



## **Pachcoal Lemme and Jorge Amado in defense of education and soviet literature in the Brazilian press (1945-1962)<sup>1</sup>**

Pachcoal Lemme e Jorge Amado em defesa da educação e da literatura soviética na imprensa brasileira (1945-1962)

Pachcoal Lemme y Jorge Amado en defensa de la educación y la literatura soviética en la prensa brasileña (1945-1962)

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### **Abstract**

The purpose of this article is to present the diffusion, by Jorge Amado and Paschoal Lemme, of the Soviet educational and literary thought in Brazil between 1945 and 1962. These authors, who had recognized works and dealt with social themes in Brazil, used the press as a tool to propagate Soviet thought and the main Russian theorists who formulated new pedagogical and literary aesthetic proposals at that time. In articles and interviews at the time, Jorge Amado and Paschoal Lemme exalted the successes achieved and the new horizons open to education and literature, which were aligned with the debate overcoming capitalism and the new models of organization in the literary and educational fields. In this perspective, the present work seeks to rescue journalistic publications in which these authors defended and propagated the Soviet conquests, using them as a reference to reflect on the education and culture of Brazil at the time.

**Keywords:** Soviet Education. Jorge Amado and Soviet Literature. Paschoal Lemme and Soviet Education.

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## Resumo

A proposta deste artigo é apresentar a difusão, por Jorge Amado e Paschoal Lemme, do pensamento educacional e literário soviético no Brasil entre 1945 e 1962. Esses autores, que tinham obras reconhecidas e tratavam de temas sociais no Brasil, utilizaram a imprensa como ferramenta para propagar o pensamento soviético e os principais teóricos russos que formulavam novas propostas pedagógicas e estéticas literárias naquele momento. Em artigos e entrevistas da época, Jorge Amado e Paschoal Lemme exaltaram os sucessos obtidos e os novos horizontes abertos para a educação e a literatura, os quais estavam alinhados ao debate de superação do capitalismo e aos novos modelos de organização dos campos literário e educacional. Nessa perspectiva, busca-se no presente trabalho resgatar publicações jornalísticas em que esses autores defenderam e propagaram as conquistas soviéticas, utilizando-as como referência para refletir sobre a educação e a cultura do Brasil de então.

**Palavras-chave:** Educação Soviética. Jorge Amado e a literatura soviética. Paschoal Lemme e a educação soviética.

## Resumen

El propósito de este artículo es presentar la difusión, por Jorge Amado y Paschoal Lemme, del pensamiento educativo y literario soviético en Brasil entre 1945 y 1962. Estos autores, que habían reconocido obras y tratado temas sociales en Brasil, utilizaron la prensa como herramienta de propagación del pensamiento soviético y de los principales teóricos rusos que formularon las nuevas propuestas estéticas pedagógicas y literarias de la época. En artículos y entrevistas de la época, Jorge Amado y Paschoal Lemme ensalzaron los éxitos alcanzados y los nuevos horizontes abiertos a la educación y la literatura, que se alinearon con el debate sobre la superación del capitalismo y los nuevos modelos de organización en los campos literario y educativo. En esta perspectiva, el presente trabajo busca rescatar publicaciones periodísticas en las que estos autores defendieron y difundieron las conquistas soviéticas, utilizándolas como referencia para reflexionar sobre la educación y la cultura brasileña de la época.

**Palabras clave:** Educación Soviética. Jorge Amado y Literatura Soviética. Paschoal Lemme y Educación Soviética.

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## Introduction

From the 1920s, with the influence of the Russian Revolution of 1917, Brazil experienced a period of political, social, and educational effervescence awakening new political forces and social segments that would soon contribute to the end of the political model implemented by the Old Republic.

It was in the 1920s that the Communist Party of Brazil was founded, simultaneously with the tenentist movement and the *Coluna Prestes*, which accelerated opposition to the oligarchic regime, promoting the political renewal that culminated in the 1930 Revolution.

Getúlio Vargas ascended to power and after the Constitutionalist Revolution of 1932<sup>2</sup> was over, the democratic environment allowed the constitutionalization of Brazil in 1934, but it would not last long, as the Estado Novo coup in 1937 would supplant the democratic achievements reached so far.

Horta (2012) points out that during the Vargas period (1930-1954) there was a strengthening of the Police and the Army, as well as the authoritarian profile of the State for the control of ideological apparatuses (Education and the Press), proposing an intervention in the educational policy developed in the period. This attitude of the Vargas government was in line with the military ideology of the period, which believed in nationalism and a strong and intervening State. Moral and Civic Education and Physical Education were designed to discipline, normalize and control the new generations, forming future soldiers for the homeland and opponents of communism.

With Brazil plunged into a dictatorship, an anti-communist discourse that dominated the political debate at that historic time was evident from the beginning. This thought would intensify in subsequent decades with the end of the Second World War (1939-1945) and the bipolarization resulting from the Cold War (1947-1991).

It would be in this environment of opposition to communism, polarization, and conflict, that the proposals of Jorge Amado and Paschoal Leme would be introduced - the result of the experience acquired by the authors on trips made to the former USSR - who fought for a renewal of the Brazilian literary and educational environment.

Jorge Amado and Paschoal Lemme, two intellectuals<sup>3</sup> who used the press as a tool to propagate Soviet thought, were prominent names from 1945 to 1962 in the fields of literature and education, contributing to the dissemination of non-aligned thinking, and, therefore, counter-hegemonic, but which offered new ways to reflect about Brazil.

In this perspective, the objective of this article is to identify, in articles from printed newspapers<sup>4</sup> that circulated in Brazil during such period, writings by Jorge Amado and Paschoal Lemme in defense of the Soviet educational and literary model, evaluating its repercussion and contribution to the Brazilian history and educational thought.

This work is structured in two parts. The first presents reports by Jorge Amado about his participation in the *II Congress of Soviet Writers*, organized in Moscow in 1954; in the second part, the text deals with journalistic materials by educator Paschoal Lemme in defense of soviet education, as well as the book he produced after he visited the country in 1953.

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<sup>2</sup> Revolt that took place in the state of São Paulo against Getúlio Vargas's provisional government, demanding the constitutionalization of Brazil and as a result of the dissatisfaction of the elites from São Paulo with the political course adopted.

<sup>3</sup> For Vieira (2007, p. 22, our translation), "Intellectuals got involved with the passions of the city and, thus, defended the centrality of the educational issue in the project of Brazilian modernity. In this scenario, which involved intellectuals' feelings of mission and political engagement, teaching and journalism become important means of public intervention".

<sup>4</sup> The research was carried out based on the collection of the Hemeroteca Digital of the National Library.

The research is historical in nature, within the scope of Cultural History, which, for Chartier (1990, p. 17, our translation), has as its main object “to identify how, in different places and at different moments, a given social reality is constructed, thought, read”.

For Cultural History, representations are determined by the interests of a group that “forge” them. From this perspective, the circulation of Soviet educational and literary thought in Brazil, between 1945 and 1962, was based on representations forged in the Brazilian press and by Brazilian intellectuals, such as Jorge Amado and Paschoal Lemme. Based on the writings of these thinkers, it is possible to (re)signify the image created and manifested of Russian education and writers, using the newspaper as a source.

The use of the concepts of production, representation, and circulation by Chartier (1990) leads to the understanding that there is an interaction between the terms, as they are producers of culture. This theoretical understanding facilitates the proposal of the present work, which analyzes the moment of circulation and reception of Russian educational and literary thought in our country, corresponding to the ways of making and disseminating such information.

In this perspective, recognizing that the cultural value is not only in the practices but also in the representations made through these practices, starting from the written productions and their circulation, this study was developed through historiography and printed newspapers. Newspapers are being read, under the interpretative exercise, fundamental to understanding and analyzing the circulation of Soviet thought in Brazil.

Thus, it is worth saying that the press as a source of research was only explored in the last decades of the 20th century, with the emergence of new theoretical and methodological possibilities in the historiographical field, where the very concept of *source* was expanded. Until the 18th century, according to Barros (2019), historiography was based on sources characterized as “realistic sources”, based on the idea of veracity: “A realistic source is one that presents itself to its readers as carrying a true discourse about something that actually happened.” (BARROS, 2009, p. 111, our translation).

The daily printed newspaper, the source used in this article, is, for Vieira (2007, p. 15, our translation), “part of a media structure of enormous impact and, increasingly, diversified political and cultural action”. In Brazil, its emergence dates back to the beginning of the 19th century and remained as the main branch of the press for many years, more precisely until the middle of the 20th century. Vieira also states that the newspaper assumed an important role in the process of forming representations about the world. Thus, newspapers are seen as a means of transmitting not only information but ideas and representations.

Complementing the understanding of the option for newspapers as a source of documents and representation, Pasquini et al. (2014) contribute by pointing them as “a rich instrument for research in the history of education, mainly because it provides elements that clarify the debates held in the social sphere” (PASQUINI et al., 2014, p. 12, our translation).

Documentary research, which uses newspapers as a means, contributes to the analysis of a certain historical moment, of the facts and speeches expressed, and that constitute sources of information. From reading old newspapers:

we manage to get closer to collective projections about a time, actors, and spaces given in a relationship of anteriority – *an anteriority made present in the act and by the act of research*. Through the observation of a social chronicle, a poem published on a spot of a page, a scientific article, an advertisement, or an editorial, we gather segments of culture that anchor human dilemmas and desires (CAMPOS, 2012, p. 65, our translation).

The approach to the “presentified” past, made possible by the “trace of old newspapers”, helps understand a given social reality, as well as the meanings that “men of the past” gave at each moment through writing. For Campos (2012), using old newspapers to write the history of education “means understanding them, therefore, much more as credible fragments of the culture of a time and space than thinking of them as reliable evidence of the past” (p. 66, our translation).

Regarding the use of the press, it is worth mentioning the understanding of Bandeira, Melo, and Andrade (1980) when they state that the news reflects class positions and that:

Events, manipulated on paper and transmitted by telegraph, are generally worth more than opinions, solemnly inserted in a fourth-page editorial. They deceive more easily. Behind the apparent objectivity, the ends of political propaganda hide. Reality and desires merge. Fact and rumor are confused. Information is disseminated, formed or deformed according to convenience, in a context of permanent psychological war. And the more the vital interests of the bourgeoisie come into play, the more the boundaries between fiction and history disappear (BANDEIRA, MELO, and ANDRADE, 1980, p. 73, our translation)

From this point of view, in this article, we reiterate that newspapers, as a source of research, are also used as a basis for meaning and representation of the Soviet cultural and literary model, between 1945 and 1962, in Brazil, by Jorge Amado and Paschoal Lemme.

### **Jorge Amado and Paschoal Lemme in defense of Soviet education and literature – the press as a place of dissemination**

The news about political, social, and economic events in Russia, which at the beginning of the 20th century was still experiencing its imperial phase, with the Romanov<sup>5</sup> dynasty in power, was always present in the Brazilian press. However, interest intensifies after the advent of the 1917 Revolution<sup>6</sup>. The topics circulated in different information means, such as magazines and newspapers, which tried to clarify the post-revolutionary events in Russia for the Brazilian public.

According to Bandeira, Melo, and Andrade (1980), in Rio de Janeiro, people packed movie theaters to watch a documentary made by the International Red Cross about Kerensky<sup>7</sup> and his political activities after the fall of the Tsar, a topic that was very discussed at that time.

Aware of the role played by the press, as well as its connection with groups that had specific political, social, and educational interests, it was researched in the pages of newspapers linked to the workers’ movement – the most interested ones in socialist events in the period - which printed reports in defense of the educational and literary model resulting from the 1917 Revolution.

It was in the proletarian newspapers that the news of Russian revolutionaries gained prominence and greater projection. In them, there were articles and information about the main writers, poets, politicians, and teachers who assumed the socialist ideology. It was adopted as a starting point, the principle exposed by Pasquini, Guedes, and Chaguri (2013, p. 13, our translation) which relates education and the press as being:

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<sup>5</sup> The Romanov dynasty was the last Russian imperial family, with Tsar Nicholas II and his entire family being executed in 1918 in the midst of the Russian Civil War triggered by the 1917 Revolution.

<sup>6</sup> On this issue, see: BANDEIRA, Moniz; MELO, Clóvis. **O ano vermelho**: a revolução russa e seus reflexos no Brasil. 2. ed. São Paulo: Brasiliense, 1980 and WAAK, W. **Camaradas nos arquivos de Moscou**: a história secreta da revolução brasileira de 1935. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1993.

<sup>7</sup> Deputy of the Russian Provisional Government from July 21 to November 8, 1917.

Two apparently unrelated elements, but which reveal themselves as structural units that allow the analysis of different groups representing certain forces of power, whether expressed in political, religious, or educational issues.

The use of newspapers, as a means to propagate the achievements of the then Soviet Union in the educational and literary area, was thought of by the reach that this means of communication had in the first half of the 20th century. The newspaper had a great influence on the formation of public opinion of a relevant part of the population. Discussing the use of the press, Vieira (2007, p. 19, our translation) stated that:

the issues that are imposed are not associated with the ideas of the true and the false, of the press telling the truth or not, but with the understanding of the reasons that led it to defend certain theses, as well as the unveiling of the discursive strategies mobilized to support them and thus persuade its readers.

Thus, considering Vieira's position, publications by Jorge Amado and Paschoal Lemme, respectively, in defense of Soviet literature and education, will be highlighted below. These are articles that achieved notoriety, especially in the labor sectors, and represented the wishes of those who admired the revolutionary events. These authors used newspapers as a means of publicizing the educational and literary achievements of the country, in newspapers such as *A Imprensa Popular*, *Diário de Notícias*, *O Jornal*, and *Diário da Noite*.

According to Ribeiro (2011), the newspaper *Imprensa Popular* (1951-1958), from Rio de Janeiro, was created during a phase of extreme radicalism of the Brazilian Communist Party, as in May 1947 the Party's registration was revoked by the Brazilian Superior Electoral Court, staying illegal. In this condition, this party was able to maintain its newspapers and publications, going through frequent demonstrations of police repression and temporary closures. This newspaper was created as a way to spread the Party's ideas, as well as the events in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and the world. Ribeiro also emphasizes that the Party press

contributes for workers from different sectors of the Brazilian economy to bring to the attention of large parts of society their problems, the violence they were victims of, their claims, etc., making their struggles gain legitimacy and some kind of recognition in the country's political scenario (RIBEIRO, 2011, p. 8, our translation).

The newspaper *Diário de Notícias* appeared in 1930 in Rio de Janeiro, the capital of Brazil at the time. It was founded by Orlando Ribeiro Dantas and lasted until 1974. As a revolutionary, it opposed the Republican oligarchy advocating social transformations. It passed through different phases, including support for Vargas' defeated candidacy for the presidency in 1930, following the principles of the liberal alliance of amnesty, secret vote, and restructuring of justice, under the revolutionary flag. From this perspective, he fought the coffee monoculture, to which he attributed the economic difficulties of the country. He was also concerned with labor issues, for which he defended the need for legislation aimed at improving the situation of workers, with minimum wages and working hours, among others. Its position led to the request for Dantas to provide clarification to the police when the 1930 revolution exploded. It supported and also opposed Vargas in the provisional government. As an opponent,

it was strict against sectors of the government that were not in favor of the composition of a national constituent assembly. It supported the Constitutionalist Revolution, which, for the newspaper, represented the essential aspirations of the Brazilian people. That is the reason why it was censored by the government.

With the Constitution of 1937 and the installation of the Vargas Dictatorship, it refrained from only disclosing government actions, but its combative trajectory resulted in the arrest of its creator. During this period, the newspaper went through financial difficulties, however, it also remained moderate after the end of the Vargas dictatorship. It expressed strong opposition to Vargas's candidacy even after his inauguration in 1951. After the 1950s, it began to face financial difficulties, but its combative position was maintained after the death of Vargas and the arrival of Juscelino Kubitschek to the presidency of the Republic. It supported Jânio Quadros, and, after his resignation, João Goulart, when it saw an open path to materialize its ideals of revolutionizing the country. It supported the 1964 coup but later opposed it<sup>8</sup>.

*O Jornal*, launched on June 17, 1919, in Rio de Janeiro (RJ), a widely circulated morning newspaper, was linked to politics. Initially, it was directed by Renato de Toledo Lopes, editor of the afternoon version of *Jornal do Commercio* from Rio. Due to conflicts with the general management of *Jornal do Commercio*, he resigned and founded the *Folha*. After five publications, *O Jornal* was bought by Francisco de Assis Chateaubriand Bandeira de Mello. Under the command of this journalist, *Folha* became the first organ of the *Diários Associados* chain, and, under this direction, it gained importance in the history of the Brazilian press, until its extinction in 1974<sup>9</sup>.

Under the initiative of Francisco de Assis Chateaubriand Bandeira de Mello, *Diário da Noite* was created, the first São Paulo newspaper to be part of the national network of *Diários Associados*, on June 2, 1925<sup>10</sup>.

### Jorge Amado and Soviet Literature

Jorge Amado<sup>11</sup> was one of the writers who used the newspaper as a means of disseminating education and Soviet literature. He participated in the *II Congress of Soviet Writers*, held in Moscow in 1954. An event that aimed to promote Russian literature, expanding its influence to progressive writers from different countries, including Brazil.

After participating in the event, the Bahian writer made public his impressions and analysis in a series of reports, published in the newspaper *Imprensa Popular*, based in Rio de Janeiro and which had connections with the Communist Party.

The first report, on February 27, 1955, carried the title: “*Uma literatura a serviço da paz e do futuro do homem*” (A literature at the service of peace and the future of man), in which the author mentions the event and defends the influence and importance of Soviet literature for writers of several countries, including Brazil.

Another report in the newspaper *Imprensa Popular*, from March 13, 1955, continued the subjects of the *II Congress of Soviet Writers*, when Jorge Amado referred to the October Revolution as an event that transformed the world, influencing not only the political and

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<sup>8</sup> More details on important aspects of the trajectory of this controversial newspaper can be read in Ferreira, Marieta de Moraes. Available at: <http://www.fgv.br/cpdac/acervo/dicionarios/verbete-tematico/diario-de-noticias-rio-de-janeiro>. Accessed on June 25, 2022.

<sup>9</sup> Available at: <https://bndigital.bn.gov.br/artigos/o-jornal/>. Accessed on 12 Feb, 2020.

<sup>10</sup> Available at: [http://200.144.6.120/exposicao\\_diariosassociados/historico.php](http://200.144.6.120/exposicao_diariosassociados/historico.php). Accessed on June 21, 2020.

<sup>11</sup> Jorge Amado, between the 1930s and 1950s, was a member of the Communist Party and a link between Russian and Brazilian writers.

economic life but also the development of the literature, art, and culture in general. Literature, according to the author, passed from the hands of the bourgeois intellectuals to the hands of the proletarians, the workers, becoming an instrument of transformation.

Amado (1955b) cited the educational reality in Brazil, as well as the intention of some politicians to follow in the same footsteps of Soviet education to eliminate illiteracy in our country, taking the opportunity to mention the political discussion about Brazilian education that reigned in the 1950s, comparing it to the Russian conquests:

I remember a discussion, once, in the Education and Culture Committee of the Chamber of Deputies, during the time I sat there. A deputy from Paraná, in the fire of the first months of Parliament, presented a bill for the rapid and total literacy of our people. And in the explanatory statement he asks in anguish: “If Soviet Russia was able to eliminate in a few years the total illiteracy of the Russian people, why can't we do it?” (AMADO, 1955b, p. 12, our translation).

Faced with the questioning of a deputy from Paraná<sup>12</sup> about his reports, Jorge Amado, in response, cited the main reasons why Russia had innovated and was achieving success in the area of education, emphasizing that this was only possible by conquering the “power of the people” in the “service of the people”.

The conquest of power by the people showed that in the post-revolutionary project there was an emphasis on development, as well as a concern to extend access to culture to the popular masses. Jorge Amado states that:

Illiteracy is not liquidated in our country, in Latin American countries, in colonial and dependent countries in general, because the governments of these countries are the most interested in the existence and preservation of illiteracy. Enlightened and educated masses mean masses against these obscurantist, anti-progressive, country-selling governments (1955b, p. 12, our translation).

Jorge Amado takes advantage of the aforementioned report to criticize the government and the Brazilian reality, highlighting that illiteracy was one of the main reasons that stopped the progress of our country in that period. Russia, on the contrary, was successful because it facilitated access to culture for the popular masses, resulting in great achievements in education and literature – “Soviet literature quickly became the most important of our time” (AMADO, 1955b, p. 12, our translation).

Jorge Amado also criticized the limited dissemination of Russian literature in that period. In his words:

Various circumstances, above all the constant obscurantist position of Brazilian governments in recent years - just remember the *Estado Novo* period -, made the dissemination of Soviet literature in Brazil always small and limited, and its ignorance not only on the part of the public reader as well as the intellectuals (AMADO, 1955c, p. 14, our translation).

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<sup>12</sup> The name was not identified in the text.

For the author, the limitation of educational, political, and literary matters meant that many Russian intellectuals were not known and publicized here in Brazil - which showed an attempt to ignore or hide them - and the few that gained notoriety in our country have been labeled as subversives or disseminators of theories that attacked national values. This reality was only changed in the second half of the 20th century when there was greater dissemination of Soviet literature in Brazil.

For Jorge Amado, the non-disclosure of the works and ideas of these intellectuals was a mistake made by the Brazilian press in the face of the greatness expressed by this literature. The indignation at this fact can be seen when Amado highlights the work of “calumny by the enemy” and the reactionary ill will:

When the still so great lack of knowledge of Soviet literature and the mistakes made about it in the Brazilian press, supplements, newspapers, and literary magazines is verified, when it is verified the lack of knowledge among intellectuals about the importance and greatness of Soviet literature, one must take into account not only the work of slandering the enemy, the class position of certain intellectuals, the reactionary ill will but also the little that has been disseminated in Brazil about this great literature (AMADO, 1955c, p. 14, our translation).

Among the writers considered masters of Soviet literature, he cites Maxim Gorky, Tolstoy, Makarenko<sup>13</sup>, and other authors not translated into Portuguese. About this, Amado asks,

How dare these men of letters talk about culture and say that there is no Soviet literature? What does not exist is honesty on the part of certain literati and also a sensible delay in the necessary and indispensable dissemination in our language of the great Soviet literature (AMADO, 1955c, p. 14, our translation).

For the Bahian writer, what mattered were not the literati who denied Soviet literature, but the “honest men deceived by the dishonest”, the ignorant. Against this, Jorge Amado suggested fighting for the dissemination of these works for greater enlightenment of intellectuals, providing greater democratization of these ideas, and also defending the use of Soviet books in the process of training the popular masses in Brazil.

Anton Makarenko<sup>14</sup>, the “master of humanism” and the “builder of men”, was also honored in his publications, revealing to Brazilian readers that his works were published in Brazil between 1934 and 1939:

In these twenty years, most of the work of another classic of Soviet literature and also of Soviet Pedagogy was published: Makarenko. *Pedagogical Poem*, *Book for Parents*, and *The Flags on the Towers* appear between 1934 and 1939. When death stole from us this master

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<sup>13</sup> Many intellectuals are referred to by Jorge Amado, such as Fladeev, Gladkov, Serafimovich, Cholokov, Simonov, Erenburg, Wanda Wassilewska, Fedin, Ivanov, Grosmann, Ilf and Petrov, Lavrenev, etc. These are some of the various writers and their respective works cited by the author; however, as only Gorky, Tolstoy and Makarenko are included in this work, we decided to limit the reference to them.

<sup>14</sup> Anton Semionovich Makarenko (1888-1939) was a Ukrainian pedagogue who ran a colony for juvenile offenders and abandoned children after the Russian Socialist Revolution of 1917. He became known for combining education, work, and collectivity in the school space. The colony is named after one of the greatest writers of his time, Maxim Gorky. Among his works is *Pedagogical Poem*.

of humanism and its practical application, this reeducator of children, this builder of men, this great figure of the Stalinist time (AMADO, 1955c, p. 14, our translation).

A fact to be highlighted that reinforces Jorge Amado's involvement, and the proselytism he developed, was the account of his visits to the Soviet Union. According to the author, between 1948 and 1954, he visited the country six times, "and some of these visits lasted a long time". These visits allowed direct contact with the country's culture and education.

I know these people from having lived with them, having fought for peace by their side, and having learned from them to be better than I was before. I love every particle of this country and I love its people with all the fibers of my heart, I carry the people and the country with me wherever I go (AMADO, 1955a, p. 11, our translation).

His experience in socialist lands allowed him to witness the emergence of writers from the proletarian class and the peasantry - new writers who, for the Bahian author, were forced to stifle their vocations for a long time, but who gained space and began to influence generations. From there, Amado (1955c, p. 14, our translation) states that:

Yes, Soviet literature has had a daily and beneficial influence on writers all over the world. It has been a great example of a literature at the service of the proletariat, of its ideas, of a literature in the struggle against imperialism and war, against the oppression of peoples, and the exploitation of man by man. Generous literature, with noble and beautiful content, could not but influence millions of readers, and the most advanced writers of our time.

As already mentioned, the interest of the Soviets in holding their *II Congress of Writers* was to bring together progressive writers who worked in several countries, including Brazil. Jorge Amado's literary and journalistic performance can be understood as a link between national literature and that of the then Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

As a result of the event, a magazine was created, *Literatura Internacional* – for the dissemination of foreign literature with a socialist tendency - in order to expand and intensify literary ties in different countries, in addition to stimulating an international movement for literary peace regardless of the political or religious convictions of the authors involved.

Jorge Amado, soon after his return to Brazil, appealed to Brazilian writers, as guided by the direction of the Union of Soviet Writers, in which he asked them to write for the new magazine, sending short stories, poems, poetry, critical writings, any literary genre. The objective was to publicize the new magazine and promote its insertion in the intellectual environment.

In communications, the author emphasized that *Literatura Internacional* was not exclusive to communist authors, but was intended for "good writers", those who are for peace and who translate their national characteristics, values, and aspirations of their homeland into their literature.

As Jorge Amado reports, one of the first issues of the magazine would publish a selection of Brazilian short stories, among the selected authors were Monteiro Lobato, Marques Rebelo, Mario de Andrade, Afonso Schmidt, Origen Lessa, Graciliano Ramos, Junior Pilgrim, Dias da Costa, which confirmed the eclectic position of it and its new aesthetic and political proposal.

Of the Soviet writers read and disseminated by Jorge Amado, Maxim Gorky stands out, who gained notoriety in Brazil, having had much of his work translated into Portuguese. Gorky's performance crossed the literary field, being the Russian author to defend public instruction.

For Mariátegui (2012), Gorky was not only a narrator of Russia, but one of its main protagonists, participating in the public debate, its critics, chroniclers, and actors, who did not make the Revolution, but lived it:

Maxim Gorky is the novelist of vagabonds, outcasts, of the wretched. He is the novelist of gutters, bad life, and hunger. Gorky's work is peculiar, spontaneous, and representative of this century of crowds, the Fourth Estate, and the social revolution. Many contemporary artists draw their themes and characters from the lower, plebeian strata. The bourgeois soul and passions have already been overexploited and are therefore somewhat outdated. In the case of the proletariat, on the contrary, there are new nuances and unusual lines (MARIÁTEGUI, 2012, p. 121, our translation).

Before becoming a writer, Gorky carried out several activities and crafts, however, reading was his greatest passion, which led him to become one of the most important and outstanding writers of the Soviet Union, being recognized worldwide for the value of his work.

In Brazil, one of Gorky's works - *Ralé* - was staged in the 1950s at the *Teatro Brasileiro de Comédia*<sup>15</sup> in São Paulo and dealt with the daily exploitation suffered by poor and marginalized individuals, who lived in collective housing, by their landlords. The play reached a favorable review and great interest from the São Paulo public for bringing social issues to the stage.

According to the report entitled *Maxim Gorky on TV* from the *Diário da Noite* newspaper, the direct transmission of the play by PRF3-TV had repercussions throughout the state: "The success of the theatrical season in our Capital was like this, provided to thousands of people, transforming television in this particular, into a magnificent means for the dissemination of theater" - the report praises the association of TV and theater in the exhibition of the play (DIÁRIO DA NOITE, 1951, p. 8, our translation).

### **Paschoal Lemme and school education**

In the educational field, Paschoal Lemme<sup>16</sup> was one of the defenders of Soviet education as a model to be followed in Brazil. In his journalistic articles and academic works, the educator made an important defense of the success achieved by the country. He highlighted that despite Russia having great linguistic and cultural differences from Brazil, it could serve as an important reference and a new theoretical matrix for studies in the field of education.

In his book, entitled *A educação na URSS – 1953*, the author portrayed his experience and the information obtained on his trip to the Soviet Union, which took place in 1953, after participating in the "World Conference of Educators", in Vienna, Austria, in April of the same year. Paschoal Lemme and other participating educators were invited to visit the Soviet Union, which allowed them to get to know the country's school system.

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<sup>15</sup> About the play *Ralé*, by Maxim Gorky, see: <https://enciclopedia.itaucultural.org.br/evento397619/rale>. Access on 16 Aug. 2020.

<sup>16</sup> Paschoal Lemme (1904-1997) fought in defense of public schools and the democratization of education; he was one of the signatories of the *Manifest of the Pioneers of New Education*; he was an Education Technician at the Ministry of Education and Culture; and professor at the Rio de Janeiro Institute of Education, then the Federal District.

In the book, he expressed his admiration for the history of the eastern European country, which had achievements in terms of education and culture, offering examples that needed to be known worldwide. He emphatically defended that the relationship between Brazil and the Soviet Union would bring benefits to the Brazilian educational and cultural model.

For Lemme (1956), the Soviet Union accomplished great feats in terms of science, culture, art, technique, and education. Brazil, in the 1950s, had immense educational problems:

in terms of education and teaching, we can no longer ignore the experiences and achievements of Soviet educators and researchers. It is, therefore, necessary that relations between the two countries be established as soon as possible, as the Brazilian people should no longer be deprived of the benefits that these relations can provide them, both from an economic and a cultural point of view (LEMME, 1956, p. 14, our translation).

The author highlighted the organization of Soviet education, having visited several educational establishments, from kindergarten to higher education. In his report, he explained that the schools were organized through a single system, with no difference in the education of one or another student; everyone received the same training – there were no private schools. According to the author, education was done in the collective and for the collective, the same for both sexes.

As for vocational education, according to Lemme, it was essentially based on work, technique, and science. This education was divided into three types of establishments: *professional schools*, which prepared skilled labor in a short time; the *technicums*, spaces for training with a higher professional level, what the Soviets called practical engineers; finally, the *institutes*, which provided higher-level technical education. From direct contact with Soviet education, Lemme (1956) concluded that:

In the Soviet Union education, there is an indissoluble nexus between theory and practice and between the school and the people. In fact, there is not a single school that is not equipped, within its respective specialty, with workshops, laboratories, offices, and different material, which allow the educator and the students to apply the theoretical knowledge acquired in practice. On the other hand, this practical sense is understood only in terms of the production of peace, in which the working class and the whole people are decisively committed (LEMME, 1956, p. 258, our translation).

Paschoal Lemme, as a teacher and defender of the public school, expressed his enchantment with the Soviet education model and pointed out the paths that should be followed, including encouraging study, research, and participation in various subjects related to teaching and culture.

In *O Jornal*, from 1945, Lemme published an article entitled: *Adult Education*, in which he mentions the difficulties in accessing primary and secondary education in Brazil. Difficulties that required urgent work to meet the needs of adults who could not attend schools at the appropriate age.

The author uses the Soviet experience as a reference in the investment in adult education, stating that, after the resumption of diplomatic relations with the country, it would be possible to know the “giant” aspects of adult education and re-education that the revolution undertook and “whose results stunned the world with their landslide victories over Nazi Germany, so proud of its high cultural and technical level” (LEMME, 1945, our translation).

In 1962, in *Diário de Notícias* on December 23, 1962, entitled “The Regional School of Meriti: a Brazilian experience in education”, Lemme highlights the experience of a school created along the lines of the socialist pedagogy in the city of Caxias, Rio de Janeiro, instituted on February 13, 1921, by Armanda Álvaro Alberto<sup>17</sup>.

The school was created to serve poor children and adolescents in the region, characterized by being a home-school. As a day-school model, it housed a limited number of students, with no grades, awards, or punishments. However, the students had a comprehensive education and initiation to work. About the “features”<sup>18</sup> of the Regional School of Meriti, Armanda Álvaro Alberto stated that:

With no model in mind, it was inaugurated on February 13, 1921, without a single written program; from the beginning, however, it took the form of a home-school, albeit a day-school, with a limited number of students, who are not given grades, prizes or punishments. The general orientation was summarized in four posters with the words: Health, Joy, Work, and solidarity. Along with the School, considered an indispensable annex, the Euclides da Cunha Library was inaugurated, divided into three sections: for students, teachers, and residents of Meriti. A school museum was soon organized, in part with contributions brought by the students themselves, of the local nature. Quite naturally, the domestic roles, together with those of helping the library and the museum, and others that the establishment demanded, were carried out by the children. We never had a servant or other employee for such tasks (ALBERTO, 2016, p. 47, our translation).

This initiative was repressed and resulted in the founder’s arrest on suspicion of being linked to communism. Using this example, Paschoal Lemme compares the educational effort developed by Armanda Alberto - in Meriti in Rio de Janeiro - with that of the Russian writer Anton Makarenko, as they had the same pedagogical aspirations, also defending that one of Makarenko’s main books, *Pedagogical Poem*, could be considered one of the most remarkable works of contemporary pedagogy and literature.

The book *Pedagogical Poem*, cited by Lemme and Jorge Amado, was praised as one of the references in education, in 1954, in the newspaper *Imprensa Popular*. The report was made in response to criticisms made by jurist Néelson Hungria, then Minister of the Supreme Federal Court (STF), to the Soviet Union, on the occasion of his speech as a speaker for a class of bachelors at the Faculty of Law of Goiás. According to the newspaper, the Minister stated that the “suppression of the human vocation” had taken place in the Soviet Union.

In response, the newspaper criticized and highlighted the mistakes in Nelson Hungria’s statement, publishing an article with the suggestive title: “The mistakes by Mr. Hungary”, in which he replied that the suppression of the human vocation occurred in Brazil and in countries where childhood and youth were in a situation of abandonment, with high rates of illiteracy, due to the lack of schools and policies aimed at its eradication.

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<sup>17</sup> Armanda Álvaro Alberto was an educator and one of the founders of the *Associação Brasileira de Educação (ABE)* in 1924, having also been one of the three women - the others were Cecília Meirelles and Noemi Rudolfer - who signed the 1932 Manifest of the Pioneers of Education. She became well known in the Brazilian educational and intellectual environment for her experience at the head of the Regional School of Meriti, founded on February 13, 1921.

<sup>18</sup> Expression used by educator Armanda Alberto to characterize the pedagogical proposal developed by her institution as a “home-school”.

The minister should know, and when dealing with the case, have the honor to confess it, that in few other countries children and youth are in a situation of neglect equal to that in Brazil. The reformatories are dens of crime. This is recognized by the judges themselves and within a few days, it was a vehement order to that effect from Judge Stampa Berg. As for the lack of schools and the illiteracy rate, everyone knows, they are clamorous (IMPrensa POPULAR, 1954, p. 3, our translation).

According to the newspaper, the Brazilian reality could not be compared to the Soviet Union, as there was no illiteracy there and education was the most “thriving in the world” – unlike Brazil, where, in that period, with a population of 54 million inhabitants, half were illiterate. Finally, it was suggested to the Minister to read the book *Pedagogical Poem*, by Anton Makarenko, so that he could have greater knowledge about the pedagogical work developed in the Soviet Union:

But if the minister wants to find out about the extraordinary pedagogical work carried out in the USSR, he does not have to go far. We recommend a book translated into Spanish. Let the minister read, without reactionary passion, Makarenko’s *Pedagogical Poem*. He will thus be able to find out about the untruths he shares (IMPrensa POPULAR, 1954, p. 3, our translation).

In this pronouncement, the newspaper defends the teaching practice in the Soviet Union as a reference in education, a model to be followed and studied. Pedagogue Anton Makarenko was suggested as an extraordinary educator through his main work, *Pedagogical Poem*, translated into Spanish only.

### Final considerations

The printed newspaper, as a means of communication, for the circulation of ideas and representations, was an important tool both in the reception and in the dissemination of Russian educational and literary thought in Brazil between 1945 and 1962.

In the literary field, Jorge Amado can be considered the link between Soviet and Brazilian writers. His participation in the *II Congress of Soviet Writers*, held in Moscow in 1954, as well as his appeal for Brazilian writers to write for the magazine *Literatura Internacional*, represents the interest in maintaining a literary dialogue between the two countries. In the reports presented, the writer emphasized different names of Soviet literature, however, three names gained prominence and were considered the great masters: Maxim Gorky, Leo Tolstoy, and Anton Makarenko.

In the educational field, Paschoal Lemme was one of the defenders and enthusiasts of the Soviet model. His visit to the country, in 1953, resulted in the book dedicated to the understanding of its educational system, from kindergarten to higher education, entitled: *A Educação na U.R.S.S. – 1953*. In the work, the author reports aspects considered relevant to the country’s educational and cultural formation. Lemme, as a teacher and defender of the democratization of Brazilian education, found in the Soviet experience a reference to be followed by Brazil in facing the high rates of illiteracy that plagued the country. The Russian experience, considered successful by the author, would make our country reach advances in terms of education and culture.

In the understanding of Cultural History, representations (Chartier, 1990) are determined by the interests of individuals or groups. From this perspective, we can conclude

that the circulation of Soviet educational and literary thought in Brazil, between 1945 and 1962, was based on representations created in the Brazilian press and by intellectuals such as Jorge Amado and Paschoal Lemme who sought changes similar to those that occurred in the Soviet Union to the national reality. The authors emphasized this literary and educational thinking, using the pages of newspapers to propagate a model of education and literature that they perceived as safe and plausible for Brazil to achieve significant advances, ensuring significant achievements in the educational and cultural fields.

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