Mapping concepts and authors from 20th century Portuguese magazines of ideas and culture

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Magazines of ideas and culture constitute a very unique and exceptional set of sources, whose richness comes from an ample participation of intellectuals and artists, including some of the most influential individuals of their time. The fact that Fernando Pessoa first published most of his work in these periodicals clearly illustrates their importance (Andrade, 2003). These authors' prolonged participation, over issues published during long periods of time, allows us to capture and understand the movement of ideas and the diversity of their voices, in a continuous process of debate and update.

The periodical press played a very strong historical role in France (e.g., Charle, 2004; Pluet-Despatin et al., 2002), Italy (Frigessi, 1979), the United States (Tebbel and Zuckerman, 1991), and Brazil (Luca, 2011; Martins, 2012), to mention a few examples. The history of magazines in Brazil is particularly interesting to us, due to the very direct relationship between Brazilian and Portuguese intellectuals, who often wrote in the same publications (Guimarães et al., 2013).

In Portugal, all prominent intellectual movements used the periodical press, and specifically magazines, as a place of reunion, where they shared, discussed, and made their ideas public. In the first half of the 20th century the diversity of published magazines was as ample as the diversity of artistic, cultural, intellectual, and political movements. Magazines were used not only to reach other intellectuals but also a wider audience, with a commitment to establish a strong and informed public opinion, in search of what many contemporary authors believed to be "a universal rationality present in every person" (Andrade, 1999: 31, translation ours). The press was, among other things, a territory of political struggle and intervention.

For almost two decades now, the research group Free Seminar of History of Ideas (Seminário Livre de História das Ideias, n.d.) has been working on building a comprehensive and extensive database of some of the most important 20th century Portuguese magazines of ideas and culture. The project Magazines of Ideas and Culture (Seminário Livre de História das Ideias, Revistas de Ideias e Cultura, n.d.) has taken a multidisciplinary approach from the very beginning, encompassing knowledge from fields such as history of ideas, library science, and information science. Its aim was to build a relational database containing exhaustive information on authorship, quoted authors and works, subjects, concepts, and geographical names, for all articles contained in these publications.

One of the main methodological aspects of the project was the segmentation of the traditional "keywords" field in two: subjects and concepts. The keyword was deemed a too insufficient and imprecise instrument for obtaining a comprehensive understanding of the underlining ideas and ideological frameworks contained in these magazines.

To avoid the use of divergent criteria in establishing what could be considered a concept, a conceptual thesaurus, for use by researchers, was discussed and developed by the team beforehand. The first step in this process was to reach a consensual definition of the two relevant operative fields; in very broad terms, a concept was considered abstract, whereas a subject was deemed the materialization of an idea (e.g., Koselleck, 2004; Skinner, 2005 and Castro, 1996: 11-21, for a somewhat different theoretical approach). For example, in an article containing the concept "war," acceptable accompanying subjects – limited by actual article contents, of course – are any and all specific armed conflicts, as well as all the thoughts and ideas that can be produced on "war." We seek to determine concepts from a comprehensive, rather than explanatory, perspective. This means that, in any given article, all structuring concepts mobilized by the author, in accordance with the conceptual economy underlying the discourse, are relevant and thus collected.

Utilizing a conceptual framework also makes it possible to record the use of a concept without a verbatim textual mention of the word (Lisboa, 2015: 133-145). The need for a critical understanding of the texts made the use of tools for text recognition (OCR) inadequate. As such, all the input information is collected and validated by researchers.

The definition of the conceptual thesaurus followed principles of parsimony, consistency, and clarity, avoiding redundancies and repetitions, while at the same time favouring common criteria and language comprehensibility for all users:

"While making no claim to absolute denotation or universality, and agreeing with the fundamentally subjective use of concepts, we believe that the use of a large number of concepts is in fact ubiquitous, in parallel with the difference between language and speech. However, notwithstanding the differences between language and the uses of language, we must be able to achieve some level of systematization, as found in most dictionaries and similar works of reference."

The resulting conceptual network constitutes one of the strongest virtues of the project, allowing for a clear delimitation of the general and specific terms that structured thought as a representation of the world, a phenomenon which can be found in magazines of the same political, cultural, or artistic movement. The set of reciprocal concepts in the conceptual map for each movement will allow a clear understanding of the fundamental ideas and thoughts that motivated their authors.

It should be noted that our project does not aim to classify information, but rather to provide a comprehensive reading of the sources. Our output is meant to be the result of a critical analysis of the source and an interpretation of its contents, grounded in the fields of History of Ideas and Conceptual History, and not a mere blind or neutral collection of terms and names. The database is not intended to replace the source, but instead to aid navigation through its complexity, providing meaning and structure to the included corpus of discourses, and highlighting the underlying programmatic and doctrinarian aspect of these magazines.

Our presentation proposal focuses on the magazine *A Águia*, a *monthly magazine of literature, art, science, philosophy, and social critique*, as stated in the subtitle, published between 1910 and 1932. This was the main organ of the republican Renascença Portuguesa, one of the most noteworthy intellectual movements of 20th century Portuguese history. For its 205 issues, published over the five series that make up the magazine's complete collection, 1,903 articles were indexed, and the collected data includes 403 single authors, 4,299 quoted names, and 1,033 concepts, among other descriptors.

We will apply network analysis to our data (Wasserman and Faust, 1994; Scott, 2000; Carrington, Scott and Wasserman, 2005), and intend to focus on the most important authors, i.e., those that have written the most articles for *A Águia*. Connecting individual article authors with the authors quoted in their texts should provide a visual map of intellectual networks, highlighting influences between authors and their ideas, thoughts, and intellectual background. Using information on quoted names will bring to light the shared and individual references of these authors, providing a visual network of the most influential names featured in their participation in the magazine.

We also intend to trace conceptual networks for a few selected authors. By observing the interaction of concepts used by a given author during a long period of time, an illustration of the course and evolution of their thoughts and ideas will hopefully manifest. In addition, observing the connections between concepts used by different authors (which concepts are used simultaneously more often, for example) can highlight profound or subtle differences in their intellectual background. Finally, confronting the two stages of our analysis – quoted authors and concepts – will provide a clear and vivid image of each author's views and discourse.

We believe that quantitative analysis of qualitative information can be a very powerful instrument if there is a strong consistency in the information being analysed. It can bring to light new relationships between authors, conceptual frameworks, or even conceptual transitions within a single author. Shifting from a narrative of intellectual dialogue to a visual movement of thought and ideas can be a powerful tool for obtaining an original and comprehensive image of the structures of thought underlying the intellectual production of a given period, through a particularly significant medium, i.e., magazines.

The tool developed by our research group "is an invitation for the reader to remember that knowledge is, foremost, an exercise of imagination, since the universe of questionable content and the scope of viable answers are both meticulously expanded." (Andrade, n.d.)

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