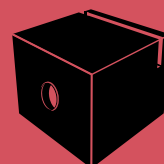


ADVENTURES OF A PHOTOGRAPHER FROM MADEIRA IN THE IMPERIAL COURT OF BRAZIL

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Published by:



EARLY VISUAL MEDIA LAB

C I C A N T

*AVENTURAS DE UM FOTÓGRAFO
DA MADEIRA NA CORTE IMPERIAL
DO BRASIL*

Abstract

Based on the discovery of four portraits in the collection of the Brazilian National Archives, we researched the trajectory of Diogo Luis Cipriano (1820-1870), born on Madeira Island, one of the first daguerreotypists to settle in Rio de Janeiro. We try to describe the tensions and conflicts between painters, miniaturists and photographers in search for their prestige and commercial success in the capital of the Empire of Brazil, between 1850 and 1870. On the other hand, we analyze how in the public arena of the newspaper pages and the busy corners of the Court, techniques are confronted, talents are measured and, mainly, the signs of modernity and the monopoly of *saudade* (nostalgia) are disputed.

Keywords: Daguerreotype; Miniaturists; Brazil – Empire; Brazil – History of Photography; Photography – Nineteenth-century.

Resumo

A partir da descoberta de quatro retratos na coleção do Arquivo Nacional brasileiro, investigamos a trajetória de Diogo Luis Cipriano (1820-1870), nascido na Ilha da Madeira, um dos primeiros daguerreotipistas a se estabelecer no Rio de Janeiro. Procuramos descrever as tensões e os conflitos entre pintores, miniaturistas e fotógrafos por prestígio e sucesso comercial na capital do Império do Brasil, entre 1850 e 1870. Por outro lado, observamos como na arena pública das páginas dos jornais e das movimentadas esquinas da Corte confrontam-se técnicas, medem-se talentos e, principalmente, disputam-se os signos de modernidade e o monopólio da saudade.

Palavras chave: Daguerreotipia; Miniaturistas; Brasil – Império; Brasil – História da Fotografia; Fotografia – Sec. XIX

Photography

What uproar goes on in the press!
What a nonsensical game!
Some say they are artists,
Others say: – they are insane!
(Modesto, Correio Mercantil, 04/06/1867)

The real victim of photography, however, was not
landscape painting, but the portrait miniature.
(Walter Benjamin, Little History of photography)

Rio de Janeiro's sky is particularly beautiful in May. The light is more diffused, the temperature is mild. An excellent day for a daguerreotype, Dr. Manoel Joaquim Menezes, lieutenant-colonel major surgeon of the Brazilian army, may have thought. Not that the brightness of the day mattered, as the ad guaranteed that the “gallery, expressly prepared with a large skylight” allows “taking portraits every day, *whatever the weather.*” (CM, 04/03/1851, p 3) The event had been planned for some months, since His Majesty had awarded him the rank of Knight of the Imperial Order of the Rose. Those portraits cost a small fortune, especially for a retired officer.

He had always been wronged. Even in the Chamber of Representatives they mentioned him as an example of how much the army surgeons were suffering! However, the Order of the Rose – the most beautiful commendation in the Empire – consoles all injustices. Dr. Menezes, promoter of the Santa Cruz dos Militares Brotherhood, leaves his house on Rua da Ajuda, near Morro do Castelo, and heads to Rua dos Ourives, the location of the workshops of Diogo Luis Cipriano, one of

the four daguerreotypists that announced regularly at the *Correio Mercantil* that year. The retired lieutenant colonel, 66 years old, takes his wife Eufêmia Marciana Mendonça de Menezes and his single daughters Maria de Menezes and Ana Edetrudes de Menezes.

– Come, then, to the portraits! – he may have ordered women in the family. Married children would have to pay for their own daguerreotypes if they so wished. He had waited too long for his value to be recognized. Now, sitting in front of the

portraitist, does he feel the weight of age — or is it the weight of medals that curves his chest? The eyelids give way. The surgeon closes his eyes. He had thought of his daughters and the shadow of remorse had clouded his face.

The portraits produced on that day were donated to the National Archives, in Rio de Janeiro, as part of the Collection of engineer Francisco Bicalho, a set of daguerreotypes, ambrotypes and photographs on albumen paper that had reached the descendants of the engineer through one of the great-granddaughters of Dr. Menezes. At the request of this institution, I did extensive research around these images, identifying the photographer and investigating the characters. I was especially interested in the way photography, this particular portrait session, would serve to illuminate the ordinary life of the urban middle class of the Imperial Court in the mid-nineteenth-century. And mostly, that intermediate dimension of existence, between public and private life, whose borders the photograph had helped to blur. I dedicated myself mainly to three stories that intertwine themselves in that day: that of the military surgeon Manoel Joaquim de Menezes and his zeal for commendations and honours, that of the obscure poet Ana Edeltrudes de Menezes (Figure 2) and her commitment to the cause of the moral emancipation of women — that is, the right to education, one of the first female political agendas in nineteenth-century Brazil – and that of the photographer and miniaturist Diogo Luís Cipriano, whose inventive actions in search of prestige and fortune illustrate the arduous competition between artists in the portrait market of the capital city of the Empire of Brazil.¹ The closed eyes of the patriarch hide

past secrets but they also invite us to dive into the oneiric dimension of images where unrealized dreams are kept, where history is conjugated in the future perfect.

In this text, I focus on the photographer Diogo Luis Cipriano, born in Madeira Island, one of the first daguerreotypists to settle in Rio de Janeiro, about whom, until 2019, almost nothing was known - and the few existing information was inaccurate and contradictory. His trajectory will help us to describe the tensions and conflicts between painters, miniaturists and photographers in search of artistic recognition and commercial success between 1850 and 1870. In the public arena of the pages of newspapers and the busy corners of the Court, techniques are compared and talents are measured and, mostly, the signs of modernity and the monopoly of *saudade* (nostalgia) are disputed.

The plates are ready, polished, they shine like mirrors. Perfect. Many people think that calling daguerreotypes “mirrors with memory” is a kind of a metaphor. It is not. The daguerreotype is born a mirror and only then becomes a photograph. Diogo Luís Cipriano observes the fleeting reflection of his face and his fingers on the silver surface while washing the plates. Sparks of light dance in the water. He repeats the gestures he learned from his teacher Guilherme Telfer, from whom he had bought the business on Rua do Ourives. A good deal, he thought that day, since a whole family was coming to have their portraits taken.

Diogo dreamed of increasingly large families, with their daguerreotypes hanging on the wall. He had learned the painter’s profession from his father, also called Diogo Luís Cipriano, who was already painting in Funchal, Madeira Island. Regarding his emigration to Brazil, there are conflicting versions. In one of these, his father had debts on the island, sold what was

left of his family inheritance to the English and emigrated to Brazil in 1811, bringing his wife and children. According to a local historian, on the back of a painting attributed to his father, located in Rio de Janeiro in 1915, there was a note saying that he had emigrated because he did not have “a life of economic expansion in his homeland, having gone to Brazil that opened its doors in an welcoming manner, and where he exuberantly showed his talent as an artist”. The mentioned painting was reportedly taken to a public deposit due to an inheritance dispute between the painter’s children after his death at the age of 90 (Carita, 2007, p. 480). If Diogo, the son, could have known what they would say about that painting 150 years from then, he would have lost one of the plates. I was me who painted it, he would have said, outraged by the historical injustice that posterity reserved for him in his homeland.

A second version about his origin says that it was his son, also a painter, who took the initiative to come to Brazil. Also called Diogo Luis Cipriano, born around 1801, he became involved in one of the most complicated and controversial episodes in Madeira Island in the nineteenth-century, the liberal movement of 1821 that followed the approval of the constitution by the Courts, in Lisbon; a conflict in which the governor of the island and the bishop of Elvas are opponents. In the course of the controversy, both sides claim to be defenders of the Constitution and accuse the opponent of conspiring against it. In an anonymous account of the episodes, we can read: “Everything is a mess, everything is in disarray. Nobody knows who is the aggressor, who defends the public cause” (Botelho, 1821, p. 9). The bishop ended up by being expelled from the island on 22 February, leaving for Lisbon by ship. The next day, the city would have dawned with “flags painted with saints, and some

1) This text expands the session on the photographer Diogo Luís Cipriano, originally published as part of Lissovsky, 2019.

religious emblems". The young painter Diogo Luís Cipriano had taken sides with the bishop and because he was a suspect of being the author of the flags that defied the governor's authority he is arrested that same night (Botelho, 1821, p. 40). In the representation he writes, in May 1821, he denounces the "bosses of the land", who feared that their "many hidden iniquities" were exposed, particularly in favouring the British interests on the island (Rodrigues, 2008, p. 71-73).²

— Perhaps that painter was my father — Diogo, the daguerreotypist, would smile, happy with the eventual heroism of his father. Once released, Diogo would have packed his belongings and emigrated to Brazil with his family.³ In my opinion, the only former political prisoner of the liberal revolution in Madeira has never left the island. He stayed there taking care of his business and it was his son the one who emigrated and who arrived in Brazil in 1847 to live off his art (AN, 4/27/1915, p. 1), managing to establish himself in the Court in 1850, both as a painter and a miniaturist. Three years later, Diogo Luís Cipriano, the one who stayed in Madeira, decides to support his son who now wanted to dedicate himself to the art of the daguerreotype, since he sends a bank draft to Rio de Janeiro, addressed to "Diogo Luís Cipriano Junior". (CM, 7/13/1853, p. 2).

— Damn Madeira Island, where all painters are called Diogo Luís Cipriano! — Junior could have said to himself, sympathetic to the difficulties of future biographers. I hope that

customers remember to come in black or dark clothes, as William Telfer, his master of trade, always recommended.

William, or Guilherme, as he also signed his name, has been working in Rio de Janeiro since 1849, being one of the pioneers of photography in the Court (JC, 2/6/1849, p. 3). English or Scottish, according to the source, he boasts that he arrived from the United States, which, in those times, reinforces his pedigree as an artist of the new times. In October 1850, after receiving two boxes of material from France (JC, 9/30/1850, p. 2), he announced himself as a "daguerreotype teacher" and claims that he can make portraits with "such a natural expression to the eyes" that "stand out from all that can be made in this country". Natural eyes, eyes that seem so alive that they give us back the look — this was the first exclusive advantage of photography. Given the daguerreotypes' visionary eyes, the eyes of the painting are like dull orbits of dead fish or enamelled glass balls on toy mannequins. The daguerreotypist announces that he takes portraits of all sizes, from the smallest ones adopted to be placed in scrapbooks (JC, 15/10/1850, p. 4). The smaller, undoubtedly, the closer to the heart and the easier to take with you. The teaching was accompanied by the sale of equipment, since his workshop offered "a wide range of paintings, little boxes, medallions, etc., all the objects that belong to the daguerreotype." (CM, 04/03/1851, p. 4) In the following year, there are already, at least eight, daguerreotypists active in the Court. Competition among professionals was

fierce and it would not be surprising if it also passed on to their slaves, resulting in serious injuries such as the "stab in the belly" that a Telfer's slave got in a "capoeira conflict" that occurred at nine o'clock in the evening, in front of the master's workshop, "on Rua do Ourives near Rua do Cano" (CM, 30/9/1852, p. 1).⁴ That year, the Academy of Fine Arts organized an exhibition and the *Correio Mercantil*, after fiercely criticizing what had been on display, said that the best was absent: Telfer's daguerreotypes. (CM, 19/12/1852, p. 1)

In 1853, in order to face the competition, Telfer emphasized in his ads one of his specialties: "blurred and colour photographic portraits". (JC, 03/19/1853, p. 3), but at the end of the year he gives up on Rio de Janeiro — profits started to decrease with the growing offer of paper photographs and other media, much cheaper than the daguerreotypes. And then there was this Portuguese student, who had received money from his father to buy the workshop. On the 10th of February of 1854 he leaves for Liverpool to never return.⁵

Since 1852, Cipriano had been keeping his miniaturist workshop in Rua do Ouvidor; but soon he transferred to the studio acquired from Telfer. In those days, the daguerreotype still maintained its affinity with magic. On the same page that announces the new address, a curious couple of a "magnetizer" and a "sleepwalker" also offers its services (CM, 29/5/1854, p. 4). In 1857, the *Almanak Laemmert*, the most prestigious business and people guide at the Court, brings together

photography and the daguerreotype under a single item "Daguerreotypes, and Photographers", totalling 11 professionals. In today's eyes, the comma between the two techniques marks the appearance of the newcomer. However, in the *Correio Geral da Corte*, Diogo Cipriano identified himself as a "painter". This is not surprising because his prestige existed due to painting and miniature rather than to the daguerreotype. That same year, the "miniaturist of great merit" was appointed "portraitist of the imperial house". (CM, 23/5/1857, p. 1). Although he was later appointed photographer of the imperial house, he always kept his first appointment in his ads. He was proud of the miniature.

From 1859, photographic techniques available to the public multiply. The daguerreotype is still being done, but Joaquim Insley Pacheco, who would become one of the most famous photographers of the court, insists on announcing himself "photographer and ambrotypist of the imperial house" (Almanaque Laemmert, 1855, p. 672). He described himself as the only "glass portraitist" of the Court. In order to better characterize his modernity, compared with the competition, he informed at the inauguration of his services, that he was a disciple of "distinguished and highly skilled New York teachers" (CM, 09/02/1855, p. 4) and that his galleries were "gas-lit". (JC, 14/11/1855, p. 4) Such modernity, which the lamps emphasized, also required a new persona. His given name was Joaquim José Pacheco. Like Diogo Cipriano, he was Portuguese, from Cabeceiras de Basto, but having studied in the United

2) There is the suspicion that this document, despite signed by Cipriano, was not written by him, but by a priest who was the bishop's ally.
3) The entry of *Enciclopédia Itaú Cultural* implicitly assumes that this painter was the photographer, as it informs that Diogo was born in 1801 ("presumably of Brazilian nationality") and died in 1901, having lived, therefore, one hundred years, the last thirty without taking any photograph. I believe that this date of death corresponds, in fact, to the death of his eldest son, also called Diogo Luís Cipriano. Available at: <http://enciclopedia.itaucultural.org.br/pessoa22023/diogo-luiz-cypriano>. Accessed on 25/12/2019.

4) That corner no longer exists; it was destroyed with the opening of Avenida Central (currently Rio Branco) at the beginning of the 20th century. Rua do Cano became Rua Sete de Setembro (Brazilian national date).
5) William Telfer may have returned to work in London as a portraitist on *carte de visite*, as Helmut Gernschein mentions (1962, p. 246), but for a short period of time since he "abandoned photography when daguerreotype was supplanted by the collodion process".

States with Henry Insley, he decided to incorporate the American surname: he said goodbye to “José” and became Joaquim *Insley* Pacheco.

After all, North American daguerreotypes were considered the best in the world, thanks to the plate polishing techniques developed in that country. And if there were any problems with the eyes, it would be the portraited person’s fault, and not the portraitist’s, as suggested by a caricature published in the *Semana Ilustrada*, in 1865. (Figure 3)

Insley Pacheco’s primacy with regard to ambrotyping is, in a way, questioned by Cipriano, who, when associating with T.O. Smith in 1857, informs that it was the latter who brought the “American system” to Brazil [in 1854] (Garboggini, 2005, p. 26). The offense, I believe, will never be forgiven. The 1860s are a period of technological transition and the taste of the public also changes, threatening established professionals. As a sign of the times, the comma between “Daguerreotypes and Photographers” disappears from the *Almanak* from 1860 onwards. With the expansion of the market, lower costs and fierce competition, photographers and miniaturists (often the same person) are frequently involved in controversies around their skills and the quality of their work. An example of this begins when someone who signs as *Aprendiz* comments on the miniatures presented by José Tomás da Costa Guimarães at the General Exhibition of Fine Arts of the Imperial Academy of 1860: “terrible design”, heavy colour and not natural at all, “lack of relief in almost all”. Ultimately, an artist “below criticism” and who would need to learn not only his craft but to be more “indulgent” with his colleagues, of whom he speaks so badly (JC, 19/1/1861, p. 2). The artist’s reply comes the next day, implying that he knows the *Aprediz*’s true identity: he would be someone who, in a certain competition, presented himself with the work of someone else, he would aspire to be a miniaturist, but did not exhibit his works and, finally, he had a charlatan as a mentor (JC, 20/1/1861, p. 2). He suspected, I believe, that the detractor was Insley Pacheco, who would indeed have been introduced to his craft in Ceará, and not in the United States, by a mysterious Irish magician and conjurer named Frederic Walter.

The following day, *Aprendiz* challenges José Tomás to a public artistic test. Antônio José da Rocha – a drawing teacher, who received an honourable mention in the 1860 exhibition –, believing that José Tomás had hinted that *Aprendiz* was him, writes that when the miniaturist “was still in his homeland, perhaps growing potatoes, we were already studying drawing at the Academy of Fine Arts”. Another polemist, who calls himself *Filho do Carpinteiro*, equally offended by the insinuations, challenges José Tomás to reveal who is the “charlatan” whom he called the *Aprendiz*’s mentor (JC, 21/1/1861, p. 2). On the fourth day of the controversy, there is such confusion with anonymous and pseudonyms that José Tomás is forced to say that his insinuations do not concern Mr. Rocha, and even less Mr. *Filho do Carpinteiro*; but accepts the challenge of facing *Aprendiz* if he reveals his identity (JC, 22/1/1861, p. 2). As the insults do not cease, José Tomás regrets that the “Brazilian press freedom” allows slander on the part of anonymous people and concludes that *Aprendiz* “is like these killers armed with blunderbusses, they put themselves on the road behind the trees to safely hurt the traveller they want to rob” (JC, 25/1/1861, p. 2).

Among the many disputes between artists and photographers who, under pseudonyms, fight each other on the press, one is of interest here, because Diogo Cipriano is at its centre. In addition to the usual reciprocal challenges, it mobilizes values that are very dear to photographs and miniatures: memory and *saudade* (nostalgia). In April 1861, an exhibition of “cartes de visite portraits” was announced at Insley Pacheco’s gallery, which foresees the direction that the conflict would take. The *cartes de visite* were the novelty of the moment: cheap, very clear and small, they could be made in large quantities. But

the description of the product is a sophisticated provocation: “these miniatures made of three-inch cards, whose resemblance is of the greatest accuracy, serve mainly to comfort those who suffer from *saudade* (nostalgia): they may well be placed in a letter written in ordinary paper (JC, 27/4/1861, p. 2).

What do you mean “miniatures”? A scam, yes, because a photograph made by a machine, however small, will never be a miniature. Then, Diogo thought it over and decided that he could create his own method of comforting the “*saudade* (nostalgia) *that hurts*”. On 7 June 1861, a brochure with an original idea was included in the *Jornal do Comércio*: “subscriptions” of “portraits of families from Portugal mainland”. It would work like this: an associate portraitist, named Gaspar, would soon leave for Europe and accept subscriptions from customers interested in ambrotypes from distant family members. When he returned to Brazil, he would bring the photographs ordered (JC, 15/6/1861, p. 4). The idea was simple, but Diogo Cipriano decided to describe it with exaggerated pomposity: “Not rarely, a great thought of ennobling the art that I defend assaults my spirit; however, I always tried to dismiss it, because I felt that I had to succumb to the sublime of great commitment. Later, I had the idea of making my art worthwhile, and explore the wide horizons it offers.” A rival miniaturist “translated” this passage as follows: “He sent a man to Portugal to take portraits on pieces of glass with a machine, thus expecting to make a lot of money.” (JC, 19/06/1861, p. 2)

In addition to the miniaturists, who already suffered from the loss of the monopoly of *saudade* (nostalgia) to which they were accustomed, the photographers also reacted to the idea. The day after the distribution of the pamphlet, a long anonymous

text in the *Jornal do Comércio* adopts an ironic tone and tries to undermine the credibility of the project. Under the title “Brave discovery!!!” starts by criticizing Diogo Cipriano for having the “predicate” of dividing himself into “three distinct people, without forming a single thing” (that is, painter, miniaturist and photographer) and accuses him of having worked for the “return of art”, remaining loyal to the daguerreotype, being the “last place among those who defend it”. Because he was against progress, he had reacted against the ambrotype, an American technique that soon became the photographers’ favourite, and then he changed “shamefully” his mind.⁶ Even so, despite the years of practice, he would be a terrible portraitist (“Anyone who wants to portray themselves in impossible positions can go to Mr. Diogo’s house and will be pleased”). He ironizes: “definitely, Mr. Diogo was enlightened by God to help poor mankind”. The author feels obliged to alert the public to the trap that is being set up, after all, there will be no person who can resist ordering “the public-form” of the family, of the house where they were born, of the puppies, of the kittens and even “of the toys they played with in the childhood”. At this point, there comes the fatal blow: Cipriano’s assistant would hire men and women in Portugal to pretend to be the family members whose features had long been forgotten and thus deceive their relatives in Brazil. (JC, 8/6/1861, p. 2).

From then on, the controversy is no longer technical and artistic, but is associated with tensions between Brazilians and Portuguese in Imperial Brazil. Under the title “*Insolência da inveja*” (Insolence of envy), those who call the Portuguese “so uncouth and stupid” that they would not be able to recognize their own family members are criticized (CM, 10/6/1861, p. 2). A few days later, Diogo tries to end the discussion: “The undersigned, miniature portraitist of Their Imperial Majesties, with an establishment in Rua do Ourives, does not reply to anonymous people and thanking the people who have been defending him, asks them not to continue doing so as to not be offended” (CM, 14/6/1861, p. 2). The following day, he publishes two ads in the *Jornal do Comércio* to attract more subscriptions. The competition’s reaction is even more violent. As the godparents in the duels usually do, someone who signs A *Palheta do Brasão* launches a challenge:

“Admitting that everything that the *mascarado* (masked man) says against men who show their faces, the best way to be served is: the aggressor should sign their name, they should choose a room where they work with Mr. Diogo, seal the work of both, and call impartial judges that will decide on the good work of the artist’s merit and the *charlatan’s* confusion.” (CM, 13/06/1861, p.2)

6) The image of a traditionalist photographer, averse to technical innovations – like his master, William Telfer, who did not overcome the end of the Daguerreotype – seems to have affected Diogo Cipriano, after all. An ad from 1863 is full of details that seek to undo that image with several references to progress and civilization: informs that the partner H. J. Aranha acquired in Europe “the most advanced machines” and “all the accessories related to the progress of the photographic art”. Thanks to these acquisitions and the renovations of its facilities, the company was prepared to overcome “the difficulties of the fair pretension of fully correspond to the demands of a highly civilized country”. The ad invited “people who are fond of progressive ideas” to visit the renovated “establishment”. CM, 06/04/1863, p. 4)

The challenged, however, refuses the duel, saying that he will not decline his name or lock himself in a room with his opponent because “there are certain customs typical of the inhabitants of Mr. Diogo’s homeland which we cannot accept” and that he should be locked not in a room but “in a cage so that he could be admired as something rare”. Another rival uses the traditional accusation of charlatanism: Diogo takes advantage of the “ignorance of some people” to “impersonate an artist”, when he is nothing but a “plate cleaner” and “caricature maker”. And that he hopes to see, upon the return of the “acolyte”, “the burlesque collection of aunts Marias and uncles Manueis” (JC, 14/6/1861, p. 2). Even satirical sonnets are published. One of these, entitled “*Retratos de retratos*” (Portraits of portraits), says:

Diogo does not regret your condition / Donkey has been a lot of good people / And Gaspar who sends to Lisbon / Like you, among the donkeys has reigned. // Portrait this time will have the soldier / Shall he hold in his hand half a crown / Photographed will he be from stern to bow / “Fooled by the honour of such a place / Those Diogo’s brains are so famous / He’s already published in the gazette / How much of the silly idea is vain. // But I, in this, only discover bullshit / Let people know if they are doubtful / Diogo is a donkey, the rest is a lie (CM, 16/06/1861, p. 2).

We do not know if the subscription business was successful, but the controversy disappears from the newspapers. That same year, Diogo Cipriano wins a copper medal in the Imperial Academy exhibition for a miniature of the Nursing

Madonna. But 1861 would not end without a reaction from Insley Pacheco.

In a big ad, the “photographer of the imperial house” informs that he now makes “halotypes” (a secret that he would have just obtained and whose beauty and ease exceed “everything that has been done in modern photography”): “the halotype process that nowadays we have the pleasure to carry out with perfection, not only matches the great contrasts of the chiaroscuro [of the ambrotypes] [...] but can be made to rival the most expensive ivory miniatures” (JC, 7/9/1861, p. 4).

Thus began, in Rio de Janeiro, the war against the last bastion of the miniatures, painting on ivory. The technique had developed throughout the eighteenth-century, with watercolour and, later, in the early nineteenth-century, with oil, which allowed to give more “softness to the skin” (Johnson, 1990, p. 15-23). The use of ivory would have promoted a true “revolution” in the art of miniature, since it represented this fascinating combination of organic matter and artifice, jewellery and work of art. The cases used to keep the daguerreotypes and ambrotypes imitated those already used by this type of miniature and, since the end of the 1850s, the aim is to develop photographic processes that simulate, both in colour and in the materiality of the surface – by applying varnishes, for example –, the appearance of the ivory miniatures. It is not rare to find texts, truncated only apparently, that favoured confusion between the techniques, such as the announcement of the opening of Insley Pacheco’s workshop in 1855, where we can

7) Halotype, derived from ambrotype, was patented in New York, in 1858. It used two identical superimposed plates, one transparent and the other one painted, which gave the portrait a colour and volume effect.

read: "Oil portraits by Modern Photography on plates, paper, glass and ivory, and brush miniatures" (JC, 14/11/1855, p. 4)

Since the cost of the halotype was still high, and the weight of its image was significant due to the simultaneous use of two quite large glass plates, this was not yet the fatal blow in miniature portraits. But in 1864, the *Jornal do Comércio* announces the presence in Rio de Janeiro of the photographer Fillon, "recently arrived from Paris", who takes portraits in colours of "unparalleled beauty", emphasizing their superiority comparing to the miniatures, as not even the most precious ones "present greater correction of the drawing nor more transparent smoothness of the flesh". After ensuring that he is the only photographer in Rio de Janeiro to have this process, the newspaper mentions that he is capable of producing "portraits with the colour and animation that are lacking in those who take taken by the ordinary process" (JC, 17/11/1864, p. 1). This is probably Alfred Fillon (1825-1881), a French photographer based in Lisbon who, as a republican, went into exile in Portugal from 1857. A sharp competitor in the miniature nostalgia market, he announced himself in Lisbon as being capable of printing "portraits of all sizes up to microscopic size" (Araújo, 2017, p. 808). He did not settle in Rio de Janeiro and it is unlikely that he came from Paris. It is known that he returned to Paris, for just over a year, on the occasion of the 1870 Commune. We can assume that he brings the Crozat system, which had been created in Spain, in 1862, and which spreads throughout France and England from the beginning of 1864 (also known at the time as double-background photography or two colour photography), whose shiny surface is similar to porcelain or

ivory⁸ (Caccialanza, 2015). The Crozat system is a compromise between photography-jewel and the multiple character of the bourgeois portrait. Through it, photography says its last goodbye to the miniature. An observer wrote, sometime later, "photography in the face of the miniature was like a bird in front of the snake: the snake fascinated the bird – to the point of imitating it – and then it swallowed it" (Johnson, 1990, p. 25).

From then, the miniaturists will enjoy the last few years of their little glory. In 1865, Diogo sent his award-winning miniature of the Madonna to the Porto International Exhibition, which welcomes it with due honour. But the photographers' offensive to the ultimate refuge of miniature *saudade* (nostalgia) could no longer be contained.

In 1866, the *Correio Mercantil*, after pointing out that "until today, vain attempts have been made to obtain the photograph on ivory", reports that people have witnessed the demonstration of a discovery by the photographer J.F. Guimarães who, only with the use of chemistry and machines, without any retouching, achieved the desired result in just five minutes: "the portrait we saw has wonderful soft tones and an extraordinarily delicate transparency" (CM, 24/10/1866, p. 2). The successive techniques of varnishing photographic portraits had gradually transformed the substance of ivory into the tome attributed to the copy.

As a consequence, in the second half of the 1860s, the conflict was no longer personal, against this or that "charlatan",

but between categories, since photographers usually called their *cartes de visite* miniatures and accused miniaturists of not knowing how to draw, having photographs as models (CM, 27/5/1867, p. 3). As a response, a "warning to photographers" is published stressing their vulgarity: "If they want to decompose, they should go to Paço square because there they will find their fellow coachmen" (JC, 28/5/1867, p. 3). The author of the "warning", who signs *Miniatura*, will be avenged by photographers under the weirdest pseudonyms, such as *O Galinheiro do Visconde*, *Bizarro Capacho*, *O Parasita* and *O Nebli-na*. Although offenses such as "hunchback", "pig painter" and "manure mushroom" are abundant, they insist that the miniaturist does not know how to draw and lives "at the expense of others" (CM, 29/5/1867, p. 3). A violent response addressed to "The hydrophobic photographer", calls him "disgusting and gross compound of all vices", participant of orgies, in addition to "having been born in the pigsty from where you were left in the foundling wheel!"⁹ Among the most heinous crimes of which such a photographer is accused is the one of letting "the miserable *haggler* that gave you milk, die!" (JC, 5/31/1867, p. 2). Although the target of the offenses is, obviously, the photographer's mother – perhaps a photographer who had adopted the name of a foreign father – there is an underlying meaning to the accusation: photography would have turned its back on the one that originated it – the painting – to indulge in vulgarity.

A few days later, the *Correio Mercantil* publishes two extremely violent satirical poems against *Miniatura*, and a curious note entitled "Photographic and miniaturistic question". In it the author insists on saying that Insley Pacheco is not behind the

brutal offensive of photographers. Ironically, he calls him "a distinguished gentleman, who already boasts of a habit of Christ and with several medals, for his never quite recognized merit". And resuming the controversies of 1861 about the photographic signature, he pretends to be naive: "What does it matter if people say that what was published against Mr. Diogo Cipriano was Mr. Pacheco's, as well as what was published against Mr. Gaspar?" And he adds: "Mr. Diogo Luís Cipriano was a victim of atrocious attacks", but "Mr. Pacheco spoke and everything is over! It was not Mr. Pacheco, or any of his lackeys, the author of so much garbage" (CM, 4/6/1867, p. 3).

Despite the resistance of the miniaturists, the victory of the photography was already designed. In 1855, a famous photographer like Henrique Klumb said he was capable of taking "portraits on paper, glass and ivory, imitating the most perfect miniatures" (CM, 04/11/1855, p. 4), but the situation to which the painted miniature was reduced, a decade later, can be exemplified by the reduced size of an advertisement published in July 1867, in which a foreigner offers to teach drawing classes and make oil portraits and miniatures "at excessively cheap prices" (JC, 3/8/1867, p. 3). The time demanded new strategies. After acquiring the equipment from the renowned studio of Auguste Stahl and Germano Wahnschaffe – which closes in Rio de Janeiro in 1870 – the painter-miniaturist-photographer Diogo Cipriano launches another commercial creation, the *Loteria Fotográfica* (Photographic Lottery) (Figure 4): two hundred tickets, which were free to the customers who bought a dozen of portraits. The prize: "a magnificent gold watch with a beautiful gold chain" (JT, 21/5/1870, p. 3).

8) Despite of being disseminated, since 1863, as "colour snapshot, the device used is not a camera, as the news suggests, but an auxiliary device for the processing of copies, aiming at adjusting the plates and applying enamel.

9) This is the Santa Casa da Misericórdia's foundling wheel where single mothers and prostitutes left their unwanted children anonymously.

— Yes. A beautiful gold chain like the ones he used to paint in the daguerreotypes he took in 1855. So, let’s go to the portraits because they have never been so cheap and they give prizes to the customers!

The footnote of the ad included a message common to almost all studios: “portraits are taken from the smallest miniature to natural size”. And, a little further on, as a complement, we can read: “oil, watercolour, pastel portraits, etc., etc.”. The miniature now belonged entirely to the field of photography. Painting had been reduced to an “etc.” (JT, 5/21/1870, p. 3). But Diogo Cipriano never forgot his award-winning *Nursing Madonna*. After the Porto International Exhibition ended in 1865, it mysteriously disappeared. He wrote letters, contacted emissaries. Until his death, at the age of fifty, in 1870, he never lost hope of finding it again. (JC, 12/22/1870, p. 5)

Almost a decade later, a Portuguese art exhibition arrived in Rio de Janeiro. A nephew of Diogo, walking through the galleries, recognizes the miniature and his uncle’s signature. The coincidence is announced in several newspapers (JR, 11/12/1879). A legal dispute of the family against the Portuguese exhibitor begins to recover the piece. The Brazilian Justice orders the retention of the work until its property is decided. The situation drags on indefinitely and in the course of an endless action, the miniature disappears again. Why did it have to be small?

However, the Cipriano’s *Madonna* had the gift of reappearing. In April 1915, someone found it in the Public Depot, where it had been kept since 1879. He finds it beautiful, frames it and gives it to the minister of Justice. The mystery of the “masterpiece” found in the depot becomes a topic in the press. The minister calls an expert from the School of Fine Arts. The person in charge was the painter Zeferino da Costa, who considers it scrupulously well designed and of “fresh colour”, despite being a “copy of an original from the Italian school”, and

concludes the report saying that the work would have “relative artistic merit”. In view of this, the piece is integrated into the School’s Pinacoteca. But its stay there did not last long. Cipriano had four children, but in 1915 only one was alive, Ednardo Alves Cipriano, 47 years old. The legal action of the dispute of the work with the Portuguese exhibitor, in 1879, was brought by the painter’s eldest son who, as one can guess, was also called Diogo Luís Cipriano. With the death of this son, the legal action was extinguished. Now that it has been found, Ednardo filed a new legal action for the possession of the miniature (AN, 27/4/1915, p. 1). The work, which had been given the name “*Bela Adormecida*” (Sleeping Beauty) by the press, returned, as a comet, to the darkness of the Public Depot — a century later, where does the reappeared *Madonna* now rests?

We do not know its whereabouts. We also do not know who won the first photographic lottery. But thanks to some daguerreotype-tickets acquired by the Meneses family in 1855, Diogo Luís Cipriano — an ordinary artist of ordinary people — now has a biography. His fame will never reach that of his rival, Insley Pacheco, the Emperor’s photographer, who never gave him the chance for a duel of skills. And we will never know what other gimmicks he would have invented to attract the Court’s clientele had he not died of hydrophobia due to a stray dog.

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