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"Ad perpetuam rei memoriam": The Vargas Regime and Brazil's National Historical Patrimony, 1930-1945

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*Ad perpetuam rei memoriam.*<sup>1</sup>

## The Vargas Regime and Brazil's National Historical Patrimony, 1930-1945<sup>2</sup>

Daryle Williams

Este artigo trata da política federal do patrimônio histórico nacional durante o primeiro regime Vargas, 1930-1945. Concentra-se na trajetória das atividades de coleção, proteção, restauração, e patrocínio do patrimônio histórico brasileiro executadas principalmente por três instituições culturais federais—o Museu Histórico Nacional (fundado 1922), o Serviço do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional (1937), e o Museu Imperial (1940). Através de uma história institucional destes três órgãos esboça a criação e crescimento do conceito do patrimônio histórico na política cultural federal e o papel dele na política autoritária do Estado Novo. Há vários exemplos do duplo-jogo cultural e político na proteção dos objetos e localidades históricos sob o regime Vargas. Mostra tanto nos aspectos culturais quanto nas ramificações políticas da atuação do governo federal no campo histórico que o regime Vargas procurava no patrimônio histórico nacional uma base material e tradicional à sua orientação autoritária, anti-liberal, e anti-regional. Enfim, o relacionamento entre o regime Vargas e o patrimônio histórico nacional representou os dois como elementos altamente patrióticos, tradicionais, e nacionalistas na modernização da sociedade brasileira.

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On November 19, 1930, Brazil's Museu Histórico Nacional (MHN) accepted the first donation made to the museum since the end of the armed insurrection which came to be known as the Revolution of 1930. The donation consisted of a flag used by the victorious insurrectionaries in the state of Paraná during their rebellion against the liberal machine politics of the Old Republic. The flag itself was not particularly noteworthy. Paraná was not home to the revolutionary movement which thwarted the would-be presidency of Júlio Prestes and dealt a severe blow to the oligarchic politics of "café-com-leite" which had characterized national politics since the early years of the Republic. Nor had Paraná been a major battleground in the recent one-month civil war. However, the flag's donor, Getúlio Vargas, was quite noteworthy.<sup>3</sup> Vargas was not only the political and military leader of the Revolution as well as the newly-appointed Chief of the Provisional Government, he was a figure who would dominate Brazilian political life for the next quarter century. By accepting the flag, the MHN not only gained an addition to its collection of artifacts of the Brazilian past, it won an extremely well-placed patron. Moreover, the Museu Histórico secured a protector who was fascinated with the preservation and exhibition of Brazil's national historical patrimony. The donation of the *paranaense* flag, the first of several hundred donations that Vargas would personally make to the MHN over the course of his first fifteen-year presidency/dictatorship (1930-1945), marked the beginning of a long and

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intimate romance between Getúlio, the Vargas regime, and Brazilian History.

At face value, there seems to be nothing especially unusual about Vargas's first donation. According to contemporary historiographic standards, the Revolution of 1930 was a pivotal moment in Brazil's historical evolution. Objects related to the Revolution, such as the *paranaense* flag, should justifiably be included in the permanent exhibitions of Brazil's national historical museum, as such objects make up part of Brazil's national historical patrimony. The flag certainly fell under Rodrigo Melo Franco de Andrade's, Director of the Serviço do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional, definition of the national historical patrimony which encompassed "the material goods (*bens móveis e imóveis*) of national origin produced by our predecessors, which include works of high and popular artistic value as well as works associated with memorable figures and facts in the nation's history."<sup>4</sup> However, Vargas made his donation to the Museu Histórico—an institution ostensibly charged with the representation of Brazil's *historical* heritage, not contemporary current events—little more than two weeks after the end of the Revolution which brought his regime to power. In November of 1930, it was unclear whether the revolutionary forces would be remembered as national heroes or failed insurrectionaries. With Old Republic liberals still threatening to reverse the fortunes of the Provisional Government, the Revolution could hardly be equated with heroic feats and figures immortalized in the MHN galleries. Hence the significance of making the donation of the flag so soon after the Revolution ended: By including the flag among historical relics once used by universally recognized national heroes such as Tiradentes, Dom Pedro I, Duque de Caxias, Dom Pedro II, and Deodoro da Fonseca, the fledgling Vargas regime insinuated itself among the greatest figures and movements of the Brazilian past. Within the MHN, the flag, and by extension the Revolution of 1930, quickly became a part of the museum's testimonial to the difficult, yet glorious, process of forging a strong, independent, and unified Brazilian nation-state.

The donation of the *paranaense* flag was one of the first of numerous, increasingly complex encounters between the Vargas regime and Brazil's historical memory. Led by Getúlio's loyal patronage of the Museu Histórico, the Vargas regime cultivated an intimate relationship with the memory and materiality of the Brazilian past through an expanding network of federal institutions which cared for Brazil's national historical patrimony. This article studies the growth and significance of this increasingly diversified network of complementary, historically-oriented federal institutions which the Vargas state explicitly charged with protecting the national historical patrimony and implicitly charged with incorporating Vargas and the Vargas project into the collective historical memory of the founding fathers and ideals of Brazilian nationhood. It is my argument that cultural institutions which cared for the national historical patrimony enjoyed a privileged position within the Vargas state not merely because they celebrated the successes of Brazilian history and cultural evolution, but also because they helped to promote the broader political agenda of an authoritarian, centralizing, and nationalistic federal government which valued tradition as the base of modernization. As discussed in greater detail below, these institutions were yet one more tool utilized by the federal government in its rapid and aggressive campaign to shape national integration and development. On the one hand, historical protection empowered the federal government to preserve the monuments and mementos of the past, while on the other hand it gave the Vargas regime the control over the material goods through which it called upon the nation to dream of a historically reverent, modern Brazil. I contend that at the heart of both historical preservation and the call to the imagination of

a modern nation was the Vargas regime's unswerving policy of elite social control through a strong, centralized government. Through an analysis of the institutions and actions of state agencies charged with historical patrimony, we shall see the outline of a larger political agenda which placed cultural policy as a wedge through which the ideals of social order, state supremacy, and tradition could be exalted as the fundamental roots of Brazilian civilization at a time when the civilization had to face the strains of rapid structural and socio-economic modernization.

This research represents a modest contribution to a growing interest in the politics of Brazilian culture. Several historians, including Randal Johnson, Simon Schwartzman, Sérgio Miceli, and Mônica Pimenta Velloso, have recently argued that a well-articulated federal cultural policy was not only a novelty of the Vargas regime, it was an area in which the Vargas state exercised significant latitude in the stagecraft of nation-building at both practical and rhetorical levels.<sup>5</sup> Johnson and Velloso, in particular, have discussed the Vargas regime's aptitude for co-opting prominent literary and cultural figures of various intellectual strains and impressing them into the service of the state in federally-funded initiatives of cultural planning and propaganda. The research presented below, based primarily upon the internal documentation of the federal agencies of historical protection and preservation, represents a closer inspection of the internal bureaucratic workings of one of the most successful and important areas of cultural policy-making—historical patrimony—to delineate how intellectuals, bureaucrats, rhetoric, and policy came together to rapidly define and execute a broad program of historical protection and promotion. This “nuts-and-bolts” look at historical patrimony and state policy should establish a methodological framework in which the study of the *política cultural* (cultural policy) can be used to understand the historical formation of modern Brazil's *cultura política* (political culture).

## HISTORICAL PATRIMONY BEFORE VARGAS

Although the Vargas state's interest in historical patrimony was unprecedented in scope, the regime was not the first institution in Brazil to undertake a systematic study and representation of the nation's past. Nor was the Vargas regime the first institution to link the study of the past with nation-building. For example, founded on October 21, 1838, the Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro (IHGB) had been studying and debating Brazilian history for nearly one century before the Revolution of 1930. Since its foundation, the IHGB had been an enlightened academic institution which tried to represent the history of a white, European civilization living in a tropical setting. Nation-building through the creation and shaping of a national historical memory was at the core of the IHGB's mission. The link between nation-building and historical inquiry was established during the imperial period in the numerous studies of independence, national sovereignty, and territorial integrity and expansion found in the work of the Instituto's membership and regular publications.<sup>6</sup> Following the 1889 proclamation of the Republic, the IHGB remained the unchallenged authority on questions of national history, receiving an annual stipend from the federal government.

The numerous statues, memorials, and busts commemorating historical figures and events erected in public spaces during the imperial and early republican periods further indicate that the Vargas regime did not simply invent the practice of patronizing a set of official, historically-themed symbolic goods. Commemorative monuments,

plaques, and busts were not uncommon before 1930. As the political and cultural capital of the nation, Rio de Janeiro was especially endowed in monuments to the titled nobles, generals, admirals, engineers, authors, battles, friars, and explorers of the Brazilian past.<sup>7</sup> These were ready-made markers for a national historical memory of the great white men who built Brazil.

Moreover, historical protection and preservation was not entirely a Vargas-era innovation. The regional governments of Bahia, Minas Gerais, São Paulo, and Pernambuco had each considered the protection and/or restoration of various local historical sites during the First Republic.<sup>8</sup> Although pre-1930 proponents of historical preservation were unable to muster the necessary support and expertise to realize any large-scale preservation and/or restoration projects, some members of the regional elite did take an interest in their local historical patrimony well before the federal government's Serviço do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional (SPHAN) began its aggressive campaign of historical preservation in 1937. Lastly, the most significant pre-1930 initiative in historical preservation was the 1922 legislation signed by President Epitácio Pessoa which created the National Historical Museum. Pessoa hoped that a permanent historical exposition, created and operated by the federal government, would continually remind the nation of its historical heritage. According to its founding decree, the MHN was to be a "school of patriotism for the understanding of our past."<sup>9</sup> Though small, the early MHN tried to function as a visual textbook of Brazil's historical development from Portuguese colony to independent Republic.

In spite of each of these efforts, the sum of pre-1930 interest in historical patrimony was quite modest and uncoordinated. The IHGB and its affiliated state historical and geographic societies addressed very narrow audiences, and although most received some form of federal or state support, they never enjoyed the full symbolic and legal powers that Vargas-era historical institutions attained. Before 1930, monuments to historical figures and events were most often built through private subscription or the one-time allocation of public funds. In comparison to the post-1930 use of public monuments in civic ceremonies and national holidays, before the Vargas regime rose to power, historical monuments were poorly integrated into a symbolic language of the nation's historical memory. The earliest efforts at historical preservation at the provincial and state level had largely failed, placing hundreds of historical sites and objects at risk of decay and sale to foreign collectors. And, even though the MHN had been functioning for almost a decade before Vargas donated the *paranaense* flag, the MHN suffered from a serious lack of federal funding and public interest during the presidencies of Artur Bernardes (1922-1926) and Washington Luiz (1926-1930)—presidents who exhibited little interest for federal investment in historical preservation.

The Vargas regime, however, would subsequently transform Pessoa's historical museum into the cornerstone of an expansive cultural infrastructure of federal museums, agencies, publications, monuments, and public ceremonies which showcased Brazil's national historical patrimony. Quite unlike the dispersed early efforts at historical preservation and representation, the Vargas regime was the first *federal* administration to take a systematic interest in national historical patrimony. Moreover, Vargas headed Brazil's first federal administration to *institutionally* link the concepts of national development and national historical patrimony. From the marked expansion of the federal historical museums to the restoration of historical cities to the campaigns to *tombear* (register for the sake of preservation) the national historical and artistic patrimony,

under Vargas the federal government assumed the novel responsibility of being the official authority on historical preservation and historical memory. After the Revolution of 1930, federally-created, funded and controlled institutions quickly developed into centers for historical studies and historical representation. These institutions assembled the artifacts from the past, sponsored historical research, and served as witnesses to Brazil's historical evolution from a dependent colony to a modern nation-state. Over time, the federal government's historical institutions not only became the repositories of the Brazilian past, they came to represent Vargas and the Vargas state as loyal, reverential servants of Brazil's past and its national sovereignty. This type of historical and nationalistic representation legitimated the regime's claims to serve as the uncontested curator of Brazil's traditional past and modern future.

### A CASA DO BRASIL: THE MUSEU HISTÓRICO NACIONAL

The Museu Histórico Nacional was the premier example of how the Vargas regime touted its curatorship of Brazilian nationhood, both past and future. It took less than one decade for the MHN to grow from a small collection principally composed of coins, armaments, and tableware housed alongside the workshops of the Imprensa Nacional to the self-proclaimed "Casa do Brasil," in large part because the Vargas regime, which repeatedly legitimated itself as the renovator of Brazilian historical traditions, found in the MHN the building blocks of the Brazilian past. As discussed with the donation of the *paranaense* flag, the regime also seized upon the idea that the MHN could be a means of historicizing an illegal, armed insurrection against the constitutionally-elected Júlio Prestes, by placing historical artifacts alongside the contemporary ones, gently mixing the past and present. The flag was the beginning of a growing federal interest in the museum and its symbolic potential.

In spite of the small size, meager annual visitation, and severe underfunding which characterized the MHN before 1930 (the lack of federal support between 1922 and 1930 would become an oft-repeated accusation of the Vargas-era MHN<sup>10</sup>), the Vargas regime found in the MHN an institution whose original ideological and methodological mission of preserving the material goods of the Brazilian past coincided with the regime's interests in the reconciling tradition and modernity through the preservation and exhibition of the national historical patrimony. Two decades before the Revolution, Gustavo Barroso, the future director of the MHN, had lobbied for the creation of a repository for the nation's historical patrimony—a place in which the federal government could direct the nation's historical memory towards the hero worship of great men and deeds that made Brazilian history great. Barroso, writing under the pseudonym João do Norte, originally spoke of the need to create a military museum to match France's Invalides, Spain's Royal Armory, and Portugal's Museum of Artillery. According to Barroso, these museums were enduring testaments to their nation's military greatness, as well as schools of civic pride and patriotism.<sup>11</sup> (As discussed below, Barroso's idea that a national historical museum should heavily favor militaristic feats would later be incorporated into the display strategies of the MHN.) Barroso also thought that a national historical museum would foster a *Culto da Saudade* (Culture of Nostalgia) that he found seriously lacking in Brazil. Barroso (again writing under the pseudonym João do Norte) subsequently wrote, "With sadness at every turn, one realizes that a cult of traditions is almost nonexistent in Brazil. Here in Rio there are

hundreds of examples... The greatest relics of our tradition grow scattered and abandoned... The *Culto de Saudade* is a thing that does not exist...."<sup>12</sup>

In 1922, Barroso's hopes for the creation of a nostalgic, didactic repository for the Brazilian past took shape when Epitácio Pessoa grew interested in incorporating a national historical display into the international exhibition celebrating the one-hundredth anniversary of Brazil's independence from Portugal. A museum confirming the historical origins of Brazilian civilization would nicely compliment the Exhibition's more prominent pavilions which showcased Brazilian industry, agriculture, urbanization, sanitation, and cosmopolitan feel. A well-organized historical display could prove that Brazil had a history as rich as the national history of any other civilized nation participating in the Exposition. On August 2, 1922, Pessoa signed the museum into law and appointed Barroso as director of the fledgling museum which was quickly installed in the Centenary Exposition's Pavilion of Large Industry. From its simple inauguration, the MHN was a reminder that a modern (i.e. urban, republican, industrial) Brazil could celebrate its traditional (i.e. rural, colonial and imperial, agricultural) past.

From the start, Barroso worked to realize the ideal of a museum dedicated to the exhibition of a heroic past. As Director from 1922 to 1956, with a two year absence from 1930 to 1932, Barroso made an unmistakable ideological imprint on the display strategies and institutional mission of the MHN.<sup>13</sup> Ultranationalist, occasional advocate of a return to monarchical rule, xenophobe, and a vociferous opponent of the unmitigated importation of foreign ideologies and the trappings of modernity, Barroso was a strict self-avowed traditionalist in the vein of other conservative Catholic thinkers of the 1930s, such as Plínio Salgado and Miguel Reale. Like Salgado and Reale, Barroso prized order, authority, and the social good over the individual rights of the common citizen.<sup>14</sup> As a journalist, author, Integralist, and museum director, Barroso was especially drawn to singular figures of authority which, in his mind, embodied social order and traditional Catholic values. Barroso's idolization of great figures and grand ideals could be clearly seen in the MHN's displays mounted under his directorship. Under Barroso, the MHN evolved into a shrine of Brazil's fallen heroes, herculean efforts, and noble ideals. Men like Cabral, the Viceroy, Tiradentes, Duque de Caxias, the Bragança Emperors, the Barão do Rio Branco, and Deodoro da Fonseca became the pillars of a secular temple to Brazilian nationalism. The MHN's galleries filled with portraits and busts of national heroes, objects directly used by such figures (armaments, military decorations, personal effects), and objects which evoked the lifestyle of such figures (chinaware, furniture, fashion, coaches). The MHN also collected visual and decorative arts, as well as militaristic objects, which evoked significant moments in Brazilian history, including cannons used in the defense of Brazilian territory and historically-themed paintings such as Vitor Meirelles' *A Batalha do Riachuelo* and Aurélio de Figueiredo's *Último Baile da Ilha Fiscal*.

Throughout its first four decades of operations, the MHN and its *Culto da Saudade* remained dedicated to assembling images of an elite, heroic, and civilized Brazil. Like the Centenary Exposition, the MHN would have little use for the parts of Brazil that did not point to progress and European civilization. Thus, the original MHN did not include representations of economic underdevelopment, social stratification, urban ills, slavery, or racial mixture. The collections *did* contain objects relating to these subjects. However, they were represented by display strategies that stressed success over failure, individual glory over collective struggle, progress over disorder. A European Brazil was privileged over a multiethnic Brazil. The unattractive aspects of the Brazilian

past were whitewashed in the deification of the discoverers and bandeirantes, the Imperial Family, the great military figures of the nineteenth century, and the founders of the Republic. Less illustrious actors and less noble ideals rarely found a place in the MHN display cases, and the museum would not seriously consider display strategies emphasizing Brazil's social, economic, or cultural history until well after Barroso's death in 1959.<sup>15</sup>

A quick survey of the growth and accomplishments of the MHN under Barroso indicates how successfully the museum fared during the Vargas regime. No longer ignored by the federal government, it grew and prospered from 1930 to 1945. By the end of the *Estado Novo*, the museum had expanded into the entire Casa do Trem as well as the adjoining Arsenal da Guerra to form what now makes up today's three-story conjunction of galleries, offices, workshops, archives, and library; its collection had grown to fill nearly 40 exhibition galleries, each named after a historical figure or a prominent donor;<sup>16</sup> in addition to the permanent collection, the museum mounted two temporary expositions to commemorate the centenary of the abdication of Dom Pedro I and the military accomplishments of Duque de Caxias;<sup>17</sup> it had assembled and installed Brazil's Historical Exposition at the Centenários de Portugal, held in Lisbon in 1940;<sup>18</sup> it published the *Anais do Museu Histórico Nacional*, which became one of Brazil's most prominent historical publications of the period; annual visitation to the Historical and Numismatic exhibitions topped 25,000 visitors;<sup>19</sup> over 170 students had completed the two-year *Curso de Museus*, forming Brazil's first corps of professionals trained in the organization, preservation, and display of historical and artistic patrimony;<sup>20</sup> Barroso and the MHN staff had eagerly accepted donations from some of Brazil's most established families, including the estates of the Guinles, the Ottonis, the Calmons, the Barão de Cotegipe, and Carlos Gomes; and, Getúlio had taken it upon himself to be the museum's protector, making regular visits and even more regular donations. By all standards, under Vargas the MHN evolved into one of the most prominent cultural institutions of Brazil—so much so that by the late 1930s, it was freely calling itself the “*Casa do Brasil*.”<sup>21</sup> Barroso had not only succeeded in creating a temple to the *Culto da Saudade*, he had created an institution which perceived itself to be the highest representation of the nation. The MHN was figuratively Brazil's home.

## THE MHN AND THE POLITICS OF PATRONAGE

The consistent growth in public and private support for the MHN strongly suggests how the Brazilian past played an increasingly important role in the reconfiguration of Brazilian political culture which took place after the Revolution of 1930. The MHN's privileged position in federal cultural policy also sheds light in the stagecraft of Vargas era politics and ideology. The revolutionary regime sharply modified the Old Republican idea that the material goods of tradition had to be swept away (or at the least, resurfaced) to make way for the progress and modernization.<sup>22</sup> To the contrary, the Vargas regime actively sought to prove that a truly modern state valued and preserved the material past. Of course, neither Vargas nor the Vargas state believed that tradition should stand in the way of modernity and progress. But, the cultural policies of the Vargas regime were based upon an ideal that knowledge and *reverence* for the past, for tradition, and for the nation's heroes were prerequisites for a modern, nationalistic, and patriotic citizenry and society.



Many private citizens with historical legacies that far pre-dated Vargas also capitalized upon their chance to be revered in Brazil's expanding historical memory. Thus, institutions like the MHN were so important. While museums could not diversify economic output, increase productivity, facilitate labor-management relationships, or quell communism (all well-stated goals of the Vargas regime), they grounded the ideals and policies of modernity in the ideals and accomplishments of the past. Many of these ideals and accomplishments were undoubtedly invented by the Vargas regime and projected onto a historical patrimony in which Indians, slaves, women, workers, failure, and conflict were nearly invisible. But, museums served to naturalize this vision of Brazil through the impressive *material* representation of historical success, enlightened leadership, and noble families. As the Vargas-era museum was primarily a place to revere the past and not question it, it was an optimal environment to disseminate a view of modernization that synthesized and glorified the past as a didactic book of lessons, role models, and wonder.

As the "*Casa do Brasil*", the MHN was especially important in fostering the belief that an encounter with the past could evoke an immediate, almost spiritual, rush of patriotic pride. A typical visit to the MHN was not merely supposed to be motivated by a desire to see objects from 450 years of Luso-Brazilian history. It was to be an act of sentimental patriotism. A visit was supposed to invoke the sense of awe and wonder for Brazil's historical accomplishments that Barroso found lacking in 1912. Adalberto Ribeiro, a journalist for the Departamento Administrativo do Serviço Público (the Vargas regime's civil service super-agency), captured this feeling in a 1944 report on his visit to the MHN. After describing the Sala Dom Pedro II, Ribeiro commented: "The Museu Histórico Nacional is...an authentic book of memories that one truthfully reads in a unique way: more with the heart than the eyes. In this manner, a world of objects and episodes rise from the darkness of the past, intermixes, and softly moves towards us, not unlike certain scenes in the movies."<sup>23</sup> This seductive, almost mystical meeting between visitor and historical past did not ask for a critical engagement between the two. Rather, when faced with the material riches of Brazilian history, the visitor was simply supposed to be overwhelmed.<sup>24</sup> The museum's displays, which overflowed with objects but lacked in explication, asked visitors to suspend critical thought in order to unabashedly love their country and revere their predecessors.

It remains unclear how well the MHN's message of patriotism was received by the Brazilian public. Although visitation increased dramatically, total visitation still represented a small fraction of the Federal District's population.<sup>25</sup> Unfortunately, we know little about those who did visit, as MHN visitation records do not contain information about the visitor's socio-economic, racial, regional, or gender make-up. It is certain that the MHN was regularly visited by state officials, government employees, schoolchildren, military academy cadets, diplomats, and foreign tourists. This suggests that the museum-going public was predominately literate, white, urban, and middle-to-upper class. This would also be the target audience most likely to accept the link between museum-going and patriotism, as this was the class whose heritage and historical contributions to the formation of Brazil were best represented in the MHN galleries. However, cursory evidence also suggests that museum-going grew in popularity across class lines during the 1930s and 1940s, when the number of museums and annual visitation increased.<sup>26</sup> Barroso mentioned the increasing variety of visitors in a 1944 report on the MHN.<sup>27</sup> Although Barroso may have been overly optimistic to suggest that museums were being regularly visited by members of all classes, from the humble worker to

the erudite scholar, with the increase in museums and museum-goers, especially those concerned with historical subjects, the *Culto da Saudade* slowly inducted new members. This should lead us to believe that the patriotic message of museum-going was being heard by a growing portion of Brazilian society. Nevertheless, much more research is needed to determine how, when, and where the Vargas regime's message of patriotism was received within a highly stratified society in which the ideals of patriotism were often remote, and the practice of museum-going rare.

We do know that certain sectors of the elite were very faithful to museums, and particularly the MHN. This is particularly true for two groups: the top members of the federal elite, especially Getúlio Vargas, and the descendants of established nineteenth-century families, especially those families which once held imperial titles of nobility. These two groups were not only regular museum-goers, they were also regular donors. Like the royal visitor, the MHN hailed these donors as true patriots.

The official patronage of the MHN makes a great deal of sense. The Vargas regime had tried to ingratiate itself into the MHN, the officially designated repository of Brazil's historical memory, just days after Vargas assumed power. After the Revolution, the Vargas regime consistently used the MHN to legitimate its claims of being a true defender of the Nation and national interests. The regime also used the MHN to legitimate its political mandate and many of its more controversial political policies. Aside from objects of true historical value that the Vargas elite either donated or acted as intermediary for private donors, the regime consistently used the MHN as a warehouse for objects related to the regime's contemporary political fortunes. After the November 1930 donation of the *paranaense* flag, the MHN received several other artifacts from the Revolution of 1930, as well as the Constitutionalist rebellion of 1932 and the *golpe de estado* of 1937. Perhaps the most blatantly politicized donation to the MHN, made in hopes of quickly historicizing an extreme act of political symbolism, was the donation of an urn containing the ashes of the state flags burned in a public ceremony held soon after the declaration of the *Estado Novo*.<sup>28</sup> The remains of the symbolic, ritualistic end to regionalism (so intimately tied to the politics of the Old Republic) were taken from their contemporary political setting and placed within the rarefied confines of the MHN.

Within the *Casa do Brasil*, the material evidence of the strict authoritarianism of *estadonovista* politics were placed among the less controversial, more celebrated memorials to the heroes of Brazil's past. National politics instantly became national historical patrimony. Similar intentions were at play in the numerous donations made by Vargas of objects associated with the day-to-day politics of *Estado Novo*.<sup>29</sup> The MHN's numismatic section regularly accepted coins and medallions commemorating events purely related to Vargas' daily presidential duties and political policies. Although these objects were of little historical or artistic value at the time that Vargas donated them, in the MHN they made quotidian politics appear enlightened. At a material level, Vargas' political duties gained equal stature with the founders of Brazilian nationhood whose material patrimony made up a large part of the holdings. The association between Vargas and the founders of Brazilian nationhood crystallized in 1945 when the MHN honored Vargas with the inauguration of the Sala Getúlio Vargas—one of only four galleries named after a Brazilian head of state. Getúlio was among a select group indeed, as the other three salas were named after the founder of Brazilian independence, Dom Pedro I, Brazil's long-lived monarch, Dom Pedro II, and the founder of the Republic, Deodoro da Fonseca.

There was an ideal in the permanence and respectability of historical representation which also motivated many wealthy private citizens to donate their family's historical patrimony to the national historical patrimony. Both the family and the nation benefited, as the family gained membership into the heroic elite immortalized by the MHN and the nation benefited through the sheer value of the donations. The State also benefited by being able to use the material culture of Brazil's most traditional families as part of a larger campaign of building credibility within Brazilian society. If the representatives of Brazil's historical formation placed their trust in the Vargas administration to care for their riches, then should not the Nation do the same?

Some members of the post-1930 Brazilian society, especially the descendants of nineteenth-century families which may not have adapted to the changes wrought by the end of the Empire and republican rule, needed institutions like the MHN to assure that their 'place in history' would not be forgotten, regardless of the socio-economic changes that were radically transforming Brazil. In an era when the last of the nineteenth-century titled nobility were dying out (and with them, the first-hand memory of the imperial elite), the *Casa do Brasil* could assure that a once-titled family would always remain a titled family within the galleries of a federal museum.<sup>30</sup> Neither the title nor the memory would be lost to time. Of course, there were conditions placed on many large private donations. Major donors, like the estate of the Barão de Cotegipe and Miguel Calmon (a descendant of the Marquês de Abrantes), stipulated that donations were contingent upon the creation of a special exhibition gallery named after the donor. The donors also demanded that, once installed, the collection had to remain an indivisible component of the MHN's permanent collection.<sup>31</sup> Yet, these stipulations were hardly onerous to the MHN. To the contrary, they bought into Barroso's ideal in the sanctity and perpetuity of the national historical patrimony. *Ad perpetuam rei memoriam*. To dismember historical patrimony would be to symbolically dismember the nation (an anathema to the centralist political culture of the Vargas era). This belief in the permanence of national historical patrimony and its use as a means of preserving the memory of personal, familial, and regional histories is most assuredly a Vargas-era innovation in Brazilian cultural politics predicated upon the existence and support of institutions which claimed to preserve and promote the nation's historical memory.

As the Vargas regime made donations to the MHN to historicize (and sanitize) the political, private citizens donated to memorialize their family's contribution to the formation of the Brazilian nation-state. Both the state and private donors donated to the MHN in order to assure their place in the nation's historical memory. The conjunction of the private and public collections, assembled and displayed by the MHN staff, unified the material cultures of Brazil's traditional and modern powerbrokers. Through the patronage of public and private donors, the MHN was able to represent a near seamless transition from colony to Empire to Republic to *Estado Novo*, each building upon the former, each using tradition as the foundation for change. Of course, the historical transitions between each of these historical periods (and within them) were not seamless. The Brazilian historical record is full of conflict and discord. But, within the MHN, bandeirantes and Jesuits did not struggle over the souls and labor of Indians. Dom Pedro II could graciously stand next to Deodoro da Fonseca, the general which banished the Imperial Family. And, Vargas' image could rest among the busts of the presidents of the Old Republic, even if Vargas spearheaded a violent end to the Old Republic itself.

## THE MUSEU IMPERIAL: THE VARGAS-ERA RESURRECTION OF IMPERIAL BRAZIL

There was no better case of the Vargas regime's attempt to assemble a collection of material goods truly worthy of reverence and awe than in the creation of the Museu Imperial in Petrópolis. In the conscious reversal of early republican political decrees which banished the Imperial Family, attempted to auction off the wealth of the Braganças, and raised the ideal of the Republic far above the leadership of an Emperor, the Vargas regime took great strides to repatriate the mortal remains of the Imperial Family and reassemble the material wealth and the memory of Dom Pedro II. This symbolic resurrection of the Braganças focused upon the Emperor's beloved summer retreat in Petrópolis, located in the mountains above Rio de Janeiro. In the span of one decade, with Vargas taking a personal interest throughout the process, the mortal remains and the material life of the Emperors returned to Petrópolis to forever remind Brazilians that Brazilian nationality had imperial origins.

From the Emperor's jewel-encrusted Crown to the Imperial Throne, the Museu Imperial brought together a unique repository of historical artifacts, bringing Brazilians face-to-face with the richness of nation's past. The museum originated in the efforts of Alcindo Sodr , director of the Museu Hist rico de Petrópolis, who had lobbied for the installation of a museum in the former Imperial Palace during the mid-1930s. In July of 1938, the Imperial Palace was *tombado* by the Servi o do Patrim nio Hist rico e Art stico Nacional (see below for an explanation of *tombamento*), and the state of Rio de Janeiro subsequently ceded the property to the federal government. In the meantime, Vargas had grown attracted to the idea of setting up a federal museum to re-create the Bragan a Monarchy. The 1920s had witnessed a tentative reapproximation between the Republic and the Empire, after Epit cio Pessoa lifted the ban on the family imposed four days after the November 15, 1889 proclamation of the Republic.<sup>32</sup> But it was not until 1939, near the height of the *Estado Novo*, that the federal government succeeded in repatriating the mortal remains of the Emperor Dom Pedro II and the Empress Tereza Cristina. Vargas personally attended the installation of the imperial remains in a specially-constructed mausoleum built in the Petrópolis Cathedral. The Mausoleum's dedication ceremony represented the official consecration of Dom Pedro II as a heroic leader who saved Brazil from the internal divisiveness that tore up nineteenth-century Spanish America, a great man of letters and science, and a true patriot. The following year, Vargas decreed the formal creation of the Museu Imperial.<sup>33</sup> In 1941 Dom Pedro Gast o de Orleans e Bragan a, grandson of Dom Pedro II, responded to the federal government's favorable policies towards the imperial period by offering to repatriate the archives of the Casa Imperial do Brasil, held in Castelo d'Eu in France.<sup>34</sup> Like the descendants of the barons, dukes, and marquises of the nineteenth century, the protection of the national historical patrimony was advantageous to the former Imperial Family who could always remain imperial in the nation's historical memory. The Museu Imperial opened to the public in March of 1943.

Although the MHN and the Museu Imperial both preserved and exhibited material artifacts from the past, the Museu Imperial was distinct from Gustavo Barroso's *Casa do Brasil*. While the MHN tried to represent all of Brazilian history from Cabral to Vargas (suffering from numerous bouts of historical amnesia), the Museu Imperial tried to assemble and exhibit items solely associated with the life and lifestyle of Dom

Pedro II. Sodré's idea was to re-create the Imperial Palace just as Dom Pedro II had left it days before the fall of the Empire. In a letter to Rodrigo Melo Franco de Andrade, Director of the SPHAN, Sodré wrote that the museum would be installed in the "most appropriate historical house of the country, where the special rooms, such as the Throne Room, Pedro II's office, Ambassador's Suite, Empress's Suite, Billiards Room, Chapel, Dining Room, and Bedroom of Brazil's last Imperial couple will be reproduced with the same pieces characteristic of the old Palace..."<sup>35</sup> The Museum was to be a period house quite unlike the more conventional display cases, portraits, and statuary of the MHN. The Museu Imperial was a time machine whose single destination was Imperial Brazil. The directorship of the Museu Imperial hoped that the *Culto da Saudade* could be fostered through depth in museum display, as opposed to the MHN's breadth.

The Museu Imperial enjoyed almost immediate success, strongly suggesting that the museum struck a resonant chord in Brazil's collective historical memory. In its first nine months of existence (March-December 1943), over 22,000 visitors came to see the collections. (With 20 years of collections and exhibitions, the MHN received just slightly more visitors in all of 1943). By 1945, the Museu Imperial received over 50,000 visitors, a figure that would nearly double in the 1946.<sup>36</sup> From 1942 to 1946, the museum's collection grew from 1,973 objects to 11,540, worth an estimated market value of 80 million cruzeiros.<sup>37</sup> The Museum quickly began publication of the *Anuário do Museu Imperial* to serve as a learned journal for studies on the Second Reign, and it sponsored several conferences on various historical subjects.

Getúlio maintained a characteristically enigmatic relationship with the Museum. The museum's rapid success was in part due to the loyal support of Getúlio who, like Dom Pedro II, would often escape Rio's tropical summer months in temperate Petrópolis. Vargas made regular visits and donations to the Museu Imperial. However, it appears that Getúlio's interest in the Museu Imperial was not purely motivated by a disinterested passion for the Brazilian monarchy, as Vargas was an unusual beneficiary of the resurrection of the Brazilian Empire. Vargas's patronage and support of the Museu Imperial not only gave back to the country the cultural patrimony which had been dismembered during the Old Republic. Vargas's intimate association with the Museu Imperial also made Getúlio seem like the enlightened colleague of Brazil's last great head of state who had also taken such a keen interest in the arts and culture—Dom Pedro II. Vargas's association with the Museu Imperial and Dom Pedro II was so intimate that the museum's inaugural ceremonies included the unveiling of a bust of Getúlio placed along the main entrance to the restored Imperial Palace. In an otherwise conscious recreation of the material world of the Emperor and the Second Reign, the bust was a clear anachronism. When Pedro II looked out of the Palace's window, he certainly did not see a bust of Vargas. But in terms of cultural politics of the first Vargas regime, the bust makes perfect sense as it stood to represent Getúlio's watchful eye over the memory and material goods of Brazil's last Emperor. Who cared about Brazil's historical heritage? The answer was materially represented for all visitors to see. And, every visitor who took a few moments to step back into the world of the Second Reign brought that representation of Getúlio's watchful eye with them.

In the historical memory of the Vargas elite, there were many parallels to be drawn between the leadership of Dom Pedro II and Vargas. But, how can we make sense of these parallels? Did they have any larger meaning in Brazilian political culture after the Revolution of 1930? I argue that the exaltation of Dom Pedro II served as a metaphor

for the model of leadership that the Vargas elite wanted Brazil to recover from its imperial past. Pedro II offered Brazil the role model of a benevolent patriarchal leader who was dedicated to the arts and sciences, as well as the material modernization of Brazil. These were all attributes that Vargas tried to appropriate onto his own political persona. Although there were many dissimilarities between the Second Reign and the *Estado Novo*, the similarities were great enough (and the capacity to challenge the official history of either the Second Reign or the *Estado Novo* weak enough) that Vargas was able to associate himself with the ideals and policies of the Emperor. The Museu Imperial became an invaluable means through which the memory of Vargas and Dom Pedro II could seductively create an image of two leaders, one imperial and the other republican, joined together in the betterment of the Nation.

#### HISTORICAL PATRIMONY EXPANDED: THE SERVIÇO DO PATRIMÔNIO HISTÓRICO E ARTÍSTICO NACIONAL

Both the Museu Imperial and the MHN did have their limitations. It was impossible to display the entire range of the national historical patrimony in one or two federal museums. Aside from the blind eye turned towards the historical contributions and participation of Afro-Brazilians, women, Indians, and the popular classes, as well as the larger, impersonal processes of Brazil's historical development, the MHN was limited to exhibiting objects which could be bought, donated, or bartered and then transferred to Rio. In general, most objects in the MHN collection were small enough to fit into glass display cases or on the gallery walls. Larger objects were limited to furniture, statues, cannons, and a few coaches. The Museu Imperial was similarly limited in its displays and display strategies. As a shrine to the elite world of Dom Pedro II, the museum represented a very narrow view of nineteenth-century Brazil. The Museu Imperial virtually ignored all non-elite social and economic aspects of the Second Reign. Furthermore, only a small fraction of the population could actually visit either museum, even though admission was free of charge. These limitations left many dangling questions. What was to be done about historical buildings and towns? How were citizens who lived outside of the Federal District and nearby Petrópolis going to be indoctrinated into the *Culto da Saudade*? How was local and regional historical patrimony going to be incorporated in the national historical patrimony? What was the private citizen's rights and responsibilities with respect to historical patrimony? These questions were addressed through the successive inauguration of several other historical institutions which would come to complement the activities of both the Museu Histórico and the Museu Imperial.

The first of these new institutions was the Inspetoria dos Monumentos Nacionais, created by Decree 24.735 of July 14, 1934. Under the direct control of Gustavo Barroso's MHN, the Inspetoria represented the initial response to some of the questions posed above. No longer confined to working with historical objects that could be brought to Rio, Barroso directed a federal agency whose primary mission was the restoration of Ouro Preto, Minas Gerais (formerly Vila-Rica de Albuquerque)—the administrative, religious, and cultural center of the eighteenth-century gold mining boom in the interior of southeastern Brazil. Over three years (1934-1937) and at a cost of 200 contos, the Inspetoria restored Ouro Preto's most prominent churches, bridges, and fountains. The Inspetoria worked with ecclesiastic, local, state, and federal agencies

to assure that Ouro Preto would become a beacon for any Brazilian interested in the small town which was home to the Inconfidência Mineira, Tiradentes, and some of the finest examples of Baroque art and architecture in the Americas. By the time the restorations of Ouro Preto neared completion, the federal government's definition of the national historical patrimony was extending far beyond the walls of the MHN. The touchstones of national history were no longer confined to display cases. Any historical site, located anywhere within the national borders, became a possible candidate for patriotic pride and federal protection.

The truly *national* scope of the Vargas regime's interest in the national historical patrimony was manifest in the activities of the Serviço do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional,<sup>38</sup> successor to the Inspetoria dos Monumentos Nacionais. The SPHAN enjoyed the collaboration of some of Brazil's most prominent intellectuals of the 1930s and 1940s, the inner circle of the Vargas elite, numerous municipal and state governments, and the full weight of the federal state apparatus in an aggressive campaign to define, find, catalog, *tomb*,<sup>39</sup> and restore the nation's historical and artistic patrimony. Empowered by the SPHAN's defining document, Decree-Law 25, its representatives spread out across Brazil to establish the presence of the most ambitious and powerful of the all Vargas-era federal institutions responsible for the national historical patrimony. In the process, they helped to establish the presence of the Vargas state throughout the nation.

The SPHAN symbolized the Vargas regime's hearty appetite for managing the national historical patrimony as part of a larger project of managing Brazil's national identity. Given legal powers that no other federal cultural institution had previously enjoyed, over the course of the *Estado Novo* the SPHAN came to exert control over a wide array of historical and artistic sites, structures, and objects which its Director Rodrigo Melo Franco de Andrade called "the identity documents of the Brazilian nation." Through *tombamento*, the SPHAN could summarily include any object, structure, or site into a rapidly expanding definition of the national historical patrimony—the material goods which made Brazilian identity uniquely Brazilian. Personal, local, and regional affiliation and control of any *tombado* object could be subordinated to the directives of a federal agency which claimed to represent the interests of the entire nation. *Tombamento* complemented the regime's much broader attempts to wrest political power from the personal, local, and regional interests which had dominated Brazilian politics during the Old Republic at the expense of the federal government. *Tombamento* also gave the Vargas regime a federally-controlled, material base to use in the redefinition of Brazilian identity.

The SPHAN originated in a comprehensive proposal written by the founder of Brazilian Modernism, Mário de Andrade (no relation to Rodrigo Melo Franco de Andrade) who submitted the *Projeto do Serviço do Patrimônio Artístico Nacional* to Minister of Education Gustavo Capanema in March of 1936.<sup>40</sup> This project was undoubtedly one of the most important cultural documents of the Vargas era. It outlined in detail the ideology and methodology of identifying and preserving the most representative elements of Brazilian culture. According to Mário de Andrade's plan, "the objective of the Serviço do Patrimônio Artístico Nacional (SPAN) is to determine, organize, preserve, defend, enrich, and promote the national artistic patrimony." The SPAN's raison d'être was *tombamento*—a simple act of registration in one of four *Livros do Tombo*, but an act which signified an artistic object's or historical site's official and irrevocable consecration as representative of Brazilian culture.<sup>41</sup> Andrade envisioned that in five

years and at an estimated cost of 10,000 contos, the federally-funded SPAN would be able to study every artistic object and historical site in Brazil, determine which were to be *tombado*, publish the four *Livros do Tombo*, create and install four national museums, and begin publication of the *Revista Nacional de Artes*.<sup>42</sup> In a very short period and at a very high cost, Andrade hoped to capture the totality of Brazilian artistic production, aesthetics, and historical artifacts from all regions, periods, ethnicities, and social groups.

A brief consideration of the mental worlds of Gustavo Barroso, author of *O Quarto Império*, and those of Mário de Andrade, author of *Macunaíma* would suggest that two fundamentally opposed visions of the Brazilian national patrimony struggled for precedence within federal cultural policy under Vargas. While Barroso was directing the MHN as a conservative, elite temple to national history, Mário de Andrade was traveling throughout Brazil, studying the interior, indigenous folklore, popular art, and the relics of the colonial past. Andrade incorporated his experiences with the wide variations in Brazilian culture into a very broad definition of the national artistic patrimony which included nearly any work of art, historical or contemporary, deemed representative of Brazilian cultural production, evolution, and/or aesthetics. Andrade's plans include fine and popular art, sacred and secular art, regional and cosmopolitan art, and art produced by Brazil's numerous ethnic groups. Andrade's ideas for the SPAN were the reflection of an intellectual, author, and civil servant deeply interested in the variety and complexity of Brazilian society, history, and artistic production as part of a fundamentally *modern* project which synthesized tradition with modernity, an ethnically mixed population with a European elite.<sup>43</sup> For Barroso, on the other hand, the past should be venerated to escape the ills of modernity. Moreover, the past should be noble and inspired, rather than impersonal and common.<sup>44</sup> There was little room for anything that Barroso considered unheroic or uninspired, which included the vast majority of the national population. Thus, Barroso's MHN bore little resemblance to what Andrade envisioned for federal policies of historical protection.

In spite of Andrade's stature as one of Brazil's leading intellectuals and his personal friendship with Capanema, Gustavo Barroso's vision of national historical patrimony remained quite captivating to a regime which found a slightly mystical veneration of the past more attractive than a critical engagement with it. Not only were Andrade's plans too costly and overly ambitious for a new federal agency exercising new federal powers, Andrade's definition of cultural patrimony did not square with the predominant tendencies in Vargas-era federal cultural policy. In brief, cultural policy under the Vargas regime was characterized by a predilection for high art (particularly historically significant high art), European genres with Brazilian themes (visual arts, theatre, and music), and nationalistic art (often propagandistic). The regime did exhibit interest in popular and applied art and aesthetics, but this interest often came as part of the glorification of Getúlio as Brazil's archetypical father figure, calls to social order and harmony, or the "legitimation" of the popular.<sup>45</sup> Moreover, the dominant tendency in the Vargas era cultural policy was *historical* patrimony at the leading edge of cultural patrimony. Andrade's proposals were too ahistorical (or better put, pan-historical) for the federal cultural infrastructure overseen by Capanema. As both a political and an aesthetic decision, the Vargas regime perceived itself to be gaining more through the celebration of the national past. While Capanema and Vargas eagerly accepted Andrade's proposal, Vargas submitted a scaled-back version for legislative approval.<sup>46</sup>



In the end, the majority of Andrade's SPAN proposal was adopted. However, the elements that were altered or suppressed offer a great deal of insight into the mental world and internal workings of the Vargas regime's *política cultural*. Perhaps the most significant alteration of Andrade's original plan was the shift from a SPAN (Serviço do Patrimônio Artístico Nacional) to a SPHAN (Serviço do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional). The alteration came in a memorandum between Gustavo Capanema and Vargas in which Capanema argued that the SPAN's responsibilities were too narrowly defined. Capanema proposed that the SPAN should in fact be the SPHAN, which would be responsible for "historical patrimony, artistic or otherwise."<sup>47</sup> In theory, Capanema argued that historical patrimony and artistic patrimony were inseparable, but in reality, he supported the subordination of artistic patrimony under the rubric of historical patrimony. The SPHAN went from an agency primarily concerned with artistic patrimony to one primarily concerned with historical patrimony. This shift indicated that the Vargas regime's key leadership held much more interest and use for the nation's historical, as opposed to artistic, heritage. The shift also brought the emergent SPHAN into ideological conformity with the federal government's other historically-oriented institutions.

Although Andrade did not protest the emphasis on historical patrimony, his plans for the inclusion of ethnographic and anthropological artistic production as part of the wide range of Brazilian artistic patrimony would be sharply curtailed when historical importance was privileged over artistic aesthetics.<sup>48</sup> The future SPHAN would concentrate on the study and preservation of material objects from the past whereas the ethnographic studies and protection of popular art originally proposed by Andrade would be basically excluded from SPHAN responsibilities. Once the SPHAN began to fully undertake the study of the national historical and artistic patrimony in 1937, the agency would leave behind most of the SPAN's contemporary, popular, ethnographic, and anthropological provisions to concentrate on the study, *tombamento*, and restoration of historic architectural sites, mostly dating from the colonial period. Mário de Andrade's SPAN, based on the universal protection of all types of Brazilian art produced by all time periods, social classes, regions, and ethnic groups, had been replaced by Capanema's SPHAN, based on the select protection of *historical* art as artifacts of the *historical* past.

After definitive approval by executive decree, the SPHAN's responsibilities proved to be much more challenging than Mário de Andrade's 1936 proposal had originally suggested.<sup>49</sup> Individual states could not provide the SPHAN with all of the information requested, slowing the comprehensive documentation of historical sites and artifacts. *Tombamento* was a long, drawn-out process. The agency faced a limited budget and a scarcity of trained personnel. Resources were spread thin with the inspection of commerce in historical objects, antiquities, and auctions which detracted from the agency's primary mission, *tombamento*. *Tombado* objects and sites were sporadically damaged or defaced. Even though Decree-Law 25 gave SPHAN the authority to fine individuals who damaged historical patrimony, enforcement was nearly impossible. Furthermore, not all members of Brazilian society welcomed *tombamento*. In spite of the rhetoric about the net social good and national pride, some private property owners resisted relinquishing control of their properties to a state agency in the interests of cultural patrimony. Similarly, some municipalities protested the restrictions placed on urban construction and infrastructural improvements in areas protected by *tombamento*. As will be discussed below, the conflicts between private property, municipal rights, and

the national historical patrimony would be an ongoing dilemma for the SPHAN. They would ultimately be one of the many means of asserting authoritarian powers for the state.

Despite the setbacks of the early years, by the late *Estado Novo* the SPHAN had achieved many of the goals that it had originally intended to complete by 1941. The *Livros do Tombo* had slowly filled. The SPHAN had annually published the *Revista do Serviço do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional*, whose stated mission was to systematically “promote awareness of Brazil’s artistic and historical values and to contribute to their study.”<sup>50</sup> Like the *Anais do Museu Histórico Nacional* and the *Anuário do Museu Imperial*, SPHAN’s *Revista* was a federally-funded journal of historical research and publication. Through these journals, the federal government placed itself at the forefront of historical studies by publishing original historical research, often written by federal employees, based upon the historical collections found in federal museums and historical landmarks as well as private collections. The SPHAN had also mounted several successful expositions detailing the agency’s work and commemorating the anniversaries of imperial advisor José Bonifácio, sculptor Aleijandinho, and the Company of Jesus. The agency had offered financial and technical support to various state and local museums interested in historical preservation. It oversaw three regional historical museums—Ouro Preto’s Museu da Inconfidência, São Miguel’s Museu das Missões, and Sabará’s Museu do Ouro (discussed below). And, the agency had successfully documented and restored historic buildings in the states of Rio Grande do Sul, Minas Gerais, São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Mato Grosso do Sul, and Bahia, among others.

There were four main qualities to SPHAN’s accomplishments. The first, which placed the SPHAN squarely in line with the ideology of the Vargas regime, was that its aesthetics were officially nationalistic. Brazilian historical and artistic innovations were to take precedent over international aesthetics. In 1936, Rodrigo Melo Franco de Andrade stated that “In nations with a more developed artistic patrimony, every day one hears more calls for the primitive or exotic art of the other peoples. But, above all else, what is most important in every nation are the monuments which characterize that nation’s art and history. The poetry of a Brazilian church of the colonial period is, for us, more moving than the Pantheon. And any statute that Aleijandinho carved into soapstone for the churchyard of Congonhas (Minas Gerais) speaks to our imagination more loudly than Michelangelo’s Moses.”<sup>51</sup> Distancing himself from both the European fashion for ‘primitive’ art and more conventional tastes in European high art, Andrade indicated that the agency’s official aesthetic would be trained to see through the lens of nationalism and national heritage. A Baroque church anywhere in the world was not to be as moving as a Brazilian Baroque church.

Secondly, the representation of the nation’s cultural patrimony de-emphasized historical or artistic representations of non-European, non-elite groups in *tombamento* and major restoration projects. Even the SPHAN-directed restorations of the Jesuit mission of São Miguel (Rio Grande do Sul) completed for the installation of the Museu das Missões scarcely took into account the local indigenous population’s central role in the artistic and cultural life of the eighteenth-century Spanish and Portuguese missions.<sup>52</sup> Thirdly, restoration projects strongly favored structures built during the colonial era, with a large preponderance of colonial religious sites. There was some logic to this as colonial religious structures were the most common surviving historic structures in Brazil, containing some of country’s best artwork and historical artifacts. Yet, the preservation of colonial religious institutions also validated traditional institutions of

authority as focal points of patriotic pride and cultural heritage. Lastly, the SPHAN had to rely on the collaboration of many local, regional, and ecclesiastic entities to successfully accomplish its goals. Social collaboration in the protection of cultural patrimony was a recurrent theme in Rodrigo Melo Franco de Andrade's public interviews and speeches and in a series of radio addresses on SPHAN activities made in 1944 and 1945.<sup>53</sup> Most often those who helped the SPHAN execute its projects benefited from the Service's attention, attracting federal funds, technical expertise, and the preservation/restoration of objects or sites of great material and emotional value.

Although the SPHAN was most active in the Southeastern region, remote areas which could not be readily visited by its employees and sites which were low priorities for preservation and restoration were still incorporated into expansive domain of the national historical patrimony through the agency's extensive photographic collection.<sup>54</sup> A photographer typically participated in the SPHAN's initial visits to a historical site to visually document the site.<sup>55</sup> Through the photographer's work, no object or site of value would be totally lost to decay, sale, or distance. Historical memory could live on in a set of reproducible photos which could serve to help a SPHAN architect plan a restoration without leaving Rio, or to illustrate to any citizen a wealth of images of a living past. Furthermore, photographs allowed the SPHAN to bring all of Brazil's historical and artistic patrimony into the offices and exhibition halls in Rio.<sup>56</sup> No matter how remote, no matter how large, no matter who owned it, the SPHAN was able to catalog and display a representation of the Brazilian past in the national capital. Given the impossibility of actually bringing the national patrimony to Rio, through photos, Rio could still give the nation its national patrimony. This is undoubtedly a cultural ramification of the aggressive centralization of political power that began after the Vargas regime seized power.

It is important to recognize that the SPHAN did not work in a vacuum, nor was the protection of the national historical patrimony universally welcomed by all sectors of Brazilian society. As Brazilian economic output increased and urban populations swelled, there were many forces working against the preservation of old, often decaying, buildings that were often located on valuable property in urban centers. Although the rhetoric of the Vargas elite and the federal cultural institutions spoke of the compatibility, if not the interdependence, of modernization and historical preservation, *tombamento* could interfere with urban improvements. Furthermore, some private property owners resisted *tombamento* and the restrictions placed on registered sites and objects held in private hands. When such conflicts arose, the laws of historical preservation favored the state over the claims of private individuals or municipalities.

The state's power to compromise the rights of private property owners for the sake of historical preservation was a radical innovation under Republican law. Under the Constitution of 1891, private property was near sacrosanct. During the Old Republic, historical preservation would certainly not infringe upon the free use of private property. But under the provisions of the authoritarian Constitution of 1937 and Decree-Law 25, the executive branch (personally represented by Getúlio and institutionally represented by Ministry of Education and the SPHAN) enjoyed many legal powers concerning historical preservation that would have been unthinkable under the liberal Constitution of 1891. The most extraordinary new power granted to the SPHAN was the power to summarily *tomb* private property even if the property owner was opposed. Since *tombamento* placed several restrictions on the use of any registered property (for example, the SPHAN had to approve all alterations to the structure and

its surroundings), the classic liberal right to the free use of private property could be compromised by state directive. Of course, the SPHAN never emphasized compulsory *tombamento*, nor the loss of certain uses for *tombado* properties.<sup>57</sup> Instead, the agency stressed the state's role in balancing the rights of the private individual and the public welfare. In this case, the public welfare was defined to include historical preservation. The hope was clearly that compulsory *tombamento* would not be necessary because private citizens would see it as their patriotic duty to aid in the protection of the national historical patrimony.

But, the rhetoric of nationalism and patriotic duty still retained a certain coercive, authoritarian underside. This two-sided face of *tombamento*, one nationalist, the other authoritarian, was replicated throughout the Vargas administration's federal policies. Vargas-era political policies were grounded in the rhetoric of nationalism, patriotism, and civic duty. But, during times of conflict, the Vargas state often resorted to authoritarian means to achieve its goals. The nationalist-authoritarian split of cultural policies were part of a much broader split in how the Vargas regime exercised and retained power.

Tensions over compulsory *tombamento* troubled the SPHAN throughout the *Estado Novo*. In 1942, a protracted legal battle arose between private property owners and the SPHAN over the compulsory *tombamento* of the Arco de Teles, a historical arch located on Rio de Janeiro's Praça XV de Novembro.<sup>58</sup> The owners of the property sought an annulment of the *tombamento* on the grounds that the State had infringed upon their rights to the free use of private property. The owner's case was eventually argued before the Tribunal Supremo Federal (TSF) which upheld the constitutionality of compulsory *tombamento*. The TSF also rejected the owners' claim that if the property were to be summarily *tombado* then it must be expropriated by the State with due compensation. The TSF argued that since the owners of the Arco de Teles were not truly deprived of their property, only restricted from altering, damaging, or destroying it (a narrow interpretation of Decree-Law 25), their constitutional rights had not been infringed and therefore they had no right to monetary compensation.

The Arco de Teles case demonstrates that, under the Vargas administration, an ostensibly apolitical, cultural act such as *tombamento* could have deep legal and juridical ramifications. The TSF decision also legitimated cultural policy-making as an extension of the state's power's to enforce what the state defined as the highest social good. TSF Minister Orozimbo Nonato characterized the case as a fight between the "conservative, individualist principle (of private property) and the socially-minded tendency...that dominates the panorama of contemporary life."<sup>59</sup> According to the TSF decision, the traditional liberal right to private property was preserved, but it was to be placed within a broader social context in which the state acted as intermediary between private individuals and the public good. The TSF's decision was not especially anti-individualistic (the right to private property was never challenged), but it did increase the powers and rights of the state vis-à-vis the powers and rights of private property owners and especially vis-à-vis the state's powers and rights granted under the Constitution of 1891. Assuming the caretakership of the national historical patrimony empowered the Vargas regime in areas which previous federal administrations had not considered. The SPHAN was one of the beneficiaries of this novel form of state empowerment. In late 1944, Antônio Leal summed up on the SPHAN's view on the ramifications of the Arco de Teles case by stating, "It is the interests of education and culture which demand the conservation of monuments of historic and artistic value,

imposing upon the property holder the duty to collaborate with the State in order to achieve that objective.<sup>60</sup> Within the authoritarian political culture of the Vargas regime, if social collaboration was not freely offered, it could be demanded.

Of course, the SPHAN leadership always hoped the social collaboration would not be coerced. For the most part, these hopes were fulfilled. Certain historic municipalities like São João del Rey and Diamantina (Minas Gerais) sometimes complained when *tombamento* complicated urban improvements, but exercising its double-edged nationalist-authoritarian powers, the SPHAN generally prevailed in reconciling historical preservation and urban modernization.<sup>61</sup> As the SPHAN grew into a major federal institution of culture, it created a mystique around the sanctity of the national historical patrimony which many municipal, regional, and ecclesiastic authorities readily accepted. As will be discussed below, these authorities often facilitated the SPHAN's efforts.

The SPHAN occasionally faced some significant setbacks when historical preservation presented obstructions to major infrastructural projects. For example, in November of 1942, Rodrigo Melo Franco de Andrade vehemently protested the cancellation of the *tombamento* of several historical sites located in downtown Rio de Janeiro. Andrade criticized the planned demolition of numerous historical structures, including several eighteenth-century churches and the Town Hall, to make way for the construction of Avenida Presidente Vargas, a new major thoroughfare linking Rio's Zona Norte to the Centro.<sup>62</sup> Under the original provisions of Decree-Law 25, *tombamento* had been a permanent and perpetual designation, thus protecting *tombado* structures from the vicissitudes of urban improvements. However, in late 1941 Vargas issued Decree-Law 3.866 which gave the President of the Republic (synonymous with Vargas himself) the power to summarily revoke the *tombamento* of any site or object.<sup>63</sup> In a clear demonstration that Vargas' powers as head of the federal government outweighed the powers of any federal institution of culture, he invoked Decree-Law 3.866 to cancel the *tombamento* of all structures located in the path of the planned street, allowing the Prefecture of the Federal District to demolish them. (Note that while most of the structures demolished were not especially significant in any historical or artistic sense, together they made up the structural fabric of Rio's architectural history from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries.) When the Avenue was inaugurated on November 10, 1943 (the capstone to the celebration of the sixth anniversary of the *Estado Novo*) a substantial portion of Rio's historic downtown architecture had been destroyed in the name of modern progress.<sup>64</sup> The veneration of the past had its limits when confronted with the direct choice between historical preservation and modernization, especially when Vargas was personally involved.

A significant sidelight to the construction/destruction carried out to open up Avenida Presidente Vargas was the transformation of an area associated with the historic area of the national capital into one of the principal nerve centers of the Vargas state apparatus. As historic structures were being torn down to pave way for the new thoroughfare (at times, in contradiction to previously established policies of historical preservation), the federal government was simultaneously erecting the new headquarters of the Ministry of the Army and the federally-owned Central do Brasil railway at the Avenue's northern end. Like the area around the Esplanda do Castelo, which was transformed by the construction of the new headquarters of the Ministries of Labor, Education, and Treasury which took place during the *Estado Novo*, the localization of important government organs turned Avenida Presidente Vargas into a locus of federal power.<sup>65</sup> These large-scale construction projects were

predicated upon the destruction of some of Rio's historical patrimony. Through select attacks on historical patrimony, the symbols and sites of an old Brazil rapidly gave birth to imposing new sites of federal bureaucratic power. The paradox is that this federal bureaucracy would in turn legitimate itself by claiming that it was the protector and guardian of the nation's historical patrimony, as demonstrated in acts such as *tombamento*.

### SPHAN'S MUSEUMS: THE NATIONALIZATION OF REGIONAL HISTORICAL PATRIMONY

Although the SPHAN was not wholly successful in protecting all of the powers originally prescribed for *tombamento*, many of the agency's goals were achieved without much protest. Perhaps the SPHAN's biggest successes were in the creation of three regional museums that preserved the cultural and economic life of colonial Minas Gerais and the Sete Povos das Missões (located near the Brazil-Argentina border in the contemporary state of Rio Grande do Sul). The Museu da Inconfidência (Ouro Preto, Minas Gerais; created 1938), the Museu das Missões (São Miguel, Rio Grande do Sul; created 1940), and the Museu do Ouro (Sabará, Minas Gerais; created 1945) were not just museums which recovered and displayed items which had been lost and forgotten during the Empire and Old Republic. They were new, regional affiliates to Barroso's ideal of the *Culto da Saudade*. Like Barroso's MHN, these museums were federally-funded and federally-controlled. And even if these museums displayed items which had once been part of local and regional historical memory and identity, they became integral components of the institutional network of the national historical patrimony. As part of this network, they were readily used by the Vargas elite to foster patriotism, encourage historical veneration, and teach the lessons of tradition to a society undergoing rapid modernization.

The SPHAN's most successful museum was the Museu da Inconfidência, located in former Penitentiary of Ouro Preto. During the restorations of Ouro Preto in the mid-1930s, Vargas became interested in the history of Minas and the lessons to be drawn from the Inconfidência Mineira, an eighteenth-century conspiracy against Portuguese colonial rule led by Joaquim José da Silva Xavier, popularly known as Tiradentes. The Inconfidência, and particularly Tiradentes' martyrdom, had already been a standard component of the republican imaginary since the 1889 Proclamation of the Republic.<sup>66</sup> But like so many of the Vargas-era innovations in historical memory, Getúlio was first to celebrate the Inconfidência and Tiradentes within a federal institutional context. In 1936, Vargas signed legislation authorizing the repatriation of the mortal remains of the Inconfidentes (part of a larger Vargas-era fixation on the mortal remains of national heroes, including the Braganças and the pro-government soldiers killed in the 1935 Intentona Comunista).<sup>67</sup> On July 15, 1938, Vargas personally attended the installation of the mortal remains in the Igreja de Antônio Dias in Ouro Preto, calling on Brazilians and *mineiros* alike to remember the origins of Brazilian republicanism and nationalism in the Inconfidentes' struggles.<sup>68</sup> In December of the same year, Vargas issued Decree-Law 965, creating the Museu da Inconfidência.<sup>69</sup> By 1942, the remains were transferred to the future museum's austere Panteão dos Inconfidentes, and on August 11, 1944, the Museu de Inconfidência was officially inaugurated in the presence of Minister of Education Capanema, Rodrigo Melo Franco de

Andrade, Mayor of Ouro Preto Washington de Araújo Dias, and Archbishop of Mariana Dom Helvécio Gomes de Oliveira.

From conception to inauguration, the Museu da Inconfidência was an exemplary case of church-state-municipality cooperation on subjects of historical preservation. Both the Church and the State had already benefited from the restorations of Ouro Preto made under the Inspeção dos Monumentos Nacionais. The Church had been able to preserve its holy temples and sacred art and the State could use Ouro Preto as a shining star of historical preservation and historical memory. This mutually beneficial collaboration continued with the creation of the Museu da Inconfidência. The Church gained a guaranteed space to display some of its artistic treasures while the state (the SPHAN) was given control over historical and artistic artifacts that could evoke the material culture of a nationally recognized hero and martyr, Tiradentes. Furthermore, the state was able to incorporate ecclesiastic patrimony into the national patrimony, clearly enriching the latter and protecting the former. Lastly, the municipality of Ouro Preto which had been declared a National Monument in 1933 (surely saving the town from decay as the state of Minas Gerais focused its energies and resources on the new state capital, Belo Horizonte), spiritually gained through the boost to its civic pride and financially gained through the continued investment of federal funds for historical preservation and the growth of tourism.<sup>70</sup> The Museu da Inconfidência was a win-win-win achievement for the Church, the state, and the municipality.

There were some costs involved in the installation of the Museu da Inconfidência. The greatest cost was in the sacrifice of local and regional autonomy for the enrichment of the national historical patrimony. Paradoxically, by celebrating the richness of a regional cultural patrimony, the SPHAN undermined the region's ability to call that patrimony uniquely its own. Although this type of sacrifice was made in almost every city which contained objects or sites of interest to the SPHAN, it was especially acute in the historic towns of Minas Gerais where Ouro Preto and Mariana were National Monuments and São João del Rey, Sabará, and Diamantina, among others, were all heavily *tombado*.<sup>71</sup> The harder the SPHAN worked to preserve Minas in the interests of the national historical patrimony, the harder Minas found it to keep places like Ouro Preto to itself. Rodrigo Melo Franco de Andrade inadvertently stumbled upon this paradox at the inauguration of the Museu da Inconfidência. As Andrade praised the new initiative within the federal cultural policy to open museums outside of the Federal District, he spoke of the increasing ease with which local and regional populations could celebrate the national historical and artistic patrimony through the celebration of their own local and regional historical patrimony.<sup>72</sup> What Andrade neglected to mention, but what was evident from his mere presence as a representative of the federal government, was that the national historical patrimony nationalized regional historical patrimony. Regional control of local historic sites was progressively sacrificed to the directives of a federal agency based in the Federal District. Alongside federal museums came federal agents, federal laws, and federal control. Although SPHAN employees were certainly not dupes in a subversive plan to suppress regional autonomy through museums (the Vargas regime employed much more direct methods to suppress errant regionalism), the expansion of the central state's influence, focused upon specific historical sites of once purely regional awareness and pride, was an undeniable by-product of historical preservation.

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS: PROGRESSIVE CULTURAL POLICIES IN A REPRESSIVE POLITICAL CULTURE

We should bear in mind that the SPHAN, the MHN, and the other federal museums discussed above were *generally* not used as organs of political control or regional domination. Although policies like *tombamento* had deep political ramifications, they were most often not used to achieve specific political goals. On the one hand, the art and artifacts of the colonial and imperial periods were in a rapidly declining state of conservation before the Revolution of 1930. The Vargas regime's interest in the preservation of historical and artistic patrimony saved a great deal of that cultural patrimony from being irrevocably lost through decay or sale. On the other hand, the objects and sites eligible for *tombamento* or museum display were too uncommon to be consistently relied upon as vehicles for asserting state power. More prominent federal institutions such as the Departamento da Imprensa e Propaganda, the Tribunal da Segurança Nacional, and the numerous federal Ministries were in much better positions to demonstrate the unilateral powers exercised by the Vargas regime. Moreover, the employees who worked towards the protection and exhibition of the national historical patrimony should not be seen merely as pawns in a larger Machiavellian scheme to control Brazilian society through the preservation of historical patrimony. These employees were by and large citizens who loved the Brazilian past and found an outlet for this love in the expanding federal bureaucracy. The Vargas elite, very conscious of its place in the nation's historical memory, gave these civil servants the opportunity to express this love through a civil service career which oftentimes far outlived the *Estado Novo*.

But, we must recognize that the protection of the historical patrimony was part and parcel of a larger process of asserting a federal presence in every state, in every municipality, in every family, and in every mind. In one form or another, the presence of Getúlio Vargas and the state apparatus he headed was intimated with a vast array of places, images, and sentiments associated with the past, the present, and the future of Brazil. From Ouro Preto to the Palácio do Catete to Volta Redonda, Getúlio was there. The preservation and manipulation of the national historical patrimony served to represent a heroic past, a reverential present, and an inspired future. The imagery of the national historical patrimony consistently pointed towards the historical evolution of a strong and independent nation, a patriotic population, and benevolent leaders. These were the type of positive images of Brazil that the Vargas regime preferred to represent through the federal institutions of culture, and especially the historically-oriented institutions. These were the images of the nationalist side of Vargas-era representation. Of course, there were many negative images (anti-Communism, anti-religionism, anti-subversion, anti-liberalism to name a few) also intended to strengthen the nation and legitimate the regime's stewardship. But these images were most often reserved for the more authoritarian agencies of the Vargas state. These were the images represented not by the MHN or the Museu Imperial, but by the DIP and the Tribunal de Segurança Nacional.

In conclusion, the conscious invention of the Brazil's historical evolution through institutions like the MHN, the Museu Imperial, and the SPHAN should make us consider how the Vargas regime was able to represent a modernizing Brazil which always maintained a reverential glance towards the past. These types of questions should lead us to rethink what tradition meant to Brazil's modernizers. For the Vargas



elite, tradition and modernity were not antithetical. To the contrary, the regime tried to reconcile the two, making a successful transition to modernity dependent upon a reverence for tradition. Amidst all of the political jockeying behind historical preservation, the Vargas' regime marriage of the traditional and modern, a historical past and a modern future, was a marked departure from the Old Republic, where the liberal elite generally saw little to reconcile between the past and the future, and particularly few historical material goods worthy of federal expenditure. Lastly, the question of historical preservation under Vargas should demonstrate that, far from being the exclusive domain of intellectuals, artists and history buffs, cultural policy and historical preservation were essential components of state policy and political empowerment.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>"For the lasting memory of things," motto which appeared on all papal bulls. Phrase used by Gustavo Barroso, Director of the Museu Histórico Nacional, in denying a request for the loan of a portrait held by the MHN on the grounds that all objects obtained by the institution became the permanent and perpetual property of the national historical patrimony.

<sup>2</sup>I would like to thank the staffs of the Museu Histórico Nacional, the Instituto Brasileiro do Patrimônio Cultural, the Centro de Pesquisa e Documentação da História Contemporânea do Brasil, and the Fulbright Commission's Educational Advising Office (Rio de Janeiro) for their help and support in researching and writing this article. My special thanks go out to Shawn Smallman and José Bittencourt for reading early drafts.

<sup>3</sup>Museu Histórico Nacional, Sector do Contrôlo do Patrimônio (hereafter MHN-SCP), Pasta 19/30, Doc. 4. MHN donation records attribute this donation to Vargas. However the records indicate that the Marquesa Margarida Solari Crespi originally gave the flag to the Centro Cívico 5 de Outubro of Paraná on October 15, 1930. MHN records do not indicate how the flag came into Vargas' possession.

<sup>4</sup>*Rodrigo e o SPHAN: Coletânea de Textos Sobre Patrimônio Cultural*. Brasília: Secretaria do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional: Fundação Pró-Memória, 1987, p. 21.

<sup>5</sup>See Randal Johnson, "Regarding the Philanthropic Ogre: Cultural Policy in Brazil, 1930-45/1964-90" in *Constructing Culture and Power in Latin America*, Daniel H. Levine, ed. (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993) pp. 311-356; Simon Schwartzman, et. al., *Os Tempos de Capanema* (São Paulo: Paz e Terra, 1984); Sérgio Miceli, *Intelectuais e Classe Dirigente no Brasil, 1920-1945*, (São Paulo: Difel, 1979); and Mônica Pimenta Velloso, *Os Intelectuais e a Política Cultural do Estado Novo*, (Rio de Janeiro: Fundação Getúlio Vargas/CPDOC, 1987).

<sup>6</sup>Marcel Luís Salgado Guimarães. "Nação e Civilização nos Trópicos: O Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro e o Projeto de uma História Nacional," *Estudos Históricos*, Vol. 1 (1988), pp. 5-27.

<sup>7</sup>*Monumentos da Cidade* (Rio de Janeiro: Diário de Notícias, 1946).

<sup>8</sup>The most commonly cited pre-1930 conservation efforts included the restoration projects of the Forte de São Tiago, the Forte São João da Bertioga (São Paulo), the Forte do Monte Serrat (Bahia), and the Mission at São Miguel (Rio Grande do Sul). For a summary of the efforts to protect the national historical patrimony before the creation of SPHAN, see Rodrigo Melo Franco de Andrade, *Brasil: Monumentos Históricos e Arqueológicos*, (Mexico City: Instituto Panamericano de Geografia e História, 1952).

<sup>9</sup>The MHN was created by Decree 15.596, signed August 2, 1922. Its stated function was to collect, preserve, classify, and exhibit objects related to History of the Nation (*História Pátria*).

According to its founding decree, the MHN was to be a “school of patriotism for the understanding of our past.”

<sup>10</sup>For example, a 1944 report on MHN activities from 1930 to 1944, charged, “A few years ago, the Museu Histórico was forgotten by the government. But after 1930, the Museum began to move to a different rhythm with the beginning of Government support.”

<sup>11</sup>Adolpho Dumans, “A Idéia da Criação do Museu Histórico Nacional,” *Anais do Museu Histórico Nacional*, Vol. 3 (1942), pp. 382-394.

<sup>12</sup>Dumans, “A Idéia...”

<sup>13</sup>Barroso lost his position as MHN Director from December 8, 1930 to November 18, 1932, in political retribution for his support Júlio Prestes, Vargas’s opponent in the 1930 presidential race. Rodolfo Garcia, who would later become the Director of Biblioteca Nacional, served as Director of the MHN during Barroso’s absence.

<sup>14</sup>Regina Maria do R. M. Abreu. *Sangue, Nobreza, e Política no Templo dos Imortais: um Estudo Antropológico da Coleção Miguel Calmon no Museu Histórico Nacional*. Unpublished MS (Rio de Janeiro: Programa de Pós-Graduação em Antropologia Social/Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, 1990).

<sup>15</sup>There are sharp differences between the MHN under Barroso and the MHN of today. Aside from improvements in museum technology, the contemporary permanent exhibition is based around historical trends rather than historical figures or prominent patrons. Beginning in the mid-1960s, most objects dating from the Republican period were transferred to the Museu da República. Since the mid-1980s, the MHN has organized its permanent collection around five modules: Expansion and Defense, Colonization and Dependency, Quotidian Life, Liberty and Power, and Transportation. (Some of these modules await installation.)

<sup>16</sup>In 1942, the MHN’s exhibitions *salas* were named after: Cândido de Sotto Maior, Guilherme Guinle, Zeferino de Oliveira, Dom Pedro I, Dom Pedro II, General Osório, the Duque de Caxias, Smith de Vasconcelos, the Ottoni estate, Mendes Campos, Guilhermina Guinle, Arnaldo Guinle, Carlos Gomes, Barbosa Rodrigues, Carlos Guinle, the Viceroys, the Barão de Amazonas, Octávio Guinle, Almirante Tamandaré, the Conde de Bobadela, the Conde de Porto Alegre, Almirante Saldanha, Coelho Netto, Miguel Calmon, Marechal Deodoro da Fonseca, the Republic, Tiradentes, and João VI. An internal courtyard which exhibited historical cannons was named after Epiácio Pessoa. Getúlio Vargas, Carlos Gomes, and the Barão de Cotegipe would also earn *salas* before the end of the *Estado Novo*.

<sup>17</sup>The MHN inaugurated the Exposição Comemorativa do Centenário da Abdicação de D. Pedro I on April 7, 1931, and the Exposição do Centenário da Ação Pacificadora de Caxias on August 18, 1942.

<sup>18</sup>Gustavo Barroso, “A Exposição Histórica do Brasil em Portugal e seu Catálogo,” *Anais do Museu Histórico Nacional*, Vol. (1940), pp. 235-246.

<sup>19</sup>Museu Histórico Nacional, Arquivo Permanente (hereafter MHN-AP), *Relatórios Anuais do Museu Histórico Nacional*, 1930-1945.

<sup>20</sup>Centro de Pesquisa e Documentação da História Contemporânea do Brasil/Fundação Getúlio Vargas, Arquivo Gustavo Capanema (hereafter CPDOC-GC) 34.12.11g Pasta VI, Doc. 8.

<sup>21</sup>The title “*Casa do Brasil*” appeared on a plaque at the museum’s main entrance. The name first appeared in an official MHN document in the *Relatório* of 1935.

<sup>22</sup>Consider the massive urban reforms undertaken in Rio de Janeiro during the first quarter of the century when large tracts of unique historical buildings were either destroyed or resurfaced to make way for modern city life.

<sup>23</sup>Adalberto Mário Ribeiro, “O Museu Histórico Nacional,” in *Instituições Brasileiras de Cultura*. Vol. 1. (Rio de Janeiro: Ministério da Educação e Saúde: Serviço de Documentação, 1945).

<sup>24</sup>Myriam Sepúlveda dos Santos, *História, Tempo e Memória: Um Estudo sobre Museus (a Partir da Observação feita no Museu Imperial e no Museu Histórico Nacional)*. Unpublished MS (Rio de Janeiro: IUPERJ, 1989), p. 44.

<sup>25</sup>In 1930, the MHN received approximately 7,000 visitors. By 1945, that number had jumped to over 25,000. The exact annual visitation to the MHN is unknown because the museum's Historical and the Numismatic Sections gave separate figures in the annual *Relatório*. It is impossible to determine how many visitors visited only one section and how many visitors visited both (thus being counted twice). The Historical Section was much more popular than the Numismatic.

<sup>26</sup>In 1930, the Ministry of Education recognized 20 museums in Brazil, of which 14 were public and 6 were private. In 1944, the Ministry recognized 66 museums, of which 36 were public and 30 were private. In 1944, of the 29 museums who reported, annual visitation totaled 174,840 people. *Anuário do Ministério da Educação e Saúde Pública*, Vol. 1 (1931), p. 315; *Anuário Estatístico do Brasil*, Ano VI (1941/45).

<sup>27</sup>"Dados Informativos das Atividades do Museu Histórico Nacional no Período de 1930 a 1944," MHN-AP DG 1 1 (7).

<sup>28</sup>MHN-SCP Pasta 15/37 Doc. 13, December 1, 1937. Writing for the MHN, Minister of Education Gustavo Capanema thanked the donor, Dr. Júlio Moreira, for the "small flask containing the ashes of the state flags collected soon after they were burned during the solemn occasion which took place in (Rio de Janeiro) on November 27."

<sup>29</sup>MHN-SCP 1/44, "Doações do Senhor Presidente Getúlio Vargas" is a comprehensive list of donations made by or attributed to Vargas from November 19, 1930, through October 22, 1945.

<sup>30</sup>José Bittencourt, "A Parede da Memória: Objetos, Memória e Perenidade no Museu Histórico Nacional." (Unpublished MS, 1992), p. 16.

<sup>31</sup>See MHN-SCP Pasta 15/36 for the 1936 donation of the Coleção Miguel Calmon; see MHN-SCP Pasta 14/45 for the acquisition of the Coleção Barão de Cotegipe.

<sup>32</sup>The ban on the Imperial Family had been in effect since the promulgation of Decree 78-A of December 21, 1889. Decree 78-A also called for the liquidation of all real estate owned by the Imperial Family. On September 3, 1920, Epitácio Pessoa signed Decree 4.120 which revoked the ban. It also called for the construction of a mausoleum to house the mortal remains of the Emperor and Dona Tereza Cristina.

<sup>33</sup>Decree-Law 2.096, issued March 29, 1940.

<sup>34</sup>*Anuário do Museu Imperial*, Vol. 2 (1941), pp. 297-298. D. Pedro Gastão de Orleans e Bragança wrote to Vargas on February 14, 1941, offering "the historical patrimony of a precious archive of documents from our past which the National Dynasty saved from dispersion and guarded for the *Pátria*." Vargas accepted the offer the following month.

<sup>35</sup>Alcindo de Azevedo Sodré, *Museu Imperial* (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Nacional, 1950), pp. 18-24.

<sup>36</sup>From March 13, 1943 (inauguration) to December 31, 1943, the Museu Imperial received 22,099 visitors. The 12-month visitation figures for 1944-1946 were 32,837, 54,611, and 91,154 respectively. *Anuário do Museu Imperial*, 1943-1946.

<sup>37</sup>*Anuário do Museu Imperial*, Vol. 6 (1946). The appraised value of the collection in 1946 was 16 million cruzeiros, but the estimated market value was 80 million.

<sup>38</sup>After five decades of administrative and name changes, the SPHAN is now known as the Instituto Brasileiro do Patrimônio Cultural (IBPC). The IBPC is a unit of the recently revived Ministry of Culture.

<sup>39</sup>I have retained the key words *tombas*, *tombamento*, and *tombado* because they are poorly translated into English. The concept of *tombamento* originates in the Roman legal practice of registering property ownership in an official book. Once registered, the property was subject to all existing

legal codes. In effect, unregistered properties were not legally recognized. In the case of cultural patrimony, *tombamento* entailed the official registration of an object or site into a *Livro do Tombo*. Once registered, it was subject to a series of federally-defined regulations and protections. *Tombamento* could be voluntary or compulsory, and was, in theory, irreversible. The *tombamento* of cultural patrimony was unprecedented in Brazilian law when Mário de Andrade submitted his proposal for the creation of a federal agency charged with historical protection.

<sup>40</sup>CPDOC-GC 36.03.24/2g Pasta I, Doc. 1.

<sup>41</sup>The four *Livros do Tombo* were: the *Livro de Tombo Arqueológico e Etnográfico*, for archeological, Amerindian, and popular arts; the *Livro de Tombo Histórico*, for historic art; the *Livro de Tombo das Belas Artes*, for fine art; and, the *Livro de Tombo das Artes Aplicadas*, for applied arts. Objects registered in each of these four books were to be displayed, when possible, in four corresponding museums: the Museu Arqueológico e Etnográfico, the Museu Histórico, the Galeria Nacional das Belas Artes, and the Museu de Artes Aplicadas e Técnica Industrial, respectively.

<sup>42</sup>CPDOC-GC 36.03.24/2g Pasta I, Doc. 1.

<sup>43</sup>Lélia Coelho Frota, Preface to *Mário de Andrade: Cartas do Trabalho: Correspondência com Rodrigo Melo Franco de Andrade (1936-1945)* (Brasília: Secretaria do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional, Fundação Pró-Memória, 1981), pp. 25-26.

<sup>44</sup>For a glimpse into Barroso's ideas about the preservation of the national historical patrimony, see "Documentário sobre a Ação do Museu Histórico Nacional na defesa do Patrimônio Tradicional do Brasil," *Anais do Museu Histórico Nacional*, Vol. 5 (1944).

<sup>45</sup>On Vargas-era cultural policy towards popular culture, including *samba* lyrics, *carnaval*, and *literatura de cordel*, see: Cecília Meireles, "Samba e educação," *A Manhã*, January 18, 1942; Jairo Severiano, *Getúlio Vargas e a Música Popular* (Rio de Janeiro: Fundação Getúlio Vargas, 1983); Pedro Antônio, "Samba da Legitimidade." MA Thesis, Universidade de São Paulo; and, Ludwig Lauerhauss, Jr., "Who was Getúlio Vargas? Theme and Variation in Brazilian Political Lore," in *Journal of Latin American Lore*, 5:2 (1979), pp. 273-290.

<sup>46</sup>Vargas submitted the proposal to the Câmara dos Deputados on October 15, 1936 (Projeto 511/1936). The proposal adhered to Mário de Andrade's original four *Livros do Tombo* and journal publication, but the provisions for the four museums had been removed. While awaiting legislative approval, the SPHAN operated under an interim executive decree. The Service was officially created during the January 1937 reorganization of the Ministry of Education. Projeto 511-1936 was in the final stages of legislative approval when the *golpe de estado* of November 10, 1937, closed both houses of the Legislature and suspended all pending legislation. 20 days after the *golpe*, Vargas issued Decree-Law 25, giving the SPHAN its definitive legal framework. This Decree-Law was virtually identical to the original legislative bill.

<sup>47</sup>CPDOC-GC 36.03.24/2g Pasta I, Doc. 3

<sup>48</sup>Mário de Andrade did not oppose the modification of his proposal. On July 19, 1936, Andrade wrote to Rodrigo Melo Franco de Andrade, "I already knew that every part of the *anteprojeto* would not be accepted... feel free to make and unmake, modify, and make concessions to circumstances that I did not recognize because I was not aware of them. I am not so stubborn or vain as to believe that the things I create are perfect. Never fear that changes or accommodations to my *anteprojeto* will offend me." In *Mário de Andrade: Cartas do Trabalho*, p. 60.

<sup>49</sup>CPDOC-GC 36.03.24/2g Pasta II, Doc. 19.

<sup>50</sup>Rodrigo Melo Franco de Andrade, "Programa," *Revista do SPHAN*, Vol. 1 (1937) p. 1.

<sup>51</sup>*O Jornal* (Rio de Janeiro) Oct 30, 1936. Reprinted in *Rodrigo e o SPHAN*, pp. 48-49.

<sup>52</sup>Dalton Sala Jr., *O Serviço do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional: História Oficial e Estado Novo*, Unpublished MS. Departamento de Artes Plásticas da Escola de Comunicações da Universidade de São Paulo, 1988.

<sup>55</sup>Every Friday evening from November 10, 1944, to March 30, 1945, Antônio Leal delivered a 10-minute radio broadcast (*palestra*) on the SPHAN's history, activities, and accomplishments. The full text of these broadcasts is located in the CPDOC-GC 36.03.24/2-Ag Pasta III, Doc. 24.

<sup>54</sup>*O Globo* (Rio de Janeiro) Oct 22, 1936. Reprinted in *Rodrigo e o SPHAN*, pp. 25-27.

<sup>55</sup>CPDOC-GC 36.03.24/2-Ag Pasta II, Doc. 7

<sup>56</sup>A similar argument can be made for the use of architectural and artistic scale models and mock-ups (*maquetes*) commonly used in SPHAN exhibitions. Although not as easily reproduced as photographs, models gave the viewing public a three-dimensional scale representation of objects and sites of historical value.

<sup>57</sup>CPDOC-GC 36.03.24/2-Ag Pasta III 2ª Palestra, November 17, 1944. Antônio Leal argued that “the incorporation of any good, real or movable, into the national historical and artistic patrimony does not imply, as you see, the [state’s] assumption of control: it is merely an act which declares the good’s historical and artistic value, and for this reason, places it under special rules (*fica sujeito a um regime especial*).”

<sup>58</sup>CPDOC-GC 36.03.24/2g Pasta III, Doc. 6. The Arco de Teles was *tombado* on September 21, 1939. The case against the SPHAN was argued before the Tribunal Supremo Federal on June 10, 1942. The TSF passed judgment in favor of the SPHAN on July 4 of the same year.

<sup>59</sup>CPDOC-GC 36.03.24/2-Ag Pasta III, Doc. 24. 3ª Palestra, November 24, 1944.

<sup>60</sup>CPDOC-GC 36.03.24/2-Ag Pasta III, Doc. 24. 4ª Palestra, December 1, 1944.

<sup>61</sup>CPDOC-GC 36.03.24/2g Pasta III, Doc. 13. In 1943, the *Diário do Comércio* of São João del Rey, MG, criticized the SPHAN for being too stringent in its regulation of the construction of new buildings and urban improvements in historic sections of the municipality. In response, Rodrigo Melo de Andrade denied that the SPHAN had impeded any improvement projects. Andrade reiterated that the colonial nature of historic cities like São João would be maintained. CPDOC-GC 36.03.24/2-Ag Pasta III, Doc. 24. 12ª Palestra. February 2, 1945. The population of Diamantina, MG, protested the *tombamento* of the Mercado da Diamantina (in ruins). The town had wanted to demolish the structure to build a new Post and Telegraph Building, but the SPHAN insisted on preserving the building. The case went before Minister of Justice Francisco Campos and then Vargas, both deciding in favor of the SPHAN. The SPHAN subsequently restored the building.

<sup>62</sup>CPDOC-GC 36.03.24/2g Pasta III, Doc. 9.

<sup>63</sup>Decree-Law 3.866, issued November 29, 1941.

<sup>64</sup>Prominent historical structures destroyed in the construction of the thoroughfare included the churches of São Pedro dos Clérigos (1773), Bom Jesus do Calvário (1719), São Domingos (1791), Nossa Senhora da Conceição (1758), as well as the Paço Municipal (1876). For a detailed study of the construction/destruction of Avenida Presidente Vargas, see Evelyn Furkin Werneck Lima, *Avenida Presidente Vargas: Uma Drástica Cirurgia* (Rio de Janeiro: Biblioteca Carioca, 1990).

<sup>65</sup>The new headquarters of the Ministério do Trabalho, Ministério da Educação e Saúde, and Ministério da Fazenda were built in the vicinity of the Esplanada do Castelo (the three structures are bounded by Avenidas Presidente Antônio Carlos, Almirante Barroso, Pedro Lessa, and Graça Aranha). The Ministério da Guerra and the Central do Brasil were constructed on Avenida Presidente Vargas, across from the Campo de Sant’anna.

<sup>66</sup>José Murilo de Carvalho. *A Formação das Almas: o Imaginário da República no Brasil* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1990), pp. 55-74.

<sup>67</sup>Decree 756, issued April 26, 1936.

<sup>68</sup>Getúlio Vargas. “Perante as Cinzas dos Inconfidentes,” in *Ideário Político de Getúlio Vargas*, Raul Gastini, ed. (São Paulo: Empresa Gráfica da “Revista dos Tribunais” Ltda, 1943), pp. 95-97.

<sup>69</sup>Decree-Law 965, issued December 20, 1938.

<sup>70</sup>CPDOC-GC 34.12.11g Pasta IV, Doc. 10. At the inauguration of the Museu da Inconfidência, Ouro Preto Mayor Dr. Washington de Araújo Dias spoke, "Ouro Preto will never forget the benefits and projects that it has received from the Government of the Republic. In its long and glorious existence, this old city, sometimes misunderstood and sometimes scoffed upon, did not receive the government favors and benefits to which it held an incontestable right. Only under the Government of the great Getúlio Vargas have the sights of the great governmental leaders been refocused on the old city of the Inconfidentes."

<sup>71</sup>Ouro Preto was declared a National Monument by Decree 22.928, issued July 12, 1933. Mariana gained the same status through Decree-Law 7.713, issued July 6, 1945.

<sup>72</sup>CPDOC-GC 34.12.11g Pasta IV, Doc. 9. At the inaugural ceremonies, Andrade spoke, "The creation of the Museu da Inconfidência in Ouro Preto marks the beginning of a new and significant direction adopted by the federal government with respect to national museums. No longer limiting itself to the organization and development of these institutions in the Capital of the Republic, the government has resolved to create and maintain them in the interior of the country. Thus, the invaluable cultural reach which these institutions attain will not be confined to the Federal District."

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