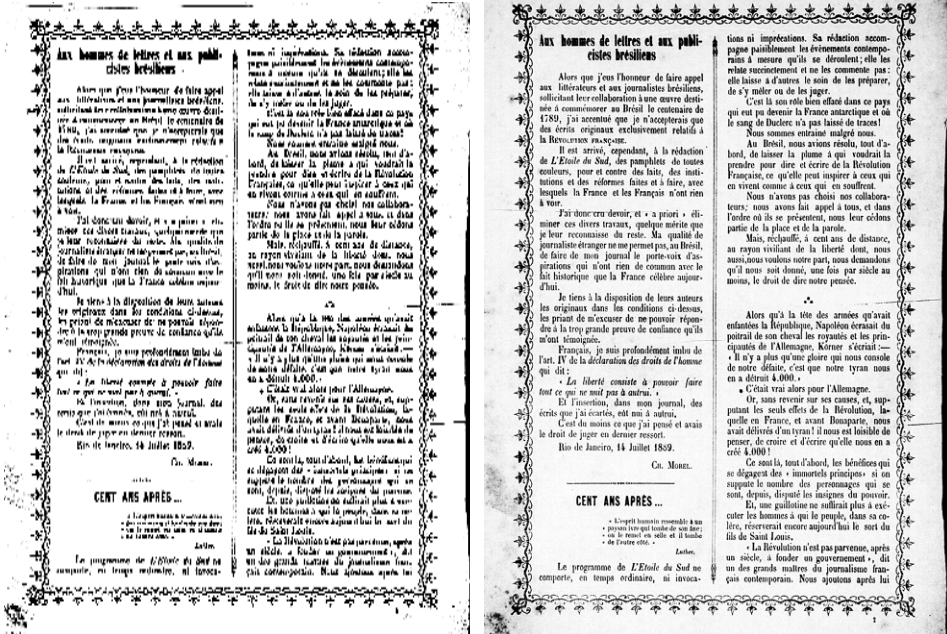
Source: The special commemorative supplement *Étoile du Sud du Centenaire* (1889) had the coats of arms of the French Republic and the Brazilian Empire side by side in a conciliatory attitude with the powers in force. Hemeroteca Digital Brasileira - Biblioteca Nacional.

Conciliation soon revealed a hidden restlessness: on the next page comes a statement “Aux hommes de lettres et aux publicistes brésiliens” (To the men of Brazilian letters and publicists), signed by Charles Morel (figure 5). The letter claims they stopped publishing several texts which were sent to the newsroom since they did not exclusively refer to the French Revolution: “Nevertheless, pamphlets of all persuasions have come to the *L’Étoile du Sud*, for and against facts, institutions and reforms made and yet to be made, with which France and the French people have nothing to do”⁵⁹.

58. *L’Étoile du Sud*, Rio de Janeiro, July 13-14, 1889.

59. Special commemorative supplement *Étoile du Sud du Centenaire*, July 14, 1889, *L’Étoile du Sud*, Rio de Janeiro, 2, 1889.

Figure 5. Étoile du Sud du Centenaire, July 14, 1889



Source: "To the men of Brazilian letters and publicists", statement signed by Charles Morel, L'Étoile du Sud publisher. Hemeroteca Digital Brasileira - Biblioteca Nacional.

This was only a few months before the Proclamation of the Republic and tempers were fierce. The fact that Morel's newspaper received numerous contributions in which the values of July 14 and the French Revolution were incorporated into the national debate already shows that this date played an important symbolic role in the Brazilian political culture. The next year, 1890, Brazilian republican authorities celebrated July 14 as a national holiday together with the French. After that, the symbology of July 14 will permanently be Franco-Brazilian. Even if the date, for the French colony, goes to its nationality, this is no longer the given emphasis. Brazilian elites increasingly participate in the French holiday and vice versa. The motto is that cooperation and nationalist discourse falls apart, especially after the law of "great naturalization". The pantheon of the Brazilian republican authorities, created in place of the sacralized representations of the monarchical family (who still had strong popular appeal) soon benefits from this strong positivist campaign and again July 14 meets their interests. The *Revue Franco-Brasilienne* of 1898, edited by Duncan Wagner and Alfred de Carmand, publishes the National Holiday Program held in Rio de Janeiro, with the participation of several Brazilians, in which the *Marseillaise* is performed alongside the Brazilian National Anthem.

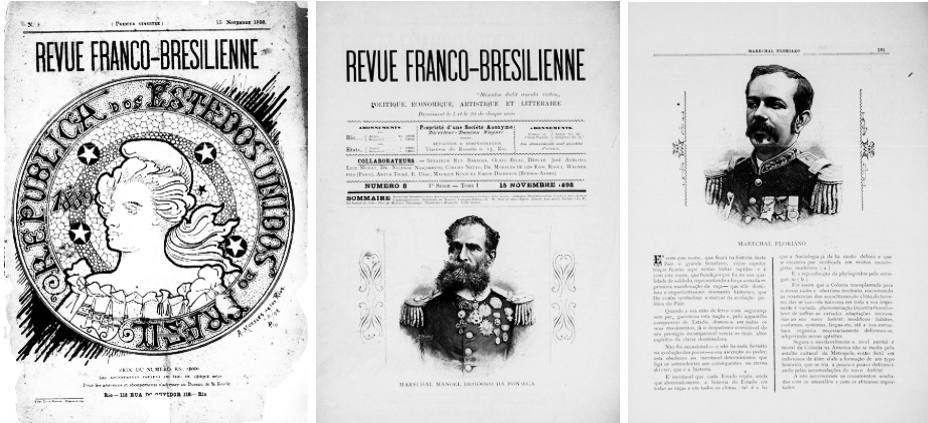
Figure 6. *Revue Franco-Brsilienne*, July 14, 1898.



Source: National Program of the July 14 Festivities held in Rio de Janeiro. Hemeroteca Digital Brasileira - Biblioteca Nacional.

The editors of this literary magazine published in French and Portuguese, some of the texts being bilingual. They also had the collaboration of none other than Coelho Neto, Olavo Bilac and Luiz Murat, in addition to exalting Rui Barbosa in the section *Silhouettes Contemporaines*. Alongside this new elite of men of letters who will soon star in the tropical *Belle Époque* at the dawn of the 20th century. The new Republican heroes are erected in full-page effigies in their special November 15, 1898 supplement: military presidents Marechal Deodoro and Floriano Peixoto, Republican Manifesto signatory Saldanha Marinho, and presidents Prudente de Moraes and Campos Sales.

Figure 7. *Revue Franco-Brésilienne*, July 14, 1898



Source: The pantheon of the Brazilian republican authorities benefits from the strong positivist campaign and July 14 serves their interests. Hemeroteca Digital Brasileira – Biblioteca Nacional.

It is possible that the *Revue Française du Brésil* group had good relations with positivists, but it was not composed exclusively by them. This suggests that such references went beyond the restricted circles of the group engaged in the approval of the Brazilian civic calendar⁶⁰. In São Paulo, the increasing colony at the end of the 19th century was also mobilized. The most important newspaper published in the coffee capital was *Le Messager de St. Paul* (1901-1924), whose name changed to *Le Messager de São Paulo* in 1905, in a move that clearly favored integration. Founded on July 14, it celebrated its anniversary and the 1902 National Holiday. Although it devoted only a very modest note to the celebration due to lack of resources, as his editor Eugène Hollender claimed, it does not let the date go unnoticed, once again adopting a conciliatory tone: “We congratulate the French colony of São Paulo and the Brazilian nation on this occasion because they celebrate this historic date with pomp. Long live France! Long live Brazil! [Vive la France ! Vive le Brésil !]”⁶¹.

The same occurs 18 years later, in 1920, when the newspaper? takes advantage of the date to lament the consequences of the War and exalt Latinity against Pangermanism, pervasive in Brazil at the time: “The July 14 we celebrate today must therefore be, once again, the holiday of trust in the destiny of the homeland and of the race which, more

60. Contrary to what Leal suspected, “The celebration of July 14 and September 7 has (sic) the distribution of the lithographs of Danton and José Bonifácio, creations of Décio Villares, but there is no record that they were activities outside the circle of positivists of the IPB.” Costa-Leal, “O calendário republicano”, 76.

61. *Le Messager de St. Paul*, São Paulo, July 14, 1902.

than ever, we are not allowed to doubt: Long live France! Long live Brazil!”⁶². In 1922, Brazilian parliamentarian and São Paulo historian Eugenio Egas⁶³, argues, upon signing the July 14 note, that the date belongs not only to France, “pride of the Latin race”, but also to the whole world. He also acknowledges the Brazilian debt to the France: “All Brazilians recognize the French influence in organizing and developing their nationality”⁶⁴.

Conclusions

It is widely known that the French Republic has provided symbols for the constitution of a civic culture of the nascent Latin American republics⁶⁵. Historiography has also addressed that Republican National Holidays such as July 14 were an element of this repertoire. In this text we have tried to shed more light on the interests involved by analyzing the representations of July 14 in the press published in French in Brazil⁶⁶. And this media culture played a central role in the creation of a French-inspired transnational republican imaginary, since it acted as an important mediator (*passeur culturel*) between the two cultures.

French newspapers and magazines published in Brazil represented the *Fête Nationale* in several ways: defending the republican values still under the monarchist Empire of Dom Pedro II and sometimes defending that the date be exclusively French, sometimes admitting an approximation with the nationals, a tendency that was skillfully exploited by the republicans, especially the positivists, to the point of pressuring for July 14 to become a Brazilian holiday. Thus, it is symptomatic that Etienne Brasil’s account of the emblematic July 14, 1890, published in 1920 and whose basis was the memories of older French citizens and the French-Brazilian press, underlines the integration and, above all, its harmony with Brazilians. After all, this process of appropriation and overlapping of the republican national symbols of both countries did not take place in a linear way, nor in harmony, as is supposed based on their record. The role of political myth is understood as a factor that unites past and present, history and memory, in order to unify them by overcoming.

62. *Le Messager de São Paulo*, São Paulo, July 14 1920.

63. Álvaro-Weissheimer Carneiro-Christiani, Marques-Menusier Giancristóforo-Dainis and Karepovs-Suely Campos de Azambuja, “Eugenio Egas”, *Acervo Histórico da Assembleia Legislativa de São Paulo – Exposições*, página web, Exposições, Parlamentares Paulistas, <https://app.al.sp.gov.br/acervohistorico/exposicoes/parlamentares-paulistas/egas/>

64. *Le Messager de São Paulo*, São Paulo, July 14, 1922.

65. One of the best studies on the subject is still undoubtedly Murilo de Carvalho, *A formação das almas*.

66. Denis Rolland dedicated two works (2000; 2005) to the general theme of the French “model” for Latin America in which he addresses July 14. One of them exclusively analyzes the universal symbology of this holiday. His stimulating study focuses more, however, on the decades after World War I, especially World War II, and does not use 19th century Franco-Brazilian newspapers as its source.

There is no need to say that it is to the French Revolution (...) that belongs the glory of finishing the work begun by our first kings, but left scandalously unfinished by their last successors. (...) Far from breaking continuity with the past, the Revolution (...) is, on the contrary, a symbol of reunion, of fusion, of collective enthusiasm. Of all the great events that have marked its course, it is the Celebration of the Federation, the swearing of the Champ de Mars on July 14, 1790, that expresses its deepest significance.⁶⁷

The Brazilian republicans took advantage of the collective ritual promoted by the French colony, the conviviality at dinners, dances, recitals, operas in which a heavy load of symbols such as the anthem, the flag, the colors, the female allegories, and, obviously, July 14, could be exhibited. This integration of Brazil with the world through French ideals would thus extend to its mythological integration into Latin America and the supposedly natural “Latinity” connecting these countries to France, Brazil included. And all this with a strong symbolism of the “people” – a people who, as we know, was scarcely engaged in the Proclamation of the Republic. The civic idea of “people” projected in these universal French ideals thus served to try to legitimize the Republic without, however, effectively engaging a despised people seen as a threat. On the other hand, for the French there was a great advantage in these arrangements, even though their nationalist discourse lost space over time, especially after the 1930s. It was in this year that the “Revolução de 1930” took place, a *coup d'état* that promoted the rearrangement of the oligarchies within the power which these French groups were closely connected. Its leader, Getúlio Vargas, institutes an increasingly nationalistic government and July 14 is no longer a Brazilian holiday.

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- [6] *L'Étoile du Sud*, RJ, Brazil, 1889.
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