

Cerrado, Nature, and Environment in the magazine *A Informação Goyana* (1917-1935)

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Abstract: This article deals with nature and the environment in the Cerrado based on research in articles published in *A Informação Goyana*, a magazine that circulated between 1917 and 1935. We present the documentary analysis in three dimensions: the first is Cerrado's Flora – sometimes treated with the eyes of 19th-century travelers, seen as exuberant and wonderful, seldom with a more practical and utilitarian look towards the plant as food and for its medicinal use. The second dimension deals with environmental issues in an interface that polarizes environmental issues with economic development. On the one hand, the need for agricultural exploration, that is, an economic concern, on the other, the defense of a Forest Code with a view to environmental preservation, a debate that is still very contemporary. And third, the magazine's view about the rivers, which, besides being extolled as natural beauty, was seen as a strategic solution for the integration of the central region with the country's coast. The analysis shows that this magazine, in addition to its historical importance, constitutes a primary source for the knowledge of nature and traditional knowledge significant to the people's health of Central Brazil.

Keywords: Cerrado, Riches, Nature, Magazine *A Informação Goyana*.

Resumo: O presente artigo versa sobre a natureza e o meio ambiente no Cerrado, a partir da investigação em artigos publicados na Revista *A Informação Goyana*, periódico que circulou entre 1917 e 1935. A referida análise documental apresenta-se em três dimensões: a Flora do Cerrado tratada ora com olhar dos viajantes oitocentistas, vista como exuberante e maravilhosa, ora com um olhar mais prático e utilitarista voltado para a planta como alimento e para o seu uso medicinal. A segunda dimensão trata das questões ambientais numa interface que polariza as questões ambientais com o desenvolvimento econômico. Por um lado, a necessidade da exploração agrícola, ou seja, uma preocupação econômica, e por outro, a defesa de um Código Florestal com vistas à preservação ambiental, debate ainda muito contemporâneo. E por último, o olhar trazido pela Revista sobre os Rios, que além de exaltados como beleza natural eram vistos como solução estratégica para a integração da região central com o litoral do país. A análise mostra que esta Revista, além da importância histórica, se constitui como fonte primordial para o conhecimento da natureza e dos saberes tradicionais importantes à saúde dos povos do Brasil Central.

Palavras-chave: Cerrado, Riquezas, Natureza, Revista *A Informação Goyana*.

Introduction

The need for an informative organism to advertise the incomparable native riches to the Brazilian *interland* – this vast region almost unknown in all its aspects and which, however, has the strongest elements to be incorporated to the progressive

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currents of the most prosperous areas of our country – justify the appearance of this publication (SILVA; BRASIL, 1917, p. 1).

The magazine *A Informação Goyana* was founded in Rio de Janeiro (Br) in the first half of the 20th century, more precisely in August 1917, and circulated until 1935. Covering almost 20 years of publications about Central Brazil, the magazine is an indispensable source for researchers who address several topics in this vast region that encompasses the Brazilian Cerrado. Under the direction of two men from Goiás, Henrique Silva² and Americano do Brasil³, one of its objectives was to disseminate the wealth of Goiás, making them known nationwide and encouraging investments in the region, as shown in its launch number: “[...] one of the main efforts of this magazine is precisely to put before the capitalist, industrialists and traders eyes the endless economic possibilities of the most central and least-known state in Brazil” (Vol. I, n. 1, 1917, p. 1). The editors also reinforce the justification for the need to create the magazine due to the little or no space given to the region in the media of large centers, especially those in Rio de Janeiro, in which the ignorance is so high that it is common to confuse Goiás with the state of Mato Grosso.

In Brazilian and regional historiography, the period that covers its circulation comprises part of the Old Republic and the 1930 Revolution, with its subsequent reflexes in the country, and particularly in Goiás. Among these changes, we highlight the shift in the political domain that, after a long period of dominance by Caiado, saw the rise of Pedro Ludovico Teixeira's group, the construction of Goiania, and the effective transference of the state's capital.

Going back two centuries, the discovery of gold at the headwaters of the Red River and in its vicinity in the 18th century, according to Palacin (1994), would have anticipated the occupation⁴ of the Goiás region by a century and a half to two centuries of regular penetration, as the state had not awakened the interest of the Portuguese Crown for being far from the coast, in a place of difficult access, and for not offering any attractive product for commerce. It was then, as the author says, that the discovery

² Henrique José da Silva, founder and main director of the magazine, was born in Bonfim (currently Silvânia - GO) in 1865, joined the military career, attended the Military School of Praia Vermelha. He collaborated with several newspapers in Rio de Janeiro, Rio Grande do Sul and Goiás. He died in May 1935, the year of the magazine's last publication (NEPOMUCENO, 2003, p. 61).

³ Antônio Americano do Brasil (1892-1932) was Henrique Silva's great-nephew. He was a doctor and also worked as a professor, journalist, and politician. He worked in the magazine with Henrique Silva from 1917 to 1930 (NEPOMUCENO, 2003, p. 62).

⁴ The author refers here to the occupation unleashed by Bandeirantes and colonizers, using the elucidative term of the *gold rush*, since natives inhabited that region in a long time.

of gold (1722-1725) in the region turned the attention of the Portuguese Crown to the Goyazes mines. But the wealth of gold did not last long. In the last decades of the 18th century, the reduction in the extraction of the metal was already visible (PALACIN, 1994, p. 65).

After the mining peak, Goiás did not find an economic solution to replace the fast wealth of gold mining in the famous century of gold. In the 19th century, defamed as the century of decay, the province was stigmatized by both foreign and national travelers, and the concept was reproduced even by historians. In the advent of the 20th century until the end of its first three decades, the situation in Goiás, according to Luís Palacin, had not changed substantially, as “it remained an isolated, sparsely populated, almost entirely rural state, with a subsistence economy” (1989, p. 90).

The foundation of the magazine *A Informação Goyana* occurred in this context. It covered several subjects, with particular emphasis on the following: means of transport, problems of rivers and navigation, education, press, indigenous issues, economy, intrigues for the definition of the limits of Goiás, the transference of the federal capital, the construction of Goiania, and issues related to natural wealth, such as its forests, hardwoods, and the papyrus trees.

We can only say that, although other researchers have already dedicated themselves to the study of this document so significant for the History of Goiás and Brazil with good results, it still offers numerous possibilities for new approaches, as is the case of this article, which investigates, from the magazine’s perspective, aspects of nature and the environment in the Cerrado in the first half of the 20th century.

Cerrado’s Flora in the magazine *A Informação Goyana*: exuberance and medicinal use

There is no Brazilian territory richer in medicinal plants than the one that the State of Goyaz covers, its native fields mainly (SILVA, 1931, p. 76).

The Cerrado of other times is no longer the same. This biome has the second-largest land area in the country, and with more than 2 million/km² is the largest savanna in the world. It has an exuberant fauna and flora with more than 11.000 plant species, of which 4.400 are endemic, that is, typical of the place (DIAS, 1992; RATTER et al.,

1996). In its evolutionary historicity, it reached the status of climax vegetation⁵, with its own botanical, morphological, and physiological characteristics, which differ from other national biomes. Thus, the vegetative mosaic that constitutes the Cerrado is the result of a perfect balance of biotic and abiotic factors that determine its identity and the complex nature of the symbiosis necessary for its existence, as defined by Horieste Gomes (2008).

The need to make pulsate the pride of enjoying an environment make us realize this relationship between rarity and beauty. In the article “*An unknown world*”, there is a comparison with Olympos:

There, the thought expands with the indefinite lines of the horizons, before the dazzling landscape the exalted imagination ignites, and the heart, as we walk into the unknown, which attracts and dominates us, sometimes trembles fearfully, sometimes pulsates violent, full of noble Brazilian pride (RAMOS, 1917, p. 24).

The magazine contains a high percentage of articles on the natural riches of the Cerrado. More than once, including in the magazine first issue, *Americano do Brasil* emphasizes the valuable contribution of Bandeirantes and scientists who visited the region. But he also highlights that their incursions were generally superficial, not far from the trails of the pennants or the royal roads. That is, they did not enter the dense forests. Thus, his criticism becomes more acidic concerning the ignorance of public officials in the country about the flora of Central Brazil. “But none of this is known by the *pseudo phytologists* of the Ministry of Agriculture or the curious compendium writers and essayists who have not seen other forests than those of Gavea and Tijuca and the vegetation of European climates on our paved avenues” (BRASIL, 1917, p. 2).

The magazine's founder also criticizes the numerous information about the Flora and Fauna of Goiás reproduced by the “organizers of our botanical map”, who, according to him, was very wrong, being misplaced, since many botanists who wrote about the subject had not even walked across the region. Thus, the editors emphasize that one of the magazine's missions is to disclose the riches that have so far been unexplored and the other to undo the several mistakes that circulate in the Central Brazil region, as shown in the following excerpt.

⁵ According to Horiestes Gomes (2008), climax vegetation means that because of its morpho-physiological characteristics, it reached its vital balance millions of years ago, and therefore there is no possibility of regeneration.

In the attractive outline of the morphological aspects of our little-known *interland*, the exact determination of the various and opulent phytological distribution will definitely take a long time and particular scientific care, due to the specific characteristics of the habitat, due to the incalculable varieties still alien to any classification or knowledge of the competent (BRASIL, 1917, p. 2).

There are many articles dedicated to the dissemination of the different types of native plants and fauna of Goiás, which is a strategy to stimulate the development of the State. Thus, the flora has its qualities highlighted, as is the case of the pink mahogany.

Finally, Rio knows the untapped forest wealth of Goyaz. Pink Mahogany, from Goyaz, is now the favorite of wood buyers, due to its less fiber and to admirably lend itself to carpentry and various works from the industry... (SILVA, 1926, p. 16).

In addition to the Pink Mahogany, they mentioned Cedar, Vinhatico, Landi, Gonçalo Alves, and Balsam. Next, a list of fourteen wood purchasing companies in Goias, located in Rio de Janeiro, is provided.

The magazine dedicates few pages to the cardinal flower, *Lobelia cardinalis*. There are two articles in a row stating that it naturally proliferates in the region. The first article argues that it should be cultivated and better used, including in cooking, as a component in the manufacture of marmalade. The text also notes its use in livestock feed and as a medicinal plant. “There is a useful plant that thrives in abandonment in the vicinity of the cities of Goiás. Our countrymen should try to cultivate it because it contains one of the economic futures of Goias” (CURADO, 1918, p. 111). However, the second article, signed by Dr. Antonio Pimentel, disapproves of what the previous edition disclosed and makes some corrections about its use. The doctor explains that the species that thrive in Sao Paulo, Minas Gerais, and Goias is not *Lobelia cardinalis*, nor a lobeliacea, being, therefore, a solanacea, or *Solanum auriculatum*. The text also emphasizes the risks of its indiscriminate use, because, according to the doctor, its medicinal properties were not yet well known, and he is convinced that it has toxic properties, since one of his children, after ingesting the plant was poisoned and in danger with severe diarrhea and vomiting. He also recommends to not adulterate the famous Santa Luzia marmalade with part of the cardinal flower in its production.

And, therefore, I think that the idea of falsifying the marmalade from Goyaz, which already has a great fame for its excellent properties, should not be launched, much less defended; on the contrary, one

must seek more and more to raise that deserved fame, and once and for all abandon the wolf fruit, which is not impossible to have any other application, given its alkaloid (PIMENTEL, 1918, p. 118).

Other plant species also had attention, such as *Manihot pseudoglaziovii* Pax & K. Hoffm or maniçoba, massaranduba (*Mimosopes ellata*), gameleira (*Ficus elástica*) and mangabeiras (*Hancornia speciosa e H. pubescens*), whose exploitation took place in depending on the capacity of the latex production and supply of the rubber trade. “The December 1917 export, through the Goyaz Railroad Road, passed [...] about 14,295 kg of rubber”. In the excerpt from the article *What Goyaz produces and exports* (p. 89), we can see the commercial profile established with some countries in Europe and the Americas,

(...) rice, beans (including broad beans), corn, corn, and cassava flours; sugar, marmalades, and other sweets; Crystal of rocks of different colors and all the precious stones that Brazil exports; cotton, cloth, and other textile fibers; rope and shredded smoke; rubber, maniçoba, and mangabeira rubber.

Still, the padagia or padagi, an abundant vine of the gallery forests at the head of the Ouro, Aldeia, and Taua rivers, gained notoriety for its medicinal properties. Its roots administration was in the form of tincture, decoction, and elixir as a natural, anti-inflammatory adaptogen applied to neuralgia, treatment of urogenital disorders, and sterility. Such therapeutic efficacy meant that herbal preparations of this species were marketed at Pharmacia Burjack and also exported to Europe (PIMENTEL, 1922, p. 83).

No less appealing than the padagia, a list of other medicinal species deserves the contemporary eyes, as they occur in the Cerrado biome and are part of the people medicine and traditional peasantry in Central Brazil.

The medicinal flora of Goiás is mentioned as “extraordinary”. In the Cerratense landscape, canopy (*Croton fulvus*), corraleira (*Croton antishyphiliticus*), swallow weed (*Euphorbia sp.*), stump (*Rudgea viburnioides*) and shepherd’s bag (*Zeyheria digitalis*) were configured to use to treat syphilis, and for other urogenital disorders: Douradinha (*Policourea aurata*), a potent diuretic and anti-inflammatory; jarrinha (*Aristolochia galeata*) and the plumeria (*Plumeria lancifolia*), described as antidotes for snake bites; sucupiras (*Pterodon sp.*) and quinas (*Cinchonas sp.*) are used “for everything”; congonha-do-campo (*Luxemburgia polyandra*) and cotton-do-campo (*Cochlospermum regium*), are considered anti-diarrheal and anti-inflammatory; copaiba (*Copaifera*

langsdorffi). Others such as cashew (*Anacardium sp*), jalapa (*Mirabilis jalapa*), andiroba (*Carapa guianensis*), manacá (*Spiranthera odoratissima*), amaroleite (*Operculina macrocarpa*), cocas (*Erythroxylum sp*), and poia (*Cephaelis ipecacuanha*) were also mentioned.

These last two, cited by the abundance of occurrence and, who knows, under a visionary perspective that they would become great exponents in the current pharmaceutical industry, due to the biosynthesis of alkaloids such as cocaine, emetine, and cephaline, respectively. This fact culminated in the process of genetic erosion of *C. ipecacuanha*, which is considered an endangered species (MAIA, 2017).

There was an emphasis on the lemongrass from the field (*Proelea paradoxa*) description, that gave off the scent of its essential oil, as shown in this report:

The whole plant, from its root to flowers, contains a remarkable amount of the highly aromatic and volatile essential oil, so much so that on hot and calm days, the atmosphere is so steeped in such a pleasant smell, similar to that of *Melissa officinalis* (SILVA, 1924, p. 49).

This plant, as well as its volatile oil extracted through fractional distillation, reached the regional apothecary market at the time, with importance in Brazil's perfumery.

In the article *The indigenate of our useful plants*, the author portrays the relationship of resistance of indigenous knowledge about native plants against exotic species brought by Jesuits and other Europeans. Thus, he points out:

In the absence of new materials yet to be collected, we have a living tradition. This, which is the memory of the man, shows in the past and the present that the country natives never used the industrial plants introduced by the European invaders, on the contrary, since the later learned from them the use of manioc, sweet potatoes, mendubi, and tobacco (SILVA, 1922, p. 95).

Another plant species noted for its majestic morphology is the buriti palm or *Mauritia vinifera*, which Saint-Hilaire called “palmier du desert, a la fois si élégante et si útil”. Its elegance and usefulness allowed its almost entirely use. The sap or buriti wine is extracted from its stem, the fruits (coconut) are used to make the Saieta sweet – quite palatable and with stimulating medicinal properties –, and the leaves are used to cover houses and obtain buriti silk, a material with an adequate texture for the

production of hammocks, rugs, and waterproof covers. This palm tree occurs in the paths, being an indication of the presence of water.

The reports about babassu palm (*Attlea sp*), or “babaçu”, showed a remarkable economic interest due to the abundance of its occurrence throughout almost the entire state of Goiás, and to the coconuts morphological characteristics that are higher than native species from other states, such as Maranhão, for example (SILVA, 1923, p. 59).

The babassu production chain has become one of the most representative plant extraction in Brazil, due to its coverage area (13 to 18 million hectares in 279 municipalities, located in 11 states), numerous potential and economic activities conditions to develop, its importance for families that survive from subsistence agriculture associated with its exploitation, and the strong social and political mobilization in favor of free access to babassu fields (CARAZZA, 2012).

Another curious species of vegetation occurring in the region of Goiás is the mangosteen or, as scientifically named by Linneaus, *Garcinia mangustan*. It is an exotic plant, native to eastern countries such as Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia, which was brought to Brazil and cultivated initially in the states of Para and Goiás, where it has adapted very well due to the states' high temperatures (EMBRAPA, 1989).

The mangosteen received a discreet reference in the magazine *Informação Goyana* (SILVA, 1928, p. 15). This description seems to be one of the first about the species in Goiás, contradicting documents indicating its arrival in Brazil in the 1940s.

Since its fruit has a beautiful aspect and an extremely palatable flavor, it was considered “the queen of fruits and the delicacy of the gods”, which made it occupy a prominent place in the export scenario. Under the medicinal aspect, the mangosteen has antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, and antibiotic properties (ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA, 2019).

Thus, it is clear that in some articles of the magazine under analysis, the lush landscape is treated by the authors in a similar perspective to the Cerrado descriptions made by 19th-century travelers⁶. These authors let slip in cracks of stories, this vision was taken by charm, in the molds of the explorers who went through these paths in search of products from nature, with commercial and curative value, such as plants useful for medicine and food.

⁶ In Silva and Pereira's (2016) analysis, the fascination arises from the different species that inhabited Goias, since the European landscape was quite different from the Brazilian, especially in the Cerrado.

To reinforce this aspect, when analyzing article titles in this magazine, we found 40 articles that mention the “wonder” of the flora diversity of Goiás and the valuable commercial contribution to the regional and perhaps world scenario.

In the articles Wealth of Goiás I and II, the authors refer in detail to the kingdoms *Plantae* and *Fungi*, extolling the peculiarities and endemism, attributes that classify the Cerrado biodiversity, even today, as *sui generis*, among the other natural biomes and therefore worthy of attention regarding extinction (GOMES, 2008).

Environmental Issues: reforestation, Forest Code, and agricultural exploitation in the magazine *A Informação Goyana*

The State of Goyaz, of ubiquitous land and pregnant with sap, cannot remain silent in the face of the blatant spectacle of the devastation caused by the ax or the destructive fire of fields and forests (SILVA, 1934, p. 96).

During this period in the History of Goiás (1917-1935), it is possible to notice in the themes treated in the magazine *A Informação Goyana* a genuine concern on the environmental issues, although in a subtle way. In addition to the constant articles exalting the exuberance of the state's flora and fauna, there were several corrections of mistakes made by scientists who did not know the region and wrote about it, as well as warnings for problems such as overfishing, deforestation, and fires.

Articles defending the environment were frequent in the magazine even before the institutionalization of the Brazilian Forest Code in 1934. It is important to remember that the Law on the Protection of Native Vegetation (LPNV), popularly known as the New Forest Code, is from 2012, and it is the current Brazilian legislation that protects native vegetation.

In 1924, for example, the need to elaborate a Forest Code emerges as a subject in the magazine⁷. Thereunto, Americano do Brasil organized a conference to discuss forest policy. According to him, the elaboration of the Forest Code would be the beginning of

⁷ The first Brazilian Forest Code was instituted by Decree No. 23.793, of January 23, 1934, subsequently revoked by Law 4.771/65, which established the Forest Code in effect until the publication of Federal Law No. 12.651, of May 25, 2012. For more information see: [Sociedade Brasileira para o Progresso da Ciência. Academia Brasileira de Ciências. Grupo de Trabalho do Código Florestal. *O Código Florestal e a Ciência - Contribuições Para o Diálogo*. São Paulo: SBPC, 2011, p. 4.](#)

the resolution of the forest problem and the abandonment in which the forests were (SILVA; BRASIL, vol. VII, n. 11, 1924, p. 83).

In the following year, the magazine brings an article entitled *The fish scarcity in the Capital of Goyaz*, which reports the scarcity of fish in the Rio Vermelho and the market of the City of Goiás. The explanation was that this scarcity was due, in part, to the use of dynamite in the waters of the Rio Vermelho, which killed thousands of fish for no profit (SILVA; BRASIL, vol. VIII, n. 10, 1925, p. 77).

The concern with burning and reforestation issues is also prominent in the magazine. In a note entitled *Reforestation*, there is a warning about the prominent decrease in water and against deforestation, which would be the great destroyer of the fields and forests of Goiás: “We call here, by the government, to restrain the exaggeration of the felling, the burning, as well as to enforce the Forest Code, creating, if possible, a department to the reforestation of the State” (SILVA; BRASIL, vol. XVIII, n. 12, 1934, p. 96).

In another passage, the magazine addresses the issue of forest reserves in Goiás. In a note on the topic, there is a reference to an official mission from the Ministry of Agriculture that was delighted with the states' forests but called attention to the inconsequential deforestation.

The mission verified that in Goyaz, as in Minas, and as, assuredly, in all Brazilian states, the ancient and pernicious practice of cutting down forests over long stretches continues to be the land cultivated for two or three years, and then, abandoned, giving way to new clearings in the nearby woods (SILVA; BRASIL, vol. XVII, n. 3, 1932, p. 23).

In the end, the article states that this observation about the lack of inspection and constant deforestation in Goiás reinforced what the magazine denounced in numerous issues over the years.

Agricultural exploration appears in several issues of the magazine. The crucial problem in this period was the precariousness of the means of transport to connect Goiás to other states, mainly to the coast, where they would forward as advanced goods in agriculture.

Cotton was among the incentive goods for cultivation. Since the 19th century, Goiás exported cotton to other states. Fact observed and described, for example, by the French traveler August de Saint Hilaire in 1819 on the occasion of his trip through Engenho São Joaquim, in the town of Meia Ponte, currently Pirenópolis. At that time,

Saint Hilaire praised the qualities of cotton production, encouraging its cultivation and export. Despite the incentives since the 19th century aiming to increase such production, in a 1918 article on the cotton culture of Goiás, Henrique Silva states that, despite being of excellent quality, there is no data on its production.

Currently, according to the tables organized in the State Finance Secretariat, fictitious documents, full of gaps, the exportation from Goyaz does not exceed 1,000 kilograms of raw cotton, and the production or consumption of cotton manufactured on primitive looms is unknown, that still work there, as a hundred years ago, when cotton yarns were running in commerce as fiat currency (SILVA, 1918, p. 67).

In an article entitled *The culture of the fields of Goyaz*, signed by Victor de Carvalho Ramos (1917), there is an exalting tone of the state possibilities for agricultural production, because “only the State of Goyaz, given the exuberant fertility of its soil, once it has the farmers of modern agricultural instruments, will produce enough to supply the whole Brazil”; and also a tone of outburst, stating that “the farming in Goyaz, like everything else that concerns my State’s sources of progress, has never deserved the least assistance from state public authorities until today” (RAMOS, 1917, p. 55). On the other hand, the author criticizes how farming is practiced, which is harmful to the environment.

At other times, abandoning the fields and plateaus that, corrected and transformed with the help of plows, become fertile agricultural soils, the sertanejos devastate the forests, consuming the natural wealth to plant and harvest a few thousand ears of corn that do not compensate for the harm caused to the flora (RAMOS, 1917, p. 55).

Victor de Carvalho Ramos concludes that the low productivity of the Goiás crop is due to the complete lack of agricultural machinery, the non-application of modern agronomic principles, and the absolute lack of fast transport routes to export the products. But the author reinforces that there are measures that the government can and should use to intensify the production, namely: the reduction of the price of vacant lands, free or affordable supply of machinery necessary for landowning, and distribution of seeds and brochures containing cultivation instructions through the Ministry of Agriculture. And he concludes, emphatically regarding the need to protect the Cerrado: “after this, the government must strictly prohibit the devastation of forests and constant burning” (RAMOS, 1917, p. 55).

Rivers: nature and redemption of transport in the magazine *A Informação Goyana*

This topic seeks to analyze the importance of rivers in Central Brazil and how this medium of communication in the first decades of the 20th century approached it. The analysis of the articles referring to this specific theme aims to form a group idea about the rivers' images that prevailed, seeking a general understanding of how this theme was approached and or represented in the journal.

Among the various subjects cataloged in the magazine *A Informação Goyana*, articles about rivers deserve to be highlighted, as the space dedicated to them is quite significant. They are mostly news drawing attention to the potential that rivers and their banks offered and the possibilities for exploration, mainly due to the improvement of navigation conditions.

In the published articles, a praiseworthy approach to exaggeration prevails, extolling its innumerable riches and natural beauties. Terms such as “royal majesty”, “beautiful beaches”, “white sand”, “magnificent green and fragrant islands”, and “noble, rare, and very precious woods” are a constant in the magazine's publications, such as the one that follows.

The incalculable wealth of Tocantins and Araguaia in babassu (sic) nuts, rubber, wood, countless oil fruits, as well as the magnificent natural pastures that extend through the valley, [...] large herds of cattle, not to mention the extraordinary fertility of the land for all cereals, including wheat, shows that the economic exploitation of the region would imply a tremendous increase in Brazil's production resources (SILVA; BRASIL, vol. VIII, n. 9, 1925, p. 70).

As for navigation possibilities, most articles present rivers as frankly navigable, or as being easily solved, with investments to make them the principal means of communication between central Brazil and the coast. On this issue, several commission study reports are published and commented on for the implementation of improvements to use these rivers as a means of transport, in addition to draft laws also for this purpose.

Articles are also frequent to clarify the hydrographic basins and the location of the different rivers' tributaries. There was a predominance of reports on the Araguaia and Tocantins rivers with their branches, but the Paranaíba, São Marcos, and das Mortes rivers also appear, although less frequently.

Another type of publication on rivers recurring in the Magazine is the travel reports by nationals and foreigners that offer a wealth of details on geographical, climatic, and population aspects of the margins of these rivers. Exemplary is the article *The Dominicans in Araguaia*, which presents the results of the activities of this religious order in the region of Araguaia, emphasizing the foundation of new urban centers and a new impulse to the existing ones. According to the article, which praises the religious people's role in the region, several fronts based their actions, such as the incentive to settlement, the opening of roads, the establishment of schools, and indigenous catechesis, among others.

They establish villages, give new impetus to others, draw roads to penetrate civilization, fight illiteracy and lack of hygiene, civilize wild Indians, pacify new and unsecured areas, encourage their exploration and settlement, open up new fields and markets for commercial exchange, liven up the agricultural and pastoral industries, liven up customs, giving everyone examples of an active and virtuous life, teach the founders' belief and glory of our nationality, and without fanfare, the Dominicans in Araguaia sacrifice themselves and work for the aggrandizement of Brazil (SILVA; BRASIL, vol. XVIII, n. 1, 1934, p. 83).

In another passage, a note in a prophetic tone, citing Couto Magalhães, draws the attention of public authorities on the possibilities of using rivers as a means of communication: “the people from Goyaz must turn their eyes to Araguaia, like the Israelites to the columns of fire, who guided them in the desert” (SILVA; BRASIL, vol. XVI, n. 9, 1932, p. 66).

Finally, it is important to note that photographs and poems also present images of the rivers. Photos of the time usually illustrate the texts about them, which allow, for example, to visualize the landscapes, the boats' structure, the riverside populations, the vessels, and the diverse and rich flora and fauna of the region.

The poems also offer exceptional subsidies to understand the riverside populations' universe and daily life in their constant and intimate interaction with the rivers. The verses of a poem written by Abílio Nunes, entitled Boatman of Tocantins, shows this.

Hit stick, hit stick!
The pilot shouted loudly.
But in the affliction of the retail
the rod released from his hand.

For one of the unlucky bad luck
that luck tells us to play
the boat broke
at Joaquim Ayres stone.

Some stayed on the stone,
others in the water fell
and heroically swimming
below, in another they left.
The boss went crazy,
because the boat and its contents,
cargo, luggage and everything
rolled underwater (NUNES, 1935, p. 49).

The poem above portrays the daily life experienced by boatmen and crew on long journeys on rustic boats along the Araguaia and Tocantins rivers. Navigation was not easy, accidents being constant, as expressed in the poem. Therefore, when leaving for trips, the farewells were long and painful, because the risks were many, and not everyone managed to return. If the boat hit a rock or capsized, in addition to the loss of goods, deaths were recurrent. It is interesting to note that such was the boaters' familiarity with the river, that the places of danger had specific names, expressing a relationship with an accident or fact that occurred along with it.

The analysis of the theme rivers and navigation in the magazine shows that, for the most part, the publications present a romantic and idyllic vision concerning the natural beauty of rivers, their banks' vegetation, and islands, especially on the island of Bananal. As for the problem of navigation, it is clear that the predominant discourse exalted their potential, minimizing the difficulties to make these rivers openly navigable, in addition to a constant defense of higher incentives in favor of improving navigation, which would be the solution for the transportation difficulties that the State of Goiás faced in the period.

Final Considerations

Regardless of the reasons, motivations, and efforts for the magazine *A Informação Goyana's* appearance and circulation from 1917 to 1935, its importance as a historical source is undeniable. Although the publication presents an eminently propagandistic character of the region – as the title at the beginning of this paper shows – to attract investments to explore the natural wealth, its high relevance lies in what it represents as a research source, in the form of texts and images of a countryside reality

that at the time was little known in the big cities. This content presentation and dissemination enabled the preservation of a collection that, over time, could have been lost, just like the Cerrado and its wealth are threatened, not yet described in this or any communication vehicle.

Goiás, in the context of the magazine's foundation, was a state that lacked investments that would provide a solid structure for its development. The founders of the periodical, both from Goiás, resented this situation and intended to make their contribution so that the region would achieve a better condition in the country, making it better known and encouraging investments in its home corner. We observed this intention in the analysis of the booklet of Taunay (1876), which discusses the National Exhibition of 1875, with a detailed description of flora species with medicinal and industrial potential intending the export trade as a strategy for economic exploitation.

As for the themes investigated in this study, the Cerrado, nature, and the environment, we found that, through this publication, it is possible to know many aspects regarding its composition, use, and, mainly, the thinking on how to “tame” this nature.

More than once, the editors reinforce the need to undo the many misunderstandings about the region of Central Brazil propagated by both national and foreign travelers, without even forgiving the Ministry of Agriculture's employees. The biggest problem, according to them, was publishing opinions without knowing the Cerrado's flora and fauna. Besides clarifying the use of various plants, the articles warned about the risks of misusing some of them.

Environmental issues also feature prominently in the magazine. In several articles, we found warnings regarding the deforestation of riparian forests, fires, predatory fishing, among others. But concomitant to the environment defense, concerns about economic development appear, mainly in the sense of a better definition of which products to grow and how to grow them. For that, they defend a necessary policy of the Ministry of Agriculture to encourage agricultural production geared to the conditions of the region.

The theme that permeates all publications of the magazine is the issue of means of communication, especially that of river transport. Both in terms of nature preservation and economic development, rivers are presented as a key point in the center integration with the country. Despite the countless difficulties that arose for frank navigation of the rivers, most of the articles were optimistic about the solution to this

problem. It also draws attention to the praise of the riches of these rivers and their banks, such as native plants, natural pastures, and fertile lands.

Finally, with so few means of communication for this region in the first decades of the twentieth century, this source offers countless possibilities to get to know a better part of Central Brazil concerning the Cerrado and its environment in the period. It provides elements of the historical framework that can support research in different areas of knowledge, such as humanities, health, and biology. To study and protect the Cerrado from such great devastation that has plagued it in recent decades, its knowledge through a printed source that began more than one hundred years ago can contribute to this endeavor.

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