



Madame Curie at the Brazilian *National Academy* of Medicine, photograph of *Revista da Semana*, August 28, 1926.

The work of the great scientist Maria Skłodowska-Curie, holder of two Nobel prizes, is well known. A lesser known fact is the passage of this illustrious scientist in Brazil, for a period of 45 days. Also, in 2011, we participated in a work that addressed Maria Curie's visit specifically to the city of Belo Horizonte, state of Minas Gerais, and the results of the research brought even more motivation for us to continue seeking to know the marks that this wonderful woman had left in Brazil. The topic received additional motivation in 2017, in which the 150th anniversary of the birth of Maria Skłodowska-Curie was celebrated, resulting in the book “A visita de Marie Curie ao Brasil” (Maria Skłodowska-Curie w Brazylii).

She traveled by train in a special wagon to the main cities in Brazil at the time: Rio de Janeiro, Belo Horizonte and São Paulo, covering more than 1500 km in total.

She visited several scientific centers in Brazil, University of Rio de Janeiro, University of São Paulo and University of Minas Gerais, in Belo Horizonte. In Belo Horizonte, it was essential for the Radio Institute of the Faculty of Medicine to start the pioneering treatment with radioactivity in the fight against cancer in Latin America. The Medicine Memory Center still has a signature frame on the wall.

During the trip, Maria Curie was accompanied by a commission of women important in science and politics, belonging to the Brazilian Movement for Female Progress.

In writing the book, the first challenge was to try to show the reader the life and work of the woman and scientist Maria Curie. It was important to show the challenges, deprivations and overcoming that the scientist had to go through. The scientist was an ordinary person like all of us, and what she achieved, definitely, was not simply because of her ability to study, but also and mainly because of her obstinacy in winning through her studies.

After introducing the illustrious character, it was necessary to discover what led the important scientist to travel to Brazil, a country that is outside the Northern Hemisphere. Thus, some questions arose: How was the invitation made, and by whom? What was the position of the political authorities in Brazil? What was the interest in having this magnificent woman in our lands? What places did the researcher go to, and how was she received? What was Maria Curie's legacy to our country's science and medicine? What is the contribution in the fight for women's rights?

The answer to these questions was essential for the book to be written.

The initial desire to disclose the subject was that the book should be read by high school, undergraduate, graduate students, researchers and teachers, mainly those directly or indirectly linked to chemistry and physics, but we realized with time the book can be very appreciated too, by those who like sociology and the history of fighting for equal rights between men and women in Brazil and in the world or simply by someone who likes to read. The book is the only one to talk about the presence of Maria Curie in Brazil.

Maria Curie's visit to Brazil was a milestone, not only for the study of radioactivity and its applications in our country, which would already be a lot, but also helped to consolidate the need for national science to be connected with what was most advanced in the world.

In 2017, thanks to the efforts of the Polish Chemical Society and the Center for Polymers and Carbon Materials of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Gliwice, a Polish translation of the book by João Pedro Braga and Cassius Klay Nascimento on the Maria Curie's Visit to Brazil has been published.

We were also grateful to have part of the work presented in the scientific journal *Nature* with the title *Trailblazer: When Marie Curie went to Brazil*, 551, page 440 (2017).

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A visita de Marie Curie ao Brasil



Cover of the digital book “Kindle” by Amazon.

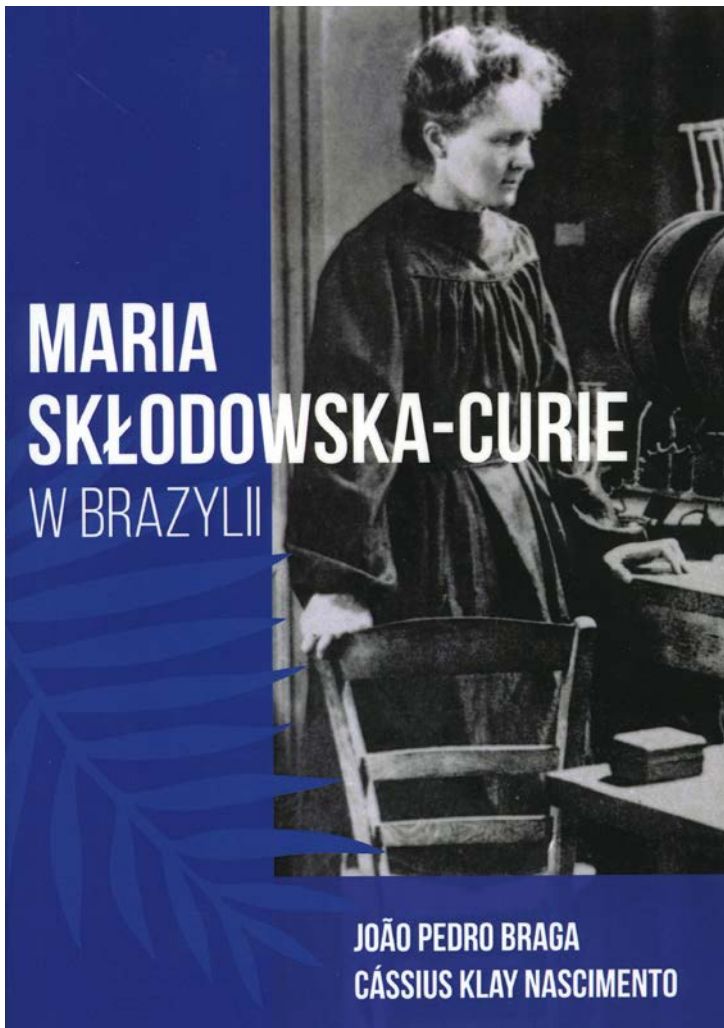
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Cover of the book Maria Skłodowska-Curie w Brazylii published in Poland.



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